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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

**LANGUAGE PURISM AND PRESCRIPTIVISM IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT:  
A CASE STUDY OF A SISWATI RADIO PROGRAMME '*NASI-KE SISWATI*'**

**MINOR DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE: MASTER OF  
PHILOSOPHY IN APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

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**DATE SUBMITTED: MARCH 2001**

## DECLARATION

**I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work and has not been submitted before to any institution for assessment purposes.**

**Further, I have acknowledged all sources used and have cited these in the bibliography.**

University of Cape Town

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## ABSTRACT

The study aims at assessing purists' and prescriptivists' concerns about language as reported in Western and non-Western settings, as to find out whether they share the same views about language correctness. The data base is a series of a siSwati radio programme, called *Nasi-ke siSwati* 'Here is (genuine) siSwati' hosted by Jim Gama, known as 'Mbhokane'. I try to assess his attitudes to what he considers 'inferior' use of the language, with the aim of understanding what issues are at stake when African prescriptivists make their pronouncements.

From the studies investigated I have discovered that puristic concerns and sentiments are similar irrespective of language, cultural or national backgrounds. Both Western and non-Western purists pay attention to formal features of the language, are motivated by nationalistic feelings and often hold exaggerated claims about correctness and the abuse of language.

The study concludes by recommending that there should be a great participation of linguists in puristic debates to ensure a diversity of viewpoints. This will also help in widening purists' view about the role of language in daily life in the modern era and hopefully put prescriptivism and purism on a more practical footing.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND ITS IMPACT ON PURISM**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Sociolinguistics studies are concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with a goal of understanding the social basis of language and how it functions in communication. Attention to language prescriptivism and purism like any sociolinguistic topic is widely treated in the Western context. Language prescriptivism and purism is based on people's attitude to language as shaped by teachers, writers, critics and other self-proclaimed language experts or guardians who accord certain forms as 'more correct' or 'better' than others, thus should be used whilst others are discarded as unfit. For purists language is formal and is based on public and written styles than speech (Milroy & Milroy 1985:21-22).

The purist's notion of 'correctness' is often based on personal tastes and prejudices, and also of declarations handed down from on high, rather than on genuine linguistic properties. This can be seen in the development of Standard English. Standard English was a variety that was accepted by the power elites of the society and was confirmed via social institutions like government, schools and the media in the period ranging from about the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This variety was selected as it had already achieved prominence politically, commercially and academically. The selection of this standard variety does not mean it was better

than others linguistically, since different varieties of English would have served the same function if they were given that status. Therefore the selection of a particular style by speakers/listeners depends upon specific situation and upon symbolic values associated with the selected styles. Stubbs (1983:33) concludes that speakers of Standard English can be casual, polite or rude as anyone else and can use slang, swear and say things in bad style or bad taste. For instance people switch between forms of English when chatting to friends (an informal conversation) and when interviewed for a job (formal conversation). A single style speaker is non-existent (Wardhaugh 1998:5).

The knowledge of using different patterns of speech is based on what Hymes calls communicative competence. According to Hymes (1972:279) communicative competence is based on grammatical and social knowledge of one's language. He argues that a person who chooses occasions and sentences, but is master only of grammatical sentences is odd. Hymes further argues that a normal child acquires knowledge not only based on grammaticality but also on appropriateness. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and what to talk about, with whom, when, where, and in what manner. According to Hymes children develop a theory of speaking appropriate in their community like other cultural forms of knowledge.

Stubbs (1983:37) in support of Hymes theory of communicative competence argues that a native speaker knows, largely unconsciously a vast number of facts

about his or her language. A fluent speaker therefore, is defined as one who is aware that one variety is preferred for some uses and another for others, thus is able to device and understand novel sentences (Hymes 1972:274). This knowledge is based on acquiring a system of grammar as well as the system of use.

Most studies had shown that purists pay less attention to facts, whilst the use of certain expressions, pronunciation and loanwords can be explained or defined. These may be a result of language change or language variation. Often sociolinguistics treats language as an expression of social identity, thus national ethnic, racial cultural, religious, age, gender, social class, caste, educational, economic, geographical, occupational and other social groupings have linguistic ramifications (Brown 1992:1). Therefore ignoring facts is nothing else than language manipulation, which might be harmful as it diverts attention away from more important linguistic issues (Aitchison 1991:220).

The present study is a contribution to sociolinguistics, whereby peoples attitudes to language as reflected in purism and prescriptivism within a non-Western cite, Swaziland will be analysed.

### **1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Language purism and prescriptivism tend to be studied in Western contexts. The purpose of the study is to examine whether these phenomena are similar in an

African context. The research site is a siSwati talk-show programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* 'Here is genuine siSwati' in which matters pertaining to 'formal siSwati' are discussed. The study will synthesize and critically examine the puristic/prescriptive claims made in the programme. It will then draw conclusions whether prescriptivism in an African context is different from Western studies.

## **1.2 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY**

Language issues have always been my concern as a language teacher, mainly because I work in an environment that consists of pupils from different backgrounds. In all my different classes I realized that some pupils came from urban, semi-urban and rural backgrounds. I have discovered that the background of a person correlates with the language that he or she speaks. I am aware of our contribution as language teachers to encourage pupils to write 'good siSwati' in a society that is becoming too modernised. The gist of the topic was motivated by a CALSSA mini-project conducted in August 1999, where we were assigned to collect data on 'teachers and people's responses to the siSwati language'. I had conducted an interview with the presenter of a language talk show programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* and realized that the issues raised in the programme go well beyond ordinary language usage.

## **1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SISWATI LANGUAGE**

The language situation of a nation is determined by its history. SiSwati, a Bantu language has undergone various stages of development since the period of nation

building. The existence of the Swazi people known as Bembo-Nguni dates back to 1600 under the leadership of Nkhosi Dlamini who and his successors lived along the Tembe River area near what is today Lourenço Marques (Matsebula 1972:4). Those clans Tembe-Tsonga who went with Dlamini call themselves *bemdzabu* 'those of the original stock', were considering themselves to be the only 'real' Swazi. During this period of nation building various clans were overcome and absorbed to the Swazi nation, e.g. the Basotho and Nguni which were known as *emakhandzambili* 'those found ahead'. By 1836 three different stocks could be identified, that is, the Tsonga, Sotho and Nguni which were welded together to form one nation (Zievogel 1952:xix). Kuper (1962:1) supports this view that the Swazi nation was shaped by cultural diffusion, borrowing and social adjustments, (of various clans) such that today the Swazi nation has a culture, language and social structure that is similar to other African states. For instance, siSwati is closely related to Zulu in language and culture.

The siSwati language belongs to the South-Eastern Zone which includes Nguni, Sotho, Tsonga and Venda which could be further divided into the nine South African written languages (Taljaard et al.1991: 1). The Nguni is divided into two sub-groups, that is the Zunda and the Tekela. The Tekela sub-group comprises of **siSwati** of Swaziland, KaNgwane and South Eastern Transvaal, also the **Sumayela Ndebele, Lala, Nhlanguwini, Phuthi and Bhaca.**

### 1.3.1 The development of a siSwati standard language

Swaziland whose borders had extended as far as Rhodesia (known as Zimbabwe today) was able to attain political unity through powerful leadership like that of King Mswati I. Language and cultural solidarity was however attained minimally due to the fact that leaders left the incorporated clans to act and speak in their own domain, so individual language and culture were left to develop on its own lines (Ziervogel 1952:xix-xx). Thus today siSwati speakers have a wide culture and speech; different patterns of life are a norm. For instance some Swazis like those in Ermelo, Piet Retief, Caroline and Hlathikhulu speak a Zunda dialect. They employ Zulu sounds, like *th*, *d*, and *z*. instead of saying *umfati lotsandzako* they say *umfazi lothandako* for Zulu *umfazi othandayo* 'a woman who likes' though still maintaining some siSwati morphemes. So Zulu **th** is **ts**, **d** is **dz** and **z** is **t** in siSwati.

From the time of nation building siSwati had been left to develop according to its course and dialect diversity was never addressed. As a result present siSwati consists of five distinct dialects namely, the Hlathikhulu dialect, Lomahasha dialect, Mpumalanga dialect, Kuyeyeza/Kuthefuya dialect and the Lobamba dialect, which is known as the standard form of siSwati.

Swaziland had been a British colony from 1903 to 1968 (Matsebula 1972). The colonial masters were not so much interested in developing the Swazi people but had their own ulterior motives. Efforts to teach Swazis to read and write were

made by the missionaries; thus the country today has a great number of educational and health mission centres.

When Swaziland got her independence on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 1968 siSwati was not yet a written language. What Rev. James Allison had written in 1846 was never developed until independence. The main reason was that Zulu was used in schools and in church (as a written language it had abundant literature by 1905-1927), so Swazis were less motivated to write their language (Khumalo 1999:28). SiSwati was accorded no status, as it was not yet written down.

By 1969 siSwati was introduced in primary schooling as a subject, thus replacing Zulu. This was a nationalistic move. In order to express the nation's political independence the language used by colonial masters was eroded. Some written material was developed; the late J.S.M. Matsebula who was Senior Inspector of schools in 1967 produced some early written work. His well-known first publication is known as *Insika 1-7* series, which were produced as early as 1969 (Khumalo 1999). As most written material was school-oriented, people were less motivated to write for pleasure and private reading. This had hindered the growth and development of the language since schools have their own goals and strategies in text selection.

The ruling party (Imbokodvo Movement) had set out its recommendations as stipulated in the Cabinet Paper No. 259/ 1976. In paragraph 1, it stated that

siSwati and English would be the two official languages, which will be used and taught in Swaziland. In developing siSwati the Ministry will ensure that there is adherence to the Government's policy. As a way of promoting the use of siSwati the 'SiSwati National Language Board' was formed. Its membership and functions are stipulated in Cabinet Paper No. 259/1976 as well as in SINALABO's (SiSwati National Language Board) Constitution, which is attached in Appendix A.

To sum up, this body consisted of delegates from Swaziland and KaNgwane's (now known as Mpumalanga) educational and cultural centres, writing institutions, the Bible Society and the media. Its chief aim was to promote a standard siSwati. Standard siSwati is based on the 'royal dialect' mainly spoken in and around Mbabane, Lobamba, Manzini and Hhohho. The other places speak what is considered as 'impure siSwati' due to geographical influences. The board is not concerned about the development of the other varieties of siSwati, thus in 1980 the 'Swazi Orthography, Terminology and Spelling rules' was published under its authority. Considering the chief aim 'that of promoting standard siSwati' the board had succeeded in developing textbooks that are written in standard siSwati. However, what goes on outside the learning environment had not been fully attended to. Maybe the reason is that to make speech conform to a standard norm is an impossible exercise.

SiSwati in the past years has developed to a limited extent both in vocabulary and function. The education system, which one would have expected to play a leading role in transforming siSwati finds itself in a dilemma, due to the flourishing of English. To prepare a child to strive in the English demanding world the Ministry of Education has set out a passing standard, which states that, a child must pass all subjects including English in junior or senior level to be considered to have passed. This leads to the anomalous situation where a pupil may pass all subjects except English and be considered a failure, even though learning has taken place. When a pupil gains credit in siSwati he or she does not have the advantage of passing the Cambridge examination, whereas a credit in English does enable this. Most urban schools have denounced the introduction of English as medium of instruction in the fourth grade. Instead they have introduced English as the medium of instruction from pre-school throughout the child's education. This new system of education is gradually shifting to rural areas, as they do not want to be left behind. In the near future possibly all schools in Swaziland would use English as medium from at least grade one unless the educational requirement change. As siSwati has not enjoyed such status in the education system, there is fear from language 'aficionados' that English will displace siSwati. Such a prediction is bound to happen unless there is a revision of the language policy.

The past colonial government as well as the present one has not achieved much in relation to the development of a standard language. Standard siSwati finds itself competing with various dialects and new speech forms, like slang.

#### **I.4 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS**

**Language purism:** Language purism is ‘the manifestation of a desire on a part of a speech community... to preserve a language from, or rid it of punitive foreign elements or other elements held undesirable (including those originating from dialects, sociolects and styles of the same language)...*it* is an aspect of codification, cultivation and planning of standard languages’ (Thomas 1991:12).

All *puristic concerns* stem from societal attitudes.

**Sociolects** or social dialects refer to non-regional differences; that is linguistic differences between speakers that are due not only to geography but also due to other social factors.

**Codification** originates from the term code (Latin *codex*), which implies a written compilation (Cooper 1989:144). It refers to the writing or establishment of norms of a language as found in dictionaries, grammar and style books by an academy, in order to have a ‘fixed’ variety which everyone has to agree to its correctness.

Whilst **Cultivation** refers to treatment of problems related to matters of correctness, efficiency, register specialization and style; a form of language planning which is typically found in connection with more developed languages.

**Language prescriptivism:** Language prescriptivism is ‘a view that one variety of language has inherently higher value than others and that this ought to be imposed on the whole speech community’ (Crystal 1992). Cameron (1995:1) has

popularized the idea of 'verbal hygiene', that certain elements are considered unclean and need to be removed from a certain language. In this study language purism and prescriptivism are considered as two sides of the same coin, as one concept, as there is a considerable overlap between the two in practice. **Purism** is the attitude to language, whilst prescriptivism is the practice that tries to regulate language so as to achieve puristic goals.

**Location, motivation:** The **location** of language purism refers to the place where puristic concerns could be found. This is concerned with identifying areas like standardization, nationalism and morality etc. **Motivation** refers to the factors that drive these puristic concerns. The location and motivation of language purism are often parallel. Locating purism is the first step of identifying the motivation of puristic concerns.

