Towards multilingual higher education in South Africa: the University of Cape Town's experience

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South African universities are required by the Language Policy for Higher Education adopted by the government on 6 November 2002 to implement multilingualism in their learning and teaching programmes. Multilingualism is recommended in this policy as a means to ensure equity of access and success in higher education, in contrast to past colonial and apartheid education policies that left a legacy of inequality, exclusion and failure. The implementation of this policy requires that universities develop language policies that clearly show how multilingualism will be promoted in their institutional environment and in their teaching and learning programmes. Whereas most universities have thus far developed language policies that indicate how multilingualism will be promoted in general communication and environment, the implementation of multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes seems to pose a serious challenge. The University of Cape Town has during the past few years developed its language policy and plan with the aim of implementing multilingualism in its environment and in learning and teaching programmes. The aim of this paper is to discuss the university's experience in this regard and to highlight the lessons for implementing a university language policy that may be drawn from this experience.

Introduction

In 2002, the South African government approved the Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE) (Department of Education 2002) with the aim of promoting multilingualism in higher education to meet the goals of equity and transformation. With respect to equity, multilingualism is considered in this policy to be pivotal to promoting equality of access and improved academic success for all students. The need to promote equity of access in South African universities should be understood against the socio-political history of these institutions, which was characterized by racial and linguistic divisions. During the colonial and apartheid eras, South African universities were divided according to race into black and white universities, and the latter were further divided according to language into English universities and Afrikaans universities (de la Rey 2001). The historically white universities were inaccessible to the majority of black students, first because of the government statutory laws which restricted the admission of black students to these universities (by the Separate University Act of 1959), and second, because of language admission requirement. Students admitted to these universities were required to be proficient either in English or Afrikaans, depending on the type of the university, and these languages were thus used as gatekeepers. Although the democratic change of 1994 repealed the apartheid statutory laws, the language requirement continues to create a barrier to most black students in accessing these institutions. It is against this background that the LPHE recommends that no language should be used as a barrier to access and success in higher education.

As already stated, the promotion of multilingualism in higher education is also aimed at transformation, that is, changing the historical identities of the universities in South Africa. According to the National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa, universities in the new democratic dispensation should be totally transformed to be neither black nor white, English or Afrikaans-speaking, but only 'unabashedly and unashamedly South African' universities (Department of Education 2001: 82).

Accordingly, the University of Cape Town (UCT), which is a historically English-medium university, has since the democratic change of 1994 been involved in strategic planning processes to reposition itself to be able to meet the demands of the changed social, political and cultural context and the government policy requirements. One of the major challenges the university is faced with in repositioning itself is with regard to language. Since its establishment in 1829 as the South African College, and its development to a fully-fledged university in 1918, UCT entrenched an 'English-only' language policy. This was designed to suit the needs of 'a homogenous community (overwhelmingly white, predominantly male, English speaking, economically privileged)' (Hall 2006: 14). However, following the democratic changes in the country, the university has become linguistically and racially diverse, rendering the English-only language policy inadequate. To address the new linguistic challenge, the university developed its language policy in 1999 (revised in 2003) with a view to raising critical awareness about the reality of multilingualism within the institution and in society in general, and to develop multilingual proficiency among students and staff.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the implementation of this language policy and to showcase the concomitant theoretical and practical strategies adopted by the university hitherto. The main focus of the paper will be on the implementation strategies of multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes. Here, the main objective of the policy is to implement multilingual education. The term 'multilingual education' is used within the South African context to refer to the use of two languages as media of teaching and learning, and the addition of a second and even a third language to each learner's linguistic repertoire in ways that promote both academic and linguistic success (see Heugh 1995: 95). Within the context of UCT, multilingual education entails the use of English in complementarity with students' first languages and the learning of another additional language, preferably Afrikaans or Xhosa.

The paper begins with a brief overview of the UCT language policy and plan and then discusses the theoretical framework and practical strategies adopted by the university in implementing the policy and plan. In conclusion, the paper highlights lessons to be drawn from this case study.

The university's language policy and plan
As already mentioned, UCT's language policy was developed in 1999 and was approved by Senate and Council in June and August 1999 respectively. This policy was revised in 2003. In its preamble, the policy emphasized 'the need to prepare students to participate fully in a multi-lingual society, where multi-lingual proficiency and awareness are essential' (University of Cape Town 1999: 1). It further stressed the importance of the development of multilingual proficiency on the one hand, and the promotion of multilingual awareness on the other.

Provisions of the language policy
The language policy makes the following provisions with regard to English as an official language and its use:

> English is the medium of instruction and administration. English is an international language of communication in science and business, but it is not the primary language for many of our students and staff.
> English is both the medium of teaching and examination except in language and literature departments where another language is taught and may be used. This applies to all levels, and to dissertations and theses for higher degrees. (University of Cape Town 1999: 1)

It is important to note from the foregoing that although the university is committed to using English as the primary medium of instruction and administration,

it is aware of the limitation of the English-only policy in a context where about 50% are not first language speakers of the language. The English-only policy has become inadequate as the number of black students who speak other languages has increased over the past few years. To address this new linguistic reality, the policy was revised in 2003 to make provision for the implementation of multilingualism in learning and teaching programmes and in the institutional environment. The revised policy makes the following provisions with regard to the implementation of multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes:

> To further the objective of the promotion of multilingual awareness and proficiency, all academic programme conveners and teachers will be required, with the aid of language and literature departments, staff in the Centre for Higher Education Development, and CALSSA (The Centre for Applied Language Studies and Services in Africa), to explore and implement ways in which these may be achieved through the Undergraduate and Postgraduate structures. (University of Cape Town 1999 (revised 2003), 1–2)

In administration, the policy nevertheless continues to designate English as the primary medium of teaching and learning and 'the language of internal governance and of administration' (University of Cape Town 1999 (revised 2003)).

