The Implementation of the South African Language Policy by Local Government. A Case Study.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

Signature: Date: 15 March 2021

Abstract

In 1994, the South African democratic government declared 11 languages as official. Section (6) of the Constitution stipulates that all 11 official languages should enjoy equal status. Amongst other things, language policies, language institutions, and legislations were established to assist in implementing Section (6) of the Constitution. Provincial governments have been given the task to adopt a language policy that will ensure that the designated official languages are used, promoted, and developed equally. Mpumalanga has four designated official (provincial) languages: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, and SiSwati. This study aims to investigate the implementation of the South African language policy by a local municipality in Mpumalanga.

The data presented in this thesis were gathered using semi-structured interviews with executive staff members as well as through questionnaires and office observations at the municipality. In addition, this thesis analysed physical municipal signage, Facebook posts by the municipality and members of the public, the official website of the municipality, and annual municipal reports. The findings indicate that there exist a variety of multilingual practices on the ground. However, these multilingual practices are mostly habitual and everyday; they are not due to the active implementation of a municipal language policy. Moreover, the findings of the study indicate that English is the preferred language at the municipality: English dominates in meetings, in written communication, on signage, official Facebook posts, and the website. The data also indicate that SiSwati has a strong presence at the municipality, but it is marginalised in other areas such as written and online communication. In addition, the data suggest that there is inequality in how the other provincial languages are used: there is only minimal presence of isiNdebele and Afrikaans. Moreover, Xitsonga, which is not a designated provincial language, has a strong presence in the municipality but no official status.

This thesis argues that there is partial implementation of the language policy at the municipality. The challenges affecting the implementation includes the ideology around the use of English and the negative attitudes towards SiSwati that are present in the community. Lack of implementation is also a result of limited resources in the municipality. This thesis uses the data to formulate recommendations for the Mpumalanga provincial government. These recommendations can assist with the implementation of the language policy in government communication and the equal use of all the languages present in the municipality.

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Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Act	"A bill which has been passed through government in order to be adopted as an Act"(Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, 2014:6).
African languages	"Languages which originate in Africa"(Nel, 2013:xxii).
Apartheid era	"The era that started when the National Party took over the government in South Africa in 1948. Under apartheid legislation, people were segregated based on race. This era ended in 1994 with the democratic elections" (Nel, 2013:xxvii).
Bilingualism	"The practice of using two languages (not necessarily with equal competence in both)" (NLPF, 2003:19).
Development of a language	"The promotion of a language by graphitization, and elaboration of functions so that the language can be used in the media, education, legal and administrative system, etc" (NLPF, 2003:19).
Dominant language	"A language with a higher status than all the other languages"(Nel, 2003:xxii).
Home language	"The primary language one speaks at home and in the home environment"(Nel, 2003:xxiii).
Indigenous language	"The language native to a country"(NLPF, 2003:19).
Interpreting	"The act of transposing an utterance from a source language into a target language in spoken form"(NLPF, 2003:19).
Local languages	For the purpose of this study, local languages refer to the languages that are spoken at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality.

	These include English, Afrikaans, SiSwati, isiNdebele, isiNgomane, and Xitsonga.
Legislation	"The law which has been enacted or developed by the government"(NLPF, 2003:19).
Language equality	"In terms of the South African Constitution, all languages are to receive equal treatment, use, and respect. The equal treatment of two or more languages" (NLPF, 2003:19).
Marginalised language	"Any language that is excluded from official use or which use is discouraged in a formal setting" (NLPF, 2003:20).
Majority language	"A language that is spoken by most people in a particular area" (Nel, 2013: xxvi).
Minority language	"The language is spoken by a limited number of people in a particular area"(Nel, 2013:xxvi).
Multilingualism	"In the case of an individual, knowledge of more than two languages, and in a society the presence of more than two languages" (NLPF, 2003:20).
National language	"A language which functions as a symbol of national and socio-political identity"(Nel, 2013:xxvi).
Official language	"The language of state administration and official government business"(NLPF, 2003:20).
The provincial organ of state	"Any provincial department or municipality in the province" (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, 2014:6)
Translation	"The act of transposing a text from a source language to another(target) language in written form"(NLPF, 2003:20).

Transcription conventions

The following conventions were used to transcribe spoken communication, i.e., the semi-structured interviews and office observations.

- “ ”: Direct quotations
- …: Untimed pause
- Mmm/Hmm/Ahh: Minimal response token
- ?: Rising intonation
- -: Words cut off

<u>Transcription conventions for office observations</u>

- Bold: SiSwati
- Underlined: Xitsonga
- Italics: Tsotsitaal
- Capital letters : isiNgomane
- Small caps: English

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Dedication

Nelly Bonisiwe Mhlongo – Mabasa

20 April 1972 – 20 April 2007

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This study adopts a case study approach to investigate the implementation of the South African language policy at the level of local government. The case study was conducted at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality in Mpumalanga (the name of the municipality is a pseudonym, see Chapter Three for further discussion). In studying the implementation of the language policy by local government, I look at the language use and preference by the staff members when communicating with members of the public. Moreover, I investigate the extent to which the designated official languages of the province (and thus also the municipality) are being promoted in government communications, including digital communication.

In this introductory chapter, I discuss the study area and the language statistics of the municipality. In Section 1.3 I discuss my positionality and motivation for the study. And Section 1.4 looks at the rationale for the study. I explain why I choose to study the implementation of the language policy after 1994. In Section 1.5, I discuss the key concepts for the study: Language policy, language planning, language ideologies, linguistic rights, and linguistic citizenship paradigm. The last section of this chapter will provide an overview of the thesis.

1.2. The study area

The Inkanyeti Local Municipality has a population of approximately 400 000 people (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Like most municipalities in South Africa, the municipality consists of towns, suburbs, townships, and rural areas. The townships and rural areas are marginalized and economically impoverished. The dominant economic activities in the area include farming and mining (Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs, 2020).

The social activities that take place in the communities within the municipality include soccer matches, beauty pageants, as well as traditional events such as Umhlanga.[1]

[1] Umhlanga is a SiSwati / isiZulu reed dance which is aimed at bringing together unmarried girls to cut the reed grass and celebrate their purity (virginity).

Figure 1.1 shows the home languages that are spoken at the municipality. Due to confidentiality purposes, I did not include the detailed language statistics for the municipality (see Chapter Three for further discussion).

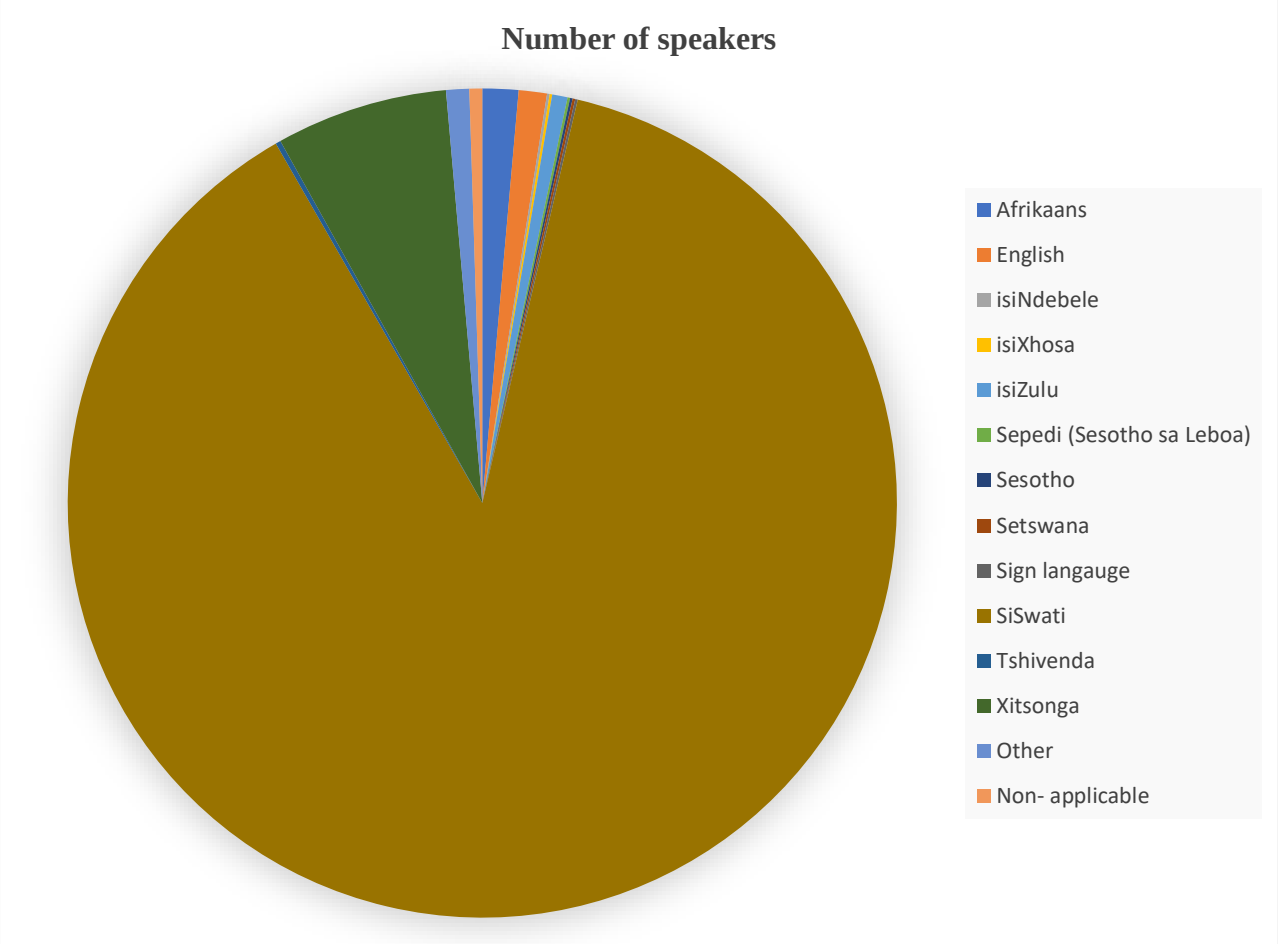

Figure 1.1: Language statistics of the municipality (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 stipulates that the designated official languages of the province are Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, and SiSwati. All four of the official designated languages of the province are present at the municipality. However, SiSwati speakers are clearly a dominant group, and Xitsonga is the second most spoken language, while Afrikaans and isiNdebele are minority languages in the municipality.

Statistics South Africa (2011) provides data for those languages that have official status in South Africa. However, as a resident of the municipality, I am aware of a SiSwati spoken variety called isiNgomane, which is not reflected in official statistics. The SiSwati that is recognised as the official language of South Africa is referred to as *SiSwati mbamba,* "proper SiSwati", by the residents of the municipality. The "proper" SiSwati dominates in the rural areas, while isiNgomane is used in the suburbs and townships.

The difference between isiNgomane and "proper" SiSwati is mostly phonetic/phonological and morphological. For example, the word for 'shoe' is *sicatfula* /sɪˌ|aˈtfula/ in SiSwati and *isicathula* /isɪˌ|atʱula/ in isiNgomane. Thus, SiSwati has the labial /tf/ sound, while isiNgomane has the aspirated /t/ sound. From this example, we can also see that isiNgomane is similar to isiZulu (where the word for 'shoe' is *isicathulo*). IsiZulu falls under the Zunda language group, while SiSwati falls under the Tekela language group. According to Ziervogel (1976:1 cited in Nomlomo, 1993:1.3), Zunda and Tekela are a subdivision of the Sintu language group. Tekela languages are identified by the /t/ sound, while Zunda languages are identified by the /ts/ and /tf/ sound. One could argue that isiNgomane is a SiSwati variant that falls under both the Tekela and Zunda language groups because it is influenced by both SiSwati and isiZulu. Unfortunately, no academic work exists on isiNgomane at this point.

1.3. Motivation and positionality

The positionality of researchers does "shape the research process" (Lin, 2015:1). To clarify my background; I was born and bred in the Inkanyeti Local Municipality, and the language I used at home was SiSwati. I attended school in a township where there were many Xitsonga speakers. The languages I spoke at school were Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, and Xitsonga. Afrikaans, English, and SiSwati were taught subjects; however, English was used as a language of teaching and learning. Although English was used as a language of teaching and learning, my peers and I would use isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga to interact during class breaks and lunch breaks. During my matric year, I developed a passion for SiSwati literature and was hoping to enrol for a Linguistics degree after matric. Unfortunately, I was not able to enrol for Linguistics at the university I attended. Instead, I registered for Media Studies and majored in SiSwati.

During my undergraduate studies, I was exposed to Applied Linguistics. I got interested in how people use language in society and how the government supports the use of different languages in society. My interest in language and society was motivated by how language is used in my hometown. The majority of us are isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga speakers, but the language used in clinics, schools, and community centres is often English. As a SiSwati speaker, I felt that my home language, despite being the dominant language in the municipality, was marginalised. This research project emerged out of my experience.

Initially, the project focused on SiSwati. However, after doing some research and observations in the field, I realised that SiSwati is not the only language that is marginalised, but that all African languages are being marginalised. In this municipality, the marginalisation affects isiNdebele, SiSwati, and Xitsonga. The language practices in my community and the municipality at large motivated me to consider all the African languages present in the municipality in the final research design and analysis. As mentioned by England (1994), research is not a product but a process. At some point, the researcher's identity might impact the research process. Being umSwati placed me in an advantageous position because I was able to use the language when collecting the data.

Roulston (2001:281) argues that the "researcher's voice is indelibly inscribed within the research process". As a resident of the municipality that is being studied, my personal ideologies relating to the use of African languages have impacted the data analysis process, I was able to reflect on the different language practices I observed while growing up at the municipality in relation to the data that was collected at the municipality.

1.4.Rationale

In post-apartheid South Africa, where inequality persists as a sensitive and critical issue, the dominance of English remains pervasive in public life. The South African democratic government has shown a legislative commitment to multilingualism and linguistic rights. Hence, Section (6) of the South African Constitution of 1996 recognizes 11 official languages. Moreover, Sections (30) and (31) of the Constitution offer South African citizens linguistic rights which allow them to use languages of their choice.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the South African language policy concerning African languages has been slow and inconsistent. Over ten years ago, de Kadt (2005) noted that research and policy have emphasized the importance of addressing language use in schools. However, this is not the only area that requires attention. Communication between the government and the public is another area where African languages should be promoted. It is an area where the public can engage with the government and make informed decisions. Having African languages promoted in this domain will raise awareness for these languages, assist in successfully implementing the language policy, and show respect for the linguistic rights (and needs) of citizens.

The national, provincial, and local governments are guided by the *Batho Pele* 'People first' principles. *Batho Pele* is a government framework that advocates for equal access to public service (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). One of the *Batho Pele* principles is access to government information. Language plays an important role in accessing government information. Members of the public should be able to understand the language used by the government when sharing information. It is for this reason that the *Batho Pele* principles state that government institutions should provide government information in languages that meet the needs of the residents (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997: Section 4.5.2). Hence, in addition to the constitutional provisions, municipalities have a responsibility of adhering to the *Batho Pele* principles.

According to Section 6(1) of the Constitution, the 11 official languages of South Africa are: "Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu". The state is required to "take practical measures and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages" (6.2). Moreover, municipalities are required to "take into account the language usage and preferences of its residents" (6.3.b). However, the question is: Have they done so, and to what degree? What are the challenges they have faced? With these questions in mind, this study investigates the following research question:

How is the South African language policy being implemented at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality, Mpumalanga province?

1.5. Key concepts

This section discusses the five key concepts for this study: Language policy, language planning, language ideologies, linguistic rights, and linguistic citizenship. These key concepts contribute to understanding language policies and their implementation; they also act as theoretical lenses in the current study.

1.5.1. Language policy and language planning

For the purposes of the study, I will use the definition of language policy proposed by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997: xi) define language policy as:

> "[A] language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules, and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group, or system."

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) note that a language policy can be a formal document that has been put together by the government; or it can be an informal statement of intent that includes discourses of language, politics, and society. The definition by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), suggests that language policies are aimed at bringing about change in society. In a study, conducted in South Africa, Nel (2014:32) describes language policy as a mechanism that can be used to eradicate sociolinguistic injustices.

There is a close relationship that exists between language policy and language planning. According to Deumert (2009:371), "language policy is sometimes used as a synonym for language planning". What is common about the two processes is that they aim to bring about change in society, usually seeking to create conditions that are more equitable and inclusive with regard to language (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997:3). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:2) define language planning as:

> "[A]n activity, most visibly undertaken by the government (simply because it potentially involves such massive changes in society) intended to promote systematic linguistic changes in some community of speakers."

While the definition of language planning by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) suggests that language planning is undertaken by the government, Deumert (2009: 384) argues that language planning is not necessarily state-centred. It involves academics, church leaders, and language societies. In addition, it has been suggested that language planning consists of different stages. Baker (2006:50-53) distinguishes three key dimensions of language planning:

- Status planning: The process where decisions are made to improve the status of a language/languages. This may include declaring a language official; or establishing it as a medium of teaching and learning.

- Corpus planning: The process whereby a language is being developed in terms of linguistic structure. This incorporates orthography, grammar, and the creation of terminology.

- Acquisition planning: This refers to the promotion of languages among its speakers, as well as the teaching of languages as second (or third, etc.) languages. In the case of endangered languages, this process can ensure the survival of a language.

In South Africa, where the promotion and development of the previously marginalised African languages are crucial, it is important to incorporate the three dimensions of language planning to ensure proper implementation of the language policy.

1.5.2. Language ideologies

I have argued above that language policy and language planning intend to bring about change in society. And how one imagines such a change – what is considered to be desirable or undesirable in terms of language and language use – is, in large parts, a question of ideology. Woolard and Schieffelin (1994:57) define language ideologies as "a sets of beliefs about a language and languages". In addition, Woolard and Schieffelin (1994:63) point out that language policies express ideological views about the role of a language in society. Alexander (2004), Deumert (2009), and Plüddemann (2015) concur that language planning and language policy convey political, social, and historical ideologies about language.

An important aspect of language ideologies is that they are typically shared among members of a sociolinguistic community (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994). In the South African context, an example would be the ideology around the use and high prestige of English. This ideology continues to thrive in the education sector (Heugh, 1987 and Prah, 2018), and also influences government-citizen communications (Nel, 2014:53). Moreover, the dominance of English in politics, media, and the economy has resulted in members of the public assuming that English is a crucial language to learn (Deumert, 2009:401 and Kamwangamalu, 2000:53). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:4) argue that one of the issues faced by language planners is deconstructing the monolingual ideologies of English that already exist.

For a successful implementation of language policy in South Africa, the parties involved in language policy and language planning have to take into consideration the language ideologies that already exist in society. The language ideologies that exist might affect the implementation of the language policy.

1.5.3. Linguistic rights and linguistic citizenship

Stroud (2001) describes linguistic rights as a paradigm that recognises the uniqueness of language groups and underwrites their right to equal use. In the South African context, under the principle of inclusiveness, linguistic rights were recognised as fundamental human rights in the South African Constitution. Section (30) on the Bill of Rights stipulates that:

> "Everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provisions of the Bill of Rights."

Alexander (2001:3) points out that "linguistic rights are inalienable human rights". Thus, the government has the responsibility of ensuring that linguistic rights are not violated. This can be done by treating all languages equally (see also Miti, 2016). According to Statistics South Africa (2011), African languages are spoken by 79.2% of the South African population. Table 1.2. below shows the statistics for languages in South Africa.

