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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY IN GOVERNMENT
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO
GRADES 1-3.

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A Minor Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree
of Masters in Education (Educational Administration, Planning and Social Policy)

School of Education

Faculty of the Humanities

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DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for an award of any other 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.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Abstract

This thesis is about the implementation of the mother tongue instruction language policy in Namibia. It examines how teachers in Grades 1 -3 understand, make sense and implement the policy in the school. Spillane's (2002) analytical framework of sense-making is used to guide the study.

This study was a single case study which used interviews and observations to gather data. The interviews used mainly open-ended questions.

The findings showed that there is willingness for the policy to be implemented, however the pre-conditions are not ideal for the policy to be implemented effectively. Three key aspects therefore need to be taken into consideration before the policy can be implemented effectively.

These are the following:

- A need for the language policy to be communicated effectively and for teachers to fully understand the rationale for the mother tongue instruction.
- A need for support material in indigenous languages for both teachers and learners.
- A need for indigenous language teachers that are properly trained for indigenous language teaching.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In Namibia the Mother Tongue Instruction language policy for Grades 1-3 states that learners should be taught in their home language in the first 3 years of schooling. This thesis is about the implementation of this policy and the key issue developed here is to examine how teachers understand, make sense of and implement the policy in schools. The framework used to guide this study is Spillane's theory on "sense-making" (2002). This analytic frame consists of three elements: the individual sense-maker, the social context and the policy signal. This study was a single case study that used two instruments for data collection: interviews and observations.

The chapter starts off by stating the problem and the rationale for the study. Secondly it provides us with background information pertaining to Namibia's language policy prior to and after independence.

1.1 Statement of the problem

After Independence in Namibia in 1990 the state proclaimed English as the official language of Namibia. English was seen as the only acceptable language of administration and of official external and internal affairs. Proficiency in English has become an important criterion for entry into the civil service and for advancement within it. The education system was also included in this proclamation and the state also expected learners in schools to be proficient in English. The language policy for schools was thus developed.

Mvula (2007) states that the language policy for schools was also developed to guide Namibian schools on how national languages should be taught in schools to promote the cultural identity of learners, through the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in Grades 1-3 as well as to ensure that English is used as the medium of instruction from Grade 4 upwards. In Grade 4 the learner's mother tongue therefore becomes a subject and learners are taught through English. There are officially thirteen languages that are used as languages of instruction in the first three years of school (Brock- Utne: 1997).

This policy is however not being fully implemented throughout the country especially in urban areas. In light of the above I want to investigate the implementation of the language policy by addressing these three key questions:

Question 1

How is the language policy for Grades 1-3 understood at school and classroom level?

Question 2

How is the language policy implemented at school and classroom level?

Question 3

What are the different ways in which schools and teachers make sense of the language policy?

1.2 Rationale

In post-independence Namibia where we are trying to address inequalities created in the past, the issue of language of instruction comes under the spotlight. When talking about education the question of language is of utmost importance since it is mainly through language that knowledge is transmitted. In Namibia this situation hampers equality and equity of access to what is referred as "Education for all". This study hopes to inform this debate by highlighting teachers' understandings of the policy and by examining how the policy is implemented.

The results will be useful for policy makers so it can help them bridge the gap between policy and practise. Policy makers would be made aware of how implementing agents understand and work with policies. They would also know the different issues that arise in the implementation process. This would allow policy makers to be more informed when making policies.

1.3 Namibia language policy context

1.3.1 Namibia's education and language policy the pre independence era

Namibians lived under German colonial rule from 1894 to 1915. Frydman (2011: 182) says that during this period German enjoyed the status of an official language. Namibia's indigenous languages were also accepted and used in daily life and in schools.

During World War One, South Africa invaded Namibia on behalf of the British in 1915. After South Africa pushed Germany out of Namibia, German lost its official status and Afrikaans and English became the official languages of Namibia. Afrikaans was the language predominantly employed in the administration and in education (Frydman2011: 182).