The UCT's explicit emphasis on English, coupled with the fact that the responsibility for its implementation is devolved to departments, has invited criticisms from scholars such as Balfour (2005: 70):

> Of all the policies, it alone advocates the most explicit 'English only' approach to the question of language development stating that 'Language and literature departments at UCT that teach South African languages other than English or international languages are expected to play a key role in exploring ways of assisting the UCT community to achieve awareness and proficiency'.

However, whilst it is a truism that UCT's language policy explicitly recognizes English as the primary medium of education and administration, it is not correct to interpret it now as an English-only policy that has no commitment to the implementation of multilingualism. As Fishman (1980: 14) warns, it is difficult to make any meaningful interpretation of what a policy entails merely by looking at its codification. According to him (Fishman 1980: 14):

> without rather detailed knowledge of all that went into the decision-making process that led up to it, we cannot tell which parts of it are window-dressing and which parts are the heart of the matter, what to take seriously and what to discount as verbiage or even as intentionally misleading.

On the question of English, the issue is not whether English is explicitly or implicitly denoted as the medium of education and administration, but how the language can be managed within a multilingual context. English constitutes a major challenge for the implementation of multilingualism in all universities in South African and indeed university education worldwide. The challenge is how to provide access to English without entrenching its hegemonic position. At present, all the language policies of South African universities, with the exception of the few historically Afrikaans universities, have adopted policies that advocate English as the primary medium of education and administration. So far there is no university in South Africa that makes use of indigenous African languages as the primary media of education in other than language disciplines. In most of these policies, the commitment to African languages is mainly to their development or intellectualization with a view to using them as media of teaching, learning and research in the distant future. This approach is theoretically flawed as languages develop through use or, as Cooper (1989) puts it, the form follows the function, not vice versa.

UCT's language policy may be thus better interpreted in the light of its

language plan, which was developed in 2003. This plan provides a better insight into the policy and gives strong indication of the university commitment to promote multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes and in its environment.

UCT's language plan
The plan was developed by a task team that completed its report in November 2003. This report (University of Cape Town 2003) identified several focus areas. First, the plan provides the following interpretation of the UCT's language policy with regard to the position of English in a multilingual context:

> English is the medium of instruction at UCT. However, the university's language policy advocates many languages of communication. It takes as its starting point the need to prepare students to participate fully in a multilingual society, where multilingual proficiency and awareness are essential. It also commits itself to ensuring that all students and staff have access to effective literacy in English. The language policy recognizes our linguistic diversity as a resource rather than a problem which resides in individuals. It also recognizes the personal, social and educational value of multilingualism and of the language development. This position reflects the university's stated institutional goals to be a player in the global field whilst playing an active developmental and supportive role in its local African environment, ensure meaningful access and success for students and staff from diverse backgrounds, and creates an institutional culture where systems, processes, behaviour, symbols and rituals represent a diversity of culture. (University of Cape Town 2003:1–2)

The language plan further stipulates that for purposes of practicality, UCT is committed to promoting three languages, namely English, Afrikaans and Xhosa, which are the three official languages of the Western Cape province. Thus, multilingualism within the context of UCT implies at least the use of these three languages. This approach is in line with the recommendations of the 2004 Ministerial Report, The Development of Indigenous African Languages as Media of Instruction in Higher Education (Department of Education 2004), which requires universities to promote the official languages of the province in which they are located.

The plan also identifies the strategies to develop multilingual awareness and proficiency among students and staff. First, it recommends that English, Afrikaans and Xhosa language courses be offered to both staff and students to develop multilingual proficiency and multilingual awareness. Second, it identifies the need to promote multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes to support students for whom English is not the first language. It recommends a two-pronged strategy: improving access to English for all students and staff on the one hand, and promotion of multilingualism in the institutional policies and practices on the other. These strategies will be discussed further later in this paper.

In addition to the language plan, the university developed in 2004 a two-year business plan (University of Cape Town 2004), which outlines the strategic objectives and operational strategies for implementing the language policy and plan. It further identifies activities, time frames and resources required for the attainment of each objective. The allocation of resources is critical for any successful language policy implementation. In fact, according to scholars such as Fishman (1987: 409) who view language planning as the 'authoritative allocation of resources to the attainment of language status and corpus goals', without resources there could be no serious language planning. For Fishman, it is this that distinguishes between real language planning and mere 'window-dressing', to use his term.