Table 1.1: Table showing languages of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Language	**Population %**
isiZulu	22.7
isiXhosa	16.0
Afrikaans	13.5
English	9.6
Sepedi	9.1
Setswana	8.0
Sesotho	7.6
Xitsonga	4.5
SiSwati	2.6
Tshivenda	2.4
isiNdebele	2.1

These statistics show that speakers of African languages (especially isiZulu and isiXhosa) are a dominant group numerically. Yet, within South Africa, their languages have a status similar to minoritized languages in other parts of the world (Kangira, 2016). Heugh (2003) argues that the continued preference and habitual use of English in health care and government communication with the citizens cause a potential failure to the concept of linguistic rights. Stroud (2001) adds that the way in which languages are used – or rather not used – can result in the violation of the linguistic rights of the speakers of African languages.

The success of language policies and the use of African languages across all domains does not only depend on government actions but also the agency of speakers and writers. South African citizens have been given the right to use the language of their choice. That right is accompanied by a responsibility to ensure that the right is not violated, and this can be done by actively exercising the right. The notion of linguistic citizenship paradigm was originally proposed by Stroud (2001). Stroud (2001) argues that linguistic citizenship does not put emphasis on the notion of linguistic rights to resolve language issues, but it focuses on the practices of the speakers of the language. The linguistic citizenship paradigm has the potential for empowering African languages through the agency of their speakers.

Understanding linguistic citizenship means understanding the different communicative resources that people use to engage with one another in different spheres of social life. Furthermore, linguistic citizenship allows speakers to engage in meaning-making and to reflect on the social and political issues that affect them (Williams and Stroud, 2015). Moreover, Stroud (2015) argues that linguistic citizenship encourages us to rethink the notion of 'language' in favour of a concept such as 'repertoire', which includes a broad palette of linguistic and other signs. Linguistics citizenship incorporates what people do and think about language and the myriad ways in which they create meaning. An important aspect of linguistic citizenship is that it focuses on what people do, not on the rights they have. It is thus a practice-oriented approach.

1.6. Thesis outline

This thesis consists of seven chapters:

- Chapter Two – This chapter discusses the language policy in South Africa. I outline the language provisions as stipulated in the Constitution of South Africa. I further look at the institutions, acts, and policies that have been established to assist in the implementation of the language provisions in the Constitution.
- Chapter Three –This chapter outlines the research methods that were used to collect and analyse the data. I also discuss the challenges that I encountered while collecting the data.
- Chapter Four – Chapter Four provides the analysis of the data that was collected using the semi-structured interviews with the executive staff members of the municipality.
- Chapter Five – In this chapter, I present the analysis of the data that was collected using questionnaires, office, and council meeting observations.
- Chapter Six –Chapter Six analyses the data that was collected using signage and the online data (Facebook and municipal website).
- Chapter Seven – This chapter provides a summary of the thesis. In this chapter, I also discuss the practices by the municipality which contribute to the implementation or lack of implementation of the language policy. I further provide recommendations for the municipality and the Mpumalanga provincial government.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the purpose of the study and elaborated on the study area. I further looked into the rationale for choosing to conduct the study at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality. As a resident of the municipality, in this chapter, I explained the presence of a SiSwati spoken variety – isiNgomane at the municipality. I also highlighted how SiSwati is the dominant language in the municipality; yet, in my own experience, it remains marginalized in many high-status domains. I outlined the rationale behind the study being conducted. Furthermore, this chapter discussed the notion of language policy and language planning, showing that language planning forms part of language policy. The chapter briefly looked at how the language ideologies which exist in society can impact the implementation of language policy. Moreover, the chapter discussed the difference between linguistic citizenship and linguistic rights, and how linguistic rights are considered basic human rights, and linguistic citizenship is a practice-oriented approach. Lastly, this chapter provided the outline for the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: LANGUAGE POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the legislations and policies which have been established to assist in eradicating the linguistic imbalances of the apartheid and colonial era. Section 2.2 provides a summary of South African language policy development after 1994. The language provisions in the Constitution required the establishment of a language board. Hence, Section 2.3 focuses on the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), which was established to support the constitutional provisions. Section 2.4 looks at the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL). In Section 2.5, I discuss the National Language Policy Framework (henceforth NLPF) of 2003. I elaborate on the Implementation Plan, which was developed so that government institutions could best serve the public in developing and promoting all 11 official languages. The Use of Official Languages Act of 2012 is discussed in Section 2.6. This Act gives detailed guidance on how the national government should use the official languages in government communication. As this thesis looks at a municipality that is situated in the Mpumalanga province, Section 2.7 reviews the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014. In this section, I further discuss the marginalisation of Xitsonga and other languages in the province. In Section 2.8, I take a broader view and discuss how the language policy has been implemented by the South African national government since 1994. In this section, I look at the challenges associated with the implementation of the language policy, considering the progress that has been made by the South African government in implementing the language policy.

2.2. Language provisions in Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

Wolff (2002) argues that South African government institutions, as well as members of the public, have shown remarkable efforts to eradicate the language imbalances that were established during the colonial and apartheid eras. Beukes (2009) points out that the constitutional provisions prioritise the development of the previously marginalised languages. Section 6(2) of the Constitution states:

> "Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages."

As discussed in Chapter One, the Constitution advocates for the protection of linguistic rights. The constitutional provisions in Section (31) indicate that linguistic rights are recognised as basic human rights (Alexander, 2001:3). Section (31) of the Constitution stipulates that:

> "Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community -
> (a) To enjoy their culture, practice their religion, and use their language."

Webb (2009) points out that these constitutional provisions reflect progress towards multilingualism and help to eradicate the language imbalances of the past. However, scholars such as Kamwangamalu (2000) and Heugh (2003) have pointed to some of the challenges associated with the practicality of implementing the constitutional provisions (see discussion in Section 2.8).

The Constitution does not specify how government institutions should implement the policy. Institutions such as PanSALB and CRL were established to assist in promoting and developing all the official languages and protecting linguistic rights. In addition, the government established legislative policies and Acts such as the NLPF and the Use of Official Languages Act. These legislations provide guidance to government institutions.

2.3. Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB)

The Pan South African Language Board was established under the Pan South African Language Board Act (No.59 of 1995, amended in 1999). Section 6(5) of the Constitution stipulates that a language board needs to be established – PanSALB – to support the constitutional provisions and to "promote, and create conditions for, the development and use of (i) all the official languages; (ii) the Khoi, Nama and San languages; and (iii) sign language" (6.5.a). Moreover, PanSALB is mandated to:

> "Promote and ensure respect for (i) all the languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu, and; (iii) Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and other languages for religious purposes in South Africa" (Section 6.5.b).

The Pan South African Language Board has done important work since it was established. However, there are some challenges faced by the board. In this section, I discuss the work done by the board and some of the challenges. Unfortunately, I was only able to access Annual Reports for 2006 to 2019. These were published on the PanSALB website. As a result, I will discuss the work they have done in these years and in 2020.[2]

One of PanSALB's achievements was the establishment of National Language Bodies (henceforth NLBs) for all the official languages, the Khoisan languages, and South African Sign Language (PanSALB, 2007:5). In addition, PanSALB has successfully established Provincial Language Committees (henceforth PLCs) for the nine provinces (PanSALB, 2007:21). The PLCs have been working with relevant stakeholders to promote multilingualism in the provinces. They have, for example, organised workshops for language rights as well as interpretation and translation workshops in the nine provinces (PanSALB, 2009:14; PanSALB, 2011:31). Schmit (2013:180) attests that PanSALB has a good working relationship with different stakeholders such as the Department of Education, higher education institutions, and the media. The relationship between PanSALB and these entities has assisted in implementing the mandate of the board, i.e., conducting research and raising awareness about multilingualism.

The current chairperson of PanSALB, Dr. David Maahlamela, has been delivering public speeches about language issues, including at the World Dictionary Day summit which was held in the Eastern Cape (PanSALB, 2019:28). Other campaigns that PanSALB supports include 'South African Word of the Year', 'International Literacy Day', and linguistic rights campaigns in the nine provinces (PanSALB, 2019:8). The current board was also successful in relaunching the PanSALB official website and adopting the *South African Sign Language Charter*. The

[2] PanSALB has not yet released the 2020 Annual Report. The discussion of the work done by the board in 2020 is based on the information posted on the website and the social media platforms of PanSALB.

charter is aimed at protecting the linguistic rights of the Deaf community and also ensuring that South African Sign Language is maintained and protected (PanSALB, 2020:3).

The Board and the National Lexicography Units (henceforth NLUs) have reported continued work on the development of the dictionaries for all the 11 official languages (PanSALB, 2015:24). In addition to Afrikaans and English, the following African languages dictionaries have been developed since 1994:

- Sesotho – The English-Sesotho bilingual dictionary has been completed. In 2017/2018 it was awaiting verification and authentication by the Sesotho National Language Board. At the time of writing the dictionary is still not published.
- Setswana - The first dictionary was published in 1976, and the second one was published in 2006.
- Sepedi – The Sepedi-English bilingual dictionary was published in 2001.
- SiSwati – The SiSwati-English bilingual dictionary was launched and published in 2010.
- Tshivenda – The dictionary was launched and published in 2006. It has also been made available in Zimbabwe.
- Xitsonga – The second edition of the Xitsonga monolingual dictionary was published in 2018.
- isiNdebele –The isiNdebele NLU is at the stage of finalizing the *Intermediate Pictorial Dictionary* for primary school learners. A trilingual (Afrikaans, English, and isiNdebele) dictionary was published in 2010.
- isiXhosa – Three volumes of the trilingual (Afrikaans, English, and isiXhosa) dictionaries were published in 1989, 2003, and 2006.
- isiZulu – The first edition of the isiZulu-English bilingual dictionary was published in 2010.

Notwithstanding these achievements, PanSALB also encountered some challenges. One of the main challenges that have been reported in all the Annual Reports as well as by Schmit (2013) are inadequate financial resources. This challenge has resulted in some of the projects not being implemented as planned. This includes, for example, work towards the development of the Khoisan languages (PanSALB, 2019:9). Moreover, Schmit (2013:204) reports that lack of adequate funding has resulted in some of the structures not being able to host meetings to strategize on measures that can assist in implementing the mandate of the board.

Schmit (2013:47) found that PanSALB has also received substantial criticism over the years. Such criticism came from academics, the wider public as well as the Department of Arts and Culture's portfolio committee. Some of the criticism led to challenges in leadership structures. The challenges to its leadership resulted in PanSALB not having a board between 2012-2014 and 2015-2018 (PanSALB, 2012:2; Reborife, 2016). The years when PanSALB was without a board caused delays in the implementation of its mandate. The challenges in leadership also affected the work done by the PLCs and the NLBs (PanSALB, 2019:11). In the absence of the board, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PanSALB and other executive members were responsible for fulfilling the PanSALB mandate between 2012-2014 and 2015-2018.

However, Schmit (2013:133) notes that, despite these challenges, the establishment of various structures (NLBs, PLCs and NLUs), and the development of terminologies and dictionaries should be considered a formidable achievement of PanSALB. In addition, Nyika (2009) points out that receiving complaints from members of the public has also assisted the board in identifying areas that require more attention, such as the use of language in the education sector. The discussion on the achievements and challenges by PanSALB indicates that progress has been made, however, there are areas where PanSALB needs to improve to ensure that the mandate is successfully implemented.

2.4. Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious, and Linguistic Communities (CRL)

The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Religious, and Linguistic Communities (henceforth CRL) was established to support Section (31) of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of 1996. The Commission was established in terms of the CRL Act No. 19 of 2002. The CRL falls under the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and it is required to submit Annual Reports to the National Assembly (CRL Act, No. 19 of 2002: Section 8.a). The CRL is mandated to promote and protect the rights of cultural, religious, and linguistic communities. Moreover, the objectives of the CRL are to ensure that there is peace, humanity, and national unity among, and within, the cultural, religious, and linguistic communities (CRL Act, No. 19 of 2002: Section 4.a.b).

Focusing specifically on linguistic communities, the objectives of the CRL are to protect the rights of linguistic communities. The CRL focuses on the protection of linguistic groups, not individuals, and their rights. The 2017/2018 Annual Report of the CRL highlighted some of the language-related projects that they implemented. These projects include:

- The multilingualism project – The CRL facilitated a dialogue that was aimed at finding different measures that can be used to promote multilingualism in South Africa. They discussed different channels that can be used to promote multilingualism when communicating with the public and in high public events such as the State of the Nation Address. The dialogue was also aimed at reassessing the status of English as a lingua franca (CRL, 2018:13-14).
- Recognition of non-official languages – The Commission has collaborated with PanSALB to address the complaints which were submitted by different linguistic groups. The complaints included requests for the recognition of Khilobedu, the Khoisan languages, and South African Sign Language. As mentioned above, there is progress with regards to the recognition of the South African Sign Language. The discussions concerning the status of Khilobedu and the Khoisan languages are ongoing (CRL, 2018:39).

Beukman (2000) points out that the CRL and PanSALB have similar mandates. They are both aimed at promoting multilingualism, supporting marginalised languages, advocating, and protecting language rights. Beukman (2000) argues that the CRL and PanSALB need to work together in coordinating language issues of speech communities. The discussion above shows that CRL and PanSALB do work together. Their collaboration appears to be strengthening the work that is done by the two entities to better support the ultimate goal - to protect linguistic rights, promote multilingualism, and advocate for marginalised languages.

2.5. National Language Policy Framework (NLPF)

The National Language Policy Framework (2003) was an outcome of discussions between the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and the Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) in response to Section (6) of the Constitution of 1996. It is important to note that NLPF does not constitute as a language policy. It is a broad framework that provides guidelines on how the multilingual provisions of the Constitution can be implemented. The NLPF was published 17

years ago. However, it is still relevant today since the framework makes clear stipulations with regard to the use of indigenous languages and the principle of equal access to public service (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003a: Section 1.1.7).

The NLPF "sets out an enabling framework for a coherent multilingual dispensation with parameters of the Constitution" (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003a: Section 1.1.8). One can argue that the NLPF creates a supporting framework for the provisions that have been made in the Constitution. It has been established to ensure that there is "harmonisation of the language policy at the three levels of government" (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003a: Section 1.3.9).

Section 2(2)(1) of the NLPF states that one of its principles is to show "commitment to the promotion of language equity and language rights as required by a democratic dispensation" (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003a: Section 2.2.1). This is an indication that the NLPF recognises the linguistic rights paradigm that informs the South African Constitution. Moreover, the framework stipulates that "all government structures (national, provincial and local government) are bound by the provisions of the policy as are any institutions exercising a public power or performing a public function in terms of legislation" (Department of Arts and Culture, 2003a: Section 2.4.1).

The NLPF is accompanied by an Implementation Plan. The strategies that are presented in the Implementation Plan are meant to be practical and progressive, enabling the national, provincial, and local governments to implement the constitutional provisions (Beukes, 2004). Section 1(2)(4) of the Implementation Plan stipulates that:

> "Local governments will determine the language use and preference of their communities within an enabling provincial language policy framework. Upon determination of the language use and preference of communities, local governments must, in broad consultation with their communities, develop, publicise, and implement multilingual policies."

Moreover, Section 1(5) of the Implementation Plan recognises the challenges that exist due to the dominance of English in most domains (government structures, business, and the media). In these domains, English functions as a lingua franca in inter-group communication. The

suggestion is to work with different political and administrative structures to enhance the effective implementation of the policy.

2.6. The Use of Official Languages Act

The history that led to the adoption of the Use of Official Languages Act of 2012 shows the importance of members of the community advocating for language rights. According to Pretorius (2013), the government's hand was forced by a court case that was initiated by a South African citizen, Mr. Lourens, who had applied to the Equality Court. Mr. Lourens is an Afrikaans speaker and a practicing attorney in North West. Mr. Lourens argued that:

> "The current practice of Parliament in relation to the language used for legislation, and the rules of Parliament in this regard, amount to unfair discrimination against him in that Bills are introduced into Parliament invariably in English, are published in English, and the official text that is sent to the President for signature is also, invariably, in English only. This, he contends unfairly discriminates against all non-English speaking people in the country." (Lourens v President van die Republiek van Suid Afrika en Andere (49807/09) [2010:2] ZAGPPHC 19).

The above-mentioned court case resulted in the adoption of the South African Languages Bill in 2011. The Bill was later amended to the Use of Official Languages Act of 2012 (Pretorius, 2013). The Use of Official Languages Act of 2012 provides a legal framework that assists in monitoring the use of official languages by the national governments. The objective of the Act is "to regulate and monitor the use of official languages for government purposes by the national government" (Use of Official Languages Act, No 12 of 2012: Section 2.a).

The Act legislates the equal treatment of all the official languages, and equal access to government information (Use of Official Languages Act, No 12 of 2012: Section 2.b.c). Section (4) of the Act requires every national department, national public entity, and national public enterprise to adopt a language policy. The policy must "stipulate how official languages will be used, amongst other things, in effectively communicating with the public, official notices, government publications and inter and intra-government communications" (Use of Official Languages Act, No 12 of 2012: Section 4.2.c).

It is important to note that the Use of Official Languages Act of 2012 gives a mandate to the national government, national departments, and, especially, the Department of Arts and Culture. Furthermore, the Act mandates the Department of Arts and Culture and the various national departments to establish NLUs. The NLUs should be responsible for all language related matters of the department (Use of Official Languages Act, No 12 of 2012: Section 5 & 6).

2.7. Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act

The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 was passed by the Mpumalanga provincial government in response to Section 6(3) of the Constitution and the Use of Official Languages Act of 2012. In 2012, the Mpumalanga provincial government published the Mpumalanga Languages Bill and made it available for public comments (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Bill, 2012). Some changes were made before the Languages Bill became the Languages Act. For example, Section (8) of the Languages Bill required the provincial government to establish the Mpumalanga Language Committee which will assist with language-related matters in the province. However, the amendments in the Languages Act advocate for the establishment of more entities – the Mpumalanga Provincial Language Committee, the Mpumalanga Language Unit, and the Mpumalanga Language Forum. The responsibilities of the Mpumalanga Language Committee which were highlighted in the Languages Bill of 2012 are similar to the responsibilities of the different entities in the Languages Act of 2014.

For the purpose of this study, the provincial organ[3] of state is the Inkanyeti Local Municipality. Section 19(1) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 stipulates that all provincial organs of state should develop language policies. However, as indicated in Chapter One the municipality does not have a municipal language policy. Thus, the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 is used as the guiding document for the study.

The mandate of the Act is to ensure that the Mpumalanga provincial government and local municipalities are guided towards the goal of promoting and developing the provincial languages. The Act indicates that:

[3] Provincial organ of state refers to "[a]ny provincial department or municipality in the province (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 1)

> "[W]hilst having due regard to Section (6) of the Constitution, which determines the 11 official languages, the designated official languages of the province, for purpose of government, as contemplated in Section 6(3) of the Constitution, are isiNdebele, SiSwati, English, and Afrikaans (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 4.1)."

Section 4(2) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act recognises the linguistic rights of the residents of the province. The residents are offered the right to "use any one of the 11 official languages as contemplated in Section (6) of the Constitution, or sign language" (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 4.2). This is an indication that the residents of the municipality are not limited to use only the four designated official languages of the province in oral or written communication.

The Act stipulates that the provincial government should establish a Mpumalanga Provincial Language Unit. The Language Unit will be responsible for monitoring the equal use of the official designated languages in the province and ensure that there is equal access to government information (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 17). Amongst other things, the Language Unit is required to take "positive measures in developing the African languages spoken in the province" (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 13). The provincial government is also required to employ language practitioners that will work hand in hand with the Language Unit to facilitate requests for interpretation and translation services in the province.

While the Language Act stipulates the need to establish a Provincial Language Unit, the success of this entity having been established in Mpumalanga is not clear. In 2019, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of Agriculture, Mr. Vusi Shongwe, delivered a speech on behalf of the Mpumalanga Premier, Mrs. Refilwe Mthweni-Tsipane. In this speech, he indicated that the "Mpumalanga provincial government shall establish the Mpumalanga provincial Language Unit within the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation (henceforth DCSR)" (Inhlabamkhosi, 2019: 3). This statement indicates that in 2019, there was not yet a Language Unit established in the DCSR. Moreover, the 2019 - 2020 Annual Performance Plan of the Mpumalanga DCSR attests that there have been inadequate resources to cater for language service development in the province (DCSR, 2020:11).