The Finnish Lutheran Mission in the north which is the former Ovamboland decided on Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in 1925 while it was also spoken in the Okavango Region (Totemeyer 2010:9). By the 1950's the majority of the population could communicate in Afrikaans.

Bantu Education which was based on the South African Education Act of 1953 was introduced to Namibia in 1962 (Amukugo: 1993). It was preceded by the Odendaal Commission of enquiry into non-European Education in South West Africa of 1958, whose aim was to make the necessary adjustment to the report of the Eiselen Commission in order to suit the Namibian conditions. The commission recommended that the African was to be equipped with the following skills and aptitudes

- Religious knowledge and good manners.
- Literacy in his [or her] native language as a means of communication and preserving pride in his national traditions.
- Literacy in the official languages as a means of communication with the European as, an aid in economic matters and in gaining, knowledge of the outside world.
- Knowledge of hygiene for the protection of health.
- Knowledge of technical skills.

- Social patterns of behaviour and values which make one a good member of the community, a good parent and a useful citizen.
(Amukugo 1993:62)

Wolfaardt (2005:1) says that throughout Namibia's history the medium of instruction played a major role in education. During the pre-independence era the target language of learning which was Afrikaans undermined the self-concept and cognitive growth of the African language speakers. From this period the idea was born that the African languages are deficient and resistance built up against the notion of mother tongue as the medium of instruction in education. The notion that English was the key to empowerment therefore grew stronger among the African language speakers.

Given this history of Bantu education and the use of Afrikaans in the education system, at independence there was a definite need for education and language reform in Namibia.

1.3.2 Namibia's education and language policy post independence era

Upon independence on the 21st of March 1990 Namibia inherited an education system that had disregarded education in the mother tongue especially in the early years of schooling. The new government entered an era that was relatively marred by colonial policy and the road ahead needed levelling. One way of levelling the road was addressing such policies (Munganda: 2001: 71).

According to Jansen (1995) three key documents emerged in 1990 to lay the foundation for education policy broadly and curriculum policy in particular: The Draft Proposal for Education Reform and Renewal, Education in Transition: Nurturing our future and Change with Continuity: Education Reform Directives. Furthermore Jansen states that one of the most important documents for education policy to emerge during early independence is the Namibian constitution itself. In articles 3 and 20 it outlines the role of languages in schools and the rights of all children to education on a non discriminatory basis.

However, the principal aspects of the Namibian language policy was already formulated and adopted before independence in the years of the liberation struggle. Brock-Utne (2001) says that

the policy document was written after an international conference, with strong British and American representation, which was held to consider the implications of the choice of English as the official language for Namibia. The South West Africa People's Organisation as the new government decided that English should be the official language in independent Namibia. The criteria used to judge the suitability of an official language was as follows: unity, acceptability, familiarity, feasibility, Science and Technology, Pan- Africanism, wider communication and the United Nations (Brock -Utne: 2001).

The language policy states that learners should be taught through their mother tongue during the first three years of schooling followed by a transition to English medium of instruction in Grade 4 upward. This policy has however not been fully implemented there is ambiguity in the policy and its implementation is not equally applied. Further details and issues regarding the language policy in Namibia will be provided in Chapter 2.

Totemeyer (2010:54) says that there is still a low regard towards the teaching of indigenous languages. Colonialism contributed to the notion that mother tongue education is second class education. This notion was further reinforced in Namibia and South Africa through second rate education of apartheid education that was offered to all learners except for white children. Owing to poverty and/or ignorance may parents still see the colonial language as a means for development and want their children to become fluent in this language in the hope that children will become more successful than they have been in securing jobs. Implementation of multi-lingual education policy is also very difficult. The number of mother tongue teachers is inadequate. Not everybody who can speak the language can teach it. The infrastructure of knowledgeable and trained officials in the civil service is often lacking. Lastly there is a poor reading culture in indigenous languages and there are very limited programmes that are being instigated or promoted to reverse this.

1.4 Outline of the study

Chapter 2: This chapter is firstly concerned with language policies of four Southern African countries: Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Swaziland. Common trends from these countries are identified. It then moves on to examine the language policy in Namibia.