The Language Policy Committee
To oversee the implementation of its language policy, the university further established a Language Policy Committee in 2005 to oversee the implementation of the policy and plan. All structures of the university are well represented in the Language Policy Committee, hence broad participation is ensured.[1] The Committee has the following two main functions:

1) to optimize all aspects of language development related to multilingualism at UCT, and to consider annual and medium to longer term plans and policies in this area for approval by Senate; and

2) to promote informed decisions about the shape, form and focus of programmes and activities designed to promote and achieve a multilingual environment.

In 2005, the university also launched the Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) and this will be discussed later in this paper.

Although the development of the language policy and plan, the business plan and the establishment of the University Language Policy Committee constitute important milestones, the implementation of multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes poses challenges of a theoretical and practical nature. These challenges, and the strategies adopted by UCT to deal with them, are the focus of the next section.

From blueprint to practical implementation: theoretical framework
Language policy implementation challenges language planners as it requires a good understanding and knowledge of the varied theoretical and practical implementation models. Such theoretical models are not always readily available, as language planning itself is an emerging discipline that is mainly informed by practice. The lack of a well-established theoretical framework for language policy implementation is more evident in micro-structural environments such as universities; throughout the world, there is still a dearth of studies in this area (see Jernudd and Neustupny 1987; Jernudd 2002; Baldauf 2006).

In South Africa, although several studies have focused on the language planning and policies of the different universities over the past few years (van der Walt 2004; Webb 2007; Du Plessis 2006; Verhoef 2007), there are still no well-established theoretical and practical models for the implementation of multilingualism in the historically English (white) universities. These universities operate under different micro-structural environments characterized by different social, political, economic and linguistic factors and their strategies for implementing multilingualism are different to those of the historically Afrikaans universities (Du Plessis 2006: 87).

The implementation of multilingualism at UCT is mainly informed by the 'language management' philosophy espoused by scholars such as Jernudd and Neustupny (1987) and Jernudd (1991, 1993); for the implementation of their language policies, see Verhoef (2007). The language management model differs from the traditional language planning model in that it represents a shift from finding optimal strategies for government-initiated action to an interest in explaining how individuals or groups of people manage language problems in discourse as a starting point for community-wide language management. The language management model 'seeks to explain how language problems arise in the course of people's use of language, that is, in discourse' (Jernudd 1993: 134). Thus, language management is viewed as taking place where a deviation from what is considered a norm is noted. The noted deviation is then evaluated either negatively or positively, following which adjustment is made, followed by implementation. In this model, speakers or language users should form part of the whole process of language planning, starting from the identification of language 'problems' to their 'solutions'.

As Baldauf (2006: 155) points out, the language management model is suitable for micro language planning since it:

allows business institutions, groups or individuals [to] hold agency and create what can be recognised as language policy and plan to utilise and develop their language resources, one that is not directly the result of some larger macro policy, but is a response to their own needs, their own 'language problems', [and] their own requirement for language management.

In this way, the language management model, unlike traditional language planning, which is interventionist and often over-prescriptive, is more acceptable to universities, which often tend to view government policies as encroaching on their institutional autonomy and academic freedom. Furthermore, the language management model seems to fit well into the culture of new managerialism in South African universities, which has become a sine qua non of university management (Coughlan 2006). Thus, in this context the use of the term 'language management' sounds preferable to 'language planning', which has lost the appeal it had in the 1960s (Spolsky 2007: 202).

The language management model makes a distinction between simple language management and organized language management. Simple management is defined by Neustupny and Nekvapil (2003: 185) as:

management of problems as they appear in individual communication acts; for example, the problem of spelling a particular word, or the problem of how to redress the use of an expression that a speaker has just uttered but now considers as not sufficiently polite.

Organized language management is described as a process involving more than one person, a discourse about management and lastly, consideration of ideological factors (ibid.). The language management theory maintains that language problems originate from simple language management and are then transferred to organized language management.

Jernudd (2002: 299–307) provides a more practical framework for implementing language management theory at bilingual universities. According to this framework, language management in universities may focus on the following seven categories of communicative acts:

(1) teaching acts between students and teachers;
(2) study acts by students;
(3) administrative acts between students, members of faculties and administrator representatives of university departments and administrative offices;
(4) research acts;
(5) writing and other presentation acts;
(6) service acts by members of faculties in communication with many different audiences; and lastly,
(7) governance acts between representatives of the university and representatives of government offices and the public.

As this paper is mainly concerned with the implementation of multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes, the focus will be on teaching and study acts.