According to Section (10) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Acts, a Provincial Language Committee should be established in terms of Section 8(8)(a) of the PanSALB Act. Section 8(8)(a) of the PanSALB Act stipulates that "a Provincial Language Committee in each province must be established to "advice in any language matters affecting the province" (Pan South African Language Board Act, No.59 of 1995: Section 8.8.a). As mentioned above, Provincial Language Committees in the nine provinces have been successfully established. In Mpumalanga, the DCSR has offered financial support to the Mpumalanga Provincial Language Committee (DCSR, 2019:78). In 2019, the committee has compiled, and published terminology lists for isiNdebele and SiSwati African literature (DCSR, 2019:26).

The Mpumalanga Languages Act further requires the provincial government to establish the Mpumalanga Provincial Language Forum. The Forum should comprise of at least one member of the Language Unit, a language association, PanSALB, and the University of Mpumalanga (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 18). However, at the time of writing, there was no traceable information on the existence of this institution.

The discussion in this section outlined the provisions made in the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014. It also highlighted the activities by the Mpumalanga DCSR in response to the provisions of the Act. In the data analysis section, I will discuss whether the Inkanyeti Local Municipality is successful in implementing the provisions indicated in this Act.

2.7.1. Marginalisation of Xitsonga in the Mpumalanga province

The language statistics of Mpumalanga show that the province is linguistically diverse. Table 2.1 provides the language statistics for the province. The statistics are based on the home languages of the residents.

Table 2.1: Language statistics of Mpumalanga province (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Language	Population %
SiSwati	28
isiZulu	24
Xitsonga	10
isiNdebele	10
Sepedi (Sesotho sa Leboa)	9
Afrikaans	7
Sesotho	3
English	3
Setswana	2
isiXhosa	1
Tshivenda	0.30

Mpumalanga's linguistic diversity notwithstanding, only four languages – Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, and SiSwati are recognised as the official designated languages of the province. SiSwati has a strong presence in some municipalities, but is a minority language in others (with a number of speakers below ten percent); similarly, isiNdebele has a strong presence in some municipalities.

The statistics show that isiZulu and Xitsonga have a relatively high number of speakers, yet there are not recognised as official designated languages of the province. IsiZulu is spoken in all the municipalities in the province, it is the dominant local language in municipalities in the south of the province. Xitsonga is – together with isiNdebele – the third most spoken African language in the Mpumalanga province, and has a strong presence in some municipalities, including the Inkanyeti Local Municipality.

Given the multilingual nature of the province, one would want to understand how the four designated languages were selected as official languages of the province. The selection of the official languages of each province is rooted in how the nine provinces were previously referred to as homelands, and each homeland had its designated languages. The apartheid homelands: Transkei, KwaZulu, Bophuthashwana, Lebowa, Ciskei, Venda, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele,

QwaQwa, and KaNgwane (see more discussion in Du Plessis, 2000:96). In the new South Africa, the previous homelands were integrated into nine provinces (Du Plessis, 2000:97). The designated languages of the homelands were recognised as provincial languages. In the case of Mpumalanga, which included KaNgwane, Afrikaans, English, and SiSwati were the designated languages of the homeland (Du Plessis, 2000:100). KwaNdebele was also integrated into Mpumalanga and it had three official languages namely, Afrikaans, English and isiNdebele. In the rest of the territory, which was part of the (apartheid) Republic of South Africa, Afrikaans and English were the official languages. The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014, therefore, recognises Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, and SiSwati – the languages of the now combined territories – as the provincial designated languages.

From this observation, one can argue that the selection of languages in the Mpumalanga province is influenced by the colonial and apartheid history of South Africa. Despite the linguistic diversity of the province (as highlighted in Table 2.1), no other languages were selected as designated official languages in the province. Xitsonga and isiZulu which have a strong presence in some municipalities were not granted official status and are politically marginalized.

2.8. Implementation of the South African language policy

Wiley & Gracia (2016) argue that even though policies are intended to promote languages, the policies may not always be well-received, conceived, or implemented. In this section, I discuss the implementation of the South African language policy by the national and provincial governments. It was important for me to look at how the language policy is implemented at a national level because it helps in understanding language policy implementation from a broader perspective. Moreover, it will help in understanding whether the challenges faced by municipalities are also experienced at a national level.

2.8.1. Challenges in language policy implementation

There is a relationship that exists between socio-political power and language. Alexander (2005) points out that English has become the language of power in South Africa. Kangira (2016) concurs that the continued preference of English as a medium of communication in South African government institutions creates a negative environment for the use of local

languages. And this affects the implementation of multilingual policies. Kangira (2016) further elaborates how the dominance of the languages of the colonial master is a common occurrence in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, English dominates indigenous languages in South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

Sharp and Klopper (2011) point out that more work still needs to be done by the government to ensure that there is no inequality in language use. They look at the difficulties that may be faced, especially, by the elderly, poor, and people from rural areas, who may experience difficulties in getting access to government services due to language barriers. This is echoed by Deumert (2010), who argues that the dominance of English is an obstacle to people with little or no proficiency in the language.

Language ideologies also pose a threat to the successful implementation of the language policy. The belief that English offers better opportunities compared to African languages may result in inequality in language use (Beukes, 2009). For example, in the education sector, English is still preferred and dominant in schools (Makoe and Mckinney, 2014); the same applies to the higher education sector (Zikode 2017, Prah 2018).

South Africa has 11 official languages. To successfully use all the official languages will require adequate resources. Linguistic personnel such as lexicographers, translators, interpreters, and proofreaders would have to be hired by government institutions to assist in providing language services for all official languages. Kaschula (2004) argues that making financial resources available for language work is one of the challenges that is faced by South Africa. Kaschula's assessment was published in 2004. However, the same challenge is present today: as mentioned in Section 2.7, the Mpumalanga 2019/2020 Annual Plan indicated that there are inadequate resources to cater to linguistic needs in the province. Moreover, the discussion in Section 2.3 has indicated that inadequate financial resources are one of the challenges faced by PanSALB. The discussion of the challenges faced by the national government indicates that a lot of work still needs to be done by the national government in ensuring that the provisions made in Section (6) of the Constitution is fully implemented.

2.8.2. Current state of language policy implementation

Early in the chapter, I discussed the institutions which were established to eradicate the linguistic imbalances that existed in the apartheid era. This shows that South Africans have chosen a multilingual approach, an approach that does not discriminate, and that is committed to developing all South African languages equally. Kangira (2016) lists different initiatives (dictionaries, translations, interpretation of public speeches, etc.) that can be used to improve the status of African languages. South Africa has adopted some of these approaches. In Section 2.3, I listed the dictionaries that have been published under the leadership of PanSALB, as well as the institution-building that has taken place.

In addition, some of the public speeches, such as the *State of the Nation Address* that is delivered by the President of the Republic of South Africa, are translated into all the South African languages. These translated documents are published on the website of the Presidency[4]. Moreover, the current President, Honourable Cyril Ramaphosa, often uses multilingualism (isiZulu, Xitsonga, Tshivenda, Sesotho, Sepedi, and Setswana) in his public speeches. Furthermore, there is usually a sign language interpreter available, for those who are viewing the speeches on television. Of interest were also the Covid-19 press conferences in 2020: the different Ministers frequently use African languages to address the public during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Progress on the implementation of the South African language policy also includes the establishment of Language Units by provincial governments. As per the provincial websites of the provinces. The following provinces have Language Units that assist with language development: Western Cape, Limpopo, Gauteng, Free State, North West and KwaZulu- Natal. One other achievement is the adoption of provincial language policies in all nine provinces. Below is the list of all the language policies and publication dates:

- Western Cape Provincial Language Act, No.3 of 1998
- Northern Province Language Act of 2000 (Limpopo Province)
- KwaZulu – Natal Provincial Language Policy of 2008
- Northern Cape Use of Official Languages Act, No. 5 of 2013

[4] http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/node/9982/translate

- Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No. 3 of 2014
- North West Provincial Language Act, No.1 of 2015
- Eastern Cape Use of Official Languages Act, No. 8 of 2016
- Gauteng Provincial Language Act, No. 3 of 2016
- Use of Free State Official Languages Act, No. 1 of 2017

Despite the challenges that are faced by the South African national and provincial governments in implementing the language policy and addressing the linguistic injustices of the past, progress is certainly being made, even though slowly.

2.9. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given an overview of the language provisions made in the Constitution after South Africa was declared a democratic country in 1994. The provisions include the mandate for government institutions to promote the equal use of the 11 official languages of South Africa. Following this, I looked at PanSALB and the progress that it has made since its formation. Especially, important are its contributions towards the development and promotion of the 11 official languages, the Khoisan languages, and the South African Sign Language. However, the discussion has also shown that PanSALB has, at times, been unable to carry out its mandate due to financial constraints and leadership challenges.

The CRL Commission is another institution tasked with the promotion of multilingualism in South Africa. Its work focuses on assisting in protecting the linguistic rights of the different linguistic communities. The 2017/2018 Annual Report of the CRL shows that there exists a successful working relationship with PanSALB. After discussing these two central institutions, I looked at the National Language Policy Framework of 2003, and its Implementation Plan, which provides guidelines on how the 11 official languages can be promoted. The Use of Official Languages Act (2012) was discussed as well. The Act provides further guidance for the national and provincial governments. As this study focuses on a municipality in the Mpumalanga province, I discussed the provisions and activities made in the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 in greater detail. The discussion on the Mpumalanga Languages Act suggested a possible marginalisation of other languages such as Xitsonga and

isiZulu. I argued that, the marginalisation is a result of the South African history, and how the designated languages of each province were selected.

This chapter gave a broad overview of language policy implementation by national and provincial governments. I discussed how the preference of English over African languages in the education sector and government communications have an impact on the implementation of Section (6) of the Constitution. The discussion of the implementation of the language policy at the national and provincial level sheds light on how inadequate resources affect the implementation of the language policy.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methods that were used to conduct this study. The methods used in this study are similar to the methods which were used in a study by Nel (2014). Her work is titled *"Challenges and opportunities of implementing the Western Cape language policy*". The methodology of her study included interviews with staff members from the Western Cape provincial parliament, language practitioners, and community members in the Western Cape. She further distributed questionnaires and conducted observations.

The chapter is structured as follows: Section 3.2, looks at the ethical procedures that were followed when conducting the study. In Section 3.3, I discuss the details of the research design. The data collection tools that were used are discussed in Section 3.4. These tools include semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, observations, document analysis, as well as physical and virtual linguistic landscape analysis. Section 3.5 presents the data management tools that helped to organise and protect the data after they were collected. Section 3.6 discusses the methodological approaches that were used in analysing the data that were collected. Lastly, I discuss the limitations and challenges I experienced when conducting this study in Section 3.7.

3.2. Ethical considerations

This study was carried out according to the ethics guidelines of the University of Cape Town, Faculty of Humanities (University of Cape Town, 2013). Resnik (2011) defines ethics as norms of conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in research.

3.2.1 Permission

A research proposal was submitted and approved by the Linguistics Section (in the School of African and Gender Studies, Anthropology, and Linguistics) at the University of Cape Town before the commencement of the project. Ethical clearance was granted by the Linguistics Section. Approval from the municipality to conduct the research was granted by the Municipal Manager. All the staff members who participated in the semi-structured interviews and the observations signed consent forms (see Appendix A). During the Council meeting, the Municipal Manager introduced me to the members of Council and community members who

were attending the meeting. This was done to ensure that they are aware that I am a researcher who was observing (not recording!) the proceedings.

3.2.2. Voluntary participation

The purpose of the study was explained to all the participants. The participants were informed that they can participate voluntarily and that they can also withdraw from the study at any time.

3.2.3. Avoidance of harm

I assured all the participants that they were not going to be harmed, either physically, emotionally, or psychologically.

3.2.4. Confidentiality

All participants who answered the questionnaire were anonymized. The individuals who participated in the semi-structured interviews were also given pseudonyms. Given that the sections at the municipality are very small, the identity of the participants could potentially be recovered. The municipality was therefore anonymized and given the pseudonym - Inkanyeti Local Municipality. Any information that could have led to the municipality being easily identified has been omitted. This includes detailed statistical information which is only reported in summary format.

3.3. Research design

Babbie and Mouton (2001:74) define research design as a plan that a researcher develops to collect data. The here presented research uses a case study design, focusing on one particular locality. According to Zainal (2007), case studies allow for the understanding of complex issues by focusing on a particular context and studying this context in-depth.

3.4. Data collection

In this study, I used qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative research is a method that is used to gain insight and understanding of people's behaviours, attitudes, values, and the motivations behind them (Creswell, 1998:15). Quantitative methods, on the other hand, focus on observing and measuring characteristics displayed by people. The results are then analysed numerically (Thomas, 2003:41). The data was collected using voice recordings, handwritten

notes, taking pictures with a phone, ‘screen grabbing’ online material, and distributing questionnaires.

The first set of data was collected in May/June 2018. The data was collected daily at the municipal offices between 08:30 and 15:00. This time frame allowed me to see how the staff at the municipality interact (with each other and with clients) in the morning when they get to work, during their lunch hour and when working at their respective working stations. I was also able to conduct semi-structured interviews with the executive staff members, engage in office and Council meeting observations, and distribute questionnaires to the staff members at the main municipality offices. I further conducted a FaceTime follow-up interview with the Communications Manager in June 2018. The FaceTime follow-up interview was conducted to get information on the demographics of the staff members of the municipality and to further understand the work done by the Communications Manager.

The online data was collected between July 2018 and October 2020. These data were collected through observations of language use and language choices by municipal staff and members of the public on the Facebook page. In addition, I analysed the language used on the website of the municipality. In February 2020, I returned to the municipality to report on the results of the study and receive feedback on my findings from staff members. During this period, I also had a meeting with the executive members of the municipality and engaged in informal conversations with members of the public. Lastly, the data analysis also included a review of the Annual Reports of the municipality.

3.4.1. Semi-structured interviews with executive staff members

The semi-structured interview method allows the researcher to obtain in-depth information from the participants. The method gives the researcher and the participant an opportunity for flexible interaction and dialogue. Thus, the researcher can follow up on questions and the participant can elaborate on the answers (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport, 2011:417). In semi-structured interviews, participants are positioned as experts on the subject and should, therefore, be allowed maximum opportunity to tell their story (Smith, Harre and Van Langenhoven, 1995:9).

For this study, five executive staff members were selected to participate in the semi-structured interviews. I focused on executive staff because I wanted to get first-hand information from top management on the language practices of the municipality. All the executive staff members are male, which introduced an unavoidable gender-bias into the sample. I prepared an interview guide that was used to guide the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B). According to Gibson & Brown (2009:88), "interviewers prepare a list of questions that can be asked in a flexible order, using wording that is appropriate to the context". The guide was used to generate a conversation that was not 'formal', but elicited information relevant to the study. The semi-formal conversations allowed the participants to be relaxed and to link their responses to their personal experiences.

To get the participants to be more comfortable in the interviews, I introduced myself using SiSwati, and briefly outlined the background of the study. De Vos et al (2011:418) point out that the two parties need to develop a mutual relationship of trust before the interview. This supports not only the cooperation of the interviewee, but also improves the overall quality of the data being collected. The interviews were conducted in SiSwati and English, as each participant was free to use the language, they were comfortable with.

Due to the exigencies of time and the tight schedules of the participants, interviews were fairly short (15 to 20 minutes each). All the interviews were recorded, and I requested permission from the participants before I recorded the interviews. The interviews were conducted in the staff members' respective offices. This setting allowed for a confidential interview.

The following staff members participated in the interviews (their name are pseudonyms, see the ethics discussion in 3.2):

A. Communications Manager (James): The Communications Manager is responsible for communication that goes out to the public, and he is also the spokesperson of the municipality. This interview focused on how language is used when communicating with the public. The Communications Section consists of four staff members, the Communications Manager, the Communications Officer, and two call centre agents. The interview was 20 minutes long.

B. The Secretary of the Office of the Speaker (Sizwe): The Secretary of the Office of the Speaker is responsible for sending meeting notices to the public and the Council. The Secretary

works closely with the Speaker to draw up agendas for all Council meetings, he is also responsible for writing minutes in Council meetings. The Section consists of three staff members: The Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and the Secretary. The interview was 15 minutes long.

C. The Planning and Development Officer (Sipho): The Planning and Development Section is responsible for the business side of the municipality. They manage contractors or municipal projects. They also deal with stakeholders from Mpumalanga and other provinces in the country. This Section consists of five staff members: The Director of the Section, two officers, and two fieldworkers. The interview was 20 minutes long.

D. Information and Technology (IT) Senior Technician (Zweli): The IT Section is responsible for managing the IT duties of the municipality and monitoring the website of the municipality. The IT Section consists of four staff members, the senior technician, and three junior technicians. The interview was 15 minutes long.

E. Public Participation Liaison Officer (Themba): Themba is responsible for interacting with the public and collaborating with the public in making decisions that will bring positive results to the municipality. This Section interacts with different municipalities in the province. The Public Participation Section and the Communications Section engage with the public regularly, however, the Public Participation Section ensures that members of the public are involved in the decisions that are taken by the municipality. This Section consists of two staff members: The public participation liaison officer, and a fieldworker. The interview was 15 minutes long.

3.4.2. Informal conversation with members of the public

During the period I visited the municipality to report back on the findings from the data that has already been collected (February 2020), I had informal conversations with five members of the public who I met while I was at the municipality. Before commencing with the informal conversations, I requested permission from some members of the public to ask them some questions about their experiences, consent was obtained verbally. The conversations were approximately 5 to 10 minutes long and focused on the perceptions of members of the public regarding the use of languages at the municipality. They were not recorded, but I compiled written notes after the interaction.

3.4.3. Questionnaires

Trobia (2008) points out that the structure of a questionnaire must be logical, the length of the questionnaire must be reasonable, and the questions should be relevant to the research question. I designed a questionnaire that incorporated Trobia's recommendations. The questionnaire consists of ten questions, and the questions focus on language use and preference as well as the development, and promotion of African languages (see Appendix C). The questionnaire was available in SiSwati and English.

I printed 50 copies of the questionnaires and personally handed out the questionnaires to staff members in the main municipal office. Before handing out the questionnaires to the staff members, I introduced myself and outlined the aim of the study. The staff members had the choice to either complete the questionnaire or decline the request to be part of the study. Introducing myself to staff members individually allowed me to build relationships and created the opportunity for staff to ask any questions they might have.

The municipality has approximately 560 staff members located in various offices: Service centres, clinics, and public works offices. The main municipal office, where the research took place, has 60 staff members. Out of these 60 staff members only nine staff members agreed to complete a questionnaire. I will discuss the challenges I encountered when requesting staff members to participate in the questionnaire below (in Section 3.7). For the nine staff members who agreed, I left the questionnaires with them to give sufficient time to respond to the questions. The staff members who participated in the questionnaire were not in executive positions, and the aim of distributing the questionnaire to them was to find out about their views.

3.4.4. Observations

Observation is a method whereby one collects data through looking and hearing rather than asking (Kuwulich, 2005). Observations are associated with the researcher's first-hand experience of the subject under investigation. Before the practical execution of the observations. I gained permission from the Municipal Manager and the Office of the Speaker to attend a Council meeting as well as permission to observe office engagements at the main

municipality offices. The staff members whom I observed also gave their consent by signing the consent forms. The office observations were conducted at the Communications Section, in the Reception area, in the Planning and Development Section, and, as noted above, during a General Council meeting. I took detailed notes during these observations, recording the use of languages and noting down, as accurately as possible, the interaction. It is important to acknowledge that during the observations there might have been a margin of error when identifying the languages that the participants use, especially isiNgomane and SiSwati because they are similar.