Chapter 3: The chapter lays the theoretical foundation for the study. The theoretical foundation is based on Spillane's (2002) theory of "sense-making". This theory is divided in three sections: The individual sense-maker, the situation in which sense-making occurs and the policy signal.

Chapter 4: This chapter provides the layout of the methodology used in the study. The study employed a qualitative approach and it was a single case study.

Chapter 5: This chapter provides the results of the study by looking at data obtained from observations and interviews of 14 teachers in Grades 1-3 as well as 2 Head of Departments.

Chapter 6: In the last chapter a summary is provided of the main points that emerged from the study as well as further recommendations for further studies and planning.

CHAPTER 2: LANGUAGE POLICY IN NAMIBIA

This chapter looks at literature pertaining to the implementation of language policies of four Southern African countries: Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Swaziland. Common trends pertaining to language policy are then identified from these countries such as the use of the same language models. It then specifically focuses on Namibia's language policy for schools. Issues that arise from the implementation of this policy are mainly: the ambiguity of the policy due to its wording and the unequal implementation of the policy.

2.1 Language policy: a general overview

Wolff (2011:51) says that African governments as well as organisations and devoted individuals have made remarkable efforts and have channelled considerable resources into national educational systems on the continent in order to comply with the goals of the 1990 Jomtiem World Conference for Education that were scheduled to be reached by the year 2000 and subsequently reaffirmed in the goals of the Education for All initiative.

The apparent failure to reach the Jomtiem goal quite obviously suggests that the actions were insufficient both in reforming the education system and in educational practise. Evidence suggests that one of the major factors responsible for the failure is the language factor (Wolff: 2011:51).

In order to gain a better understanding on the importance of language policies and the issues that surface as a result of these policies particularly for African countries, there is a need to look at how these policies came about.

During the colonial period in Africa there was a clear emergence of language polices. Different colonial powers had their own language policy which was part of their ethos of their imperial attitudes. At independence African leaders were confronted with the problems of nation building in multilingual situations. These raised the questions of the promotion of African cultural and linguistic institutions and the issue of legitimacy of the nation state (Abdulaziz: 2003). Questions that were raised were as follows:

What languages were to be promoted as national and official languages? What languages were to be used in the education system as medium of instruction and as subjects? (Hassana: 2004) states that during the colonial period linguistic imposition was unilateral whereas in the post-colonial period language choice for education and administration required a more democratic dialogue among the multi-ethnic African elites who replaced colonial administrators.

Educational practises in Africa have failed independently because of the two most commonly used language in education models, the subtractive and the transition models. According to Heugh (2011:113) the aim of the subtractive model is to move the learners from the home language and into the second language as a medium of instruction as early as possible. At times this involves learners being taught in the second language as early as the first year in school. The bottom line is the use of the second language mainly for teaching and learning. This model is sometimes referred as the submersion model which literally means that the child is submerged in the second language which leads to sink or swim scenario. This model is mainly used in the francophone and lusophone countries of Africa.

The transition model has the same final objective as the subtractive model, which is a single target language at the end of the school. The target is the second language. The learners may begin school in the first language and then slowly move towards the second language as the medium of instruction. If the switch to the second language is made within one to three years this is called the early exit transition model. If the transition is delayed is to five or six years this is called a late exit model. This model is followed by many so called English speaking countries in Africa (Heugh 2011:114). Namibia uses the early exit transitional model whereby learners are taught in their mother tongue in Grades 1-3 and a transition is then made to English from Grade 4.

Wolff (2011:51) says that both these models have shown poor performance in the system. With the subtractive model learning in a foreign or unfamiliar language simple doesn't work for most learners and with the transition model research shows that early exit models are likely to fail in the long run due to the overly limited period of learning in the home language. Education practises in Africa have not only failed because of the models they use but also because of the teaching methods employed.