Practical strategies
With about 25,000 students and staff members who belong to different language groupings, UCT constitutes a complex micro-structural environment that gives rise to a plethora of language problems. However, as Jernudd (2002: 307) recommends, the use of language audits can be effective in identifying language problems. Accordingly, UCT has over the past few years conducted several institutional climate surveys and other research to identify and understand the language problems in the institution. Three institutional climate surveys have so far been conducted: two for staff and one for students. Although these surveys were not focused on language use per se, their findings are quite informative and insightful about language use and

language problems in the university. For example, the findings of the students' institutional climate survey commissioned by the Institutional Planning Department clearly show that black students have problems in using English in learning:

> Black students also reported having difficulty with English. Whilst there was a general agreement across all groups that there has to be a common language of instruction, and acceptance of English as the language of instruction, Black students in particular felt English was a significant barrier to learning. Many of the Black students mentioned difficulty with following lectures, understanding exam questions and being able to communicate fully with lecturers. There was a strong feeling that lecturers misunderstood what Black students were asking them and this only led to frustration on both sides. (Strategy and Tactics 2004: 47)

The report also indicates a further problem concerning mainly black students from historically disadvantaged schools. These students felt they were not able to ask questions in class as they were embarrassed at being laughed at on account of their accent, not by white students, but by their fellow black students, the so-called 'coconuts' – that is, black students who, in one student's terms, 'because they have attended ex-Model C_2 or private schools spoke English well' (Strategy and Tactics 2004: 46–47). The following remarks from students are quoted verbatim in the report (23):

> You're gonna see them [Black students] struggling . . . you're so scared cause they're gonna laugh at you, if your English is not good and you end up just sitting there and asking anything, sometimes it make me feel as if I am suffocating.
> [those] who went to Model C schools, I mean it is like their first language is English. They grew up from grade one speaking English. So they will laugh at you. The Whites will not laugh at you. They will never laugh at you, but our brothers they will laugh at you.

This problem amongst black students themselves points to an emerging language problem of class in higher education which is a result of bifurcation of schooling into working-class poor schools and well-resourced English-medium middle-class schools (see Webb, Lafon and Pare in this issue for background on this). Most black students who qualify for admission on merit at UCT are mainly from ex-Model C and private schools that are well-resourced and provide good English language education. To ensure equal access, the university has introduced a programme of alternative testing, the Alternative Admission Research Project (AARP), which has developed a system of admitting students from historically disadvantaged schooling backgrounds on potential rather than performance in school-leaving results. The Academic Development Programme (ADP) at the university further provides academic development support to these students to try to ensure equity of success.

The problem of English was also noted by staff members in the recent Institutional Climate Survey Report for Staff (University of Cape Town 2007), which was conducted to gauge staff perceptions of the institution. Staff members were asked whether they regarded the dominance of English as a medium of instruction and administration at UCT as a problem. Twenty-six percent (n ¼ 266) of the respondents responded that they felt it was, 17.6% regarded it as 'somewhat of a problem', and 8.4% as 'a major problem'. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of this group in terms of various categories. Similar percentages overall of academic and non-academic (PASS) staff considered the dominance of English a problem. Women generally, but especially coloured and Indian women, were more strongly represented, and more African men and women than other groups tended to see English dominance as a problem. This tendency was more marked among the PASS group.
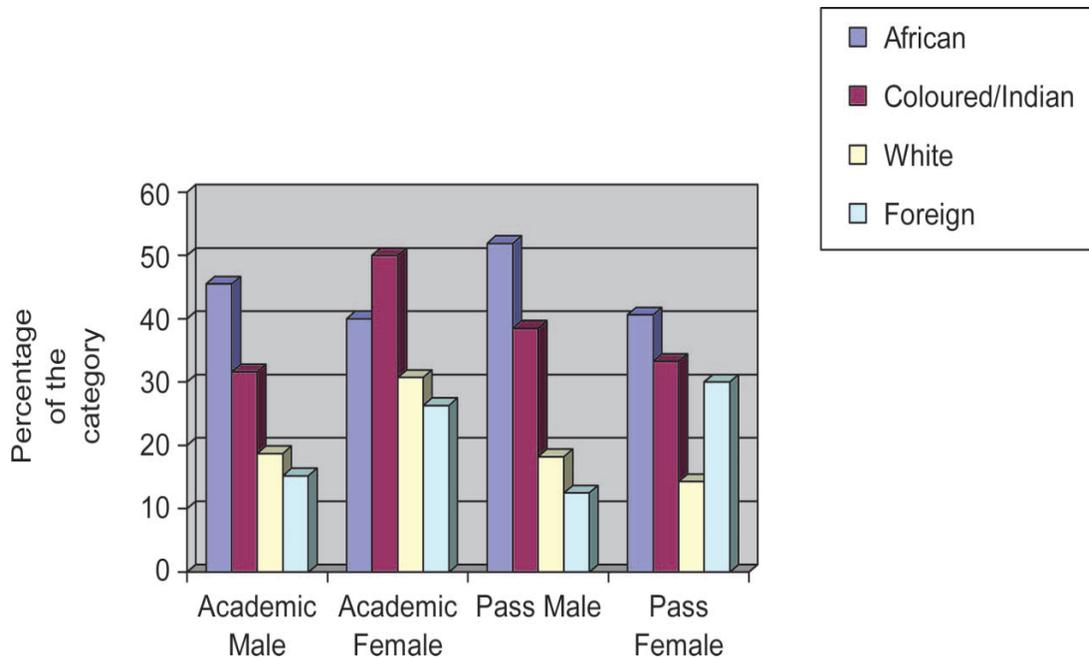
Figure 1. Dominance of English at UCT: breakdown of respondents who regard this as 'a problem'.