## 1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

### **Qualitative assessment of the sentiments of the presenter.**

The language programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* as recorded in four cassettes will be analysed as one significant location of purism and prescriptivism. The data was collected through tape recording and was then transcribed. A thematical analysis of the programme was then done. In order to clarify issues in the programme, I interviewed the programme presenter using a semi-structured interview model; this interview will be cited where relevant through out the thesis.

## 1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

**Chapter one** gives a background of the siSwati language, how it has developed into a standard language. The aims of the study are stated.

**Chapter two** presents a thematic discussion of the language programme and a review of literature on the topic of language purism/prescriptivism.

**Chapter three** gives an analysis of various literatures and the talk-show programme *Nasi-ke siSwati*.

**Chapter four** summarizes the main findings of this research, and gives general conclusions, comments and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE THEMATIC DISCUSSION OF THE SISWATI LANGUAGE PROGRAMME *NASI-KE SISWATI***

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Language purism and prescriptivism is a relatively neglected area within the field of linguistics and applied language studies. For instance the two schools of linguistics known as Historical linguistics and Descriptivism reject it as irrelevant to their concerns. However some studies in Sociolinguistics are beginning to pay serious heed to the field (Thomas 1991:3-7). My aim is to explore various studies on purism and prescriptivism, drawing attention to four major points. These are:

- the aim/concern of purists and prescriptivists
- the nature of language purism and prescriptivism
- the motivation of purists and prescriptivists
- evaluation of purist and prescriptivist concerns.

#### **2.2 A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The literature about language purism and prescriptivism is largely Western, though I have encountered a handful of studies from Asia and one from Africa on the topic. The African study by Henningsen (1989:35-40) examines purism as a (correct) process of decolonization. He cites Chinweizu's argument (1983:1) that in order to decolonize the African mind, African writers are to engage in literature that is purely African. Henningsen, however does not support Chinweizu's claim as he believes that there is no way to separate literature from its history in the African colonial world. The change in African literature and language apart from

colonizers is symbolic. It is based on an urge to remove all vestiges of colonial thinking as a process of restoring self-identity. The desire for self-identity is central in puristic movements. This example shows that puristic and prescriptivists concerns exist in every culture and may be motivated by similar sentiments. I will now consider the four major issues.

### **2.2.1 The aims/concerns of purists and prescriptivists**

There are a several concerns that are expressed by language purists and prescriptivists. These are:

#### **(a) Language correctness**

Most studies about purism and prescriptivism identify purism and prescriptivism as an attitude to language, which is based on a notion that certain pronunciations or lexical items are undesirable and must be discarded. This is what Cameron (1995:1) terms 'verbal hygiene' a desire to improve or 'clean up' language as to make it 'more correct', 'precise' or 'better'. Thomas (1991:12), Annamalai (1979), Jernudd et al (1989) and Cameron (1995) had identified forms that are targeted for 'cleaning up'; this includes foreign elements, those originating from dialects, sociolects and styles of the same language. According to Annamalai (1979:36) openness to native sources and closure to non-native sources is for the enrichment of the language. In other words purists imply that language cleansing makes the language develop in its own discourse. Though purists often target foreign loans, these are inevitable in bilingual modern societies. Whenever

nations are in contact they exchange patterns of life and language. Purging a language of foreign loans make it less expressive, it becomes rigid and stale.

Correctness is based on following norms, and any deviation from the norm is considered inadequate (Musa 1989:109). According to the *norm of correctness*, there is only one way of using language; others are thought as inferior, incorrect or ungrammatical.

Denying the use of other varieties may result to communication breakdown, as speakers of 'inferior' forms feel less inclined to use the more 'correct' form.

#### **(b) Formality**

When language guardians or experts engage in promoting correctness they are interested in sustaining a formal style that will feature in public conventions and in writing. This form becomes the language of education, administration, government and the media (Mesthrie *et al.* 1999:21). Adherence to a standard form becomes a way of attaining and expressing a prestigious social identity.

Less attention is given to the informal context; and the language associated with it is non-standard and colloquial. Those who promote the formal style are not aware that the same people who use the standard form can switch around speech depending on the situation and mode.

Most studies have stated that formal conventions (for instance writing) are promoted by education. Speech choices, however, is not based on rigid conventions, e.g., siSwati speakers who were taught Zulu in the colonial era (around 1903-1968) would switch to siSwati in the absence of the teacher (Khumalo 1999). Formal conventions serve an artificial mode; they are contrary to the reality of speech in informal or colloquial contexts.

### **(c) Standardization**

The selection of one form out of a set of equivalent varieties is a trend towards standardization. Standardization propagates uniformity. It is argued that everyone should use and understand language in the same way; other forms are therefore suppressed. This means that there will be one style of English in British Isles and throughout the whole world where it is implanted (Milroy & Milroy 1985:23). Various forms of English are prevalent today; not only outside Britain but also within Britain there are a lot of variations even when it comes to the standard language itself (Mesthrie et al. 1999:24). Milroy & Milroy (1985:26) in support of this claim argue that Standard English allows variation in the phonological level, though the ideology of standardization is inimical to change and variation. The belief in a standard language is only an ideology, a process of keeping the notion of standards alive in the mind, whilst in reality a great deal of fuzziness remains around the edge (Milroy & Milroy 1985). They are right to say that only dead languages can be fully standardized.

Most studies like those by Milroy & Milroy (1985), Cameron (1995), Trask (1995) and Mesthrie et al (1999) had shown that the selection of a standard form is not based on its linguistic superiority or excellency but is motivated by various social, political and commercial needs. For instance, the selection of the Midlands variety was due to the fact that the variety had already achieved prominence politically, commercially and academically when Caxton needed a standard language for printing books. Therefore the acceptance of a standard language and its promotion depends on the power or status of elites at a particular time. Language guardians or experts, copy editors and style guides help sustain the illusion of a standard language.

Once a standard variety is selected it is written down in dictionaries and grammar books. Writing then serves standardization since it can easily conform to rigid patterns. These dictionaries and grammar books become authorities of correctness.

The adherence to fixed conventions is contrary to reality. Whilst people might know a standard language they do not employ it in all circumstances, e.g. in informal contexts.

#### **(d) Focus on words**

Annamalai (1979:51), Park (1989:126) and Thomas (1991:62-66) stress that although purism may operate on all linguistic levels, i.e. phonology, lexicon, syntax and semantics it is mainly directed to the lexicon. Purism in the semantic

level is rare and unlikely to succeed (Annamalai 1989:228). Words' structure is targeted in purification because it is naturally flexible and easily loses shape.

### **2.2.2 The nature of language purism and prescriptivism**

Studies by Milroy & Milroy (1985), Thomas (1991), Cameron (1995) and Mesthrie et al. (1999) have defined prescriptivism as a universal phenomenon. Cameron (1995:9) argues that all people subscribe to the belief that language can be 'right' or 'wrong', 'good' or 'bad' more or less 'elegant' or 'effective' or 'appropriate'. Some forms of prescription are carried out consciously and unconsciously. Decreeing that foreign words must be discarded in speech is a conscious activity, whilst aiding an infant to master a language is an unconscious exercise.

Most studies argue that the degree of puristic intensity varies, it is determined by sociopolitical, economic and historical factors. For instance, due to fear of Western domination purists decreed that foreign loans were to be avoided in Tamil (Annamalai 1989:229). However efforts to control the infiltration of English (and Sanskrit words) always proved futile, as English is the language of prestige and is often identified with education and upward mobility.

Many scholars (like Milroy & Milroy (1985), Thomas (1991), Cameron (1995) and Mesthrie et al. (1999) express their concern about the rejection of language prescription by linguists. Most linguists reject prescription as they uphold the

descriptive nature of language. The adherence to the descriptive study helps them study languages without employing any form of prejudice (Milroy & Milroy 1985:6). Those who challenge linguists (for example Milroy & Milroy and Cameron) argue that linguists engage in prescription in one way or another. Like their pronouncement that people should leave languages alone, their adherence to a certain pattern of writing and also their engagement in language planning activities shows that they are prescriptive. One can conclude that there is no way to escape prescription (Cameron 1995:8).

Prescription is based on following rules or norm patterns. Since language is a social practice, using it entails following certain norms (Cameron 1995:6). Both prescriptive and non-prescriptive writers engage in norm observing or enforcing. Their struggle is to control language by defining its nature.

Milroy & Milroy (1985), Jernudd et al. (1989), Thomas (1991) and Cameron (1995) consider purism and prescriptivism as based on linguistic preferences of the elite in society. These include lawyers, bureaucrats, professional experts and guardians who decide that certain forms are superior or more correct than others, then the public find themselves obliged to accept them. For instance the selection of the Midlands variety was due to the fact that the elite already used it. The choice of a standard form or success of purism depends on the power of elites not objective notions of correctness. Shapiro (1989:22-3) argues that the elites engage in identity politics, that of separating people into groups with identities. Those

who engage in promoting the purity of the language see themselves, as belonging to a language of superiority, as a result an impure language is associated with an impure person.

Scholars like Dissanayake (1989), Thomas (1991) and Mesthrie et al. (1999) state that purists have regard for old forms. These linguistic materials are associated with a past golden age which is marked by exaggerated respect, i.e. old forms are better and they are without defilement (Thomas 1991:76).

The use of old forms, as replacement for foreign words is a powerful symbol of signifying identity, value and aspiration. For instance old words are preferred to newer ones; as a result old people are revered, as they possess these past treasures.

When purists favour old forms and rigid pattern of grammar they are promoting a conservative ideology. They believe that not abiding by single standards may lead to social fragmentation. Defiance of grammatical rules is equated with anti-social or criminal behavior whilst grammar teaching inculcates good behavior and law-abiding citizens (Cameron 1995:93). Cameron (1995:82-85) defines this as 'moral panic' an exaggerated concern about failure to adhere to standards.

The response of conservatives to language is marked by fear of domination when fixed conventions are shunned. Those who promote a flexible and progressive teaching method are perceived as a threat (Cameron 1995:88).

Shapiro (1989:28) and Thomas (1991:79-80) argue that purism is based on appreciation that language is a resource and therefore requires careful planning. Annalamai (1989:225) states that purism from a language planning point of view is a selection of native source for lexical development. However Reformist purism involves flexibility in selection, i.e. coming to terms with the resources which have accrued during an earlier periods of writing and adapting the language for its role as a medium of communication in a modern society (Thomas 1991:79). Puristic responses here are mild.

Milroy & Milroy (1985:20), Annamalai (1989:229), Jernudd (1989:3) and Cameron (1995) argue that puristic sentiments are embedded in history. They conclude that certain usages might be favoured in one time only to be stigmatized at another time in history. For instance at an earlier period of modernization, Turkey experienced more puristic responses than in a later stage where they were mild. Jernudd in support of this claim argues that social evaluation about language is reversible, depending on certain time in history.

### **2.2.3 The puristic motivation**

Most studies argue that purism is motivated by socio-cultural, political and historical factors. Thomas (1991:19-24) had identified certain images that shape the purists way of thinking. The images provide a base as to what motivates their

actions. I will cite three of these **images** and the other forms of puristic motivation.

### **2.2.3.1 Purist's images**

#### **(a) The miller**

In this image purism is seen as a process of separating useless and undesirable elements from truly useful ones, like the process of separating bran or husk from wheat in the milling process. This image however offers no guidance as to which elements are useful to the language. Purification is seen as a matter of refining. Just as the higher proportion of pure grain to bran makes better flour, so the 'purer' language is considered superior.

Since the removal of 'impure' elements in language is not defined according to linguistic properties of the language, the purists' stance turn to be subjective; it is based on their personal taste.

#### **(b) The metallurgist**

Language is defined as a raw material which needs to be freed from impurities before it can be used. The main task is to remove extraneous elements, though there is no guidance as to how impurities are to be identified.

In the case of gold or silver, the combination of copper helps to reduce the impurities. This however does not apply to language purification; often a foreign element is associated with defilement than enrichment.

### **(c) The priest**

Purists are attributed to sacerdotal function of ritual cleansing. Their aim is merely to rectify the manifold corruptions which have defiled the language as created by God. Purists therefore are associated with priestly function, which include linguistic purification. Often there is a close relationship between godliness and cleanliness, holiness and purity.

All these images provide an insight to the purists' self-orientation, i.e. they believe that they have an ability to decide on which elements rightfully belong to a language and which do not. The removal of what is labeled 'foreign' as to improve quality is not seen as reducing the expressive means of the language in question.

#### **2.2.3.2 Nationalism and purism**

Annamalai (1989:227), Jernudd (1989:7-10) and Thomas (1991:43, 135-9) argue that some form of cultural or political nationalism motivates purism. Nationalism is based on a notion that the national culture and language is unique, irreplaceable and is a symbol of identity. It is based on a belief that if language and culture are destroyed the nation or race will be helpless. Elements that threaten to undermine the prestige, unity or autonomy of native institutions are eradicated.

Thomas (1991:135-9) argues that both purism and nationalism are similar; they are both affected by stages of economic, industrial and social development. Both

are prompted by deep-seated dissatisfaction with the status quo and seek solutions they (as practitioners) view as practical and realistic. As a result most nationalistic sentiments are an expression of insecurity, a fear of hybridization by the dominated as the dominant language flourish. Most languages like French, Tamil and Sinhalese for instance, are threatened by the growth and prestige of English.

Puristic responses turn to be a quest for self-identification, by those who had experienced some domination. It is a symbolic act to discard or reject non-native features as a linguistic manifestation of a social act to reject dominance and assert self-identity (Annamalai 1989:230). This is what Henningsen (1989:35) calls a process of decolonization. He (1989: 31-2) defines the politics of purity and exclusion as the quest for identity and authenticity of a cultural self that feels threatened by the hegemonic presence of another culture which may or may not be in core position vis-à-vis the struggling Self. For instance the development of Black English amongst Black Americans was a desire for a separate culture and language. Citing Levine (1977:153), Henningsen argues that living in a hostile and repressive white society, black people found in language an important means of promoting and maintaining a sense of group unity and cohesion.