Secondly, according to Simango (2009) the provision of materials for the teaching of African languages are poor and there is insufficient training in bilingual and bicultural methodologies. Quite often the pedagogies used for teaching African languages are those developed in Europe and designed for teaching European languages. Methods of teaching African languages have

remained underdeveloped over the years. For African languages to be revived their written forms need to be given priority, because the written form is the primary means with which one can develop literacy among the speakers of the language.

As discussed earlier many English speaking countries of Africa use the early exit transition model where the learners learn in the home language during the first three/ four years of schooling. It would thus be interesting to understand the benefits of mother tongue instruction for learners.

2.2 Importance of mother tongue instruction

Simango (2009:243) highlights the importance of mother tongue instruction. Firstly mother tongue instruction is important for a child's overall personal and educational development. Development in the first language facilitates development in the second language. A strong foundation in the mother tongue primes the child to develop stronger literacy skills in the second language. Children perform better academically when the school effectively teaches the mother tongue and where appropriate, develops literacy in that language. Lastly mother tongue instruction is important as it promotes the identity of the learners.

According to Mbatha (2001:92) vernaculars serve as stepping stones and allow children to adjust to schooling. Mother tongue also helps learners to understand concepts they would have otherwise found difficult in another language. A child should therefore be taught using the language that he/she knows best and this is ideally the mother tongue in view of concept formulation and the way in which knowledge is constructed and transmitted to others. The formulation of concepts in the early years of a child is better facilitated in the language which he/she speaks and uses in his/her daily life. Problems of misunderstanding occur when learner are taught using a language of which they have no accurate command. The mother tongue also helps to safe guard the child's cultural identity.

Despite the many benefits of mother tongue learning there has still been popularity for the use of the colonial language for communication and educational purposes. There is therefore a need to examine the status of colonial languages by looking at how they have been incorporated in the language policies.

2.3 Language policy uptake in the Southern African context

Since the research will be looking at the language policy in Namibia, it will be helpful to look at language policies of other southern African countries. This will help in gaining a better perspective on the issue at hand. We may be able to see what has been tried and tested and what has perhaps failed. Of course we will have to look within the cultural and socio economic contexts of the respective countries but it should still give us an insight into the issue. Although every country is different there could be strong similarities and lessons that can be learnt from our neighbours.

The importance of education in the context of a developing country seems too obvious to require any explanation.

“It is a means of social upward mobility, manpower training, and development in its widest sense of the full realization of human potential and the utilization of this potential and the nation’s resources for the benefit of all”.

(Bamgose 1991: 62)

Bamgose (1991) says that in talking about education it is evitable that the question of language should arise, since it is mainly through language that knowledge is transmitted. The question of what language to use in education is particularly very problematic in the African context because of multi-linguism. It is also very problematic in a country that has been subjected to the inevitable imposition of a foreign official language arising from colonialism

The southern African region like any other region in Africa is largely multi-lingual. Miti (2009) says that despite compromising several indigenous languages all the states in this region have adopted a language of their ex- colonial master as one of the official languages. Miti (2009) states that like Namibia countries such as Lesotho, Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia all have English as the official language in their country. Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe follow a similar language model in Education. This involves the use of indigenous languages in the first three/four years in primary school. This is then followed by the use of English as the language of teaching and learning in secondary and tertiary institutions. Angola and Mozambique have Portuguese as

the official language which is also the language of teaching and learning at all levels in the education system.

2.3.1 Botswana

Botswana has twenty six indigenous African languages. Of these, thirteen are Khoesan and the rest are Bantu. Setswana has the largest number of speakers (80%) (Miti: 2009). After Botswana's independence Setswana was accepted as the medium of instruction for the first three to four years at primary school level. The rest of the indigenous languages were not given equal status as Setswana. Setswana was seen as the unifying language for all the people of Botswana. From Grade 4 onwards English is accepted as the medium of instruction while Setswana was offered as only a subject. In 2002 the language policy was changed and required English to be used as the language of instruction from Standard Two. Botswana thus used the early exit transitional model. Miti (2009) says that actual classroom practise indicates that teachers code-switched between Setswana and English throughout primary school and anecdotal data also indicates that this code switching also occurred in other parts of the country using other native languages of the students whenever the teacher happened to be a member of the community in which he/she was teaching. Miti (2009) states that the language policy of Botswana has neglected other local languages spoken in Botswana and the reality is that for some learners Setswana is a second language and English is their third language. Many children only learn English for the first time at school and they grow up in homes which do not have reading materials and some of them are brought up in homes where parents have never been through formal education. There is therefore little connection between the home and school environment and academic success may be limited (Molosiwa 2005).