Beside the climate surveys, the university also launched the Centre for Higher Education Development/Institutional Planning Department (CHED/IPD) 'Throughput' Research Project, which focused on the throughput rates of a cohort of students at UCT admitted in 1995 and expected to complete their first three-year undergraduate degree in 1998. The findings of this study showed a difference in academic performance between white and black students (Hendry and Scott 2003). In most faculties, this difference in academic performance between black and white students was over 20% (University of Cape Town 2003). Although there are many contributory factors to this difference, there is no doubt that language is one of the major factors as most of the students affected are black students with limited proficiency in English, the primary medium of teaching and learning.

The language problems of students at UCT, in particular, students with English as an additional language (EAL), have also been noted in various studies by the Language Development Group (LDG): for example, Kapp (1998, 2006), Bangeni (2001), Paxton (2007) and Thesen and van Platzen (2006). Kapp (1998, 23), for example, highlights the perception by Faculty of Humanities EAL students that, as one student put it, 'the University of Cape Town recognizes the English way of life as the only custodian to civilization'. She reports that black students from ex-DET schools[3] found the English-only policy difficult as the lecturers could not interpret what they were saying in their primary languages, as was the case at their schools.

Another study by Bangeni (2001) on the language attitudes of EAL students towards the use of English and their African languages as languages of teaching and learning in the same Faculty of Humanities also reveals the problems that students have in studying through English and their desire to study through their own first languages:

> I think that an ideal situation is one where each student is free to speak his or her home language. The present academic situation here on campus is advantageous for the white students only, as it is their mother tongue that is spoken. I do not even want to start discussing their advantage when it comes to writing essays and having workgroup discussions. They are always ahead of us in discussions and one finds that they discuss among themselves, in situations like this you will find that you feel alienated, we cannot

really follow the argument and we are just grateful that we can at least understand what they are saying. We Zulu students are unfortunate in that we cannot help the fact that we are not English speaking. (Quoted in Bangeni 2001: 37–38)

Bangeni also established that students have an ambivalent attitude towards English, as some view the language as indispensable for their future careers yet express the need also to learn through their indigenous languages – for example, when dealing with a genre such as praise poetry.

Students' ambivalence towards English is also noted in Paxton's (2007) study based on her multilingual concepts glossary project for the language and communications module in microeconomics (ECO1010H) in the Faculty of Commerce at UCT. The results of this study showed that students have a high regard for English but at the same time experience serious problems in using the language in learning. The study confirms that English presents a considerable challenge to many UCT students for whom it is not the first language. For example, when asked to judge the level of English required at UCT, 45% of students indicated that they found it 'high', 'very high' or 'difficult to cope with'. As one student put it: 'Everything is basically English, even if one doesn't understand, it's hard to find someone to explain in home language' (Paxton 2007: 63). Only 32% of EAL students said they had not experienced any discomfort in having to communicate in English when they first arrived at the university. From this study, it is clear that some students, while retaining a high regard for English, would like to access learning and teaching programmes through their own indigenous languages.

EAL students' difficulties with English are further represented in the collection of papers edited by Thesen and Van Pletzen (2006). These are based on ongoing research on the language problems of EAL students at UCT and highlight the range of difficulties that EAL students experience from understanding of concepts to reading and writing in English (see, for example, Clark 2006; Bangeni and Kapp 2006; Paxton 2006; van Pletzen 2006).

From the foregoing, it is clear that English seems to constitute a major barrier to learning among EAL students and a major problem to staff for whom it is not the first language. The university management has recognized that such problems require organized language management and accordingly, the university established the Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) in 2005 to manage the language implementation process. This language management structure will be discussed in the following section.

MEP: a language management structure

Although language management theory requires language management to be discourse-based and bottom-up, the staff and students' language problems at UCT require a language management structure to oversee the policy implementation process. Even proponents of the language management theories such as Jernudd concur that in some contexts, a language management model may involve people who 'are given authority to find and suggest systematic and rigorous solutions to problems of language potentially or actually encountered by members of their community' (Jernudd 1993: 134). Jernudd further warns that in educational settings such as universities, where many staff practise language management on-line and possess a rudimentary concept of how language works, there is a danger that decisions will be made about languages in education without the benefit of consultation with language management specialists. Baldauf (2006) also argues for the role of agencies in micro language planning. As he rightly points out, the argument that a central language management agency may abuse power or adopt a top-down approach to language policy implementation is questionable since even with a discourse-based approach, individuals or groups may also abuse power. In multilingual universities, language management cannot be simply left to individuals or groups alone, as there are many complex factors that require

coordinated effort.

The Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) was thus established in 2005 to coordinate UCT's language policy implementation. As already mentioned, UCT adopted a business model (project approach) to the implementation of its language policy and plan. In management sciences, the business model for project implementation is well established. This model requires clear identification of the project objectives, activities, time frames and resources required for the implementation of the project. MEP was therefore established to achieve the following objectives:

(1) to provide guidance on how to foster a multilingual environment within the university;

(2) to ensure the consolidation of existing multilingual and language development projects;

(3) to ensure the development of appropriate multilingual materials in the curriculum in order to support students for whom English is an additional language;

(4) to promote the intellectualization of Xhosa and other relevant indigenous African languages for use in different disciplines; and lastly

(5) to ensure the development of communicative, workplace-orientated courses in Afrikaans and Xhosa for staff and students.