3.4.5. Document analysis

Bowen (2009:2) defines document analysis as "the systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic material". The examination of these documents is done to gain an understanding of the subject being studied (Bowen, 2009). For the purpose of this study, I reviewed the Annual Reports of the Inkanyeti Local Municipality (2010 - 2019). Unfortunately, none of the Annual Reports had information relating to language matters at the municipality.

3.4.6. Signage

According to Ben-Rafael and his colleagues (2006), linguistic landscaping refers to the notices, posters, and signage that are visible in public spaces. Stroud and Mpendukana (2009: 364) define linguistic landscapes as "a way in which place is constituted through the language that is used in signage and speakers' public displays, performances, and interaction". Studies done on linguistic landscapes often follow a multimodal approach: Both text and image contribute to meaning making (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). For this study, I photographed ten signs which were visible around the municipality. I used a phone camera to capture the signs that I came across while I was at the municipality.

3.4.5. Meeting with the executive members

As mentioned earlier, I returned to the municipality in February 2020. In the context of this visit, I met with seven executive staff members. The meeting was attended by the Director of Corporate Service, the Operations Manager from the Office of the Municipal Manager, the

Legal Services Manager, the Performance Management Services Manager, the Chief Audit Executive, and the Communications Liaison Officer. Initially, I had requested the Municipal Manager and the Mayor of the municipality to be present in this meeting, however, they were not able to attend due to other work commitments. At the meeting, I presented the results of my research and asked the executive members for feedback and discussion. In their feedback, they informed me about work that they have done between 2018 and 2020 to improve the status of languages. Their responses will be discussed in the analysis chapters.

3.4.6. Online data

3.4.6.1. Social media – Facebook

I collected 40 municipal Facebook posts and 516 comments (made by the members of the public on the 40 posts). A total number of 40 posts were collected between 18 July 2018 and 26 October 2018. This is the total number of posts that were posted by the municipality during this period. The Facebook data was publicly accessible, the municipality's Facebook page is not a private site. In approaching the Facebook data, I used an approach known as virtual ethnography. According to Kelly-Holmes (2015), virtual ethnography can allow the researcher to collect data by observing the engagement and language used on the site without participating. Kelly-Holmes (2015) further indicates that virtual ethnography allows the researcher to investigate language policy online by using ethnographic sensitivity. Hine (2000:5 cited in Kelly-Holmes, 2015:134) argues that ethnographic sensitivity "make[s] explicit the taken for granted and often tacit ways in which people make sense of their lives." Moreover, Kelly-Holmes (2015) points out that virtual ethnography allows the researcher to follow interesting leads that will assist in answering the research question.

3.4.6.2. Website

Municipalities websites are sites where the public can access government information. In the context of this study, I looked at the language/s that are used on the website. This data was collected using the Wayback Machine, a freely available online tool (wwws://archive.org/web/). The Wayback Machine allows researchers to access earlier versions of a website (Berezkina, 2016:43). Using the Wayback Machine, I was able to look at the languages used on the municipality website between 2011 and 2020.

3.5. Data management

Schwandt (1997:61) defines data management as a system of categorizing, filing, and protecting the data. This makes it easy for the researcher to retrieve the data when doing the analysis. The following steps were used to organise and manage all the data that was collected:

- Semi-structured interviews were transcribed and stored in a digital folder. The recordings were downloaded to a computer and were password protected.
- The questionnaires that were completed were kept in a file as hard copies.
- The notes, which were taken during the observation were digitally transcribed. The note pad was kept safe as a backup.
- The signs which were captured were downloaded to a computer and saved on iCloud.
- All Facebook posts, comments, and website screenshots were stored in a folder.

3.6. Data analysis

According to De Vos et al. (2011:397), data analysis refers to the process of bringing structure and order to the information that has been collected. This section will highlight the methods and procedures which were followed to analyse the data of the study.

3.6.1. Semi-structured Interviews and questionnaire analysis

I used qualitative content analysis to analyse the data that was collected through the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires. According to Lavrakas (2008), content analysis allows the researcher to create meaningful categories from the set of data. It recognises people's behaviours, and how they use language when they interact. The following steps were followed when analysing the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires.

3.6.1.1. A close reading of the data

I began the data analysis process by close reading the data. According to de Wet and Erasmus (2005), a close reading of the data allows the researcher to uncover the layers of meaning evident in the data. Close reading of the data was also applied to the questionnaires that were

completed by the nine staff members. I read carefully through their responses to the open-ended questions. It was particularly important for me to pay attention to every detail of the data, from both the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires because it was first-hand information from the participants. Morse, Barrett, Olson, & Spiers (2002 cited in de Wet and Erasmus, 2005) argue that a researcher should adopt 'investigative responsiveness'. This means that the researcher needs to be open-minded, sensitive, creative, and prepared to give up on ideas that are poorly supported by the data.

3.6.1.2. First level coding

According to de Wet and Erasmus (2005), first-level coding allows the researcher to go through the data and identify emerging themes. After re-reading the data that was collected through the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires, I systematically went through all the data to identify themes in the data that link to the research question. I focused on language use and preferences, and the development of the local languages at the municipality. I first grouped the responses that relate to the two themes, and then looked at further themes in the interviews and the questionnaires that were relevant to the research question.

3.6.1.3. Identifying the languages used and preferred

As this study aims to investigate the implementation of the South African language policy by the local government, the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires focused on identifying the languages that the participants preferred to use in the municipality. I also looked at the extent to which the local languages are being promoted and developed by the municipality. The quantitative analysis of the questionnaires quantified the number of times staff members reported to use the different languages in various contexts.

3.6.2. Analysis of the observation

Kawulich (2005) argues that observations seek to describe behaviours and events in a particular setting. In my observations, I focused on the language choices by the different staff members at work, and the Council members at the meeting. As mentioned earlier, the observations were conducted at the Communications Section, in the Reception area, at the Planning, and Development Section, and during a General Council meeting. The office observations were

conducted while seating in the corridors of the various Sections, and the waiting area of the Reception. The observation of the General Council meeting was done while I was in the area where members of the public were seated. I followed the following steps to analyse the observation data:

- I wrote up notes of what I saw and heard. I tried to record utterances and interactions verbatim by noting them down.
- Before analysing the languages used, I described the setting where the observation occurred and noted down observable characteristics of those I observed (e.g., gender and approximate age).

3.6.3. Analysis of the signage

The analysis of the linguistic landscape involved two processes: Recording the language used on the sign and analysing the multimodality used on the sign. Similarly, to the questionnaires, I used qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse the signs. A quantitative approach was used when enumerating the languages present on each sign. Qualitative analysis was used to describe the relationship that exists between the image, text, and the space/location in which the sign appeared. I paid close attention to the following aspects when analysing the signs:

- The language/s used on the sign.
- Type of sign (for example, instructions and/or educational signs).
- The font size of the text.
- Amount of text on the sign.
- The physical location of the sign.
- Images used in the sign.
- The use of colour.

I also looked into questions of representation when analysing the signs. Hall (2013) argues that signs form part of a bigger picture such as cultural, social, and political influences. The reader of the signs may be able to create meaning by relating the information on the signs to broader societal experiences (Hall, 2013). Therefore, in analysing the signs, I elaborated on what the signs may represent in that context.

3.6.4. Analysis of the online data

The online data (Facebook and website) was analysed using virtual ethnography (see discussion above). There are different levels of engagements that the researcher can adopt when using virtual ethnography, this includes: lurking, observing, and conducting interviews with cite owners. However, it is not necessary for the researcher to follow all the engagement levels (Kelly-Holmes, 2015). For the purpose of this study, I observed the language used by the municipality to identify whether the language policy is being implemented; that is, I engaged in 'lurking' and 'observing'. I also observed the linguistic citizenship practices by members of the public. Before analysing the languages and multimodality used on the posts, I followed the steps outlined by Kelly-Holmes (2015):

- Familiarising myself with the municipality's Facebook account: Understanding the design of the site assisted me in ensuring that I understand how the posts and comments are structured.
- Creating field notes: I wrote summaries of the languages used and the number of times these languages were used on the Facebook page. I also noted down my observations on multimodality.
- Detailed analysis of specific posts: Given that this was a big set of data, I closely analysed a small number of posts by the municipality and members of the public. In this step, I applied 'ethnographic sensitivity' which makes explicit details of online semiotic practices (see 3.4.6.1).

3.6.5. Analysing the website

The analysis of the website followed a similar approach to the analysis of the Facebook account. In analysing the website, I had to firstly familiarise myself with the website and the type of content that is posted. Due to the study being on language use and language choices by the municipality, I noted down the number of languages used on the website from 2011 to 2020. In analysing the website, I did not pay much attention to the multimodality of the website. This was due to ethical issues, analysing the multimodality of the website would require me to

provide detailed ‘screen grabs’ of the website and this would have facilitated the identification of the municipality.

3.7. Limitations

Time constraints and working with a busy government institution can limit the data collected. In this case, the interviews with executive staff members were, as noted above, short. The reason for this was that the municipality was finalizing budgets at the time of data collection, and everyone was therefore pressed for time. Getting staff members to participate in the questionnaire also came with challenges. As I mentioned earlier, I distributed the questionnaires to staff members. Some mentioned that they did not have time to fill the questionnaire; others indicated that there were not comfortable with participating because they were afraid that this may cost them their jobs (even after I explained that their names will be kept anonymous).

The office observations also came with challenges. The staff members that I received consent from were the only ones who were comfortable with the process. I could not observe all the different Sections because some staff members were not comfortable with the process. Conducting the study in Mpumalanga – while studying in Cape Town – came with additional challenges. The challenges included financial constraints and not being able to go to the field at any given time to follow up on the data that was collected (or to collect additional data where necessary).

One of the other challenges that I would like to point out concerns gender roles. As indicated earlier, the participants for the semi-structured interviews with the executive staff were all males, and at some time it became a challenge for me as a woman. Gurney (1985) argues that female researchers doing qualitative research in a male dominated setting may not succeed in accessing all the required data because of the stereotypical attitudes’ women experience. In addition, Gurney (1985) elaborates that female researchers in a male dominated field may be required to offer certain favours. The favours may include, running errands, babysitting, and sexual favours in order to have full access to the required data.

Moreover, interviews with the Municipal Manager, the Mayor, and Community Ward Councillors were also not conducted because of the following reasons: (i) The Municipal

Manager and the Mayor were not available for interviews during the time I went to collect the data; and (ii) due to financial constraints, I was not able to travel to the different Wards in the municipality to interview community Ward Councillors. I had also planned to review and analyse minutes and agendas of meetings and departmental reports. However, this was not possible due to the confidentiality of these documents. Lastly, one of the challenges that I experienced during the writing stage is related to anonymizing the municipality. Providing detailed statistics of the municipality will allow readers to identify the municipality easily. Hence, I focused on the broad contours and not the actual percentages of the statistics.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter looked at the research methods that were used in the study. I used semi-structured interviews and distributed questionnaires to staff members at the municipality. Moreover, I collected examples of signage, and screen-grabbed Facebook posts and comments, and used Wayback Machine to screengrab the archives of the website. Data management was also discussed in this chapter, these are the organizing tools that I used to ensure that the data is protected.

I used qualitative and quantitative analysis to analyse the data collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, observations, and signage. And the analysis of the online data followed a virtual ethnography approach which allowed me to study the use of language on the Facebook page and the website of the municipality. This chapter also looked at the ethical procedures that were considered before and during the collection of the data. I had to make sure that I follow the UCT Faculty of Humanities' ethical guidelines (2013). Lastly, in this chapter, I discussed the challenges that I have experienced during the process of conducting this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with executive staff members. The analysis of the interviews focuses on reported language use (formal and informal) in the workplace. In addition, I looked at the respondents' language preferences in the workplace, and their language preferences when communicating with members of the public. The semi-structured interviews with the Communications Section, Office of the Speaker, Planning and Development Section, Public Participation Section, and the IT Section give an understanding of how the staff members leading these sections address the requirements of the language policy. In Chapter Three, I mentioned that I had informal conversations with members of the public. To support the sentiments made by the executive staff members with regards to language use when communicating with the public, I discuss the informal conversation I had with two members of the public. However, this is very limited data and cannot be seen in any way as representative. Nevertheless, I consider it relevant because it gives an idea of how the members of the public respond to the languages used by the municipality.

The last section of this chapter focuses on a prominent theme that emerged across the interviews. The findings from the semi-structured interviews suggest the presence of the "English is understood by a majority" language ideology. This ideology might have an impact on the implementation or non-implementation of the language policy.

4.2. Interviews with the Secretary of the Office of the Speaker and Manager of the Communications Section

The work done by the Secretary of the Office of the Speaker and the Communications Manager is similar. I, therefore, discuss the two interviews together. The main purpose of both offices is to produce communication that goes out to the public.

The first interview was conducted with the Secretary of the Office of the Speaker, Sizwe. Sizwe is male and in his early 30s. He resides in Nelspruit. In the interview, Sizwe used both English

and SiSwati. His duties in the office include arranging Council and community meetings, as well as drafting agendas and minutes for the meetings.

The second interview was conducted with James. James is the Communications Manager and spokesperson of the municipality. He is in his late 30s, and he too resides in Nelspruit. He uses SiSwati and Xitsonga at home. In the interview, he used English and SiSwati. James works with other municipal officers to produce content for the municipal newsletter, the website, and social media. He also represents the municipality on media platforms such as radio and television.

4.2.1. Language use at Council meetings

Sizwe describes Council and community meetings as multilingual. The Speaker usually conducts Council meetings in English. However, Council members and other people attending use a variety of languages and ways of speaking. These include Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga. Sizwe indicated that the Council members use languages that they are comfortable with to express themselves:

> "Mihlangano yaboKhansela mihlangano yepolitiki lokuhlangana khona emacembu epolitiki lahlukene, li-ofisi la-speaker lihlela lemihlangano uma kumele kulungiswe ludzaba lolutsite lolutsitsa umphakatsi. Njengoba lona kungumhlangano webupolitiki, emalunga emkhandlu asebentisa tilwimi tawo kuveta imiva yabo ngalokutsite."

> 'Our Council meetings are a political environment with different political parties. The Office of the Speaker organises these meetings to approve policies or to solve pending community issues. Since this is a political environment, the Council members use their languages to voice out their views on a particular subject.'

According to Sizwe, the Council has only one Council member who does not understand Afrikaans, isiNgomane, SiSwati, or Xitsonga. It appears that this Council member is a monolingual English speaker. Sizwe also indicated that isiNdebele is not used in the Council meetings. In the feedback meeting that was held with the executive staff members of the municipality in February 2020 (see Chapter Three), some participants mentioned that Afrikaans is occasionally used. However, given that the Council consists mostly of

isiNgomane, SiSwati and Xitsonga speaking Councillors, these languages are used regularly in interactions during the proceedings. Sizwe indicated that it sometimes becomes a problem when Council members use Xitsonga because not all of them understand Xitsonga. I will discuss the Council meeting observations in Chapter 5.4.

Sizwe pointed out that they occasionally offer translation and interpretation services to assist Council members that do not understand the languages being used in the meetings. However, interpretation and translation services are not routinely provided in these meetings. Sizwe mentioned that translation and interpretation services are only offered when they have delegates from the Mpumalanga provincial legislature present. He noted that this has not happened between 2016 - 2018. He further clarified that it only happens in rarely occurrence.

Section 6(1) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act allows members of the Council to use any of the country's 11 official languages in their debates. Thus, the practice of the Council to allow for the use of languages that are not designated as 'official' is supported by the Act. In the feedback meeting in early 2020, it was indicated that up to this date there are still no dedicated municipal Language Practitioners assisting with interpretation in Council meetings.

The Office of the Speaker and the Communications Section are responsible for drafting agendas and minutes of the Council meetings. In the absence of an explicit language policy, Sizwe and James decide which language should be used. The language they prefer to use when drafting these documents is English. Section 6(2) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 stipulates that:

> "All official records of debates of the Provincial Legislature and Municipal Councils must be kept in the official languages in which the debate took place, and a translation therefore in any one of the 11 official languages must be made available on request, by the Secretary to the Provincial Legislature or the Municipal Manager, as the case may be."

Thus, the practices by James and Sizwe may be in contradiction with the Act. The Act stipulates that records should be kept verbatim. As I was collecting data for the study, I got the opportunity to see the agendas and minutes of the different meetings held at the

municipality, and they were all written in English. This is an indication that the practice of keeping all records in English is in contradiction with the Act.

4.2.2. Language use and preference in the Communications Section

In the interview, James indicated that they use English during formal meetings, and local languages are used when interacting informally with other staff members:

> "Sikhatsi lesinyenti ngisebentisa lulwimi lweSiSwati kukhuluma nalamanye malalunga alapha emsebentini."
> 'Most of the time I use SiSwati to interact with other colleagues.'

James further reported that the language that is used on social media platforms and the website is English. He argued that this is because they want the message to reach a wider audience, and James believes that English will help with this. As mentioned earlier, James is also the spokesperson of the municipality. As a result, he is responsible for attending radio/television interviews. James indicated that his language use depends on the radio station that is hosting him, but he usually switches between English and SiSwati. During the interview, James indicated that he prefers using English in media briefings because he believes it is the best way for the message to reach everyone:

> "Phela lana sifuna kutsi le message itfolwe bantfu labanyenti. Akusibo bonke bantfu labahlala lana e-Inkanyeti labati SiSwati kungakho sisebentisa iEnglish."

> 'We want the message to be received by everyone. It is not everyone who resides in Inkanyeti that understands SiSwati, that is why we use English.'

In a follow-up interview, James elaborated that they use English because it is regarded as a "general practice":

> "Wonke ma language a-official kodvwa sesibentisi leSingisi ngoba kuyi general practice lana kamasipala."
> 'All languages are official, but we use English because it is a general practice at the municipality.'

Nel (2014:226) found that language practitioners in the Western Cape Provincial Legislature prefer using English in internal communication and that this is regarded as the easier option. Nel's findings are similar to the sentiments of the Communications Manager when he describes the use of English as a "general practice". Although these data were collected in two different settings, the communicative importance that is being assigned to English by government officials reflects the current situation in South Africa where English is politically powerful and dominant in many high-status domains. This observation is supported by the discussion of the power of English in Chapter 2.9.1.

4.2.3. Developing and promoting local languages

The Office of the Speaker, in collaboration with the House of Traditional Leaders, hosts an annual event called *Ummemo*. The event is aimed at promoting EmaSwati culture and language. During this event, the community comes together to celebrate their cultures in traditional dances and with traditional food. Sizwe indicated that this event is aimed at promoting and developing SiSwati:

> "Njalo ngemnyaka siba nemmemo, nawe njengoba wati kutsi njalo kuba nemmemo lapho kuhlangana khona bonke Bukhosi besive saMlambo. Lona mmemo ngingasho kutsi nawo uyasita kutfutfukisa SiSwati ngoba uma labantfu bahlangene, bonke bukhosi buyagcugcutela kutsi bantfu bangakhohlwa envelaphi yabo."

> 'Every year we host *Ummemo*, as you may also know that *Ummemo* is when all traditional leaders and their members in the Swati Kingdom come together. I can say that *Ummemo* helps in developing SiSwati because when the people are together different traditional leaders encourage people not to forget their heritage.'

The *Ummemo* event is aimed at promoting the EmaSwati culture and, to date, there are no comparable events for Matsonga and Amandebele in the municipality. This suggests that the latter remain marginalized and that SiSwati – although less powerful than English (or Afrikaans) – is a primus inter pares as far as local African languages are concerned.