The above experience concerning the language policy in Botswana shows us that the neglect of the other local languages in the country is a problem and affects the language policy uptake by teachers. Teachers as implementing agents can only make sense of the language policy within the context in which they work in.

According to Chilora (2001) the successful implementation of the mother tongue instruction policy at classroom level depends on the support that teachers and learners get from other stake

holders during the policy's implementation. Teachers play an important role in the implementation of the mother tongue policy as well as other educational reforms at classroom level. The importance of teachers in policy implementation was also strongly felt In Malawi's language in education policy which will be discussed below.

2.3.2 Malawi

In March 1996 the Malawian Government issued a language in education policy directive saying that with immediate effect children in infant and junior classes should be taught in their home language. Although the directive was in line with research findings in favour of learning in a home language, the policy posed a number of problems in its implementation (Mtenje & Mchazime 2001: 61).

Mtenje & Mchazime (2001: 61) say that this policy directive was made two years after Malawi had declared free primary education. This resulted in an increase in primary school enrolments from 1.9 to 3.2 million. It also put a lot of pressure on the teaching force. To address this situation 22 000 secondary school leavers were employed by the government. However this workforce was not trained except for a two week orientation programme to boost their confidence. These teachers together with the qualified ones found it difficult to implement the policy as there was nothing to support them in the classroom. There were no instructional materials written in any of the local languages except in Chichewa. This scenario was worsened by the fact that the teachers themselves were not trained in first language methodology. For the untrained teachers, whose confidence in teaching depended heavily on textbooks and teachers guide, the lack of such materials posed a serious challenge.

Additionally the home language of teachers derailed the successful implementation of the mother tongue instruction policy because teachers were asked to implement the policy in areas where the language was different from that of the learners (Chilora: 2001).

Studies revealed a mismatch between teacher's home language, pupil's home language and the language used in the instructional materials. The implication that this scenario may have is that children in Grades 1-4 are being exposed to learning some subjects in three or more languages.

Teachers prepare their lessons in English and teach them using a local language which may be the children's home language or another vernacular (Chilora: 2001).

Wang (2008) also highlights the importance of teachers as implementing agents. Wang says that although teachers may be aware of policy initiatives related to language education, they also focus on their immediate classroom priorities that influence their daily lessons. Findings showed that language policies were reinterpreted into structural priorities which had an indirect influence on classroom priorities which then filtered through to classroom practice. Teachers' willingness to implement language policies was influenced by the personal and social dimensions of classroom teaching and by teacher's goals and beliefs (Wang 2008).

Wang (2008) and Chilora (2001) make us realise a very important point: contextual realities influence policy implementation. Different schools have different contexts and they will therefore respond to policy uptakes in various ways.

2.3.3 South Africa

According to Frydman (2011: 180) South Africa shares not only a border with Namibia but also the experience of apartheid rule. South Africa has arguably the most liberal and progressive language policy in Africa. This language policy adopted by South Africa at its independence in 1994 is one of official multi-lingualism, according 11 of its approximately 25 languages including English and Afrikaans official status. Despite this admirably progressive language policy, English has gained more territory and political clout than Afrikaans in all the country's institutions, including legislature, education and media. There is thus a mismatch between South Africa's multi lingual policies on the one hand and the observed practises on the other. While the policy promotes additive multi- linguilism, the language practises in most of the public domains reflect a promotion of monolingualism English.