The project is based in the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) and acts as a coordinating structure for different language activities in the university. As Dines (1994: 14 cited in Baldauf 2006: 262) rightly points out, a university language policy should address language issues across the university in a coordinated and systematic way:

It should not be just a language centre policy or a section of the Faculty of Arts' strategic plan. It needs to be a university wide language policy embracing all the diverse issues which university senior management needs to address.

Webb (2007) in his discussion of the implementation of language policy at the University of Pretoria also emphasized the need for a language management structure to coordinate language management at his university. MEP has hitherto explored various strategies to implement multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes and to develop critical multilingual awareness and multilingual proficiency among staff. Some of these strategies will be the focus of the next sections.

Developing critical multilingual awareness and multilingual proficiency among staff
As indicated in the previous sections, UCT's language policy and plan commit the university to developing multilingual awareness and multilingual proficiency among staff. To this end, MEP has introduced a communication skills course in Xhosa, which is one of main official languages in the Western Cape. Plans are underway to introduce communication skills courses in other languages such as Afrikaans, and other indigenous languages depending on the needs of staff members. The acquisition of multilingualism among staff is important for improved communication, and also essential for university transformation. The Xhosa communication skills course for staff was introduced as a response to the language needs of staff members themselves. In line with the language management philosophy, staff members participate in the course voluntarily and the course is offered free of charge. In most cases, staff members organize themselves and then request MEP to put on the course for them. The following extracts from feedback forms indicate some of their reasons for wanting to take the course:

IsiXhosa is very important to communicate with people.
To be able to have a basic conversation to Xhosa people – break the ice when interacting with Xhosa people professionally or personally.

To learn conversational Xhosa and be able to converse with some customers and colleagues in their mother tongue.
To enable participants to have basic conversation in Xhosa and an understanding of some cultural differences.
To gain some insight into lives and culture of Xhosa people and to be able to speak some basic Xhosa.

Each course consists of 12 sessions spread over three months. The teaching of the courses is based on the communicative language teaching and task-based approaches: participants learn the target language as they try to perform certain communicative tasks such as greeting, introducing themselves to colleagues, giving their life history, family backgrounds and information about their occupations. This approach differs from the traditional approach to second language teaching, which places much emphasis on grammar instead of communication.

Since the course was introduced in 2006, about 300 staff members have participated, and the course has been very positively received. Many participants have indicated in the feedback forms that the course has made an important contribution to their personal life. Some feel the course has helped them to acquire basic proficiency in the language and to enable them 'to get along better and work with people that speak Xhosa'. Others have mentioned that they have gained a 'much better insight and appreciation of the isiXhosa culture'.

Developing multilingual proficiency and multilingual awareness among students
The university has also adopted several strategies to develop critical multilingual awareness and multilingual proficiency among the student body. The first strategy is to promote multilingualism in the curriculum by providing students with the opportunity to learn an additional language beside their first languages and English. This strategy is based on the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach, which is commonly used in many European countries (Marsh 2006). The use of this approach at UCT was piloted in the Faculty of Health Sciences a few years ago following the introduction of the new curriculum, which requires students to learn either Afrikaans or Xhosa as a compulsory subject to equip them with linguistic and cultural skills essential for their profession during and after their study. Since these courses were introduced, they have proved to be a great success and students have now requested that the courses be offered over six semesters instead of the current four-semester period. Plans are underway to extend this model to other professional disciplines such as law, social work, education and psychology.

The second strategy is similar to that for staff. In 2007, MEP piloted a Xhosa communication skills course for students and two classes were offered, one for the law students and the other one for students from the social responsiveness group. These students requested the course as they needed proficiency in Xhosa to be able to communicate with speakers of the language in the surrounding communities during their practical work or community work. This course differs from the one offered as part of the curriculum in that it is not credit bearing.

Promoting multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes
As already mentioned, one of the main objectives of UCT's language policy and plan is to implement multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes with the aim of ensuring equity of access and equity of outcomes to all students. Transformation of the teaching and learning environment was viewed by Njabulo Ndebele, the vicechancellor of UCT between 2000 and 2008, to be of paramount importance, as he makes clear in his communication entitled Living Transformation (Ndebele 2005: 2):

What goes on in the lecture-rooms, seminar-rooms, and laboratories is most probably at the heart of the goals of transformation. It is there that institutional practices are handed down as well as challenged by historic change.

The need for us, in this regard, is to pay closer attention to the interface in the curriculum between our goal to be a research-led university and the challenges of an enriched teaching and learning environment. This will require that we give closer attention to UCT's curriculum, in the broadest sense, and assess its relevance to our times, and the extent to which it contributes to deepening transformation.

It is in this area that we must give effect to the goal to enrich the student experience at UCT beyond its current levels, particularly as we broaden student access to UCT.

What Ndebele's communication alludes to is critical in view of the fact that EAL students' learning experience has over the years been impoverished by an Englishonly language policy that failed to recognize the value of linguistic diversity in teaching and learning programmes. Transformation in this regard requires that the university finds creative and innovative strategies to recognize students' first languages in teaching and learning programmes.