Moreover, Sizwe points out the challenges they face as a municipality in promoting and developing the local official languages:

> "Our challenge is that as the municipality we don't have enough funds and resources to translate all our documents; the municipality doesn't have designated linguistics personnel who focuses on language issues."

The successful implementation of the language policy requires human resources and financial resources. A similar challenge is reported by Nel (2014:224). Nel points out that the Western Cape Language Unit is not given enough resources to successfully implement the provincial language policy. This includes the translation of all documents produced by the provincial government into the three designated languages of the province (Afrikaans, English, and isiXhosa).

Kangira (2016) argues that one of the reasons why language policies that advocate for the promotion of African languages are not being implemented is because of the lack of resources. I concur with this assessment, having a linguistically diverse municipality presents challenges in offering resources to develop all the languages, and to use them equally. Yet, it is important to note that this is not only a challenge at the Inkanyeti Municipality but also at the national level (see discussion in Chapter 2.9.1). The Acts and policies that have been discussed in Chapter Two, unfortunately, do not indicate how such challenges will be addressed.

Sizwe indicated that PanSALB has, in the past, assisted the municipality with language-related matters. He mentioned that in 2017 PanSALB conducted a workshop on South African Sign Language that ran for two days. This workshop was attended by all municipal employees. The purpose of the workshop was to teach staff members about South African Sign Language as well as the basics of signing. During my last visit to the municipality in February 2020, the executive staff members who attended the meeting reported that, in 2019, PanSALB sent an assessment survey to the municipality to evaluate the progress made with regard to the use of official languages. The survey asked whether the municipality has developed and implemented the following services: Language policy, development of the language policy, language unit, language practitioners, translation, and interpretation services, and the use of African languages. The survey also requested information on challenges related to language issues in the municipality. In their response, the municipality indicated that they have implemented one

service, which is the use of African languages (SiSwati) in official correspondences (see discussion in 4.5.1). The remainder of the services were reported not to be available at the municipality. The data analysis in this chapter, as well as in Chapters Five and Six, look at language practices 'on the ground' to evaluate the implementation of the policy.

4.3. Interview with the Planning and Development Section

Sipho is the Planning and Development Officer at the municipality. He is in his late 40s and resides at KaMthenjwa (a village located 15km from the municipality offices). He uses SiSwati at home. Sipho pointed out that they work with different stakeholders within and outside the municipality. The language they use in the meetings depends on the client:

> "Mmm… sikhatsi lesinyenti laba kuba banftu labatfole ma thenda laphuma kumasipala, siba nebantfu labaphuma kulabanye bomasipala balapha eSouth Afrika kuya ngekutsi baphuma kuphi, uma umuntfu kunguMzulu sitawukhuluma SiSwati kandzi uma kuMvenda sitawukhuluma Singisi."
>
> 'Mmm… most of the time the people we do business with are the ones that are awarded tenders by the municipality, we usually have people from different municipalities within South Africa. The language used depends on what language the person speaks, if the person speaks isiZulu then we will communicate in SiSwati, but if the person is Muvenda, we use English to communicate.'

He further pointed out that their Section is encouraged by the Mayor of the municipality to promote SiSwati when providing public services:

> "Njengoba sibaka Planning, Babe Meya ugcizelele kakhulu kutsi sizame kusebentisi leSiSwati uma sihlangana nemalunga emphakatsi."
>
> 'As the Planning and Development Section, the Mayor has encouraged us to promote SiSwati when interacting with community members.'

The encouragement that Sipho speaks about reflects the central position of SiSwati in the municipality. It also shows the Mayor as being proactive and working towards the

implementation of the policy. However, SiSwati is not the only language present in the municipality, hence the encouragement to support only one language raises questions about equality in language promotion.

4.4. Interview with the Public Participation Section

4.4.1. Language use and preference

The Public Participation Section ensures that there is engagement between the municipality and the public. Themba works as an Officer in this Section. He is 32 years of age and resides at KaMaphumulo (a township located approximately 17km away from the municipality offices). He speaks SiSwati and isiNgomane at home. Themba indicated that he uses isiNgomane, English, and SiSwati when interacting with other staff members and that he uses English when interacting with other departments[5] outside of the municipality.

> "Uma sikhuluma nalamanye ma-department sisebentise lesiNgisi, ngalesinye skhatsi sisebentisana nebantfu bangaphandle labantfu labo abasati SiSwati bakhuluma Xitsonga tsine lesikubita ngekutsi siShangane, vele abasati SiSwati."

> 'When we are communicating with other departments – we use English because those people do not know SiSwati and we also don't know Xitsonga[6] – which we call Shangan, they don't know SiSwati.'

Later in the interview, Themba elaborated on the languages they use when rendering public services to the community:

> "Kuhluke kutsi wena uchamuka kuphi. If wena ufika ukhuluma SiSwati, obvious sitawusebentisa SiSwati, kodvwa mawufika ukhuluma siVenda, sitakuphendvula nge English ngoba tsine siVenda asisati. Ahh i-Afrikaans eish kulapho nalapho, uma kufika

[5] For the purpose of this study, I will use 'department' to refer to institutions that are not part of the Inkanyeti Local Municipality. Sections refer to the different operations in the municipality.

[6] This quote is based on Themba's opinion and his linguistic repertoires. Some people at the municipality may understand Xitsonga.

umlungu akhuluma i-Afrikaans kumele ngiye ngicele Jacques Van Wyk to assist ngiku interpreter."

'It depends on the area you come from, if you approach us speaking SiSwati, we will engage with you in SiSwati, but if you are speaking Tshivenda then we will respond in English because we don't know Tshivenda. Ahh, we don't know Afrikaans that well. When a white person approaches us using Afrikaans, we have to ask Ms. Jacques Van Wyk[7] to assist with interpretation.'

In the interview extract above, Themba indicated that they use English if a member of the public communicates with them in a language that they do not understand such as Tshivenda. However, if a member of the public communicates with them in Afrikaans, they are able to draw people who work at the municipality to assist with interpretation. This practice is supported by a conversation I had with Mrs. Bekker (pseudonym) in February 2020. Mrs. Bekker resides at Scout Park, a small town located 5km away from the municipality offices. She is a bilingual English and Afrikaans speaker. During the conversation, Mrs. Bekker indicated that she prefers being assisted in Afrikaans, and she usually gets assistance in Afrikaans when she visits the municipality.

Another conversation is the one I had with Mrs. Hlulani (pseudonym). Mrs. Hlulani resides in a village located approximately 30km away from the municipality offices. Mrs. Hlulani reported that she is a Xitsonga speaker, and during this conversation, I used Xitsonga to ensure that we understand each other. During this conversation, Mrs. Hlulani indicated that she also get assisted in Xitsonga when she visits the municipality. She further elaborated that there is one staff member of the municipality who usually assist her in Xitsonga, as the staff member is also from her village and understands Xitsonga.

The informal conversations with Mrs. Bekker and Mrs. Hlulani, and the comments made by Themba shows the importance of having staff members with diverse linguistic repertoires. This can assist with the implementation of the policy even if resources are limited or non-existent.

[7] For ethical considerations, this name is a pseudonym.

Themba indicated that the language he use in emails is English. He believes that using English in emails is easier than using SiSwati. He argued that SiSwati words are too long:

> "Uma sibhala ma email, I-English sibona ngatsi esamaraza lamagama ngoba SiSwati sidze."
> 'When we are writing emails, we see English to be summarising the words because SiSwati words are long.'

SiSwati's morphological structure is agglutinative, resulting in complex syntactic-morphological words. In writing, these words sometimes appear long and different from English (which is analytic). For example, *sitawuhamba nalaba bantfu* is a SiSwati sentence which can be translated as *we will go with these people* in English. While *sitawuhamba* is slightly longer than 'we will go', the sentence as a whole is shorter in SiSwati. Thus, the sentiments voiced by Themba may not always be true; however, they do inform local ideologies about SiSwati.

These ideologies may affect the use of SiSwati in written communication. As a SiSwati speaker, I'm aware of the negative attitude posed towards *SiSwati mbamba*, "proper SiSwati" (see discussion in Chapter One). The younger generation and people living in townships and the suburbs often indicate that *SiSwati mbamba siyahlupha* – "proper SiSwati is difficult". Moreover, the "proper" SiSwati is sometimes associated with being "too traditional" and "uncool". Such language ideologies might lead to an avoidance of SiSwati (especially in writing) and can thus affect the implementation of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014.

4.4.2. Developing and promoting local languages

Themba indicated that, in his view, SiSwati is not developed enough to be used in all spheres of communication:

> "SiSwati asikafike kule leveli lesingatsi khona si-developed enough kutsi singasisebentiswa yonke indzawo. Uma ubuka lana e-Inkanyenti nje, bantfu basebentisa tiSwati letihlukahlukene, manje vele ahh mine ngibona ngatsi SiSwati asikafike kuleveli lekutsi vele singasisebentisa yonke endzawo nakuma email."

> ‘I don’t think SiSwati has reached a level where we can say that it is developed enough to be used everywhere. When we look at the different types of SiSwati that people around Inkanyeti use, ahh (minimal response token), it shows that SiSwati is not developed enough to be used in emails.’

In the Western Cape, Nel (2014:235) found that the lack of terminology development in isiXhosa was one of the reasons language practitioners struggled to translate documents produced by the Western Cape Provincial Government. Challenges of terminology development also exist at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality (which does not have any language practitioners). Although the PanSALB reports discussed in Chapter Two indicate that terminology development workshops have been coordinated by the SiSwati NLU, the sentiments expressed by Themba may indicate that there could be issues with the dissemination of information regarding terminology development.

4.5. Interview with the Information Technology (IT) Section

Zweli is the senior IT specialist at the municipality, He monitors the website. Zweli is in his early 30s and he resides in Khumbusa (a township located 25km away from the municipality offices). The languages that he uses at home are isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga.

4.5.1. Language use and preference

Zweli indicated that the language they use on the website is English. He further pointed out that they are not responsible for creating content, they get content from the different Sections in the municipality and upload that content to the website. He says:

> “Most of the content that is posted, we receive it as a finished product. We upload what has been sent to us by other sections.”

The availability of a website represents a shift to e-governance. According to Ndou (2004), e-government communication can support transformation because it minimizes costs and broadens communicative reach. Also, Zweli indicated that members of the public use the website when they require certain information:

> "We have some members of the public who go to the website to get employment forms and other documents. I think that the use of English on the website is of use to people who require information fast."

However, not everyone who resides in the area has internet access. There are 75% of the residents who do not have access to the internet (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Only around 25% (Statistics South Africa, 2011) of people have access to the internet and would thus be able to use the website. Furthermore, Borins (2002) points out that e-governance comes with a challenge in low- and middle-income countries because it requires, in addition to access, particular skills. Many people, especially the older generations, have not had opportunities to develop these skills (either through practice or through formal/informal education).

The use of English-only on the website (detailed discussion in Chapter Six) may create further inequalities in language use and access to government services. However, the use of English-only may simply be a result of the limited human resources that have already been discussed in the interviews above. Adding to that, it is important to note that, the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 does not have specific language provisions for electronic communication. But Section 8(1) stipulates that any provincial organ of state must use at least two of the designated official languages when communicating with the public. In section 4.2.3, I discussed the survey that was sent by PanSALB to the municipality, the municipality indicated that they use SiSwati in official correspondences. However, the sentiments expressed by Zweli indicate that this does not apply to the website and other written communication such as emails. This is an indication that there may be contradictions between what the municipality reports to do, and the practical language practices at the municipality.

4.6. A Prominent Language Ideology: 'English is understood by the majority'

The "English is understood by the majority" ideology emerged strongly from the interviews. This language ideology helps us to understand the implementation, and/or lack thereof, of the provincial language policy in the municipality.

Piller (2015:2), Wolff (2017), and Woolard & Schieffelin (1994) describe language ideologies as a set of beliefs that people have about a language. In the semi-structured interviews, James and Sizwe indicated that the reason for using English when communicating with members of the public is because there is a general belief that English is understood by the majority of residents in the municipality. This belief does have an impact on how the municipality uses language when communicating with members of the public.

The view that English is understood by the majority affects the status of other languages present in the municipality. In the interviews, Sizwe indicated that isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga are habitually used in Council meetings, but that English is the preferred language for meeting proceedings. This preference for English as the language of meeting proceedings is grounded in the belief that English is understood by the majority in the municipality. Looking at the sentiments made in the semi-structured interviews, particularly by James and Sizwe, English is the preferred language of communication, and that does not only affect the use of other languages present at the municipality, but also the linguistic rights of the citizens who may prefer to receive government communication in their home languages.

During the interviews, the Communications Manager (James) indicated that the use of English is a general practice at the municipality. The phrase "general practice" which was used by the Communication's Manager can be interpreted in a few different ways:

- The term 'general practice' can be read as referring to the usual way of doing things: English seems to be the habitual medium of communication at the municipality because it is seen as the 'normal way' of doing things.
- Relating to the above-mentioned point, the fact that English is used as the medium of communication at the municipality may be due to the use of English being a general norm across the country. As discussed in Chapter One, English has a high status in South Africa (e.g., Kangira, 2016).

One of the interesting factors that came out from the interviews is that English is regarded as a language that is unavoidable, a language that one has to use in the workplace. Consider the following statement from the interview with Themba: "*But you know that English is always*

used in the workplace". This statement indicates that English is expected to be used in the workplace. This normalizes the use of English and strengthens its status as a lingua franca.

4.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the interviews that were conducted with five executive staff members of the municipality. I focused mostly on their perceptions of language use at the municipality, and how the official languages of the province are being implemented and promoted by the Communications Section, the Office of the Speaker, the Planning and Development Section, the Public Participation Section, and the IT Section. While discussing the findings from these interviews, I elaborated on the informal conversation I had with two members of the public who highlighted how the municipality offers assistance in the languages of their choice.

The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 advocates for the use of at least two of the designated official languages of the province for government communications. However, the data from the semi-structured analysis indicate that English is the preferred language in written communication. African languages, however, are habitually used in more informal spoken communication. Lastly, this chapter looked at the "English is understood by a majority" language ideology. This ideology seem to affect the successful implementation of the language policy by the municipality.

CHAPTER FIVE: QUESTIONNAIRES AND OBSERVATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the data that was collected through the questionnaires, office observations, and the observation of a Council meeting. The analysis in this chapter contributes to our understanding of the languages that are used by staff members in formal and informal interactions. The executive staff members that were interviewed in Chapter Four did not participate in the questionnaires, which focused on eliciting the views and perceptions of non-executive staff.

Section 5.2 of this chapter provides an analysis of the questionnaire data. The findings from the analysis suggest that the staff members are multilingual and that they use their linguistic repertoires to interact with each other and with members of the public. The questionnaire data further indicate language ideologies that seem to affect the successful implementation of the language policy. In Section 5.3, I analyse the findings from office observations. Again, the reported data from this section indicate the use of multilingualism in office interactions. Lastly, Section 5.4 discusses my observations of a General Council meeting. The Council meeting also shows a high level of multilingualism and reflects linguistic citizenship practices that are exercised by Council members attending the meeting, as well as by members of the public.

5.2. Questionnaire analysis

As discussed in Chapter Three, the questionnaire focused on language use and preference, as well as the development and promotion of local languages. Unfortunately, only very few staff members completed the questionnaire (N=9). The return rate was very low, and hence the results discussed below can only be seen as suggesting possible trends. Further research would be necessary.

5.2.1. Language use and preference

This section analyses the questions that focus on the language choices in formal and informal interactions. Importantly, the structure of the questions allowed the participants to choose more than one language. Before looking at the responses, I consider the linguistic repertoires of the

respondents (see Table 5.1.). The linguistic repertoires were compiled based on the responses given to Questions (1), (2), and (10).

Table 5.1: Linguistic repertoires for all the respondents[8].

Respondent	**Linguistic Repertoires**
Respondent 1	English, SiSwati, Xitsonga, isiZulu, Setswana, Sepedi and Tshivenda
Respondents 2	SiSwati, English, and Xitsonga
Respondent 3	English, SiSwati, isiNdebele, isiZulu, Sepedi, isiXhosa, Setswana, and Afrikaans
Respondents 4	English and SiSwati
Respondent 5	English, SiSwati, isiZulu, and Afrikaans
Respondent 6	SiSwati, Xitsonga, English, and Afrikaans.
Respondent 7	English, SiSwati, and Xitsonga
Respondent 8	English, Xitsonga, SiSwati, and Afrikaans
Respondent 9	SiSwati, English, isiNdebele, isiZulu, and Afrikaans.

Table 5.1 shows that the participants are multilingual. The linguistic repertoires of the staff members indicate that all the designated official languages of the province are present at the municipality, including isiNdebele, which is spoken by two of the nine staff members. Xitsonga, which was discussed in Chapter Two and which is not a designated official language, is spoken by four of the nine staff members.

To understand how the participants use their multilingualism at the municipality, Figures 5.1 to 5.3 summarise the answers given to Questions (1) to (3).

[8] The questionnaire did not have a section where the respondents can mention their primary home language. The order in which the linguistic repertoires are listed is in accordance to how the respondents listed them on the questionnaire.

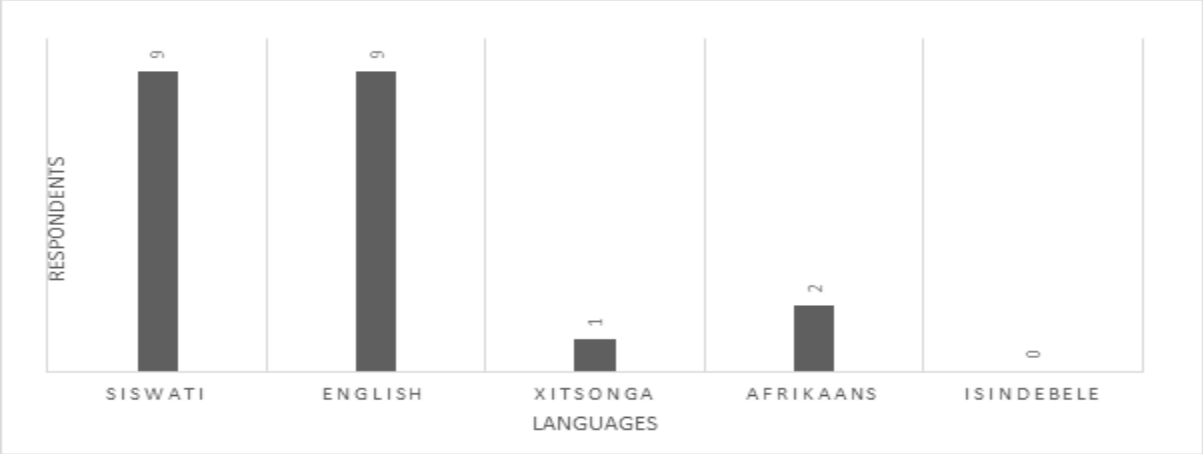

Figure 5.1 Responses to Question 1: What language/s do you use to communicate with staff members (formally)?

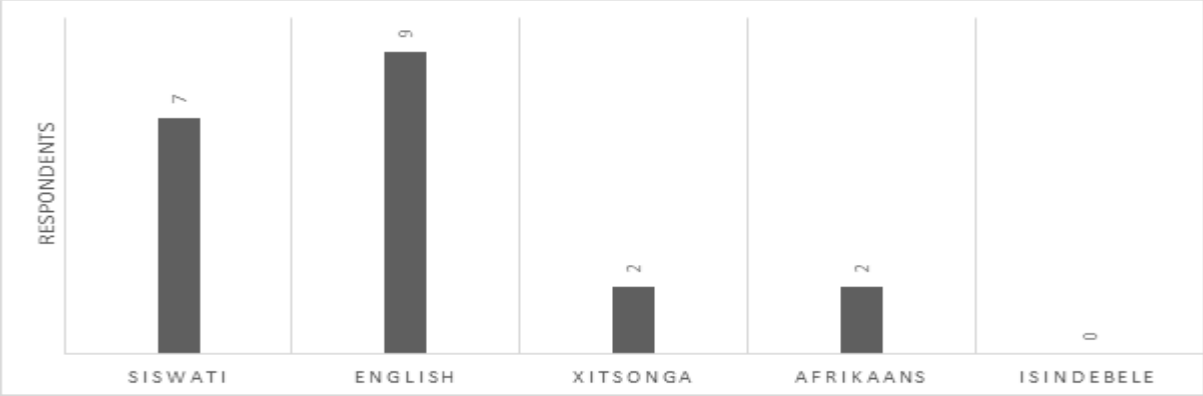

Figure 5.2: Responses to Question 2: What language/s do you use with staff members (informally)?