A small scale study done by Heugh (2009) at Zonnebloem Nest Senior School in South Africa illustrates the problem that teachers were experiencing due to the language diversity at this school. Many working class students go here and the parents have specifically chosen this school because it is English medium. Most teachers at this school are proficient English speakers. The

use of languages other than English specifically Afrikaans and Xhosa is a matter of concern at this school. The school principal and teachers acknowledge that the majority of students do not fare well in a mono lingual English context. However, this is the context, which the learners and their parents have vested their interests in. The principal and staff then set about trying to offer learners equitable access to the curriculum by accommodating learner's linguistic diversities in the curriculum as well as assessment. While English remained the dominant language of teaching and learning, Afrikaans and Xhosa were included in the teaching of History and Geography in Grade eight and in Mathematics in Grade 11 and 12. Furthermore Grade eight students were divided in Two groups one which was taught in English only and the other through English in most subjects while dual medium Xhosa-English for Geography and History (Heugh 2009). The above scenario does not only show the difficulty of dealing with language diversity in schools but also the importance of accommodating learners different languages so that learners feel valued.

2.3.4 Swaziland

In Swaziland the languages spoken here are English and SiSwati. SiSwati is the dominant indigenous language spoken by 95% of the population. Even though 95% of the population can speak SiSwati fluently the number of people who read and write fluently in SiSwati is lower (81.6%). Reading and writing skills are hardly emphasized. Thus verbal communication among the Swazi people is primarily in SiSwati, while almost all written and communication is done in English (Mbatha 2001:87).

The attitude that the educated Swazis have towards English is one associated to prestige. Swazi linguists say that in Swaziland, English became a means of social stratification based on economic and social levels (Mbatha 2001).

Mbatha (2001:91) says that Swaziland's education system follows a transitional bilingual education policy with a strong emphasis towards English. As discussed earlier the transitional bilingualism is a type of bilingualism that allows the first language to be used as a medium of instruction as tool to facilitate the switch to English, which is the official medium of instruction in the education system. SiSwati is the medium of instruction from Grade 1-3 while English becomes

the medium of instruction from Grade 4 onwards. SiSwati is then taught as a subject from Grade 4 up to high school level.

In practice this policy is however not fully implemented. In Grades 1-3 there is a strong pull towards English and there are also no guidelines for using the mother tongue as a MOI. In rural areas SiSwati is used to teach reading and writing and English is taught orally. SiSwati and English are used to teach other subjects. In the urban areas English is used as the MOI for Grade 1, English is used to teach reading and writing and some schools only introduce SiSwati in Grade 2 (Mbatha 2001: 89).

Mbatha (2001:91) says that there are various factors affecting mother tongue education in Swaziland. Firstly, teachers do not understand the rationale of teaching in the mother tongue when the society in which they live stresses the need for fluency in English rather than SiSwati. Secondly, teachers do not believe that the policy of using SiSwati as a medium of instruction is feasible. Lastly a further constraint of the implementation of the policy is the availability of resources needed to put the policy into effect. This includes school facilities, human resources, materials and textbooks. Teachers are also not trained to teach other subjects using the mother tongue.

The implementation of the language policy in Swaziland brings certain points to our attention. Teachers as implementers firstly need to be properly trained and they should also fully understand the rationale of teaching learners in the mother tongue. Resources should also be available. Without considering this implementation will remain a challenge. These issues will also be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three. The difficulties of implementing the language policy are not only unique to the above four countries, Namibia has also encountered some problems with regards to the implementation of its language policy for schools.

2.3.5 Namibia

As discussed in Chapter 1 the Namibian government decided that English should be the official language in Namibia. The Namibian education system was no exception to this decision.