Though nationalism might be an outcome of successful purification of the language, insecurity, inferiority complex, and inadequacies of the national language provide the motivation for linguistic purism (Thomas 1991:45).

### **2.2.3.3 Religion, morality and purism**

Musa (1989:105) argues that people might consider language as divine and capacity to use words as a rare gift from god. Religion is often associated with morality, thus purism is a means of overcoming evil, and an impure language represents an impure person (Shapiro 1989:22). Jernudd (1989:9) citing Munidasa argues that it is traitors who say 'no' to grammar.

In identifying puristic motivation one is able to judge their (purists) action. Some of the motivations are self-explanatory; what is judged as non-native may involve exaggerated notions about language. It might therefore turn out as a symbolic act, i.e. in actual use of the language some non-native features may persist for their communicative value (Annamalai 1989:230).

### **2.2.4 Evaluation of purism**

Milroy & Milroy (1985), Jernudd et al (1989), Cameron (1995), Mesthrie et al. (1999) consider prescription as a symbolic process of regulating language. They argue that full standardization (speech) cannot be attained. People aware of the social value attached to certain forms might claim to be using them whilst in reality they speak a variety current in their speech community. This is so because some varieties are meant for formal and informal conventions.

Most studies view purism as built on exaggerated claims about language. Park (1989:137) argues that although Korean purists might have something to offer,

they are too nationalistic or even chauvinistic, assuming that theirs is the only language in the world that is pure and beautiful. He also views them as too simplistic, claiming that the use of a loan word, of which Korean has an equivalent, is uneconomical and hence should not be allowed; though the presence of loan equivalents alongside a pure Korean word adds significantly to the expressive power of the Korean language. Korean purists are also accused of being too unrealistic; often proposing the use of overtly contrived pure Korean coinage for natural, well-established Sino-Korean words. They do not consider that normal exchanges between nations involve linguistic exchanges, so that loan words are inevitable in the modern society. There are times when purists are to accept that living in impurity is a reality, for instance Papua New Guinea which has 700 languages find itself yielding to the language of victimization for cultural empowerment (Henningsen 1989:44). Park also argues that Fundamental purists are too radical, believing that theirs is the only true version of purism and refusing to settle their differences with other purists. He (1989:137) calls for a moderate and sensible stance, free from (ultra) nationalism, simplism, unrealism and radicalism.

### **Conclusion**

The literature about language prescriptivism and purism identify common features that label a puristic stance, i.e. certain concerns which include a concern for correctness, standardization, formality and the lexicon. Other features that mark purism are its nature, motivation and evaluation.

Elements associated with the nature of purism are universality, a problem to linguists, normativity, elitist, archaist, conservative, reformist and being confined to history. Lastly what motivates purists is based on their self-images, like the miller, metallurgist and the priest; as well as nationalism and religion.

Evaluation of puristic responses is based on critical and contemporary modes.

### **2.3 A THEMATIC DISCUSSION OF THE SISWATI LANGUAGE PROGRAMME *NASI-KE SISWATI***

The talk-show programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* 'Here is (the) actual siSwati' is a language awareness programme. Jim Gama well known as 'Mbhokane' who is conversant with siSwati culture hosts it. [Mbhokane is a retired radio programme presenter but still hosts two programmes, *Nasi-ke siSwati* and *Khala mdumbadumbane* 'Cry big luggage' a programme based on marital problems.]

The programme is mainly a one man show, though on certain occasions Mbhokane hosts individuals who uphold his views; these are Rev. Solomon Mkhonta, S.D.Z. Mtsetfwa, Dabede Mavimbela, Nhlabatsi, Pitoli Shabangu and Musa Manyatsi who are featured on different times. These conservative panelists claim to provide guides to 'correct', 'genuine' or 'real' siSwati, as implied by the

meaningful title *Nasi-ke siSwati* 'Here is (the) actual siSwati'. There is a strong belief that the Swazi way of life as expressed in language, culture and moral standards is deteriorating or on the verge of disappearing because of English, Western culture, development and education. The programme by offering guides to correct language usage, cultural and moral issues aims at resuscitating this Swazi way of life. The corpus of this study is made up of four cassettes of four to six programmes each (making a total of eighteen programmes), recorded at different times in 1999. Each programme runs for fifteen minutes once a week on Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. and is repeated later in the week on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. as to reach a large number of audiences.

At the beginning and end of each programme a song is sung, which sums up the prevailing viewpoint in relation to language use, culture and conduct. In other words the song is a comment on language use, culture and conduct in Swaziland.

The poet sings

*Ngadzinga umtjeli bobabe* 'I needed people to tell me, Oh! My fathers  
*Ngadzinga umtjeli bobabe* 'I needed people to tell me, Oh! My fathers  
*Ngadzinga umtjeli bobabe* 'I needed people to tell me, Oh! My fathers  
*Hho! Tsine besiyephi, ngitamtjela...* 'I wonder (Oh!) where were you (we), I will tell him ...'

Whenever Swazis convey an important message especially to the king, they express it in song, as full understanding is attained when one is relaxed. In this song the poet is making an outcry, that Swazis lack something (i.e. some information) since there is no one to tell them. The poet continues to say *Hho!*

*Tsine besiyephi, ngitamjela* 'I wonder where were you (we), I will tell him' which suggests that the listeners missed something deliberately and will be reported since they are to blame.

In each edition Mbhokane gives an introductory note on what the language programme addresses. The idea of correcting what is un-Swazi recurs throughout the various programmes. He says:

'When speaking we need to know what we are talking about and also have a way of communicating it, Swazis here are reminded of the way of speaking and conduct. The reason being that there are a lot of things that do not reveal the Swazi way of life. Those who no longer uphold to the Swazi way of life and are against it view this as development; as I stand I do not believe that...for if you are developing it doesn't mean you have to throw away your nationality.'

The main concern is the new kind of life that is expressed in language and conduct. What could be identified as un-Swazi is incorrect language usage i.e. words and expressions that are wrongly used, spelled or pronounced differently from the expected norm; ignorance of meaning(s) of words and proverbs; improper culture and conduct. In the various programmes he addresses these issues as to remind Swazis about their way of life.

### 2.3.1 Correct language usage

In relation to correct language usage Mbhokane identifies words and phrases that are wrongly used especially in speech; words that deviate from the standard norm in spelling and pronunciation. He gives the 'more correct' forms and explains why people use incorrect words and expressions. Here are some words taken from the programme:

<b>Deviant forms</b>	<b>Standard forms</b>
(a) <i>incubulunjwane</i>	<i>incubulundvwane</i> 'measles'
(b) <i>sinyàlò</i>	<i>sinyâlò</i> 'a continuous pain after a wound has cured'
(c) <i>kubuketa</i>	<i>kubuyeketa</i> 'to review something as to consider it for the last time'
(d) <i>kuhlabelela</i>	<i>kuhlabela</i> 'to sing'
(e) <i>umfundzasikolo</i>	<i>umhlanganosikolo</i> 'workshop'
(f) <i>Jabulane</i>	<i>Jabulani</i> 'a proper name meaning, let us be joyful or happy'
(g) <i>Bongane</i>	<i>Bongani</i> instead of 'a proper name meaning, let us be thankful to God'
(h) <i>Celane</i>	<i>Celani</i> 'a proper name meaning, let us ask God to enable his growth'

(i) *Ngitokhuluma sinoma kanjani Ngitokhuluma noma ngayiphi indlela* 'I will speak anyhow'

The first word that is wrongly used in the media is *incubulunjwane* 'measles', whilst the correct form is *incubulundwane* 'measles'. Mbhokane argues that *incubulunjwane* with */-njwane/* which appears as a diminutive suffix is incorrect since measles cannot be sized, there is nothing like a small or big measles. [Both words (*incubulunjwane* and *incubulundwane*) are derived from *kucubuka* 'rash', what differentiate them is the palatal */-j-/* and the dental */-dv-/*. In the siSwati terminology both forms are considered as correct siSwati. The **siSwati terminology** is a publication by the siSwati language board, which consists of commonly used terms that appear in school syllabuses and dictionaries, and also the language boards own creation which in their opinion is more appropriate. Mbhokane is wrong to suggest that the */-njwane/* is a diminutive suffix, since there are certain words that ends with what looks like a diminutive suffix but do not have a diminutive function. A.P.V.]

*Sinyàlò* 'an ongoing pain after a wound has cured' is targeted because of tonal differences. The correct form *sinyâlò* 'an ongoing pain after a wound has cured' is high, mid, low whilst *sinyàlò* is low, low, low in tone. Tonal variations are natural in speech though purists are against that.

The word *kubuketa* 'to review something as to consider it for the last time' which is used for *kubuyeketa* 'to review something as to consider it for the last time' and *kubuka* 'to look' is considered by Mbhokane as incorrect. Mbhokane argues that *kubuketa* has become so fashionable, as a result they would even say *Litiko letibuketa umgwaco* instead of *Litiko lelibuka umgwaco* 'Ministry of roads known as the Ministry of public works and transport' *Kubuketa* is viewed as un-Swazi term; it is excluded in the siSwati terminology. Mbhokane's adherents strongly believe that *kubuketa* is taken from Zulu *ukubukeza* 'to review something'. One Zulu dictionary use *ukubukeza* and *ukubuyekeza* 'to review something' interchangeably.

*Kuhlabelela* 'to sing' is viewed as an incorrect form. Mbhokane argues that Swazis do not *hlabelela* 'sing' they *hlabela* 'sing'. The word *kuhlabelela* 'to sing for someone' is commonly used and it differs from *kuhlabela* 'to sing', to discard it as an un-Swazi term will be unreasonable.

Nhlabatsi argues that *umfundzasikolo* 'workshop' is a wrong term that is used by broadcasters. Unfortunately both Nhlabatsi and Mbhokane are so carried away that they do not give an alternative. The correct form for *umfundzasikolo* is *umhlanganosikolo* 'workshop'

Mbhokane views the three proper names, *Jabulane*, *Bongane* and *Celane* as meaningless and non-existent. The correct alternatives are *Jabulani* 'Let us be

happy for a boy is born', *Bongani* 'Let us be thankful (to God) for a baby boy is born' and *Celani* 'Let us ask God to enable his (baby boy's) growth. Though Mbhokane argues that *Jabulane*, *Bongane*, and *Celane* are meaningless, the meaning of all three proper names can be deduced. *Jabulane* from *jabula* 'happy' has to do with happiness, *Bongane* from *bonga* 'to thank' with thanksgiving and *Celane* from *cela* 'to ask' with asking. The */-ne/* cannot be defined grammatically but it is a normal siSwati cluster. *Jabulani*, *Bongani* and *Celani* are derived from imperatives *Jabulani!* 'Let us be happy!', *Bongani!* 'Let us be thankful!' and *Celani!* 'Let us ask!' */-ni/* is a plural imperative marker. As to why */-ni/* is replaced by */-ne/* may be due to normal variation in speech, since some still maintain the */-ni/* in these proper names.

#### 2.3.1.2 Idiosyncratic words

Mbhokane believes that a word should be used distinctively; it should specifically mark a particular thing. SiSwati speakers however use words broadly without taking serious precautions to rigid conventions. Here are some constructions that are targeted:

(a) *Bantfwabenhosi bakaSimelane* versus *Tindlu letinkhulu takaSimelane*

'Prince/princesses of the Simelane clan versus Big houses/leaders of the Simelane clan'

- (b) *kukhumula* ‘to take off something, like a jacket or jersey’ versus  
*kutfukulula* ‘to untie a knot’
- (c) *kugibela* ‘to ride (on) a donkey or a horse or a motorcycle’ versus  
*kukhwela* ‘to travel by car or bus, i.e. climbing into a car or bus as a way of riding’
- (d) *bantfu incumbi* versus *bantfu labanengi/labanyenti* or *babula inyoka*  
‘a pile of people versus a lot of people or they are killing a snake (they are many)’
- (e) *Ngitowubita bantfu bami enkhundleni yami* versus *Ngitobita bantfu benkhundla yakitsi*  
‘I will call my people from my region versus I will call people from our region’

Mbhokane believes that Swazis do not care about their language or the way words are to be used, thus their speech is distorted. All the above words are common and simple constructions. Mbhokane argues that the phrase *bantfwabenkhosi* ‘princes or princesses’ should be used appropriately, it should be used exclusively to those of the royal family. He believes that the use of the phrase *bantfwabenkhosi bakaSimelane* or *bakaGama* or *bakaShongwe* ‘princes/princesses of the Simelane clan or of the Gama clan or of the Shongwe clan’ is confusing as in Swaziland there is one king of the Dlamini clan. The herds or authorities of these clans are *tindlu letinkhulu* ‘big houses or leaders’ not prince or princesses. He concludes that if such an expression ‘*bantfwabenkhosi bakaSimelane/ bakaGama/*

*bakaShongwe* 'is not avoided the younger generation will not know what princes or princesses are. One wonders if the leaders of those various clans will ever heed the warning since they believe that their clans are significant.

*Kukhumula* 'to take off something, either a jersey or a jacket' is considered wrongly used when it refers to a knot. Mbhokane states that *lifindvo uyalitfukulula*, *awulikhumuli* 'you untie a knot, you do not take it off'. The word *kukhumula* is often used for both untying a knot or to take off something whilst *kutfukulula* is not so common.