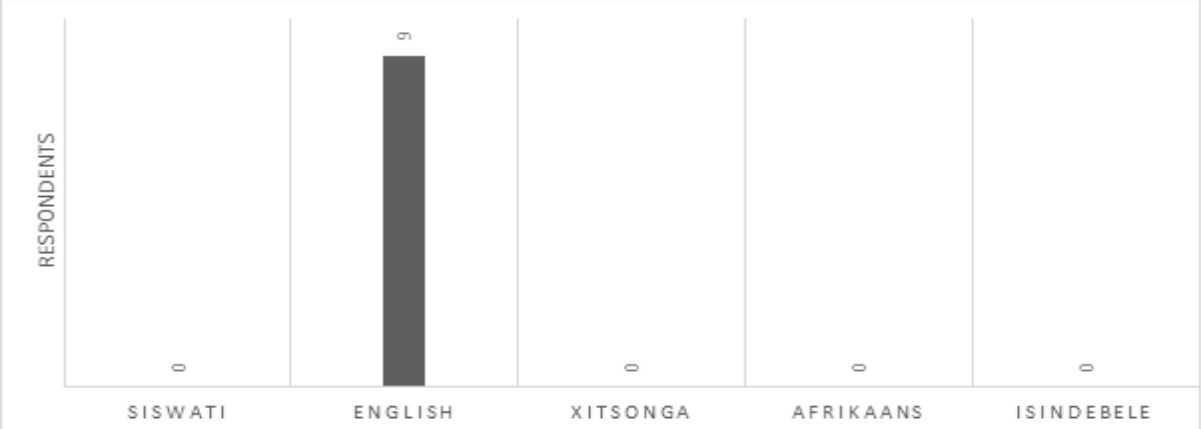

Figure 5.3: Responses to Question 3: What language/s do you use in electronic communication (Emails)?

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the languages that the respondents report to use in formal and informal communication. The languages used are Afrikaans, English, SiSwati, and Xitsonga. Looking at the linguistic repertoires and the results in Figures 5.1. to 5.3, it is noticeable that the use of English remains consistent across contexts. The data indicates a somewhat surprising shift in the use of African languages in informal communication: The number of respondents who use SiSwati in informal communication is less than the number of respondents who use English. This might, however, be a result of a greater use of Xitsonga in informal communication. In Figure 5.1, there is only one respondent who reported to use Xitsonga (in formal communication), while in Figure 5.2, there are two respondents who report to use Xitsonga in informal communication. However, given the small numbers in this data set, such interpretations are only tentative.

Moreover, Afrikaans, SiSwati, and Xitsonga are only used in spoken conversation, but not in emails. This echoes the sentiments that were expressed in the interviews by executive staff. The other languages (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Setswana, and Tshivenda) which form part of staff members' linguistic repertoires were not reported to be used in formal and informal spoken communication at the municipality.

Question (4) asked: *The Mpumalanga Language Bill makes provisions that the languages that should be used for municipality purposes are: SiSwati, isiNdebele, English, and Afrikaans. What languages do you use in the Inkanyeti Local Municipality to render municipal proceedings?* Seven of the respondents indicated that they use both English and SiSwati, and the remaining two indicated that they use only English. No use of Afrikaans, isiNdebele, and Xitsonga was reported in this context. In Chapter Four, the executive staff members reported that English is the most used language in rendering municipality proceedings. However, Afrikaans, SiSwati, and Xitsonga are also used, particularly in Council meetings.

Question (5) of the questionnaire asked: *In your view, is the municipality promoting and developing the provincial African languages (SiSwati and isiNdebele)?* All respondents indicated that there is support, and some noted that SiSwati, especially, is promoted. The answer by Respondent (7) is particularly interesting "*Most people on our municipality speaks SiSwati, so we normally promote SiSwati*". The respondent indicates that the promotion and support of SiSwati are not 'planned' by the municipality but are due to SiSwati being spoken by the majority of staff; as a result, promoting SiSwati is a 'normal' practice.

Question (6) asked: *How do you overcome language barriers between you and your colleagues who do not speak your language?* Eight out of nine respondents value English as a lingua franca and expressed language ideologies that are similar to the ideology discussed in Chapter Four. For example, Respondent (2) indicated that *"I communicate in English to find balance".* And Respondent (9) indicated that "*English is the compromise language we use*". This echoes the ideology of using English as a "general practice". The language ideologies carried by the staff members may affect language use at the municipality and support a practice of English as the default.

Question (7) of the questionnaire asked participants to assess how often English is being used by the staff members at the municipality. The (self-reported) data are summarised in Table 5.2. The results suggest that no one uses English all the time. This indicates that staff members engage in bi/multilingual practices in the municipality.

Table 5.2: Responses to Question (7): How often do you use English at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality?

Use of English (estimated %)	**No. of Respondents**
20	0
40	4
60	4
80	1
100	0

To understand the respondent's linguistic repertoires, Question (8) asked *What other languages do you speak?* The responses show that there is a rich linguistic diversity in the municipality. As indicated in Table 5.1, the respondents also speak Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga. In Chapter 4.4.1, I noted that having multilingual staff members at the municipality is helpful as it can assist with offering multilingual services to the public; particularly because there are reportedly limited resources available to support the languages spoken by the residents of the municipality.

Questions (9) and (10) look at language and service delivery.

> *Question 9: What language/s do clients use when communicating with staff members of the Inkanyeti Local Municipality?*
> *Question 10: Which language/s would you prefer to use when rendering municipality proceedings at the Inkanyezi Local Municipality?*

Figure 5.4 shows the results for Questions (9) and (10). We see that Afrikaans, English, SiSwati, and Xitsonga are used by the municipal staff members when rendering services to the public. Again, isiNdebele, a designated official language in the province, is not reported to be used in the context.

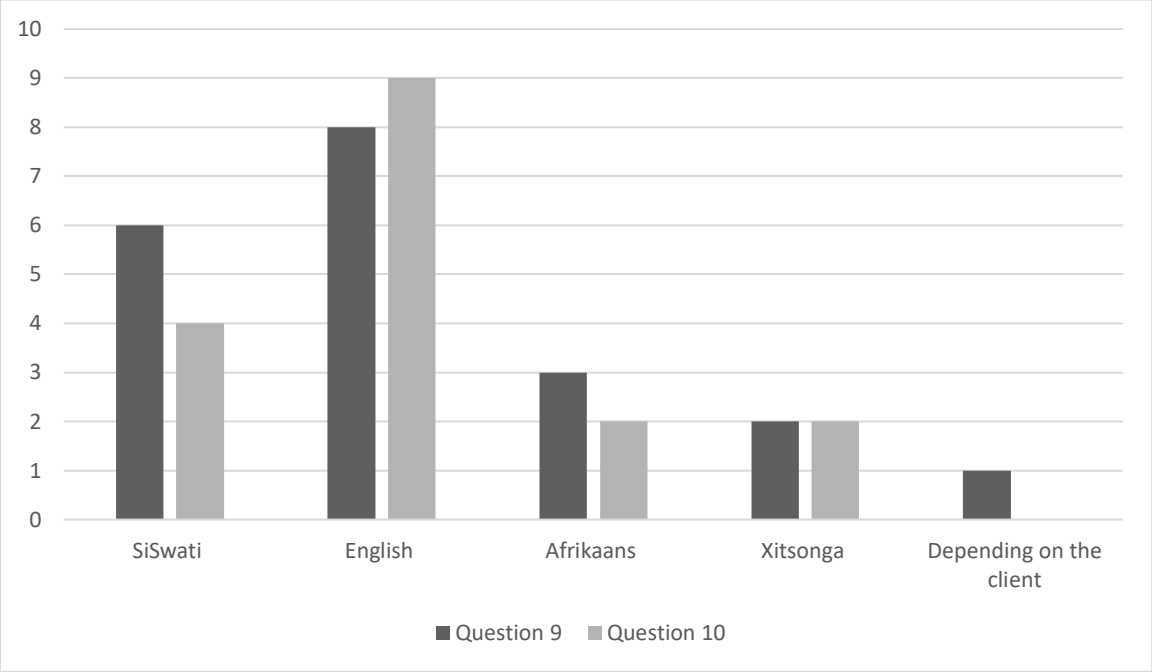

Figure 5.4: Graph showing the responses to Questions (9) and (10).

Questions (9) and (10) relate to Section 8(1) and (2) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 which requires the municipality to "use at least two of the designated official languages of the province" when communicating with the public and rendering services to the public. The use of SiSwati, English, and Afrikaans is supported by the Act. The language statistics of the municipality (as discussed in Chapter One) indicated that there are very few isiNdebele-speaking residents, and this might explain the non-representation of isiNdebele in Figure 5.4. Respondent (4) (Question 9) mentioned that language use is dependent on the client.

This is similar to the comment made by Sipho (Chapter Four) who mentioned that the language/s they use as a Section when interacting with stakeholders depends on the language that the clients use.

5.2.2. Summary of the questionnaire analysis

In Chapter Four, I argued that the interview responses showed a sense of multilingualism in spoken interactions but also reported the dominance of English in written communication. This was supported by the questionnaire responses. Again, in the reported use of language in official correspondences, we see that English is dominating. Based on my analysis, I suggest that (i) bi/multilingual practices are common in the municipality as far as spoken interactions are concerned; (ii) that this bi/multilingualism is strongly influenced by the multilingual nature of the province in general; and (iii) that the staff members use these different languages in spoken communication habitually, and not because they are consciously implementing the provincial and/or national language policy.

5. 3. Analysis of observations

This section focuses on the observations that I conducted at the municipality. These included office communications, observations in the reception area, and the observation of a Council meeting. The following transcription conventions were used: Words that are marked in bold are SiSwati; underlined words are Xitsonga; italics are used for Tsotsitaal[9]; words written in capital letters are isiNgomane, and words in small caps are English.

5.3.1. Office observations

5.3.1.1. Communications Section

I spent an hour at the Communications Section, focusing on the interactions in the offices and the Call Centre. The Call Centre is operated by two women who are SiSwati speakers. While I was communicating with them, we were using SiSwati. During the one hour that I spent at the

[9] Tsotsitaal can be defined as "a slang lexis or jargon of urban South African origin that has penetrated the languages of the cities under various conditions, especially the experience of younger males in urban settings" (Mesthrie 2008: 101).

Call Centre, they received only one telephone call. The lady who received the call was using English and isiNgomane; English was used in the greeting and when ending the call.

The conversation reproduced below reflects an interaction between two staff members in the Communications Section. The conversation was work-related. Both speakers were male and in their late 30s. Speaker (2) was explaining to Speaker (1) that he had sent an SMS regarding a project they are working on. The interaction took place in the office's corridors, and the speakers were using English, isiNgomane, and SiSwati.

Interaction 1:

Speaker 1*:* BUDDY, HOW ARE YOU?

Speaker 2*:* **Babe K.** ('Mr. K.')

Speaker 1*:* **Utsini?** ('What's up?')

Speaker 2*:* Hmm… UYITHOLILE **i-sms**? ('Hmm… did you get the SMS?')

Speaker 1*:* NO! NO! NO! ABOUT WHAT*?* AKAYITHOLI WHEN DID YOU SEND IT? ('No! No! No! About what? I didn't get it, when did you send it?')

Speaker 2*:* I THINK IT WAS LAST WEEK

Speaker 1*:* NO ANGIKAYITHOLI, BUT **mina ngifuna i-list sitocala ku uploada** LET'S RATHER MOVE **Babe.** ('No, I didn't get it, but me, I want the list so that we can start uploading it, let's rather move Sir.')

Speaker 2*:* **Ya ngiyaphusha kona vele** ('Yes, I'm pushing that now')

Speaker 1*:* **Ngiyakwati wena kutsi** YOU LIKE TO MOVE ('I know you, that you like to move')

Speaker 2*:* UTOYITHOLA, I THINK BY FRIDAY ('You will get it, I think by Friday')

Speaker 1*:* **Ya bakhona laba, uyabona, kutsi abanamsebenti namuhla** ('Yes, we have these ones, you see, they haven't done any work today.')

Speaker 2*:* *Sho* **bhuti** ('Sure brother')

Speaker 1*:* *Shap* **bhuti** ('Alright brother')

The conversation (which I reconstruct here based on the detailed notes that I took at the time) illustrates the multilingualism that is present at the municipality: The interlocutors speak English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Tsotsitaal. This observation supports the meta-linguistic comments about language use that were made by the interview and questionnaire respondents.

5.3.1.2. Planning and Development Section

The Planning and Development Section is located in a different street from where the main municipal office is located. During the time I spent at the Planning and Development Section, I observed the reception area and the corridor interactions. At the time, several staff members engaged in informal conversations at the reception area. The languages that were used were English and SiSwati. Interaction (2) represents a conversation that took place between two female staff members who were talking about ordering a cake to prepare a baby shower for one of their colleagues. Again, this interaction shows that SiSwati has a strong presence in spoken communication among staff members at the municipality.

Interaction 2:

> Speaker 1: **Yati ukhona Bongiwe utosentela likhekhe futsi** IF **singamcela kahle ngeke asidurisele**, **ngikhumbula** LAST TIME **ngenta iphathi ya Olwethu, wangicharger** R1000 FOR **lelikhekhe leli, uyalikhumbula?** ('You know Bongiwe will make the cake for us, and if we ask nicely, she won't charge us a lot of money, I remember the last time I organized a party for Okuhle, she charged me R1000 for that cake, do you remember it?')
>
> Speaker 2: **Kumele sikhulume naye** IN TIME THEN, **kuze kutsi** BY MONTH END **yonke intfo ibe seyi** READY. ('We have to speak to her in time then, so that by month end everything is ready')

Interaction (3) is a conversation that took place between two staff members at the Planning and Development Section. This was a corridor conversation between two males who were talking about going for lunch. The conversation was in English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, Tsotsitaal, and Xitsonga. Both speakers were in their early 30s.

Interaction 3:

> Speaker 1: *eMfethu* **asambe siyodla ilunch,** <u>vanhu bendla ka ntsongo.</u> ('Brother let's go for lunch, these people are slow')
>
> Speaker 2: *Sho sho* BROTHERS **asambe anginaso skhatsi sekumela** BANTU **mine.** ('Sure, sure, brother let's go I don't have the time to wait for people')

The questionnaires and interviews suggest that Xitsonga has a presence in the municipality. This is supported by this interaction which shows that there are staff members in the municipality who habitually speak Xitsonga in informal conversations. The observation at the Planning and Development office focused on language use among staff members. The linguistics repertoires of the staff members are important in the successful implementation of the language policy, the staff members can be able to offer linguistic services to members of the public who require assistance in non-designated languages such as Xitsonga.

5.3.1.3. Main office reception observations

The reception area is located closer to the main entrance of the municipality. The area has a reception cubicle, which is covered with a glass window; this is where the Receptionist sits. The reception also has a waiting area for clients. The observations happened closer to lunchtime, around 12:30, and the Receptionist received seven calls in the 30 minutes that I was present. In all cases, she moved from English to SiSwati after the initial greeting. During my observation, there were no face-to-face interactions.

The Receptionist uses the phrase: "*Inkanyeti Municipality how may I assist you?"* when answering the phone calls. The use of this phrase might suggest that English is the preferred language for official communication. However, the ability of the Receptionist to shift from English to a language that is used by the person on the other line indicates that the Receptionist is using her linguistic repertoire to ensure that the communication between her and the other person proceeds smoothly.

5.4. Observation of a Council meeting

The Council consists of 66 members. According to the information I received from the Office of the Speaker, 65 members understand SiSwati very well. One Council member is a monolingual English speaker with no understanding of Afrikaans, isiNgomane, SiSwati, or Xitsonga. The Secretary of the Office of the Speaker (Sizwe) indicated that out of the 65 Council members who understand SiSwati, approximately 20 speak Xitsonga as a home language; the remaining speak SiSwati as their home language with some, little or no understanding of Xitsonga. In the feedback meeting (February 2020) it was indicated that Afrikaans is also used in Council meetings. However, it was not used in the one that I observed.

The same applies to isiNdebele, even though it is a provincial language, it does not appear to be used at Council meetings in this municipality. As mentioned in the interview with the Secretary of the Office of the Speaker, the preferred language for Council meetings is English.

The Council meeting was held on the 30th of May 2018. It was attended by the Municipal Executive Mayor, the Municipal Manager, the Speaker, 35 Council members, and ten members of the community, who were invited. The languages that were used in the meeting were English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga. The introductions were done in English. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the Speaker chairs the meeting, and during this meeting, she used English only.

isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga were used by the Council members and other members of the community who attended the meeting. There were no interpretation services offered in this meeting. Although Council members were using isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga to participate in the meeting, the chairperson of the meeting – the Speaker – would respond to all the comments made by the Council members in English. As mentioned earlier, there are staff members who do not understand Xitsonga, and given that there were no interpretation services offered in this meeting, it may have been possible that some Council members were not able to understand all the comments and contributions made by the Xitsonga speaking Councillors.

Some agenda items were addressed by the Mayor, the Municipal Manager, and the Speaker. These presentations were in English, and no interpreting services were provided. However, it was clear that the people in the meeting were able to interact and participate. This suggests that they understood enough English to follow the presentations and proceedings. The use of African languages (isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga) by members of the community and Council members can be interpreted as acts of linguistic citizenship. Williams and Stroud (2015) argue that linguistic citizenship allows speakers to engage in meaning-making and to reflect on the social and political issues that affect them. Thus, although the Speaker, the Mayor, and the Municipal Manager were using English, the people enacted their linguistic citizenship by using their languages and raising the issues that concerned them in a language they felt comfortable with.

5.5. Conclusion

The findings of this chapter are based on the data that were collected using questionnaires and observations. The results from the questionnaires show that multilingual communication is common among staff members. Office observations also reflected the importance of multilingual practices in everyday interactions. Staff members never used English only in their work interactions: they were using Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, and, also, Xitsonga. This reflects linguistic diversity among the staff members. This chapter further showed that multilingualism is present in the Council meeting.

Again, this chapter raised the question of the status of Xitsonga in the province and the municipality. The questionnaire and office observations indicated that there are Xitsonga-speaking people in the municipality, but the language is not recognised by the province. The marginalisation of Xitsonga will be discussed further in Chapter Seven. In this chapter, I argued that the multilingual practices of the staff members are best interpreted as habitual practices; they are everyday communicative habits rather than the result of conscious and deliberate policy implementation.

CHAPTER SIX: LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES AND ONLINE DATA ANALYSIS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the data that was collected by photographing signage, collecting Facebook posts and comments, and investigating the website of the municipality. The analysis in this chapter will assist in understanding how the municipality communicates with members of the public through the signs, the Facebook page, and the website. It is important to note that the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 does not have a clause that stipulates which language/s should be used on social media pages and the website. Thus, the analysis of the social media posts and the website is guided by Section (8) of the Language Act which mandates the municipality to "use at least two of the designated official languages when communicating with the public" (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 8.1). And Section (9) which stipulates that the municipality should "use at least two of the official designated language in signboards" (Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act, No 3 of 2014: Section 9.1).