According to Jansen (1995) the most visible legacy of apartheid in the institutions in Namibia is the Afrikaans language this meant that the Namibian people were constantly reminded of the apartheid past. After independence the new government placed considerable policy and political resources in addressing the language question. The language position of the new state was immediately inserted in the constitution and the language policy for schools was drafted. One of the main aspects with regards to the language policy in Education is the replacement of Afrikaans with English for official communication and medium of instruction for the upper primary level (Brock-Utne: 2001:306)

When it comes to language policy in Namibia the document states the following:

- All national languages are equal regardless of the number of speakers or the level of development of a particular language. All language policies must be sensitive to this principle.
- All language policies must consider the cost of implementation.
- All language policies must regard language as a medium of cultural transmission.
- For pedagogical reasons it is ideal for children to study through their own language during the early years of schooling when basic skills of reading, writing and concept formulation are developed.
- Proficiency in the official language at the end of the 7 year primary cycle should be sufficient to enable all children to be effective participants in society or to continue their education.
- Language policy should promote national unity.
(Ministry of Education & Culture 1993b:65)

The goals of the policy in Education are as follows:

- The 7 year primary education cycle should enable learners to acquire reasonable competence in English, the official language, and be prepared for medium English instruction throughout the secondary cycle.

- Education should promote the language and cultural identity of learners through the use of home language medium at least in Grades 1-3, and the teaching of home language throughout formal education, provided the necessary resources are available.
- Ideally schools should offer at least two languages as subjects.
- Beyond the primary cycle (Grades 1-7) the medium of instruction for all schools shall be English, the official language.

(Ministry of Education & Culture 1993c:3)

The mere fact that the language policy moved away from Afrikaans medium of instruction to English medium of instruction beyond Grade 3 in schools demonstrates the political symbolism that the policy intended to create. The Afrikaans language reminded Namibia of the past history, there was therefore a political need to make a visible break with Afrikaner colonialism and its manifestations. The Education Minister at the time Mr. Nahas Angula defined his political strategy in relation to the Apartheid state's most visible post-colonial cultural presence in Namibia. The need to break the colonial ties with South Africa thus overrode any other considerations in the choice of English as the medium of instruction in Namibian schools Jansen (1995).

The language policy in Education in Namibia has been problematic in its implementation on two main levels. Firstly, because of its wording, in an official interpretation of the goals presented in the same policy document (MEC 1993c:9) under the title "what the policy means" stated the following: "Grade 1-3 will be taught either through a Home language, a local language or English". The language policy is ambiguous and this ambiguity is a result of the wording of the document. The wording of that statement opened up the door for English to be used as the medium of instruction right from Grade 1 (Brock-Utne 2001). This ambiguity therefore means that its implementation will vary from school to school.

Secondly according to Munganda (2001) Namibia is characterised as a multi-lingual state and in any given circumstances such characteristics are complex when it comes to the provision of education. The languages used in Namibian schools are as follows: Afrikaans, English, German, Jul' hoansi, Khoekhoegowab, Oshinkwanyama, Oshindonga, Otjiherero. Rumanyo, Rukwangali, Setswana, Silozi and Thimbukushu. Textbook development in these languages is also an aspect that needs attention. The contents of such textbooks include mostly translations from other

European languages. Some textbooks are also stereotypical when it comes to characterisation of subject matter and thus they may not be a true reflection of the actual content. Suitable and adequate textbooks and educational materials therefore need to be developed for mother tongue education in the African languages (Mungunda: 2001).

The use of Namibian languages is however not equally applied; language use differs from region to region and from rural to urban. There are inconsistencies in its implementation. In most regions especially in urban areas where there are heterogeneous language situations, many schools in urban areas do fall victim to the choice of medium of instruction in the formative years of schooling. The map below shows the distribution of Namibian languages across the different regions. It shows the language that is predominantly spoken in a certain region however other languages are also spoken in that region. This map thus confirms the point made earlier that Namibia is a multi-lingual nation and therefore makes the provision of education very complex.