According to Mbhokane *kugibela* 'to ride on a donkey/horse/motorcycle' is supposed to be used for something that you are able to jump onto for riding, like a horse, motorcycle or donkey not a car or bus. He argues that *Ibhasi awuyigibeli*, *kepha uyayekhwela* 'You never get on a bus for riding but you get into it'. Mbhokane states that the word *kukhwela* 'to travel by car or bus through climbing' must be used with the right noun, something that you get into like a car or a bus not a horse or a donkey. He feels that *kugibela ibhasi* 'to ride (on) a bus' and *kukhwela imbongolo* 'to ride into a donkey' is meaningless. The two infinitive verbs *kukhwela* and *kugibela* are treated as synonyms, they are used for both form of rides, either climbing on something or getting into something. When one is particular about words it is possible to see a slight difference in these words.

The phrase *bantfu incumbi* ‘a pile of people’ according to Mbhokane is an incorrect expression. The correct form is *bantfu banengi/banyenti* or *babulala inyoka* ‘there are many people or they are killing a snake (a proverb meaning that there are many people)’. He argues that the word *incumbi* ‘pile of something’ cannot be used in relation to people but for sand or soil. Thus one may say *Ubowubeka incumbi lomhlabatsi* ‘you must put the soil or sand in a pile’. The word *incumbi* is commonly used for both, i.e. in relation to people or for sand.

The last phrase *Ngitowubita bantfu bami enkhundleni yami* ‘I will call my people from my region’ is considered wrongly used. Mbhokane argues that the one elected as Member of Parliament or regional councilor is just *umfana wabo* ‘their boy’, he does not own people. He argues that the phrase *Ngitowubita bantfu bami enkhundleni yami* is sensitive, as there is only one person who owns people, i.e. the king. The correct form would be, *Ngitowubita bantfu benkhundla yakitsi* ‘I will call people of my region’.

Mbhokane argues that when people begin to take care of their language they will know what they are saying, to whom and why. According to him distorted speech is due to carelessness.

### **2.3.1.3 Comments in relation to incorrect usage**

The phrase, *Ngitokhuluma sinoma kanjani* ‘I will speak anyhow’ instead of *Ngitokhuluma noma ngayiphi indlela* ‘I will speak anyhow’ ironically is an

expression of Swazis' negative attitude and lack of commitment to correct usage, that is they do not care about correct language usage. Here are some comments in relation to incorrect usage:

Mbhokane states that though language is an inborn thing, the educated are up in arms to destroy the language. He goes on to question the Swazi educational system, arguing that since it encourages Swazis to lose their language it is a bad form of education. English, which is the envisaged threat, is promoted by education to a great deal. It is a 'failing subject' throughout the child's learning situation. Since English is valued in education, Swazis now equate one's knowledge of English with education, but do not place value on siSwati knowledge. The Ministry of Education had shown lack of interest in the siSwati language and this has contributed to the language's distortion. No one seems to care about siSwati or even correct language usage.

He also believes that inappropriate usage is due to Swazis' lack of respect of their language. They degrade their language since it does not have an economic value, that is, siSwati does not offer jobs. In the job market one's knowledge of siSwati is less considered than English proficiency.

Mbhokane and Nhlabatsi see the media as propagating incorrect usage. They feel that instead of promoting correct language usage the broadcasters are engaged in spoiling the language. Nhlabatsi strongly condemn the media's failure to support

correct language usage and argues that they present a wrong image about themselves i.e. they do not behave or act like Swazis. In order to capture the interest of listeners the media transmit a form of speech that is fashionable. This can be a common usage that lacks careful use of the language, like *Ubeleke umntfwana wemfana* instead of *Ubeleke umntfwana longumfana* 'She gave birth to a male child'. Grammatically *Ubeleke umntfwana wemfana* is wrong, since *wemfana* 'of a boy' is a possessive, when used to refer to the sex of the child. It gives a notion that 'She gave birth to a child that belongs to a boy.' *Ubeleke umntfwana longumfana* is more correct when you are referring to the sex of the child since *longumfana* 'he is a boy' is a copulative. The copulative in this case gives a more defined grammatical construction than the possessive, however *Ubeleke umntfwana wemfana* is common.

With the infiltration of un-Swazi words in the media, Nhlabatsi appeals to the director of I.B.I.S. (Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Services) to see to it that the media engage in correct language usage. He questions the authority of the director, that if he was conscious of the programme, he would have initiated workshops and in-service training where the language is taught to broadcasters, as there is a serious problem in the media. Nhlabatsi expresses the belief that the Swazi nation was created by God, but wonders if the media has a similar story. He argues, 'Maybe according to them *satfunjwa* 'we were exiled' to this country, otherwise we are not Swazis'

Nhlabatsi's pronouncements on language are also based on identity and a religious point of view. He argues that all nations, like China and England are known by their languages, so if Swazis end up not having a language it means they will no longer be a nation. Nhlabatsi states that after losing our Swazi identity how are we to appear before God. He believes that the director of S.B.I.S. might have an answer; maybe Swazis were created by mistake. The director of S.B.I.S. is expected to take a leading role in promoting correct language usage than to allow language defilement. Nhlabatsi feels that Swazis will never go to heaven due to this kind of situation. So correct language usage is likened to righteousness or holiness.

Mbhokane believes that incorrect use of proper names like Jabulani becoming Jabulane, Bongani becoming Bongane and Celani becoming Celane is due to disrespect to language and language bondage. He argues that even though Swaziland had acquired independence its language is not liberated or independent. Mbhokane feels that since the language is denied usage, for instance, in court it is not liberated. He argues that in court where all the participants are Swazis, the case is debated on through the medium of English with the help of an interpreter. Mbhokane states, 'An interpreter is normally hired when people do not understand each other, in this case who are they interpreting for? This shows language oppression and bondage.' Mbhokane feels that government authorities are disrespecting the siSwati language, i.e. by avoiding or not using it even when doing Swazi things, which had indirectly influenced people to use English proper

names. According to Mbhokane English names are meaningless, unfortunately Swazis who like imitating and copying English speakers (as their language has status) have fallen into a trap of adopting English names or reshaping siSwati names to meaningless creations like Jabulane, Bongane and Celane.

Mbhokane argues that since Swazis are not proud of their language but value English instead (which they equate with development), has contributed to ignorance of certain expressions, i.e. their meanings. To show that they are developed they feel it is necessary to get rid of their language. Mbhokane considers this as false pride as they will never be English speakers. He says it shows, *kulahlekelwa yingcondvo* 'to be out of mind or to be mentally disturbed', *nekutsengeka* 'to be sell-outs' and *kufika muva etintfweni* 'to be backwards'. Mbhokane views Swazis as lacking in development and will fall (or be destroyed) as they are rushing. Development therefore, appears as a shock to Swazis and they respond to it in an unbecoming way. So distorted speech is a result of misconceptions about development.

### **2.3.2 Explanation of expressions**

#### **2.3.2.1 Words with more than one meaning (ambiguous words)**

Mbhokane feels that certain words are not known especially by the modern generation, so he gives an explanation of these words as to educate Swazis. Most

of these words are known, however the second meaning might be strange to the youth. These are:

- (a) *imbita* 'traditional medicine' or 'a water pot'
- (b) *lilanga* 'a Swazi king' or 'the sun'
- (c) *eHlane/ehlane* 'a game reserve' or 'a certain problem or difficulty'
- (d) *emtfonjeni* 'a spring' or 'the Word of God'
- (e) *kumuka* 'to smell i.e. to get a smell of a dead animal' or 'to declare or announce that someone is a witch'

The first word *imbita* 'traditional medicine' or 'a water pot' will lose one or both meanings if those cultural concepts are no longer used in society. By giving an explanation of these words is to ensure that Swazis use their language correctly, for appropriate language usage is based on knowing the meanings of words.

Knowledge of the second word *eHlane/ehlane* 'a game reserve' or a certain problem' depends on the background of the user. Acquaintance with both meanings enables one to speak broadly.

The first meaning of *lilanga* 'sun' is well known, but the other meaning that of 'a Swazi king' (a metaphor) is not so common with children. However, when children reach adulthood they learn about the importance of the king in

the Swazi society by engaging in cultural activities like *umhlanga* 'reed dance' which is for girls or *lusekwane* 'boys' royal activity marked by cutting *lusekwane* 'a sacred tree of an acacia type which grows in few places in Swaziland'. The Swazi king is identified with the sun as he has a significant role in the Swazi society that of giving life or direction to the nation.

Few children from an urban set-up know the forth word *emtfonjeni* 'a spring' or 'the word of God'. The second meaning of the word is metaphorical and could be perceived if the first meaning is known.

The first meaning of the last word *kumuka* 'to smell, i.e. to get a smell of a dead animal' is well known, whilst the second meaning 'to declare that someone is a witch' is not so common with the younger generation. This may be due to life changes in society, for instance children who are brought up in a Christian home where traditional healers are not consulted will know less about *kumuka*.

Since one or both meanings are not known Mbhokane and Mkhonta aim at marketing these words so that they may be known widely. They believe that their engagements are based on national construction not a political agenda, though 'nationalism' is a form of politics too.

### 2.3.2.2 Explanation of difficult and old words

Mbhokane believes that certain words must be explained or taught in the media since Swazis are ignorant of these words. These are:

- (a) *kuhlolotela* 'to predict and wish that someone experience something bad'
- (b) *inyama madzabu* 'something that calls for everyone's attention, as a result people desire and rush for it at the same time'
- (c) *inyanyabulembu* 'a monster'( here used metaphorical to refer to a toothless person)
- (d) *umbundvu* 'gums'
- (e) *limama* 'a person with a jolly face'
- (f) *kubatjwa* 'a form of eagerness or passion expressed in one's behaviour'
- (g) *umkhuba* 'a common practice'
- (h) *kuncincitseka* 'a feeling of uneasiness or being shy to do something'
- (i) *ingedzama* 'a child without both parents'
- (j) *ulonkonkolotwako* 'an undisciplined child'
- (k) *umkhondvovana* 'a small and unclear path that is commonly used'

Most of the above words are less known by today's generation due to modernization and life changes. By giving an explanation of these words

Mbhokane aims at educating and marketing these terms for wider use, otherwise this vocabulary will disappear or end up being national symbols.

The first word *kuhlolotela* 'to predict and wish that someone experience disaster' is not so common with youth, whilst most adults know this term.

*Inyama madzabu* 'something that calls for everyone's attention, as a result people rush for it at the same time' is not a common expression. The word is derived from *inyama* 'meat' and the verb *kudzabuka* 'to tear'. Swazis like most African tribes like meat, thus they often rush for a bigger share. As they crowd over meat its like the meat can be torn to pieces at any time hence the derivation *inyama madzabu*. Full meaning or explanation is not given in the programme which reduces its comprehension. However full teaching and the use of these words would enlarge the vocabulary, as a process of resuscitating archaism.

The third word *inyanyabulembu* 'a monster' is common in folklore, but its metaphorical usage (a toothless person) is not known. Use of the metaphor constitutes an extension of the siSwati vocabulary.

*Umbundvu* 'gums' is less known. The word *tisini* 'gums' is used instead. *Umbundvu* might be an old term that requires promotion to be widely known.

The fifth word *limama* 'a person with a jolly face' is derived from the verb *mamatseka* 'to smile'. It is also an uncommon word.

*Kubatjwa* 'form of eagerness or passion expressed in one's behaviour' is not common with children and some adults. People often create a new word in relation to the same practice.

*Umkhuba* 'a common practice' is commonly used to refer to bad practices not good ones.

The word *kuncincitseka* 'a form of uneasiness (or being shy) to do something' is common with adults. Children just say *uyesaba* 'you are afraid' when referring to *kuncincitseka*.

*Ingedzama* 'a child without both parents' is not common. According to Mbhokane the word *ingedzama* is different from *intsandzane* 'a child without one of the parents'. Today the word *intsandzane* is used to refer to a child without one or both parents and *ingedzama* is barely used.

Most Swazis do not know *ulonkonkolotwako* 'an undisciplined child'. The word *ulonkonkolotwako* is derived from a verb *kunkonkobala* 'to cling on something tightly' meaning that he is so used to his bad behaviour you cannot change him.

The last word *umkhondvovana* ‘a small and unclear path’ is not common. People often say *Ubohamba ngendlela lencane* ‘You must use a small path’ not *Ubohamba ngemkhondvovana* ‘You must use a small path’.

Mbhokane believe that most Swazis lack knowledge of these terms. The programme therefore turns out to be educational.

### 2.3.2.3 The meaning of proverbs

Mbhokane argues that proverbs beautify speech and also have an economizing function. Without proverbs the speech will be long and boring. He believes that if one knows the language as well as culture will be able to use proverbs well. Proverbs therefore have a cultural base. Here are some proverbs:

(a) *Seyibambe ime nayo* meaning *Akasati kutsi langakwenta yini*.

‘It (dog) was found standing with it (game)’, meaning ‘He does not know what to do / he is stuck’

(b) *Setiyime emtfumeni* meaning *Ayisekho indlela yekuchubekela phambili*.

‘The game was found standing unexpectedly or stuck’, meaning ‘There is no way to proceed.’

(c) *Kutsatsa tindvuku* meaning *Kumiswa kwemuntfu esikhundleni seyise losangekho*.

'To take (his father's) sticks', meaning 'To select someone to take the position of his late father.'

(d) *Kuwe insika* meaning *Sengilambile*.

'The pillar (of the house) has fallen', meaning 'I am hungry'

(e) *Lidloti lingene enguleni* meaning *Ngitfole inhlanhla lengakavami*.

'The ancestor got into the milk gourd', meaning 'I got an unexpected good fortune.'

(f) *Lingawa (lilanga) litfolwe tinkhukhu* meaning *Ngeke kwenteke loko*.

'The sun can fall down and be picked or eaten by chickens', meaning

'That will never happen.'

(g) *Kubata tiphunti* meaning *Kukhuluma ngentfo lengahle ibeyingoti kulomunye*.