Section 6.2 of this chapter analyses the physical signs which were photographed at the municipality. The analysis of the signs is divided into two sections – qualitative and quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis looks at the number of languages that appear on the signs. And the qualitative analysis focuses on how the languages have been used and reflects on the multimodality of the signs. Section 6.3 focuses on the analysis of online data. Similarly, to the signs, the analysis of the Facebook data is also divided into two sections. The quantitative analysis looks at the languages used by the municipality on the posts, and at the languages used by members of the public to engage with the posts. The qualitative analysis provides a discussion of online practices; in particular, use of SiSwati by the municipality, and the creation of multilingual texts by members of the public. Lastly, Section 6.4 of this chapter analyses the website of the municipality.

6.2. Signage analysis

As this study looks into policy implementation, it is important to discuss the work done by other scholars about the relationship that exists between language policy and linguistic landscapes. The relationship has been studied, for example, by Landry and Bourhis (1997), Gorter (2006:2), Du Plessis (2012), Adekunle (2018), and Kotze (2010). Their studies report that the visual representation of languages in public space is a subject that should be looked at when discussing language policies. While signs can be produced by different actors, Landry and Bourhis (1997) point out that when looking at a language policy, the focus should be on signs that are produced and displayed by government institutions.

According to Du Plessis (2012), linguistic landscapes reflect language status: the visibility of languages in public spaces speaks to the prestige of particular languages. Yet, as noted by Gorter and Cenoz (2015), one should keep in mind that linguistic landscapes do not necessarily reflect the language used in oral communication. Hence, in order to understand the implementation of language policy in a comprehensive manner, it is vital to look at the language used in oral, written, and visual communication.

The results in Table 6.1 show the languages that appear on the 10 signs which were collected. As indicated in Chapter Three, I collected signs that I came across while I was at the municipal offices. I did not come across any signs which were in languages other than those listed in Table 6.1. In identifying these signs, I followed the definition of a sign by Backhaus (2007:55). This definition is, however, broad as it refers to various types of signs, including commercial signs. Backhaus writes:

> "A sign was considered to be any piece of the written text within a spatially definable form, the underlying definition is rather broad, including anything from handwritten stickers to huge commercial billboards. Also, such items as 'push' and 'pull' stickers at entrance doors were considered to be signs."

The results in Table 6.1 summarize the language choices on the 10 signs. Below I will discuss one monolingual sign in more detail, as well as the sole bilingual sign.

Table 6.1: Language choices on municipal signs.

Languages	**Number of signs**
English	9
SiSwati	0
isiNdebele	0
Afrikaans	0
South African Sign language and Latin alphabet	1

Section 9(1) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 requires the municipality to use at least two of the official designated languages of the province on signs and notices. Shohamy (2006:55) argues that the language displayed on signs can be seen as an example of language practice. And as mentioned earlier, the signs reflect the status of particular languages in public spaces - in this case, the signs reflect the dominant status of English in the municipality, putting it as the *de facto* lingua franca.

Shohamy (2006:110) points out that public signs allow government institutions to deliver messages to a wider public. When these messages are delivered in one language only, it sends direct messages about the power and significance of this particular language. Moreover, the languages displayed on the signs shape and perpetuate certain language ideologies (Kretzer and Kaschula, 2019). The monolingual practice on the signs posted at the municipality can be seen as perpetuating the language ideology "English is understood by the majority" (which was discussed in Chapter Four). Interestingly, in the feedback meeting, it was mentioned that before 2016, the municipality used to produce signs and notices in Afrikaans, English, and SiSwati. But this practice stopped in 2016. Those who participated in the feedback meeting indicated that they are not aware of a specific reason that led to this change.

As I have mentioned earlier, nine of the signs are monolingual and one sign is bilingual. Below, I discuss one monolingual sign and the sole bilingual sign. Both signs were posted at the Receptionist cubicle, and they were placed on the top corners of the window on the cubicle. The message on the sign in Figure 6.1 seems to be directed at those who come to visit the municipality: "PLEASE KEEP QUIET WHILE WAITING FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE

RECEPTION Thank you!!!!!" The sign is likely to have been produced by staff, using a computer and a printer.

Figure 6.1: Signage posted at the window of the Receptionist cubicle at the municipality (captured 1 June 2018).

Shohamy (2012:539) points out that the study of linguistic landscapes goes beyond the text in a sign, it also looks at the placement of the sign; that is, its position in space. The area where the above reproduced sign is placed attracts the viewer's attention, it makes it easy for the person entering the municipal building to see the sign. Moreover, the use of black bold capital letters on a white background also draws the viewer's attention to the sign. However, understanding the message on the sign will depend on the reader's proficiency in English.

The only multilingual (or rather multiscriptal) sign that I could find during my stay at the municipality is reproduced in Figure 6.2. It represents the finger-spelling system for South African Sign Language (SASL) and the corresponding Latin letters.

Figure 6.2: South African Sign Language signage placed at the Receptionist cubicle of the municipality (captured 1 June 2018).

Looking at the multimodality of this sign, the handshapes of SASL are bigger and more prominent than the Latin letters. The large size makes it easier to see all the details in the handshapes. The sign is in black and white, with no additional colour. The sign is professionally produced, it was given to the municipality by PanSALB during the SASL workshop which was discussed in Chapter Four. In the limited set of photographed signs, no official African languages were represented. The public space at the municipality appears largely monolingual and English-dominated.

6.3. Online data analysis

6.3.1. Quantitative analysis of Facebook posts and comments

This section focuses on the social media posts that were posted by the Inkanyeti Local Municipality on their Facebook page between July 2018 and October 2018. I will also look at the comments posted by members of the public. According to Statistics South Africa (2011), there are 4.6% of people living in this municipality who have never been to school. These people may not be able to read and write, let alone use the internet. The statistics also show that there are 75% of people without access to the internet in the municipality (as discussed in Chapter Four). Therefore, this analysis focuses on those members of the public who have

access to the internet, and who have the reading and writing ability to interact with the content posted on the Facebook page. The quantitative analysis (Table 6.2) looks at the number of times different languages are used in posts by the municipality, and the comments made by members of the public.

Table 6.2: Languages used in the Facebook posts of the municipality; and languages used in the comments made by the members of the public (July 2018 to October 2018).

Language status	**Languages used**	**Number of posts by the municipality**	**%**	**Number of public comments**	**%**
Designated official languages	IsiNdebele	0	0	0	0
	SiSwati	4	10	90	17
	English	36	90	291	56
	Afrikaans	0	0	4	0.8
Non-designated official Languages	Xitsonga	0	0	0	0
	Tshivenda	0	0	1	0.1
	Pedi	0	0	0	0
	Tshwane	0	0	0	0
	Sotho	0	0	0	0
	Xhosa	0	0	0	0
	isiZulu	0	0	8	2
Non - Official languages	isiNgomane	0	0	5	1
Multilingual Posts	SiSwati, English,	0	0	117	23

	isiNgomane, Tsotsitaal				
Total Number		40	100	516	100

Graham, Avery, and Park (2015) argue that the use of social media enables the government to implement service delivery in a faster and more effective manner. Ivković and Lotherington (2009) concur that social media messages can reach people in geographically different locations. They compare this to messages on physical signs, which mostly target the local population. Ivković and Lotherington (2009) further view the internet as a space that can promote multilingualism because different languages are being used, including minority languages. The governments decide how languages are used on government online communication platforms. The way they use languages may promote certain languages and linguistics ideologies among members of the public.

In Chapter Four, I explained that the Facebook page of the municipality is managed by the Communications Manager – James. James also authors the posts. In the semi-structured interview, James indicated that he decides which languages to use on the post; thus, the dominance of English on the post is not a collective decision by the municipality. As noted in Chapter Four, James sees the use of English as a "general practice" and argues that it is understood by a majority. This language ideology may be the reason for the vast majority of the post being written in English. Unfortunately, this language ideology appears to be affecting the use of African languages. This includes SiSwati, which is only used in 10% (N=4) of the Facebook posts of the municipality.

The Facebook comments by the public show that the municipality serves a linguistically diverse community. The languages that are represented in the comments are Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, isiZulu, SiSwati, Tshivenda, and Tsotsitaal. The public use of these languages online can be interpreted as yet another act of linguistic citizenship, of people using the languages they feel comfortable with even when this is not institutionally supported. Thus, although the municipal posts are predominately in English, the speakers do not necessarily respond by writing in English. Rather their meaning-making and political agency draw on a variety of languages.

Although the comments show multilingualism, English-only is still dominating with 90% (N=291) public comments. Arguably, the dominance of English in the comment section may be a result of the original posts being in English, i.e., community members accommodate to the language of the original post.

6.3.2. Qualitative analysis of the Facebook posts

The aim of the qualitative analysis is to take a closer look at the social media data which were discussed in the quantitative analysis. The qualitative analysis followed a virtual ethnography approach. As mentioned in Chapter Three, virtual ethnography allows the researcher to study a site without participating openly (Kelly-Holmes, 2015). In this section, I discuss online practices used by the municipality and members of the public. The aim is to understand how the municipality communicates on its Facebook page, and how residents respond to the online language choices by the municipality. The posts and comments included in this section are those that are relevant to my argument.

6.3.2.1. Use of Siswati by the municipality

In this section, I discuss the multimodality and language use of two municipal Facebook posts. Figure 6.3 was posted by the municipality on the 21st of October 2018, and it received 14 public comments.

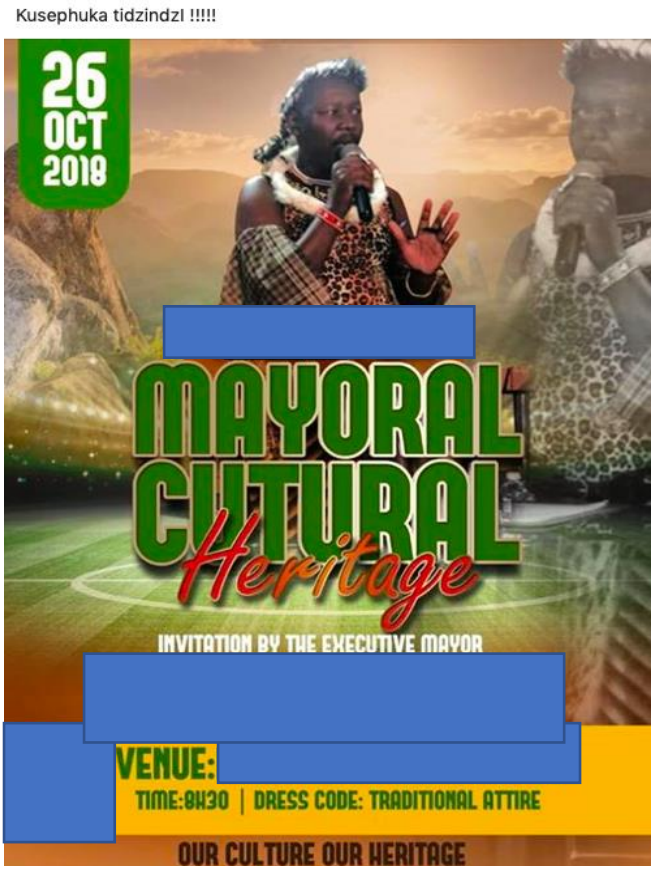

Figure 6.3: Municipal Facebook post (21 October 2018). [10]

The SiSwati idiom *kusephuka* ('pulling') *tidzindzi* ('roots') is used to describe occasions where people will be dancing. The idiom can be translated as 'uprooting', because dancing on the grass may result in pulling grass out from its roots. The poster is an invitation to an annual event organised by the Mayor to bring the community together to celebrate their cultures. The celebration is done through music, dancing, and traditional food. The Mayoral cultural event is different from *Ummemo* which was discussed in Chapter Four. *Ummemo* is organised by traditional leaders while this event is organised by the office of the Mayor.

Shohamy (2012) argues that in linguistic landscapes meaning is created not only through language but also through images. In this poster, the attire of the person in the poster represents EmaSwati culture. Interestingly, the poster states - in the singular (and in English) – "our culture, our heritage" – not "our cultures, our heritages". In addition, the graphics on the poster depict a stadium, which is the venue of the event, and beyond the stadium building, one can

[10] Facebook did not offer the 'see translation' option for this post.

see the Mpumalanga landscape. Moreover, the person on the poster is holding a microphone, which suggests there may be speeches, presentations, or singing at this event.

The poster has different colours which make some of the information more visible. According to Scollon and Scollon (2003:2), the use of colour in a text makes it easier for the reader to identify which information is more salient. The same applies to the use of different fonts. In the poster, green and red are used to emphasize the name of the event as well as the date, and yellow is used to highlight the venue. English is the only language used on the poster. However, while the Facebook caption (in SiSwati) and the poster (in English) are each monolingual, the Facebook post as a whole is multilingual, including both SiSwati and English.

Figure 6.4 is another example where the municipality posts in SiSwati. The post was published by the municipality on the 26th of October 2018. This post was also related to the theme of "culture and heritage" as it includes a photograph of a woman who is wearing EmaSwati cultural attire and is holding a microphone and a traditional food plate. The caption *Imbali yaka Mhlalba Nothando Mkhatswa, 'flower of Mhlalba Nothando Mkhatswa'* describes the woman in the image. Mhlalba is a traditional clan name[11]. In the EmaSwati culture, *imbali* refers to a young woman who has not started dating. The post received 10 comments from members of the public.

[11] Clan names refer to a group of families which have different surnames but fall under one ancestorial clan. For example, Mkhatswa and Mthethwa both fall under the Mhlaba clan.

Figure 6.4: Municipal Facebook post (26 October 2018).

The use of SiSwati in the caption of the post and the use of an image of a woman wearing the EmaSwati cultural attire suggests that this post is aimed at promoting SiSwati. The analysis in Chapters Four and Five indicated that SiSwati is not routinely used in written communication (both online and offline). Here, however, we see the use of SiSwati in posts that are aimed at advertising and promoting a cultural event. Significantly, in all the posts authored by the municipality, SiSwati is only used in posts that are promoting such cultural events. Thus, it does not reflect a consistent implementation of language policy. It is also worth noting that the other designated languages (Afrikaans and isiNdebele) of the province are not used in any of the municipal posts. The marginalisation of these languages – as well as Xitsonga – will be discussed further in Chapter Seven. Again, the analysis of the Facebook page indicate that there is minimal use of SiSwati in official correspondences.

6.3.2.2. Creation of multilingual texts by members of the public

As mentioned in the quantitative analysis, the use of different languages by members of the public when interacting with the municipality's Facebook posts can be regarded as acts of citizenship. Specifically, linguistic citizenship is a practice-oriented account by the speakers of the various languages (Stroud, 2001). The implementation of the language policy lies not only in the hands of the government, but also in the hands of the citizens. The members of the public have been given the right to use the language of their choice. Hence, it is their responsibility to ensure that this right is not violated. They can do so by actively exercising their linguistic rights in different domains, including government communications. To showcase the linguistic practices of members of the public, I reproduce comments made in response to the post in Figure 6.3. As mentioned above, Figure 6.3 has a SiSwati caption, and the poster is in English. Thus, the whole post can be identified as multilingual (SiSwati and English). The comment section following this post is dominated by English (12 comments), with minimal use of SiSwati (one comment) and multilingual writing (one English and isiZulu comment). All users who commented on the post reside in the municipality (judging from their public Facebook profiles). In this case the SiSwati prompt was not taken up in the comments, and the writers remain in a predominately English mode.

Some of the comments express implicit – rather than explicit – language ideologies. As discussed in Chapter One, language ideologies may affect the successful implementation of the language policy. Notably, half the comments (7 out of the 14) following the post (Figure 6.3) were focused on service delivery instead of the context of the poster. Those posting view the event being advertised as non-essential for the municipality; indeed, they see the event as a waste of financial resources. One might discount such posts as irrelevant for a study on language policy. However, they express a particular political ideology that also affects language policy; namely, that 'service delivery' is about improvements to material-economic conditions and not about culture and language. It is possible that such attitudes can impede the successful implementation of the language policy by side-stepping language issues as 'not important'. Below I reproduce three examples of the comments which focused on service delivery.

(21 October 2018 18:35)

Comment 1: How much is the municipality spending on this event? Can we afford it? We have a serious backlong in basic service delivery.

Response to comment 1 (22 October 2018 12:05)

Comment 2: Personal I've lost interest to this useless administration of our municipality! But we will sort it out 2019 ku [on] *ballot box because they are too much ignorant. All this old chaps must fall.*

[23 October 2018 11:46]

Comment 3

Even though, Heritage on #October. Bakithi [people] *we need to empower young ppl of Inkanyeti tru skills n mor.*

Figure 6.5. is a Facebook post that was posted by the municipality warning members of the public about a lion that has been spotted on the road. The caption of the post is in English, and the image illustrates the information given in the caption. The post received 35 comments from the public: 17 English comments, 4 SiSwati comments, 4 Afrikaans comments, and 10 multilingual comments (English, isiNgomane and SiSwati). Thus, the comment section of Figure 6.5 represents multilingual citizenship, and writers employ a variety of languages. Below I focus on the use of Afrikaans because it is a language that is less present in the Facebook comments than SiSwati.

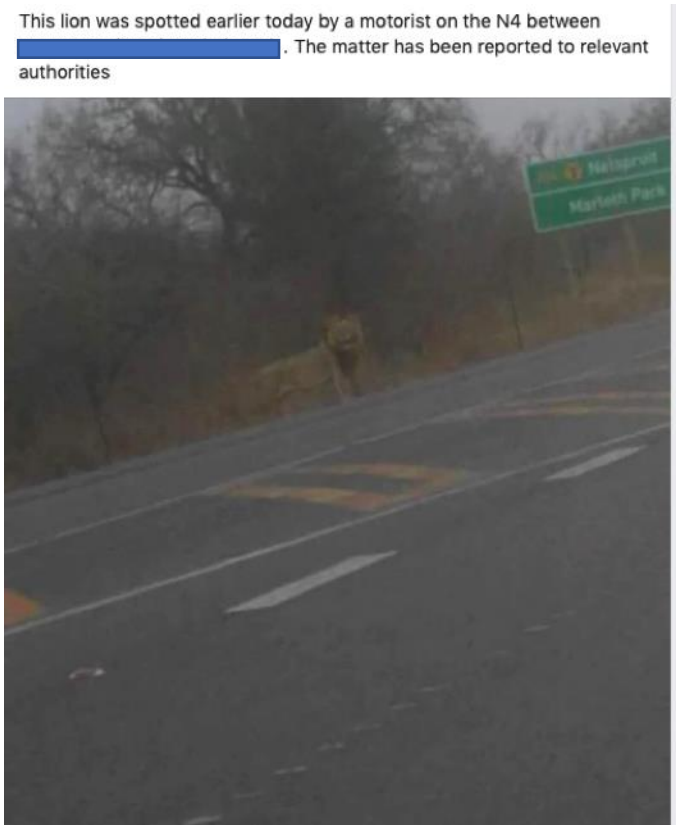

Figure 6.5: Municipal Facebook post (posted 23 September 2018)

(23 September 2018 11:50)

Comment 1: Hoop hy is veiling terug in die wildtuin. ['Hope he is safely back in the park']

Response to comment 1 (24 September 2018 07:58)

Comment 2: English please.