While Section 15 of the LPHE allows the continued use of English and Afrikaans as the media of instruction, until such time as at least one of the official African languages of the province is phased in as a language of instruction, UCT is exploring various strategies to manage language problems in teaching and learning programmes and to implement multilingualism. Accordingly, the university has adopted a two-pronged strategy:

(1) promoting access to English through the provision of English academic literacy courses to first year students;
(2) phasing in multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes in targeted disciplines.

With regard to the first strategy of providing access to English academic literacy, UCT has a long history of offering such courses. The courses were first introduced in the early 1980s with the aim of supporting students for whom English was not the first language, but the approach changed in the late 1980s and 1990s to focus on academic development and higher education development. Following this change, the Academic Development Programme (ADP) was established to provide academic development to meet the challenge of diversity in learning and teaching programmes. The ADP is based in the Centre for Higher Education Development and offers different language development courses to firstyear students who are not first language speakers of English. Within the ADP, there is also a writing centre that assists students with English academic writing skills.

Although this strategy is vital in providing the much needed access to English, its problem is that it risks sustaining the hegemony of English, leading to the marginalization of students' first languages and alienation from them. A further problem is that support for English academic literacy may become difficult and costly in future as the number of black students for whom English is not the first language increases. English is rapidly losing its prescriptive normative status at UCT as students tend to use their home languages or urban slang in communicating with one another outside the classroom situation.

The second strategy, which is a multilingual approach, seeks to promote the use of students' first languages as auxiliary media of teaching and learning in complementarity to English. This approach is referred to by scholars such as Dua (1994) as the 'complementary language use model'. Dua proposed this model for India as it has the potential to empower the use of indigenous languages on the one hand and to provide a strategy for controlling, regulating and taming the hegemony of English on the other. This model is also supported by African scholars such as Bamgbose (2000: 207), who argues that in multilingual and multicultural contexts, there is a need to go beyond 'linguistic imperialism', 'linguicism' and 'language rights' to stress the interdependent relationship between English and indigenous

languages. According to him, there should be no conflict between the promotion of English and the recognition of its interdependence with other languages. Madiba (2004) recommends the model for South Africa and proposes that English be used in complementarity with the other nine indigenous African languages in higher education. The relevance of this model to the implementation of multilingualism in South African higher education is attested by research on this issue at the University of Fort Hare and the University of KwaZulu-Natal by de Kadt (2005), and Dalvit and de Klerk (2005), which shows that EAL students prefer the complementary language use model involving English and the use of their first languages (Xhosa and Zulu) as auxiliary media of education.

Although the complementary language use model is a useful one, its implementation requires good language management at course and curriculum levels, including the definition of the nature and scope of the complementary language use and the delimitation of the function of various languages in different domains (Dua 1994: 114). According to Dua (1994: 119), the complementarity between two or more languages may range from 1% to 99%depending on linguistic, socio-cultural and political factors. These contextual factors are also important in delimiting the functions of the various languages in different domains.

Language complementarity can occur within one domain where the languages involved are used together to facilitate learning and teaching. This type of complementary language use is referred to by Dua (1994) as intra-domain complementary language use. It can also occur in the form of code switching, which is increasingly recognized in multilingual contexts as an effective strategy for learning and teaching.

As already mentioned, at UCT different pilot projects have been initiated to explore the language complementary model in different disciplines. One of these projects is the concept literacy project launched by MEP. The term 'concept literacy' is relatively new and is used within the context of South Africa to refer to 'reading, understanding and using the learning area-specific words, terms and related language forms which are an integral part of knowledge in . . . learning areas' (Young et al. 2005). The aim of the concept literacy project is to phase in the use of students' first languages in teaching key concepts in different disciplines, especially at first-year level. First-year students generally experience difficulties in understanding the special language of their discipline and its key concepts. This problem seems to be particularly high among EAL students. The literature abounds with studies that clearly show the relationship between language and conceptualization (Vygotsky 1962): scholars such as Meyer and Land (2006), Perkins (2006) and Cousin (2006) all acknowledge that students often find the language and concepts of certain disciplines to be troublesome, and they refer to such concepts as 'threshold concepts'. There is a need to deliberately identify such concepts and to teach them more systematically.

In the concept literacy project, the identification of threshold concepts is based on academic text corpora created for this purpose. Already four small language corpora have been constructed for statistics, physics, health sciences and economics respectively. The aim is to develop each of these corpora to at least one million running words so that they are likely to contain most of the key concepts of a discipline. The advantage of electronic text corpora is that contextual examples or concordances, which are essential for understanding key concepts, can be extracted by using electronic concordancing tools. The extracted concordances are used to lead students progressively to understanding the concepts and their complexities and application. As scholars such as Gee (1997: 236) argue, concept acquisition is only possible if the reader is able to situate the meanings in context. Gee regards the human mind 'as not so much a calculator and rule follower . . . but a flexible and adaptable pattern recognizer' (236). Gee further argues that in order to acquire the meaning of a new word, learners must have numerous examples and must uncover patterns and sub-patterns in those examples.