'To sharpen stumps', meaning 'To speak about something that can be dangerous or harmful to another person.'

The given proverbs express the Swazi people's cultural life. From each proverb (structurally) you can predict what Swazis cherish in life. If this cultural life is not known it becomes difficult to comprehend the meaning of that proverb. Young people find it difficult to learn proverbs since their way of life is removed from culture due to urbanization.

In the first proverb *Seyibambe ime nayo* 'It (dog) was found standing with it (game)' we learn that Swazis are hunters. The proverb defines an

unbecoming situation whereby the dog is confronted by a large game, instead of attacking it the dog in fear stands still. Likewise the game stands bravely still it does not run away as expected, as a result there is no progress. The proverb refers to a situation when a person does not know what to do.

The second proverb *setiyime emfumeni* 'the game was found standing unexpectedly or stuck' also express the life of hunting. When dogs chase a game it (the game) can find itself stuck in short wild trees, thus may fail to escape. This proverb refers to a person who cannot find direction in a particular issue.

*Kutsatsa tindvuku* 'to take (your father's) sticks express the Swazi way of life. Men have special sticks for fighting as well as for hunting. When someone takes his father's sticks it means that the father is late, as a result the son is to take his sticks to protect and provide for the family. Nowadays modern men do not carry or keep sticks, thus children would not be able to relate the meaning of the proverb. Teaching of proverbs helps resuscitate the Swazi old way of life.

*Kuwe insika* 'the pillar (of the house) has fallen gives a picture of a traditional house. A strong pole called insika 'pillar', at the centre, supports traditional houses. When the pillar falls the whole house collapse.

In this proverb food is likened to a pillar since it keeps us going. If a person is hungry he is less active and can collapse at any time just like a house with a fallen pillar.

The proverb *lidloti lingene enguleni* 'the ancestor got into a milk gourd' expresses aspects of Swazi religious life. Swazis believe in ancestors who are thought of as taking charge of their daily life, i.e. providing good things. To be confronted by an ancestor is associated with good luck. When the ancestor gets into a milk gourd, which also represent the family's life, such express a great fortune. Its like the ancestors had got into the family food to multiply it. Children who know little about the value of ancestors and the milk gourd would not easily comprehend the meaning of the proverb.

Most school children know the proverb *lingawa litfolwe tinkhukhu* 'it (the sun) can fall down and be picked by chickens'. They are able to picture the image of the sun and chicken, that the sun cannot fall down and would never be picked up or eaten by chickens. It is difficult to find the reason why this proverb was included in the list since it is well known.

*Kubata tiphunti* 'to sharpen stumps' also express the Swazi traditional life. Trees are normally cut for house and kraal building. Stumps can be dangerous if one falls over them unaware. If they are sharpened they

become even more dangerous. When one speaks about something that is harmful to another he or she is considered to be sharpening stumps.

Mbhokane believes that if one does not know his language and culture he or she cannot use proverbs well. Young people hardly use proverbs and they often find them difficult to learn as their way of life is becoming more Western. Teaching of proverbs in the media acts as an educational tool.

Mbhokane selects proverbs since they conform to his view that language is rigid. Proverbs do not change in structure.

### **2.3.3 Cultural heritage**

In the programme Mbhokane defines language as an expression of culture.

He states:

‘...culture, customs, conduct and religion are embedded in our language.

If we lose our language, all these elements will get lost. When we lose what I have enumerated what are we going to be, since all nations have these elements.’ According to Mbhokane language and cultural practices are a unit and if they are wrongly used or practiced the society’s way of life deteriorate. Here are some cultural practices:

(a) **Secrecy**

Mbhokane argues that secrecy is disappearing in the Swazi society. He states that in the past certain things, (like the king's trips) were never said or announced in advance. Today such adherences are considered as *bulima* 'foolishness'. Mbhokane argues that this so-called foolishness helped preserve the national image and nothing was ever lost because of it. However at the arrival of the wise trouble arose.

He suggests that secrecy was practiced as a form of respect for certain things. Mbhokane argues that since we are now living in a modern world that does not respect anything such adherences will not be taken seriously. For instance, King Mswati's trips now are announced in advance, whilst the cultural norm requires an announcement after such trips had been undertaken.

What makes news today culture forbids, so there is a conflict between culture and modernization. Seeing this undeniable conflict Mbhokane sorrowfully states that he will not stop declaring what is culturally wrong. Another practice is:

(b) ***Kukhonta*** 'the Swazi way of acquiring a piece of land or settlement'

Mbhokane, S.D.Z. Mtsetfwa and Dabede Mavimbela give the more appropriate way of *kukhonta*. Mbhokane begins by defining the word

*kukhonta*, stating that the word is wrongly used in the country. He argues that Swazis do not *khonta* 'acquire a piece of land or settlement' but *antjintja sikhundla* 'change place of settlement'. However foreigners do, that's why there is a statement 'He is a Swazi by *khonta*. Mbhokane admits that the word *kukhonta* is widely used and is tempted to use it too.

He and the other two panelists state that before one is allocated a piece of land he consults *bandlancane* 'the minor council'. This council will then introduce him to *bandlankhulu* 'the major council'; where he is questioned about the departure from his area. The *indvuna* 'headman' sent *licusa* 'council representative' to find out more about him. After getting the council representative's feedback, the man could be allocated land.

The three men argue that such steps are not undertaken today, as a result ordinary people allocate land thus there are a lot of *emakhowe* 'mushrooms' i.e. unofficial settlers in the country. They express a strong feeling that, if Swazis do not follow the right procedure in acquiring a piece of land, ruling the country would be difficult.

(c) *kuteka* 'Swazi traditional marriage'

Mbhokane and Musa Manyatsi from Mehlwabovu believe that *kuteka* 'the traditional marriage whereby the woman is smeared with red clay or ochre as to declare that she is officially married is conducted wrongly. They

warn Swazis to stop engaging with something they are not well acquainted with as to avoid embarrassment. Mbhokane accuse the educated for spoiling and degrading every traditional concept.

According to him *kuteka* is the best marriage since it does not produce street-kids like the Western marriage. In a Western marriage *livezandlebe* 'a child born out of wedlock' is not accommodated in his or her home. He or she is usually hidden hence the proper name *Fihliwe* 'Hidden', as being known or introduced to the family might cause a divorce. This hidden child might turn out being a street-kid if no relative is prepared to raise him or her.

The correct procedure of a traditional marriage is for the girl to visit her in-laws as to acquaint herself with the family (this is called *kujuma*). When the girl is being prepared for marriage, a goat is slaughtered. *Umsasane* also called *imvuma* 'part of the goat's meat sent to the girl's family' acts as a means of negotiation. In order to express their feelings concerning the proposed marriage the girl's family either accepts or rejects the goat's meat. It would be wrong to smear the girl with red clay or ochre (as to signify that she is married) before sending the negotiation meat. If they sent the negotiation meat after *kuteka* what are they going to do if they discover that the girl is somebody's wife (this will be a criminal offence)? Mbhokane and Manyatsi state that after a positive feedback (that

the girl can be married) she gets into the kraal, weeps and is smeared with red clay and is therefore a lawful wife before *kulobola* 'payment of the bride price normally in a form of cattle' and *umtsimba* 'the marriage procession which involves feasting and dancing'. What makes a woman a lawful wife is *kuteka* and the payment of two cattle called *insulanyembeti* 'the wiper of tears' [a cow received by the girl's mother who is consoled that she is losing her daughter's service for another woman, i.e. the girl's mother-in-law A.P.V.] and *lugege* 'a cow slaughtered on the arrival at the girl's home'.

Manyatsi and Mbhokane conclude by stating that it is crucial to know what is real siSwati. According to them following the right procedure signifies that you know siSwati. One's knowledge of siSwati is assessed on the basis of cultural knowledge. Another cultural activity is by:

**(d) *Emavulandlela* 'Boy Scouts'**

Mbhokane and Rev. Solomon Mkhonta recommend the work done by *emavulandlela* 'boy scouts', (literally way or path openers) that of participating in cultural activities. Mbhokane states that they act like *emabutfu* 'regiments' rather than an organization and employ the word *libutfo lemavulandlela* 'Boy Scout regiments. Like regiments, they respond to the king's summons *Uyezwa na!* Do you hear! or Be alert!' (a phrase used in relation to the king's summons, to call for one's attention).

The phrase *Uyezwa na!* is solely used for the king's summons and to no one else.

Often boy scouts engage in kingship duties, like weeding, harvesting, threshing sorghum and *lusekwane* 'a royal activity whereby pure boys cut the branches of *lusekwane* (a kind of acacia tree found in few places in Swaziland) in order to build *inhlambelo* (a special kraal built during the First fruit festival called *Incwala*)' as a sign of their loyalty to the state. Mbhokane and Mkhonta suggests that these boys should be given additional badges for cutting *lusekwane* as a way of motivating them in this kingship activity. These badges will encourage other boys to participate in *lusekwane*, thus enabling them to practice self-control (as there is a belief that if a boy has impregnated a girl the branches of *lusekwane* withers).

Throughout the discussion Mbhokane suggests that the country's future is at stake if cultural images are neglected. Sticking to traditional practices is considered as a necessity.

#### **2.3.4. Comments on the Swazi way of life**

Mbhokane feels that the present life is disturbed as new concepts are widely introduced into the Swazi way of life. He remarks that *liyahhusha*

'it is windy' and *kunemgudvugudvu* 'a turmoil'. The two words refer to a political turmoil due to outside influences. [*Kunemgudvugudvu* is derived from an ideophone *gudvugudvu* 'the sound of pushing and hustling of big objects' to refer to a disturbed condition. A.P.V.] Mbhokane warns Swazis to arm themselves for this approaching 'battle', i.e. difficult and terrible situation so that they are not overpowered.

He believes that the concept *lihungelo* 'right' had been imposed on the Swazi nation otherwise it does not exist in their vocabulary, even though they are crazy about it. Mbhokane argues that women and children campaign for their rights, whilst men do not. Both Mbhokane and his host Pitoli Shabangu, a regional headman from Manzini South believe that men do not campaign for their rights since they are created or born with rights. They urge men to form an organization that will address their 'rights'. Shabangu strongly condemn women's liberation, that women will never have rights.

Looting and stealing when there is a road accident is another new practice. Rev. Mkhonta states that Swazis have lost their religious ethics thus will rush for the person's belongings than aiding him or her when there is a road accident. He feels that the notion that Swazis are good, peaceful and religious is a wrong appraisal since they do not live up to that standard.

Mbhokane is critical about the present life, that it is marked by the moral and language deterioration. When people campaign for their rights (especially women and children) and steal from others (when there is an accident) they are putting on a false and unrespectable image. He believes that those without language or identity will produce such unlawful citizens.

He also believes that Swazis had been indoctrinated as a result they do not care about their language and culture. Mbhokane argues that Swazis have a language, customs, conduct and religion, however Europeans indoctrinated us *bafuna kusikhwesisa* 'they wanted to remove us' from our way of life. He blames missionaries who by their way of preaching the gospel rendered the Swazi way of life and worship evil and futile. Mbhokane states that what they did was wrong as all people have a way of worshipping God. He believes that they succeeded in their indoctrination because they were astute, not that their way of worship was the best.

Mbhokane warns Swazis that they should be aware that they were lured away from their way of life and there is a need to return to earlier traditions so as appear before God perfect, being what he intended Swazis to be.

His outlook throughout the programme shows great admiration of the siSwati language and culture. Mbhokane says:

'It is not proper to have the language disappear without any significant reason. Such has never happen in Swaziland history, but could happen in the future. The programme in fact is there to prevent this from happening...'

According to Mbhokane there is a need to protect the language. He appeals for a SiSwati language board or language overseers, who will dedicate themselves to correct language usage so that the language is not spoilt or lost. These overseers will function like 'watchdogs', as they will assess and correct any form of speech, mainly in the media. People then will exercise some care if they are monitored.

Mbhokane is fond of exaggerating about the worldview, since he believes in a rigid pattern of life. When natural changes overwhelm society they are linked with language use.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PURISTS AS EVIDENT IN VARIOUS LITERATURES AND THE TALK-SHOW PROGRAMME *NASI-KE SISWATI*

Related but diverse views about language use characterize language purism and prescriptivism. These views are generally an expression of concerns by individuals in a particular speech community, depicting a socio-political, economical and historical sensitivity; as a result ideas about language are extended to include societal concerns.

#### 3.1 PURISTIC CONCERNS

Purists often express concern about what is 'correct' or 'incorrect' in language usage. Milroy & Milroy (1985) and Cameron (1995) are in agreement that the aim of language prescriptivism is the regulation of language as a means of standardization. In the programme under study Mbhokane views his programme as a guide to correct language usage, possibly with a similar concern, to set out a 'pure' or 'genuine' form of siSwati for daily use both in formal and informal contexts. He advocates a 'single style' of language use, forgetting that speakers of any language know when to be casual or polite in their speech. They learn this unconsciously in the process of socialization and growing up. They can utilize language well, as to suit their prevailing situation, so a uniform style 'for all seasons' is not possible. What is considered as language includes cultural and moral issues; this is what Cameron view as a 'moral panic', a deep concern about language which does not rest on language *per se* but on a fear of social

fragmentation when single standards are not followed in many aspects of life (e.g. clothes, leisure, work ethics etc). So language correctness becomes a symbol of social discipline or order, and following grammatical rules depict a law-abiding community (Cameron 1995:82-93). In this vein Mbhokane labels those who no longer use their language maximally as criminals or deviants. His opinion is similar to Yapa's viewpoint as cited by Jernudd that it is traitors who say 'no' to grammar (Jernudd 1989:9).

In their deep concern about language most purists tend to make exaggerated claims. Mbhokane warns that the siSwati language is disappearing. He remarks:

(i) *Lwafa lulwimi lwetfu lubulawa ngitsi!*

'Alas, the language is dying (or destroyed) due to us!'