(23 September 2018 11:50)

Comment 3: Hy wil hike maar niemand will hom 'n lift gee nie ['He wants to hike but nobody want to give him a lift']

***Response to comment 3 (23 September 2018 12:*36)**

Comment 4: Lyk my Julie leeu maak moeilikheid…hehehe.['Looks to me (like) your lion is making trouble … hehehe']

(23 September 2018 18:11)

Comment 5: Moet hom asb nie dood maak nie verdoof hom en bring hom terug park toe [Please don't kill him, numb him and bring him back to the park]

While four members of the public were using Afrikaans to engage with the post, there is one member of the public who requested them to use English. The person who requested the use of English appears to understand both English and SiSwati as they use both languages in other publicly available Facebook comments. Requests for translation are not only voiced with regard to Afrikaans, and in other instances there are also members of the public who requested for SiSwati texts to be translated. For example, there was a request for a translation of the SiSwati caption in Figure 6.4 by one member of the public. Thus, one may argue that although the statistics show that SiSwati is the most spoken language in the municipality, there are members of the public who do not understand the language. This observation brings out the importance of having government communication translated into the languages of the residents to cater to all the linguistic needs of the members of the municipality.

6.4. Website analysis

This section analyses the language used on the municipality website. The historical website data was collected using the Wayback Machine (see Chapter Three), covering the period from 2011 to 2020. Berezkina (2016) describes one challenge that comes with using the Wayback Machine for collecting old archives: Sometimes older versions of the archives are not able to load fully. The first archive available for the Inkanyeti Local Municipality is for 2011, and unfortunately, some of the multimodal content could not load.

The website of the municipality is one of the platforms that is used to share information with members of the public. However, unlike on Facebook, members of the public are unable to engage with the content that is posted on the website. As noted in Chapter Four, the municipality requires financial support and human resources from the provincial government to ensure that all members of the public have access to government information in multiple languages. As noted above, the Mpumalanga Language Act does not specify which languages should be used on the website. However, the municipality carries a mandate of ensuring that they use at least two of the designated official languages of the province while communicating with the public as stipulated in Section (8) of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014.

The website has been English-only since 2011. The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act was adopted in 2014. Six years later, in 2020, one would expect some improvement on the

website, i.e., the inclusion of more languages. However, the only noticeable change in design is some additional information (in English) and changes to the structure of the website. The structural changes included, for example, adding information on load shedding, the municipality's social media links, and the background colours used on the website. There were no changes made to the structure of the website from 2015 to 2020.

After the presentation I did at the municipality in February 2020, the Executive staff members who were present at the meeting elaborated on the findings of the study and looked at different measures they can put in place to assist in the implementation of the language policy. They suggested employing freelance language practitioners who will assist in translating the content of the website. The reason for suggesting outsourcing is because the municipality does not have a dedicated budget for establishing a permanent language unit.

6.5. Conclusion

Chapter Six analysed the physical and digital linguistic landscape of the municipality. The chapter analysed language choices on signage, on the municipal Facebook page, and on the website. The findings of this chapter indicate that the preferred language in all signs – whether physical or digital – is English. Moreover, most of the Facebook posts by the municipality are in English, only 10% (N=4) of the posts are in SiSwati. And the use of SiSwati was only found in posts which were promoting a cultural event. The discussion of the creation of multilingual texts by the municipality indicates that English and SiSwati are the only languages used on the Facebook page. Members of the public use multilingual citizenship to engage with the posts that are authored by the municipality. The languages they use to engage with the posts include, Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, isiZulu, SiSwati, Tshivenda and Tsotsitaal. Lastly, this chapter discussed the language use on the website of the municipality, from this discussion, it is evident that the language use on the website from 2011 to 2020 has been English. The discussion in this chapter indicates that English is dominating in written communication, and SiSwati is minimally used. The use of language by the municipality on the signs and the online data appears to be affecting the successful implementation of the language policy, because, for example, the other two designated languages (Afrikaans and isiNdebele) are not used by the municipality.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

This study investigated the implementation of the South African language policy by local government. The study was motivated by the language inequalities that I observed while growing up in Mpumalanga. Many of us are SiSwati, isiNgomane, isiNdebele, isiZulu, or Xitsonga speakers, but the language used in clinics, schools, and community service centres is often English. In this final chapter, I summarise the findings of this thesis.

The thesis described language preferences and practices by members of the municipality and explored the extent to which the municipality is promoting and developing local languages. English and SiSwati have a strong presence in the municipality. However, there are areas where SiSwati is marginalised; for example, in written and online communication. This chapter further explores the marginalisation of Afrikaans, isiNdebele, and Xitsonga in the municipality. In my discussion, I return to the provisions of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 and the extent to which it has been implemented by the municipality. The last section of the chapter presents a list of recommendations to improve the implementation of the language policy.

The data for this study were collected using semi-structured interviews with the executive staff members of the municipality. I also distributed questionnaires to staff members of the municipality who are not in executive positions. Moreover, the data collection process included observing the language/s used in offices and a Council meeting. I also looked at the physical and virtual linguistic landscapes. I captured 10 physical signs posted around the municipality. I also observed the language/s used on the Facebook page of the municipality and the official website. In February 2020, I returned to the municipality, and during this period, I had a meeting with the executive staff of the municipality. At that time, I also had some informal conversations with members of the public. The last set of the data included the Annual Reports of the municipality.

7.2. Overview of the implementation of the South African language policy in the Inkanyeti Local Municipality

The study looked at the use of language by the municipality when communicating with members of the public. In the context of this study, the local languages referred to are Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiNgomane, as well as Xitsonga, which has a sizeable presence in the municipality. The latter is, however, not recognised as a designated language by the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014.

7.2.1. Language practices at the municipality

The first step in evaluating multilingual practices at the municipality included the observation of language use and language choices by the staff members at the municipality. The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 specifies the languages that should be used in government communications with the public, and requests government offices to use at least two of the provincial official languages. Below I give a summary of the language practices at the municipality:

- Afrikaans, isiNgomane, SiSwati, Tsotsitaal, and Xitsonga are used for informal interactions among staff at the municipality.
- Afrikaans, English, SiSwati, and Xitsonga are used in formal meetings by staff members.
- The language used in business meetings with external stakeholders depends on the language that the clients use, the staff members try and interact with the client in a language that they will understand.
- English is regarded as the language of proceedings in Council meetings. However, from my observation, Council members and members of the community draw on multilingual practices during the meetings. The languages that were used in the meeting I attended include English, isiNgomane, SiSwati, and Xitsonga.
- The language used on radio and television interviews depends on the radio/television station.
- English is used in electronic communication such as emails.
- English dominates in physical and virtual landscapes.

- English is used in most of the Facebook posts by the municipality. However, members of the public practice linguistic citizenship when engaging with the content posted by the municipality. Their language use includes Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane, isiZulu, SiSwati, and Tshivenda.
- English is the only language used on the website.

7.2.2. Development and promotion of African languages

Based on Chapters Four, Five, and Six, below, I summarise the extent to which the municipality develops and promotes African languages.

- The annual *Ummemo* event is aimed at promoting and developing the SiSwati language and culture.
- As noted above, Afrikaans, isiNgomane, SiSwati, Tsotsitaal, and Xitsonga are used in spoken communication among the staff members in office interaction. Even though this is not a conscious promotion of these languages, it guarantees their presence in the municipality.
- Although the language of proceedings in Council meetings is English, the Council members make use of SiSwati, isiNgomane, and Xitsonga when interacting in the Council meetings.
- The use of SiSwati on 10% (N=4) of municipal Facebook posts can be seen as promoting SiSwati.

7.2.3. Language ideologies at the municipality

This research has shown that the language preference and usage by the staff members at the municipality might be influenced by the language ideologies that circulate within the South African society. The most prominent ideology that emerged from the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires is the belief that "English is understood by the majority". This language ideology might be affecting the use and promotion of African languages at the municipality.

The executive staff members, for example, believed that English is understood by most residents, and this is given as the reason for it being the preferred language in municipality proceedings and government communications. Moreover, the Communications Manager described the use of English as "a general practice"; a statement that suggests that English is commonly used and, indeed, seen as a lingua franca. In the questionnaires, one staff member indicated that English is a language that can overcome communication barriers. The belief that English is understood by a majority is not only present at the municipality, various studies found that the ideology is also common in the education sector, the media, and government communications (see Chapter Two for a discussion). It is possible that the belief of English as a lingua franca affects the use of African languages, and consequently, the implementation of the language policy. The dominant status of English is also reflected in the data on linguistic landscapes: both the physical and the virtual linguistic landscapes are almost exclusively in English.

In addition, there exists a belief – articulated by Themba (Public Participation Officer) – that Siswati words are somehow too long and difficult. This belief by Themba resulted in him not using SiSwati in emails (Chapter Four). This language ideology might be affecting the successful implementation of the language policy and might be contributing to the English-only website of the municipality. As a resident of the municipality, I am aware that this ideology is common among the young generation, and people living in townships and suburbs. Hence, Themba's sentiments may have been influenced by the negative beliefs towards SiSwati that already exist.

7.2.4. Language policy implementation checklist

Table 7.1 summarises the extent to which the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 is being implemented by the municipality. The provisions indicated in Table 7.1 are the ones that were part of the data collection process.

Table 7.1: Implementation checklist of the provisions of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014.

No.	Language Policy Provision	Checkpoint
1.	"Promotion and respect for all languages" (2.a).	Limited
2.	"Establishment of Language Units by the provincial organ of state"(2.d).	No
3.	"Empower the public to use their languages"(2.e).	Yes
4.	"Promote multilingualism and linguistic diversity"(2.f).	Limited[12]
5.	"Use official designated languages in proceedings in Municipal Council"(5.1).	Yes
6.	"Interpretation services in Council meetings"(5.2).	No
7.	"Use at least two official languages when rendering service to the public" (8.1).	
	A. Spoken communication	Yes
	B. Written communication (Facebook page)	Limited
	C. Written communication (website)	No
8.	"Use of at least two languages in signages"(9.1).	No
9.	"Establishment of language practitioners within the	No

[12] The promotion of multilingualism and linguistic diversity at the municipality does not include all the languages present. The data analysis indicate that multilingualism and linguistic diversity is centered around the use of English and SiSwati, and not the other languages present at the municipality.

	provincial organ of state"(16.1).	
10.	"Internal language policy by the provincial organ of state"(19.1).	No

The implementation checklist in Table 7.1 and the overview summary of language policy implementation indicate that the language policy has not been fully implemented at the municipality. The study has shown that there exist extensive multilingual practices on the ground, and most of them are habitual. However, there is no dedicated support for the successful implementation of the Act. The provisions that have not been implemented are due to the challenges that were reported by the staff members who participated in the study. The challenges are mostly about resources: The participants reported that the municipality does not have linguistic personnel and, as a result, provisions such as interpretation and translation are not implemented.

Despite these challenges, it is important to commend the actions by the multilingual staff members. Their linguistic repertories assist members of the public who prefer to be assisted in languages other than English. An example of this is the call centre, where staff members assist callers in SiSwati. Moreover, the contribution by the two members of the public who indicated that they get assisted in their preferred languages (Afrikaans and Xitsonga) also shows the importance of having multilingual staff members in a government institution that reports having limited resources to cater to all linguistic needs. The *Ummemo* and the Mayoral cultural events also play a vital role in raising awareness for the EmaSwati language and culture. However, it appears that the other African languages (isiNdebele and Xitsonga) present at the municipality receive less support. This may be due to SiSwati being a dominant language at the municipality.

7.2.5. The marginalisation of Afrikaans, isiNdebele, SiSwati and Xitsonga

The discussion in Chapter Two indicated how the apartheid era has influenced the selection of only four languages as designated languages of the province. The selection of Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, and SiSwati resulted in other languages present in the province such as

isiZulu and Xitsonga to be politically marginalised. Xitsonga is the second spoken language at the municipality, but due to the way the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 is structured, Xitsonga does not share the same status as the other four languages.

The data analysis in Chapters Four, Five, and Six indicate that English and SiSwati are commonly used at the municipality. However, SiSwati is less dominant compared to English, and marginalised in other areas such as written and online communication. And same applies to Afrikaans, isiNdebele, and Xitsonga. To showcase how these languages are marginalised, below, I summarise the language practices by the municipality which contribute to the marginalisation of these languages:

- The data analysis in Chapters Four and Five indicated that Afrikaans, English, isiNgomane and Xitsonga are used in formal and informal communication. However, English is the preferred language in formal meeting and Council meetings.
- The responses from the questionnaires indicated that they are staff members who listed Afrikaans, isiNdebele, SiSwati, and Xitsonga in their linguistic repertoires. But these languages are not used in written communication.
- As mentioned above, the virtual and physical signs in the municipality are in English.
- The annual *ummemo* event promotes the EmaSwati culture, and there are no similar events at the municipality for the AmaNdebele culture, and ideally so Matsonga culture.
- The website of the municipality is in English only.

The use of English and the minimal use of SiSwati at the municipality is supported by the Act, especially because the Act requires the use of only two of the official languages in government communications.

7.3. Recommendations

- To establish a language unit at the municipality: Language issues play an important role in the development of the country as a whole. Such a language unit would assist in all language-related issues and support the successful implementation of the language policy.
- The findings from the study raise concerns about language ideologies that are grounded in the hegemony of English. Therefore, it is recommended that the Mpumalanga Department

of Culture, Sports, and Recreation and PanSALB, start public campaigns that will educate the community and the staff members about the importance of promoting and developing African languages.

- The Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act of 2014 does not recognise all the languages spoken in the province. It is recommended that the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act be revisited for it to be inclusive of isiZulu and Xitsonga-speaking residents in Mpumalanga.
- In the findings, it was mentioned that PanSALB conducted a SASL language training for staff members in the municipality. To ensure proficiency or multilingual skills amongst the staff members, more linguistics workshops should be put in place to promote the use of multilingualism in the workplace.
- The Inkanyeti Local Municipality together with the office of Traditional Leaders could use the annual event *Ummemo* to educate people about the importance of developing and promoting their languages. Moreover, a similar event could be put in place to promote the AmaNdebele and Matsonga culture and language at the municipality.
- It is recommended that signage that is posted around the municipality offices be translated into at least two of the provincial designated languages – Afrikaans, isiNdebele, SiSwati, and ideally also, Xitsonga. This will ensure equality in language use. In addition, it would be important to consider the role of spoken varieties such as isiNgomane.
- The use of African languages in community/Council meetings may also be a way of showing the residents the importance of using their languages. As the Act advocates for the use of any of the 11 official languages in Council meetings, it is recommended that the language of proceedings be SiSwati as it is the dominant language at the municipality. Alternatively, have interpretation services available in the meetings.
- There should be a practical implementation plan of the Mpumalanga Provincial Languages Act (2014), this will assist in providing direction on how the implementation should be done, who should do it, and the support required. Moreover, this implementation should take into consideration the linguistic diversity of the province.

7.4. Conclusion

Chapter Seven summarised the results of the study in line with the objectives of the study; that is, language use and preference, and the promotion and development of local languages of the

municipality. In this chapter, I also re-looked at the language ideologies that emerged from the data analysis. The data from Chapters Four, Five, and Six suggests that Xitsonga, isiNdebele, and Afrikaans are more marginalised than SiSwati. Also, in this chapter, I further presented an implementation checklist that is aligned with the Language Act. And finally, I formulated recommendations that may be used by the municipalities and the Mpumalanga provincial government to improve the implementation of the language policy.

Given the literature review that was discussed in Chapter Two and the data analysed in Chapters Four, Five, and Six, this research project shows that the South African language policy is not fully implemented at the municipality. It has shown that there are challenges that still need to be addressed. The municipality needs to take positive steps in addressing the challenges that are affecting the successful implementation of the South African language policy at the municipality. In Chapter Three, I discussed the limitations to the data collection process. There were also some limitations in the writing process, this includes, keeping the municipality anonymous throughout the writing process. For example, I could not provide a detailed and in-depth discussion of the language statistics of the municipality due to the need for confidentiality.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

University of Cape Town

Linguistics Section:
School of African & Gender Studies,
Anthropology and Linguistics

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH ON HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Title of research project:

The implementation of the South African language policy by local government. A case study

2. Names of principal researcher(s):

Nobuhle Mhlongo

3. Department or research group address:

School of African and Gender Studies, Anthropology and Linguistics. Linguistics Section The AC Jordan Building University Avenue UCT Upper Campus Rondebosch

4. Contact details:

[redacted]766377674

[redacted]rinitybuhle@gmail.com

5. Name of participant:

6. Nature of the research:

Qualitative and quantitative study

7. Participant's involvement:

What is required from the participant: To participate in an interview/to allow the researcher to observe office interaction. [In addition, I explained to the participant verbally what the study was about, and ensured that they understood that the participation was voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study any time]

Risks: None

Benefits: None

Costs: None

Payment: None

Written consent

- I agree to participate in this research project.
- I have read the consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research on condition that my privacy is respected, subject to the following:
    - I understand that my personal details may be included in the research / will be used in aggregate form only, so that I will not be personally identifiable *(delete as applicable)*.
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.

Signature of participant_____

Signature of participant's guardian: _____
(required if participant is under 18)

Name of participant's guardian: _____
(required if participant is under 18)

Signature of person who sought consent: _____

Name of person who sought consent: _____

Names and signature(s) of principal researcher(s)

Signed by candidate

_____	_____
Signature	Signature
Nobuhle Mhlongo	_____
Name	Name

Date: 31 May 2018

Spoken consent

In the event that the participant is unable to fill out a written consent form, an affirmative answer to each of the following questions must be obtained on tape from the participant.

- Do you agree to participate in this research project?
- Have you read the consent form, or have its contents been explained to you?
- Have you had the opportunity to answer questions about the research project and the consent form?
- Do you agree to your responses being used for research on condition that your privacy is respected?
- Do you understand that your personal details will be used in aggregate form only, so that you cannot be identified?
- Do you understand that you are under no obligation to participate in this project?
- Do you understand that you can withdraw from the project at any time?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Members of the community(X) and Staff Members(Y)

1. Could you please tell me about yourself, your name, age, home village and home language?(X&Y)
2. Please tell me about your educational background and work experience if you have any?(X&Y)
3. What is/was your schools language of teaching and learning?(X&Y)
4. What language/s do you often use when communicating at home?(X&Y)
5. How often do you visit the municipality?(X)
6. Which language/s do you prefer to interact with?(X&Y)
7. In your experience do you think SiSwati and isiNdebele is being promoted by the municipality?(X&Y)
8. Which languages/s is used in the documents that you have access to in the municipality?(X)
9. What are the linguistic challenges that you came across in the municipality?(X&Y)
10. Which languages do you prefer to use in your staff meetings?(Y)
11. Which language/s do you prefer to use when interacting with the public?(Y)
12. What are the linguistic challenges that you face as a staff member in this municipality?(Y)
13. How often do you use code-switching with interacting with someone in the municipality?(X&Y)

14. Why? (X&Y)
15. What are your views regarding the Mpumalanga language Bill?(Y)
16. What is the role of PanSALB in this municipality?(Y)
17. What measures do you think could be taken in order to improve linguistic indifferences?(Y)
18. As a municipality, do you have any plans of developing and promoting siSwati and isiNdebele?(Y)

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE FEEL FREEE TO USE ANY OF THE 11 SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. What language/s do you use at the municipality?

To communicate with staff members(socially)

……
……
……
……
……

2. To communicate with staff members (work related)

……
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……
……
……

3. What language/s do you use in electronic communication(emails)?

……
……
……

……

……

4. The Mpumalanga language Bill makes provisions that the languages that should be used for municipality purposes are; SiSwati, isiNdebele; English and Afrikaans. What languages do you use in the Inkanyeti Local Municipality to render municipality proceedings?

.....

.....

.....

5. In your view, is the municipality promoting and developing the provincial languages (siSwati and isiNdebele)?

……

……

……

……

……

6. How do you overcome language barriers between you and your colleagues who do not speak your own language?

……

……

……

……

7. How often do you use English in the Inkanyeti Local Municipality? (please tick)

20%	
40%	
60%	
80%	
100%	

8. What other languages do you speak?

……

……

……

……

9. What language/s do clients use when communicating with staff members of the Inkanyeti Local Municipality?

……

……

……

10. Which language/s would you prefer to use when rendering municipality proceedings at the Inkanyeti Local Municipality?

……

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…….