Beside the concept literacy project, there are other small pilot projects such as the multilingual concept glossaries initiated by Paxton in economics (Paxton 2007). What is interesting about this project is the way tutors and students are able to use code switching in teaching and learning. The data from this project illustrate the importance of giving EAL students the opportunities to explore ideas and concepts in both English and their primary language (Paxton 2007: 63). Code switching was used by both tutors and students to scaffold the teaching and learning of threshold concepts. The following example, taken from transcriptions of recorded tutorials, shows how students used both English and Xhosa to explain the concept 'equity' in economics.

> I-Equity to me means sharing equally, that means kukwahlulwa-hlulwa kwezinto ngokulinganayo, in terms of economy ifocus(e) kuyo because if you see kukho izinto ezifana nendlela, nelights, zizinto esizishera sonke, even rich people uses the same tar road esiyisebenzisayo, so le good yahlulwe ngokulinganayo ebantwini and then kwezinye igoods kuya depender ukuba ungubani na.

> [Equity means to me sharing equally, that means sharing of things equally, in economics terms, it focuses on equity for example, things like roads, lights, those are things that we share equally, even rich people uses the same tar road we are using, so this good is shared equally to all people and other goods depends who you are.] (Quoted in Tyam and Paxton 2008)

From the foregoing, it is clear that the complementary language use model provides an alternative framework for implementing multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes at UCT, and perhaps at other historically English universities. The danger of this model, however, is that it 'may be legitimized for representation and reproduction of dominant ideologies and for perpetuating the hegemony of certain languages' (Dua 1994: 116). A further problem is that in most cases, English tends to dictate the nature of complementary language use and to change it in its favour in the process of appropriation and representation. Thus, according to Dua (1994: 123) the main challenge for this model is 'to stop the marginalization of indigenous languages and to create a different order of social power and social relations for the growth of indigenous languages and for a cultural renaissance'.

Conclusion
The UCT's language policy and planning experience provides a case study of micro language planning at a historically English-medium university. This case study is significant as historically English universities in South Africa constitute microstructural environments different from those of the historically Afrikaans universities (see Du Plessis 2006) and historically black universities. In these universities, English has a historical prescriptive and normative status that tends to marginalize the use of other languages in teaching and learning programmes. However, following the increased number of students and staff for whom English is not the first language over the past few years, the English-only policy is no longer adequate or feasible in these universities.

This paper provides a situational analysis of the language problems faced by UCT and has attempted to show how the university is managing them. The main challenge is the new multilingual reality, which has led the university to review its English-only language policy, and develop a new language policy and plan. We have attempted to show the extent to which the new language policy and plan have been implemented in teaching and learning programmes, and have highlighted how language management theory has provided the framework of intervention for this implementation.

In reviewing practical UCT strategies, we have discussed how the university established the University Language Policy Committee and the MEP to provide

proper coordination and management of the implementation of the language policy and plan. The advantage of these two language management structures is that they make the implementation of multilingualism an institutional responsibility rather than an issue of one particular department or language centre as has been the case in some universities. To deal with the problem of practicality in implementing multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes, the complementary language use model, which allows students to use both English and their first languages as auxiliary media of learning, is being piloted. This model stands a better chance of succeeding at UCT and perhaps in other historically English universities as it provides a balance between the need for access to English, which has become a dominant factor in university education throughout the world, and the growing recognition of the importance of students' first languages in teaching and learning.

The complementary language use model has proved to be successful at the Faculty of Health Sciences where students are required to learn either Xhosa or Afrikaans in their curriculum as these languages are essential for their professional development and practice. The ubiquity of multilingualism in South African communities today requires health practitioners to be multilingual if they are to be effective. The concept literacy project that is being implemented in statistics, physics, law and health sciences also gives grounds for optimism in implementing the complementary language use model in the curriculum. As language and concept formation are interdependent (Vygotsky 1962), the concept literacy project constitutes an important intervention strategy to fast-track concept learning and cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) skills for EAL students. The use of multilingual tutors has also been shown to be very effective in facilitating multilingual concept teaching and learning. Thus, although these different pilot projects to implement multilingualism in teaching and learning programmes are still in their initial stages, they offer useful lessons and insight on how to implement multilingualism at a historically English university. However, as policy and models in themselves are not sufficient, the success of the implementation of multilingualism at UCT, and indeed in all the universities in South Africa, will depend much on the extent to which the speakers of the different indigenous languages, particularly the newly emerging class in these institutions, 'organize themselves into counterhegemonic struggle and fight for a different political, social and cultural arrangement of power and knowledge' (Dua 1994: 133).

Notes
1. The Language Policy Committee is a Senate Committee chaired by a deputy vicechancellor and its membership comprises the following or their nominees: deans, the employee relations manager, the coordinator of the language development group, the chair of Academics' Association, the chair of the Employees' Union, representatives from centres such as PRAESA (the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa) and CALSSA (Centre for Applied Language and Literacy Studies and Services in Africa), a representative from Student Affairs, a representative from the Residences Committee, two student representatives, the registrar, the director of the institutional planning department, the skills development facilitator, the transformation manager and the co-ordinator of the Multilingual Education Project (MEP).
2. For more on types of South African schools and their history, see Webb, Lafon and Pare, this issue.
3. For more on types of South African schools and their history, see Webb, Lafon and Pare, this issue.

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