(ii) *Luhlelo lukukhandza kufanele kutsi bantfu bakhunjutwe njalo, uma kungenjalo bangacina sebethe lulwimi. Sive uma sesite lulwimi bese kubayini kwaso?*

'The programme finds it vital that people are continuously reminded, if not they will end up without a language. Could a nation without language claim anything?'

(iii) *Ngabe kunelibandla lelibuka kusetjentiswa kwelulwimi lwesive. Bekungenta kutsi lulwimi hungete lonakala futsi hungete lwalahleka ngoba lubukiwe.*

'There must be a siSwati language board or language overseers who would

dedicate themselves to language usage, so that the language is not spoilt or lost.’

The above quotations suggest that siSwati is experiencing a serious problem, i.e. language death due to the nation’s irresponsibility. Mbhokane laments, *Lwafa lulwimi lwetfu lubulawa ngitsi!* ‘Alas, the language is dying due to us’. He believes that Swazis are not taking serious precautions as to preserve their language instead they rush for other languages (English for example). This concern over the death of siSwati is not reflected in patterns of usage. In almost all homes, siSwati continues to be used either as sole home language or together with English. Mbhokane sees the programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* as a tool to revive the language which is in the verge of disappearing. Further preservation, he suggests could be employed by a committed language board that would make a follow up as to how language is used in public spheres, especially in the media. The inactivity of the language board and the media shows that advocating ‘pure’ forms is not a practical alternative in the modern world.

Mbhokane shows a serious concern about what he thinks of as improper language usage. He identifies certain words and expressions, which according to his view are not siSwati words though they are commonly used. These are:

*kubuketa* whilst the correct form is *kubuyeketa* ‘to review something as to consider it for the last time.

*kuhlabelela* as *kuhlabela* ‘to sing’

*incubulunjwane* as *incubulundvwane* ‘measles’

*sinyàlò* must be *sinyâlò* ‘a continuous pain after a wound has cured’

The first three expressions *kubuketa*, *kuhlabelela* and *incubulunjwane* are labeled as incorrect in phonological form whilst *sinyàlò* is denounced because of tone. Mbhokane does not give an explanation as to why these expressions are wrong, but emphasizes that they do not exist in the Swazi vocabulary.

Mbhokane’s adherents believe that *kubuketa* is derived from a Zulu word *ukubukeza* ‘to review something’. The suggested word *kubuyeketa* ‘to review something for the last time’ is similar to *ukubuyekeza* ‘to review something’ which is also a Zulu word. What differentiate the two words is /t/ and /z/, which is a common feature of siSwati and Zulu words. It is unreasonable to reject *kubuketa* just because it is a Zulu word.

*Kuhlabelela* ‘to sing’ is also considered as a Zulu term, which had been assimilated into the siSwati vocabulary. The word *kuhlabelela* does exist in siSwati with a slight different meaning, that is ‘to sing for someone’.

This similarity of words from the two languages is due to the fact that they are both Nguni languages, which implies that they are of a common ancestor. Since the two languages (siSwati and Zulu) are similar, using words from both languages interchangeably must be treated as natural. Purists generally find

replacements for common and well-established words; likewise Mbhokane suggests *kubuyeketa* for *kubuketa* and *kuhlabela* for *kuhlabelela*.

The last two words, *incubulunjwane* and *sinyàlò* are targeted because they have dialect variants in speech. Mbhokane and those from his geographical region (eNdlangeni) use *incubulundvwane* instead of *incubulunjwane*, whilst those from the other regions use *incubulunjwane*. In the same way people from certain geographical regions might pronounce *sinyalo* differently, though referring to the same object. It would be unreasonable to declare certain forms as the ‘only’ correct ones, since people will continue to regard their own pronunciations as valid in local ways of speaking. So advocating one form serves what Milroy & Milroy (1985:21-22) calls ‘the ideology of standardization’, to keep the notion of standards in the mind, especially for formal usage. Purists do not appreciate that languages are not just products residing in grammars or dictionaries but are flexible interactive tools (Mesthrie et al. 2000:33). So it is possible for speakers in the same speech community to spell or pronounce the same concept differently, due to their age, gender and class; whilst speakers of different geographical regions speak differently due to their geographic location.

What Mbhokane advocates is a rigid and less expressive form of siSwati, which is artificial. For instance, he argues that *incumbi yebantfu* ‘many people’ is wrong, since *incumbi* ‘pile’ must take a nonhuman equivalent e.g. *incumbi yemhlabatsi* ‘a pile of soil or sand’. Whilst the correct form for *bantfu* ‘people’ is *bantfu*

*labanyenti* or *bantfu labanengi*; or *bantfu babulala inyoka* 'people are many (many people); or people are killing a snake (a proverb which means there are many people)'. Though for most people both expressions are correct, Mbhokane believes in a one-to-one correspondence of words. He sees borrowing and variation as dangerous and harmful to the purity of the language. Adigal, cited by Annamalai (1979:46), makes a similar claim, that variation and loanwords deprive the language of its wealth and beauty as if it cannot function by itself, whilst the use of pure (or correct) forms contribute to the richness and development of the language. This response is typical of purists; theirs is to improve the quality of the language, even if it means reducing the inventory of the expressive means available to it (Thomas 1991:24).

Variation and borrowings may be thought to contribute to the deterioration of the siSwati language. They could just as well be thought of as enriching the language and modernizing it in certain domains. In either case change is inevitable, as long as the language is a living entity it is subject to these forces.

Extensive borrowing from English, code switching and mixing can dilute the siSwati language, but one cannot expect the language to disappear in any way since the Swazi nation is a closely knitted society. Those located in rural areas generally use an unmixed form whilst those from urban areas employ unmixed forms when addressing old people or in formal context. It is likely, though, that

certain words can be forgotten or cease in the language as borrowing or code switching becomes the norm. Some examples of borrowings follow:

**(a) Borrowings**

*indishi* 'dish'

*sipuno* 'spoon'

*lipuledel/lipuleti* 'plate'

*sitofu* 'stove'

*likhishi* 'kitchen'

There are a lot of siSwati words that are borrowed from English, which shows that when the two languages got into contact, Swazis were not creative enough to name these newly discovered items, but instead the English words were assimilated into the siSwati vocabulary. The morphological structure of the borrowed word was reshaped as to conform to the borrowing language. For instance, 'spoon' became *si-puno*. /si-/ is a singular prefix of class 7/8. Some of the above-borrowed words do have siSwati coinages or equivalents but due to social nuances they are not used. The English based form carry a greater sense of prestige and modernity. Thus parents who are bringing up their children in a Western environment do not like their children to use *sitja* 'dish' for *indishi* or *lidladla* 'kitchen' for *likhishi*. The newly formed words (borrowed words) become part of the language and possible coinages are also rejected because these (coinages) are usually difficult (or require an effort) to articulate than the

borrowed word, like *ikhomphutha/icomputer* 'computer' is easy to articulate than *ngcondvomshini* 'computer'.

Various governmental ministries, with the assistance of the language board decide on the validity of these terminologies (coinages). It is worth noting that the siSwati terminology treats borrowings and coinages as alternatives, which suggests that both forms are correct.

**(b) Code switching and mixing** (To illustrate these phenomena I present some of my examples noted in Cape Town.)

(i) An urban parent complains about his son who is interrupting a conversation with a friend.

*Ubomcaphela*, when it comes to food he is number one.

'You must be careful, -----.'

(ii) A Swazi masters student comments on the lifestyle at the University of Cape Town to a colleague in a discussion about Swazi culture. These blacks tend to overdo things, *ngazutsi sebeLungu*.

'-----, its like they are Whites.

*Mine* I will never ever dream of my child *kutsi angeta lapha*, its horrible.

'I/me-----coming here -----.'

(iii) Two Swazi male students are talking about going home for the vacation.

Maybe *ngitohamba kusasa*, depending *kutsi ngiyacedza yini*.

‘-----I will go tomorrow-----on whether I finish or not.

Code switching and mixing is a common feature amongst the urban educated, of all ages especially when they are addressing their equals in informal context. This language pattern is flexible, it often disappears when one addresses old people or in a formal conversation whereby one is expected to use one medium of speech. It is not common in rural areas either. Though borrowing and code switching or mixing signify the ability to fit in the Western world, it causes common siSwati words to become unfamiliar to younger urban people. This according to Mbhokane may lead to the destruction of the language.

Mbhokane identifies certain **cultural** and **moral issues** that deviate from the traditional norm. Improper culture or morality is seen as a product of incorrect language usage. Conformity to rules of orderly (pure) speech signifies conformity to the laws of society, acquiescence in its traditional hierarchies and legitimate authority (Cameron 1995:95). Their opinion implies that when language bend, culture will simply give in. Mbhokane blames people for using:

*Bantfwabenhosi bakaGama* ‘Princes & Princesses of the Gama clan’ and

*Bantfwabenhosi bakaSimelane* ‘Princes & Princesses of the Simelane clan’

According to his view *Bantfwabenhosi bakaGama* ‘princes of the Gama clan’ must be *tindlu takaGama* ‘houses of the Gama clan’, and *Bantfwabenhosi*

*bakaSimelane* 'princes of the Simelane clan' should be *tindlu takaSimelane* 'houses of the Simelane clan'. Mbhokane reminds people of the presence of one authority, which must be reflected in speech. Most Swazis do not see anything wrong with these expressions, since historically most clans are associated with some form of kingship. So limiting the phrase *bantfwabekhosi* 'princes' to the Dlamini clan is superficial.

It is vital that purists realize that languages that are in contact tend to borrow words and certain practices from each other. Since Swazis are in contact with Zulus, Shangaans, Europeans, and live in a modern society their life pattern will change from either good to worse or *vice versa*. For instance:

*Kukhonta* 'the Swazi way of acquiring a piece of land or settlement'

Mbhokane condemns the new way of acquiring a piece of land in which ordinary people allocate land without traditional authority. According to his opinion there is only one method of acquiring land, that of consulting *bandlancane* 'the minor council' who will introduce the person to *bandlakhulu* 'major council'. *Bandlakhulu* will then interrogate him concerning his previous settlement. The *indvuna* 'headman' will send *licusa* 'council's representative' to the man's village to enquire about his personality. It is only after the council's representative's

report that the man is allocated land. Mbhokane whose pronouncements are based on a conservative ideology warns that if Swazis do not follow the right procedure ruling the nation will be difficult. He believes in a monotonous culture or way of life, thus a liberal culture appears as a threat to authority. The emphasis on single pattern of life, i.e. in speech and culture is absurd. The way people possess land varies from village to village, depending on the influences around. For instance Swazis in Lavumisa, which is near Zululand will adopt Zulu practices of acquiring land, thus might appear as deviating from the expected norm.

Mbhokane considers the shift of conduct from a civil nature to an inhuman one as being perpetrated by those who do not have a language (i.e. those who mix English and siSwati in their daily speech or those siSwati speakers who speak English most of the time). He states:

*Sisive semaSwati sinelulwimi lwetfu; elulwimini lwetfu ngulapho kuchamuka khona inhlonipho lehambelana nebuve betfu. Bantfu labate lulwimi ngabo laba naba lenibabona bagila tiga esiweni (kugcekeza umuntfu lowehlelwe yingoti yemoto). Lulwimi lwakho luyayifaka inhlonipho kuwe ungumuntfu, kepha nawungehlo lulwimi ungete wati ngempelal kutsi lokungiko nalokungasiko yini, lokufanele ukukhulume nalokungafanele ukukhulume yini...*

‘We are a Swazi nation with our language; from language comes respect that marks our nationality. People who do not have a language are these, those who are offenders in the nation (those who loot or rob those who had a car accident). For your language instills respect, but if you do not have a language you will not be able to differentiate from what is right or wrong, what to say and not to...’

Purists consider disrespect of persons, property, institutions and law itself as a result of a chaotic classroom where grammar (language) is not the main attention (Cameron 1995:95-96). It is generally wrong to consider one’s language as bringing about social disorder; rather the demands of urban life, crime and individuality are contributory features. In fact linguistic changes follow social changes (Trudgill 1974:99). Here are some claims about wrong usage.

### **3.2 REASONS FOR INCORRECT USAGE**

Purists often give a serious attention to wrong usages as they are considered a threat to the national language. To pronounce or spell words incorrectly is not only viewed as a linguistic error but also as a social or political problem. Such pride in the national language is often associated with some deeply felt insecurity about the language inadequacies (Thomas 1991:45). Mbhokane identifies what makes people diverge from what he considers correct language usage.

### 3.2.1 English's influence and prestige

Mbhokane sees English as a threat to the purity of the siSwati language. This is due to the fact that the general population equates English with development, and therefore abandons their language as to express their new status. He remarks:

*...sitive letehlukene, kwenta kwetfu ngendalo kwehlukile, akufanani, luhlelo lukhumbuta emaSwati kuloko. Bakhona bantfu uma utsi uyabuka vele balahlekelwe nguloko ngoba kwabona sowukhandza kutsi lokusiSwati abasakwati, kube abasakwati abasati nelulwimi imbhala kodvwa babe bangawo lamaSwati; futsi labanye bakujabulele loko kungatsi nguyonantfutuko noma nguyonamphucuko lokutsi ungabe usasati siSwati sale wati siNgisi, bakucabange ngatsi nguyonantfo ilungile leyo. Loko nine beKunene kusho kuphambana kwetingcondvo, nekutsengeka, nekufikamuva mhlawumbe etintfweni, ngoba intfo uyetfuka uma ufika kuyo, ubese uyitsatsa kabi...*

'...we are different nations and the way of doing things differ,...the programme acts as a reminder in this regard. There are some people who have lost direction since they do not know anything that is Swazi, they do not even know their language despite the fact that they are Swazis; some even like it as if development means knowing English and being ignorant in siSwati. This is madness, to be sell-

outs and being backwards, since when you are not familiar with something, you commit a lot of mistakes...'

The above quotation expresses Mbhokane's opinion about the status of English in the Swazi society. He claims that English is valued at the expense of siSwati since it is often equated with development. Mbhokane argues that 'some even like it as if development means one must be ignorant in siSwati and be proficient in English'. He considers this to be short-sighted, as one's knowledge of a language does not correlate with levels of development.

The importance of English amongst the Swazis is undeniable. It is the language of education, industry and commerce. English is a prestigious language due to its economic and political stability worldwide. It is a reality that it has a better and superior technological vocabulary than languages like *siSwati* (Mesthrie et al. 2000:37). Due to its prestige, English appears as an indirect threat to the purity of the siSwati language. As most people aspire for the most prestigious language they pay less attention to their language.

Mbhokane who is sceptical about the Swazis' efforts to learn English as reflected in maximum usage of the language in education, court and other governmental offices warns that English names though often employed do not have meaning. He implies that a name like Tom or Jane is meaningless. These proper names might be meaningless to siSwati speakers but are significant to Western people,

so it is unwise to label them likewise. Mbhokane states that since Swazis are now used to English names siSwati proper names are distorted indiscriminately. For instance:

*Jabulani* is changed to *Jabulane* (proper names)

According to Mbhokane the proper name *Jabulane* is meaningless and non-existent. *Jabulani* can be defined grammatically, whilst *Jabulane* cannot be fully defined. *Jabulani* is a proper name derived from a plural imperative *Jabulani!* 'Be happy!'. The imperative *Jabulani!* is from a verb *jabula* 'be happy' which can be used as a singular imperative i.e. *Jabula!* 'Be happy'. */-ni/* is a plural marker of the imperative. No one knows where */-ne/* comes from in *Jabulane*, however this does not remove the meaning of the proper name. Every siSwati speaker knows that the proper name *Jabulane* has to do with happiness. It is true to say that people generally speak to be understood, they do not speak grammar (Aitchison 1991:13-14).

The change of the proper name from *Jabulani* to *Jabulane* should be treated as a normal variation, which has nothing to do with English influence. If maybe the last vowel was lost (as to give *Jabulan*) one would have suspected that such a change was initiated so that the word conform to the English pattern that of ending without a vowel. The notion that Swazis are used to English names is a

false one. Today most Swazis are giving their children siSwati names, therefore an English name sounds outdated

English alone cannot be a driving force to language distortion. There are other forces which lead to language change. The development of one language might threaten the prestige of another, as it is in the case of English and siSwati.

### **3.2.2. Modernization and Western development**

Swazis live in a modern society which has its own demands as a result the people's lifestyle is bound to change. This modern lifestyle had lured Swazis with its offers, for instance it has assured Swazis of an easy way of life. Instead of doing hard work at home like collecting firewood, such had been catered by modern technology through the availability of electricity. As a result most educated Swazis spend their time at the work place and love to be identified with the modern life. Mbhokane sympathizes with the Swazis in this unfavourable situation. He says:

*...ngiyati ...indlela lesebaphila ngayo ngiyo leleyenta kutsi basale  
babubalekela buve babo, balubalekele lulwimi lwabo, umbuzo utsi  
uma ngabe silahla loko Nkulunkulu lasinike kona sitobese sibayini?  
Noma kuloko lesikuhawukelako kuletotive siyawubese sibangito yini  
letotive? Liciniso kutsi singeke...*

'... I know... the way of living makes people shun their nationality and language. The question is if we throw away what God has given to us, what are we going to be? Or if we aspire other nations' way of life are we going to become those nations? The truth is that we will not...'

In the above quotation, Mbhokane suggests the importance of clinging to our cultural heritage despite life changes. He sees this as necessary for the maintenance of national identity. Though purists advocate a rigid pattern of life, such an expectation is unrealistic. As Aitchison (1991:17) argues, that when a new opinion grows popular it will innovate speech in the same proportion.

The modernization of life has greatly contributed to the modernization of vocabulary. Archaic forms like *ulonkonkolotwako* 'an undisciplined child' are likely to disappear, as new words are being created everyday.

### **3.2.3. Education**

Schools are important centres for transmitting knowledge. Often school knowledge is grounded in class, gender, and race inequalities that organize the society (Apple et al.1991:11). Education therefore depicts what society cherishes. Since English has a symbolic value in the Swazi society, it is not surprising that even schools will enforce its importance. Mbhokane condemns this form of education and argues that it encourages Swazis to lose their language instead.

The wide opening of English medium pre-schools for instance is a sign of the growing interest in English. Educated parents are excited when their children try a new English word, they often wish that their children master the language as soon as possible since they believe that a straight-for/into English model will lead to proficiency in the language. Most scholars had shown that submersion education is not worthwhile; the child may either sink, struggle or swim (Baker 1993:154). By promoting and supporting submersion education Swazis are not aware that they are producing semi-linguals (children who will never be proficient in either English or siSwati). They are also producing children that will be alienated from their culture and language. This might also result to the displacement of common siSwati words.

Research by Baker and other projects like the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) had shown that additive bilingualism (a form of bilingualism in which the person's first language is maintained while adding competence in another) is the best. This however remains a continuous debate.

The growing support for English creates a major problem for the siSwati language. As it is devalued the young generation will speak the language carelessly without choosing the right speech or speech forms for a given situation.

### 3.2.4. Westernization and Swazi culture

The Western culture has brought a lot of changes in the Swazi way of life. It appeared so glorified in Christianity, education and development. Mbhokane believes that when the missionaries brought the gospel they had other motives, i.e. to promote the Western culture as they condemn the Swazi way of life, culture and religion. He remarks:

‘Everything that was Swazi was painted black like the image of the devil’.

Mbhokane believes that due to indoctrination Swazis do not admire their traditional attire, cultural practices like *kuteka* ‘a traditional marriage’, or to participate in cultural events like *umhlanga* ‘reed dance’, *incwala* ‘ceremony of the first fruit’ etc. Only a minimum proportion of the Swazi society do not like traditional practices, that is those who have been totally colonized. Most Swazis are still keen to identify with their culture, for instance they sign a leave in order to attend *Incwala* ‘festival of the first fruit’.

Westernization, which is perceived as a superior culture, is a primary threat to the siSwati language and culture. However its real impact to the siSwati traditional life is minimum. Mbhokane’s opinion in this regard is an exaggeration.

### **3.2.5. National and language independence**

Swaziland got its political independence in 1968, but still depends on the Western market to a great extent. By depending on the Western assistance its well-being is monitored by a foreign hand. This therefore shows a partial form of independence. Mbhokane believes that though Swaziland had acquired independence the language is not yet free, i.e. it is still in bondage. His opinion is based on the idea that the language is used minimally, especially in public spheres.

The general population use siSwati maximally in spite of the status given to English as an official language. Artificially English is given maximum status, i.e. official documents are written in English, however practically siSwati still serves the community in various spheres of life. In fact these various documents are often debated on in siSwati. One can say that the country is practicing bilingualism widely (though unofficially).

SiSwati, just like all languages still depends on other languages for development. It borrows from English, Afrikaans, Zulu and other African languages. Such rich vocabulary should be considered for the growth of the language. Language independence as well as national independence is a superficial statement.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4. INTRODUCTION**

In this section I aim at giving a summary of my research findings. I will then draw conclusions and recommendations.

##### **4.1 SUMMARY**

The study has given an insight into what Western and non-Western purists regard as central in language. Literature mainly from a Western context on language purism and sociolinguistics has been consulted. Since writing on purism in an Africa is rare a siSwati radio programme *Nasi-ke siSwati* was assessed as to find out whether purists hold similar concerns irrespective of their different backgrounds.

##### **(a) Similarities**

The literature investigated and the siSwati language programme has viewed language correctness as the main concern of language purism. Purists sometimes condemn the use of well-established words without giving sound reason as to why they are to be disallowed. Their selection of a standard variety is based on subjective opinion than on linguistic superiority or excellence as suggested by Milroy & Milroy (1985). Milroy & Milroy (1985:8) argue that judgements evaluating differences between standard and non-standard varieties are often socially conditioned and are never purely linguistic. For instance, the selection of

the Midlands variety over others as the basis of standard English from the 15<sup>th</sup> century was due to the fact that influential people had already favoured it.

The word *incubulundvwane* is selected instead of *incubulunjwane* 'measles' due to Mbhokane's personal taste and prejudice, rather than from any inherent superiority.

Engrossed in subjectivity purists pay less attention to facts. For instance their preference *It's I* than *It's me* or *incubulundvwane* instead of *incubulunjwane* 'measles' does not consider that most people use *It's me* or *incubulunjwane*. In fact *It's me* has been widespread in English for centuries, whereas *It's I* is more than a bizarre invention (Trask 1995:160-161). The use of expressions with different spelling or pronunciation must be treated as normal variation in speech than a major concern.

Languages that had experienced some domination usually target foreign loans as a way of reasserting their identity. Tamil for instance disfavoured the use of Sanskrit and English words, thus replaced them with pure Tamil words. In the same way Mbhokane discourages the use of English, which he considers harmful to the language, i.e. may lead to language extinction. Recourse to English (which is labeled as a problem) includes English loans, code switching and mixing and the maximum use of English in daily communication. This however is inevitable in modern bilingual societies.

Archaic forms are often favoured over new ones; as a result old people are revered, since they possess these past treasures. Mbhokane gives a number of old words that are no longer used, like *ulonkonkolotwako* 'an undisciplined child'. Old people might be the only ones who understand and use the term as a result it might disappear with them, since people are fond of creating new words to define their situation.

Purists often give a general view as to why people stick to incorrect usages. They suggest that such usages are due to carelessness, laziness, ignorance and reluctance to learn or speak correctly. Mbhokane states that Swazis disrespect their language and culture in favour of English; the language is not guarded or monitored; the media propagates wrong usages. He holds the maximum use of English responsible for distorted siSwati speech. Most of these opinions are based on emotional responses; they are not reasonable.

Diverse studies have shown that puristic responses are motivated by nationalistic feelings. Due to the love for one's national language and culture, purists accord special status to their language, that it is unique and irreplaceable (Thomas 1991:43). However, all languages are probably deserving of the same evaluation and reverence.

Puristic claims often reveal what Cameron (1995:82-85) labels 'a moral panic'. This is based on exaggerated claims about language which are motivated by fear of society's fragmentation if rigid patterns of life are ignored. As a result language concerns now include social concerns like authority. For instance there is great emphasis in the teaching of grammar or *culture* as a way of reviving the rigid pattern of life which will produce a law-abiding citizen.

Purism often serves a symbolic value; people might claim to be speaking a standard form, whilst they do not stick to it in all speech situations. They naturally modify their speech in tune with their immediate context of situation. The use of a non-standard form must not be mistaken as ignorance of the standard form.

Professional linguists everywhere think purism is unnecessary. As a result they were less active in carrying out projects that will bring understanding about language correctness.

#### **a. Differences**

The classification of elites differs in an African context; older and more traditional speakers in the siSwati culture constitute 'the elites', rather than professionals who represent bodies like the French Academy. This causes a clash as to who has the prestige and authority to decide on language correctness. Should modern-educated professionals set the standard or should people with a more traditional power base call the tune?

Culture and language seem to share equal status in an African context. Mbhokane condemns what he thinks of as a deviation from the cultural norm as much as he does to deviations in language. Knowledge of one's culture seems to be a necessity and it determines one's knowledge of siSwati.

#### **4.2 CONCLUSIONS**

- Since non-standard language serves certain functions (i.e. are often used in informal context by people who can effectively use the standard form) it should not be discarded in speech. Non-standard language can enrich communication, especially in informal contexts though often shunned by Western and African purists.
- People should be aware that any varieties could potentially serve the same function of a standard form if accorded that status. Labeling other forms as inferior is unnecessary and unfair to groups of people not in power.
- Professional linguists need to concern themselves with language issues as to conscientize society about language practices, rather than to sit back.
- Purists everywhere easily influence society emotionally but their practical influence is rather limited. People stick to their 'inferior' forms in informal context.

- A docile community might appear to be captured by puristic ideologies, but in reality their linguistic behaviour is less shackled by purism.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- There should be a great participation of linguists in the siSwati language programme so as to make it encompass debate and a diversity of viewpoints.
- Publication and preservation of the siSwati programme is necessary to popularise such viewpoints.
- Language issues are often neglected in society. There is great need to publicize them as they are freely implicated in social and political life.
- Purists need to compromise with practices on the ground so that they may be taken more seriously. They need to broaden their view of life.

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## **APPENDIX A**

**The following is an Appendix, which comprises of some information about the SiSwati Language Board.**

University of Cape Town

130  
PROPERTY OF THE SWAZILAND GOVERNMENT

CABINET

COUNCIL PAPER

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SISWATI LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

(Submitted the Hon. Minister for Health & Education)

In the Imbokodvo National Movement Manifesto, Government policy states categorically that siSwati and English will be the two official languages used and taught in Swaziland. In developing siSwati therefore, my Ministry is working in strict adherence to Government's policy. It is my Ministry's utmost aim and bounden duty to promote and interpret to the letter the above policy.

2. English as a second and foreign language has been developed and financed by foreign agencies e.g. the British Council. The English Department has, as a result of this financial support, been able to run a number of courses. This has spelt the success of the English Through Activity project in the country.

3. My Ministry is requesting Government to view the development of siSwati as a National Commitment in which Government should be wholly involved. To support this development should be viewed by Government as a moral obligation to the entire Swazi Nation.

4. SiSwati has to prepare the Swazi child to become a good citizen. If well developed, siSwati should incorporate other concepts as expressed in other subjects. This will eliminate drop-outs to a very great extent.

5. SiSwati should be viewed as a communicating means in the Nation. Hence different Ministries, various Departments of work, representatives from different parts of the country should meet in joint effort to develop this our language.

6. Emburdened with the onerous task of developing our language, it behoves my Ministry to state, without fear of contradiction, that Language makes a people. Without their own language, they cannot be a real nation.

7. One of the forceful goals in Independent Africa is to develop man's mind politically, socially, and culturally. Language seeks to enhance the socio-cultural aspect of development. In Language is enshrined interalia, those quaint glories of the past-the nation's History, customs, tales, proverbs, games poetry, religion, and ritual. These must be excavated and revived for the enrichment and glory of the Swazi Nation.

8. Our Ministry is proposing the establishment of the following in the country with Government's financial support:-

(A) SISWATI NATIONAL BOARD

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(i) Composition of the Board

1. Two members appointed by the Swazi National Council.
2. Two members appointed by the Ministry of Education, one to be Chairman and the other to be Secretary.
3. Two members from the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Services.
4. One member appointed by the Sebenta National Adult Literacy Board.
6. One member appointed by the University of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.
7. One member representing the Primary Curriculum Unit.
8. One member representing the Bible Society.
9. Two members representing Teacher Training Colleges (one member from each college).
10. One member from the Swazi National Archives (UMSAMO).
11. The Board shall have power to co-opt/nominate three members of the public who have displayed a special interest in the development of the siSwati Language from a list submitted by the Board.

12. One for *teachers Association*

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

1. To advise Government through the Minister for Education on the most effective ways to be adopted in promoting the development of siSwati in order to meet the National needs.
2. To advise on the general running of the proposed siSwati development centre.
3. To consider and finalise any proposal for the revision of the siSwati orthography and spelling rules.
4. To consider and recommend siSwati terminology submitted from various fields of service.
5. To encourage the writing of siSwati literature for adults as well as school children.
6. To encourage the use of siSwati for all public meetings which are purely siSwati, including Church Services.
7. To advise on raising funds for use in the development of siSwati.
8. To consider specific ways of using funds thus raised.
9. To consider and suggest areas in education and general public life where the use of siSwati would be most effect.

H.B.: Each Ministry or Organisation should identify a representative who has a genuine keen interest in siSwati, one who by personal conviction feels he is being called upon to play a particular role in this National Project. Once indentified, each prospective representative must be interviewed so that he may clearly state whether or not he is willing to serve in such a Board.

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9. It is hereby recommended that members of the Board be paid satisfactory travelling and subsistence allowances for attendance at the Board's meetings.

Procedure:-

1. The Board shall meet once a quarter.
2. Half of the members present shall form a quorum.
3. Date and venue of the next meeting shall be decided by the Board before the end of each meeting.

(B) A SiSwati National Research and Development Centre: Functions of the Centre

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- (i)
    1. To collect siSwati material and review it for publication.
    2. To sort out material for use by the general public and school children.
    3. To type the material for Publication or distribution to those who need it.
  - (ii)
    - a) The Ministry desires to have at least five full-time staff who should be detached from the college staff and divorced from college teaching.
    - X b) The staff to receive such emoluments as their U.T.S. counterparts receive.
    - c) One of the five members of staff to be identified as 'Senior Research Officer' carrying our supervisory work in addition to normal duties assigned him/her. This particular officer to receive emoluments equivalent to those received by the college's Heads of Departments.
  - (iii)
    - a) The Ministry further desires to have two full-time typists solely responsible for typing siSwati material for publication and use by both the school and the general public.
    - b) Each typist to receive such emoluments as received by all civil service typists of their qualification.
10. I therefore request council to approve the Establishment of the siSwati National Board and siSwati National Research and Development Centre and their functions as stated above.

***SISWATI NATIONAL LANGUAGE BOARD***

***(SINALABO) CONSTITUTION***

University of Cape Town

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1. DEFINITIONS:-

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise indicates:.

"Board" shall mean the SiSwati National Language Board, (SINALABO)

"Cabinet" shall mean the Cabinet of Swaziland.

"Ministry" shall mean the Ministry of Education.

"Government" shall mean the Swaziland Government.

"Minister" shall mean the Minister for Education.

"Principal Secretary" shall mean the Principal Secretary to the Ministry of Education.

"Chairperson" shall mean the chairperson of SINALABO.

"Secretary" shall mean the secretary of the SINALABO.

"Executive" shall mean the executive of SINALABO.

2. CONSTITUTION:-

2.1 The Minister may, in consultation with the relevant Ministry officials and existing SiSwati National Language Board members, constitute a board known as the SiSwati National Language Board (SINALABO) which shall exercise such powers or perform such duties as are assigned to it under these regulations. This Board shall exercise these powers or perform such duties under the general supervision and control of the Ministry or under such terms which the Minister may prescribe from time to time.

2.2 The Board shall consist of members who shall be nominated by the bodies concerned as listed hereunder for appointment or authorization by the Minister. The members shall be as follows:-

2.2.1 The Senior Inspector of SiSwati.

2.2.2 One member to represent the Swazi National Council.

2.2.3 One member to represent the Bible Society.

2.2.4 One member to represent the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Services.

2.2.5 One member to represent each Teacher Training College.

- 2.2.6 One member to represent the National Curriculum Centre.
- 2.2.7 One member to represent the Sebenta National Institute.
- 2.2.8 One member to represent the Swaziland Television and Broadcasting cooperation.
- 2.2.9 Two members to represent UNISWA; one from African Languages and one from African Languages Curriculum.
- 2.2.10 Two members to represent the SiSwati panels; (primary and secondary).
- 2.2.11 One member to represent the Swaziland SiSwati Teacher Association.
- 2.2.12. Two members to represent the SiSwati Language Board from Mpumalanga.
- 2.2.13 One member to represent Umdlandla Writers Association.
- 2.2.14 One member from the Swazi National Archives.
- 2.2.15 One member to represent the In-Service Department.
- 2.2.16 One member to represent the Swaziland National Association for Journalists (SNAJ).
- 2.2.17 One member to represent Emlalatini Development Centre (EDC).
- 2.2.18 The Board shall have powers to co-opt/nominate up to four members of the public who have displayed a special interest in the development of the SiSwati Language, from a list submitted by the Board Members.

### 3. TERM OF OFFICE:

- 3.1 The term of office of any member of the Board shall, as from a fixed date, be five years.
- 3.2 A member of the Board may be re-appointed at the expiry of the term of office.
- 3.3 A member of the Board may resign his membership by giving written notice to the Secretary.
- 3.4 The appointment of a member shall lapse:-

- 3.4.1 if he/she is absent from four consecutive meetings of the Board without giving a valid reason for his/her absence; OR
  - 3.4.2 if in the opinion of the Minister he/she does not perform his/her duties properly; OR
  - 3.4.3 if in the opinion of the Minister, the member has rendered him/herself guilty of improper conduct; OR
  - 3.4.4. if the body he/she represents ceases to exist.
  - 3.4.5 if the member dies.
- 3.5 When his/her membership of the Board ceases in terms of sub-regulation 3.3 or sub-regulation 3.4, the Minister shall:-
- 3.5.1 inform the body which the member concern represents;
  - 3.5.2 require the body concerned to nominate some other person to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of his term of office.

#### 4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD:

- 4.1 The Board shall have an Executive Committee consisting of the Chairperson; the Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary and two other members of the Board who shall be designated by the Board.
- 4.2 The members of the Executive Committee shall be nominated and recommended by the members of the Board. The Chairperson of SINALABO shall be appointed by the Minister from the list of nominees submitted by the members of the Board.
- 4.3 The Executive Committee of the Board shall meet at least twice a year. However special meetings may, with the prior approval of the Ministry of Education, be held at any other time.
- 4.4 Notice of Executive Committee meetings of the Board shall be issued in writing by the Secretary on the authority of the Chairperson, at least fourteen days before the date fixed for the meeting. The notice shall stipulate the time, the venue and it shall be accompanied by an agenda of the meeting concerned.

- 4.5 The Chairperson; the Vice-Chairperson; and the Secretary of the SINALABO, shall automatically take the same positions in the Executive Committee of SINALABO; then any other two members nominated by SINALABO members from the existing Board members.
- 4.6 Should the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson vacate his/her office for any reason, the Minister shall, in consultation with the relevant Ministry officials and existing SINALABO members appoint some other person who shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of office of the official concerned. In the case of the Secretary, the Minister shall require the Ministry to nominate some other person who shall fill the vacancy.

5. LINE OF COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION:-

- 5.1 The Board shall be responsible to the Minister for Education through the Principal Secretary for Education.
- 5.2 The Board shall always consult with the Minister directly or indirectly on any important issues.
- 5.3 The Board's consultation mentioned above shall be through the Executive Committee or the Secretary; whilst the indirect consultation shall be through the Secretary and the Principal Secretary for Education.

6. THE POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD:-

The Board is to stimulate and promote the growth and development of the SiSwati Language by, inter alia:-

- 6.1 encouraging <sup>authorships</sup> authorities so as to progressively increase the literature of the SiSwati Language;
- 6.2 developing and increasing SiSwati terminology;
- 6.3 taking decisions with regard to terminology and technical language;
- 6.4 laying down rules on orthography and spelling;
- 6.5 motivating and upholding co-operation of all the government and private sectors, in the united effort of standardizing SiSwati terminology;
- 6.6 screening, grading and evaluating books that are prescribed works, text-books, library books and reference works at all levels in the schools;
- 6.7 encouraging research into the language and its literature;

- 6.8 encouraging good translations and correct interpretation of work from other languages into the SiSwati language.
- 6.9 appointing and authorizing sub-committees to perform special duties which the Board may assign them;
- 6.10 dealing with any other matters pertaining to the SiSwati language;
- 6.11 to advise Government, through the Minister for Education, on the most effective ways to be adopted in promoting the development of SiSwati in order to meet the national needs.
- 6.12 to establish and advise on the general running of the SiSwati Development Centre;
- 6.13 to encourage the use of SiSwati in all public meetings.
- 6.14 to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the language policy.
- 6.15 to advise on raising funds for use in the development of SiSwati.
- 6.16 to consider specific ways of using funds thus raised.
- 6.17 to consider and suggest areas in education and general public life where the use of SiSwati would be most effective.

7. LANGUAGE CENTRE:

SINALABO will have full responsibility of a SiSwati National Research and Development Centre whose functions will be:-

- 7.1 to collect SiSwati materials and review them for publication;
- 7.2 to prepare the materials for publication or distribution to those who need them;
- 7.3 to sort out materials for use by the general public and school children;

8. MEETINGS:

- 8.1 The Board shall meet at least twice a year; provided that special meetings of the Board may, with the prior approval of the Principal Secretary for Education be held at any other time..

- 8.2 For the sake of convenience, notice of ordinary and special meetings of the Board shall be issued in writing by the Secretary on the authority of the Chairperson at least two weeks before the fixed date for the meeting. This notice shall stipulate the time and the venue and it shall be accompanied by an agenda of the meeting concerned.
- 8.3 Half of the total number of members shall form a quorum.
- 8.3.1 In case the quorum is not formed in any particular meeting, the meeting shall be postponed to a later date.
- 8.3.2 In the subsequent meeting, the members present shall form a quorum.
- 8.4 If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent, the members present shall elect one of the members present to preside at the meeting.
- 8.5 Questions arising at Board meetings shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting. In the event of equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberate vote.
- 8.6 The ruling of the Chairperson on any matter of order or procedure shall be binding: provided that if any member voices any objection, such matter shall be submitted to the meeting and put to the vote without further discussion.
- 8.7 The provision of regulation 8.4 and 8.5, and 8.6 above shall apply Mutatis Mundis to the meetings of the sub-committees.
- 8.8 The Board shall decided on the language to be used at its meetings.
- 8.9 In case of an emergency with special urgency, the Board shall nominate the Executive or Executive plus some members to attend to the issue immediately and bring back the results before the Board sessions ends.

9. MINUTES:

- 9.1 The Secretary shall record the proceedings at all meetings of the Board: On the understanding that a Secretary appointed by a sub-committee shall record the proceedings of such sub-committee.

- 9.2 The Secretary shall within one calendar month from the last date of Board meeting, make a copy of the minutes available to the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Education.
- 9.3 The minutes of the Board shall be read and approved at the next Board meeting. The meeting may, however, take the minutes as read if a copy has been sent to each member before hand.
- 9.4 Questions, corrections and objections shall be dealt with before the minutes are approved.
- 9.5 The Board or its sub-committee shall decide on the language in which the minutes shall be kept.
- 9.6 As soon as the minutes have been approved or adopted, the Chairperson and the Secretary shall sign and date them in the presence of the members.
- 9.7 Minutes are a private property of the Board and may not be made available to anyone except authorized persons.

10. **TRANSPORT AND SUBSISTENCE:**

- 10.1 Members who are in full-time service of the Government shall be paid allowance in accordance with the Government General Orders.
- 10.2 Transport and subsistence expenses for members of the Board representing parastatal bodies shall be paid by the Ministry at the rates prescribed by the Minister.
- 10.3 Transport allowances of members representing neither 10.1 nor 10.2, shall be paid by the Ministry at the rates prescribed by the Minister.

11. **DELEGATION OF POWER AND FINAL AUTHORITY:**

- 11.1 The Minister may delegate any of the powers conferred on him by this constitution to the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Education.

12. **JOINT BOARD:**

- 12.1 The SiSwati National Language Board shall form a combined board with Mpumalanga SiSwati Language Board in order to facilitate standardization of:-
- 12.1.1 SiSwati terminology
- 12.1.2 Orthography spelling rules