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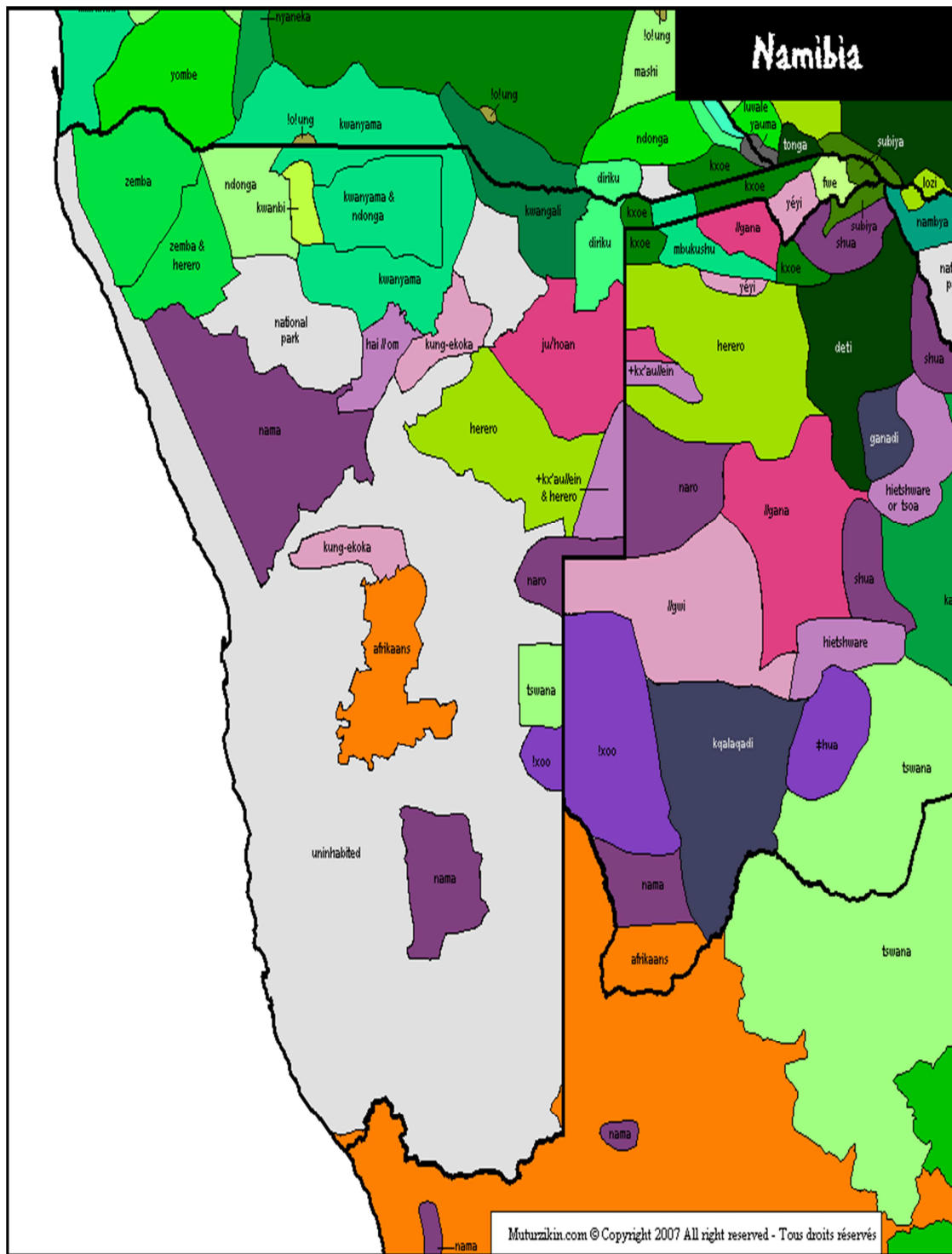


Figure1 (Muturzikin: 2007)

Furthermore in the urban areas another problem that arises is the language distribution issue. Often there is a variety of languages represented in a school and this makes it difficult to choose the languages that should be used as languages of instruction (Totemeyer 2010:13).

In the Kavango and Caprivi regions the languages Rumanyo and Thimbukushu are being neglected. Rumanyo has only recently been introduced in the schools and most Thimbukushu speaking children are being educated either in Silozi or Rukwangali from Grade 1 upwards, first as if it were their mother tongue and then from Grade 4 as a single mother tongue subject. In Caprivi the Silozi language is a bone of contention. The majority of the people in the region resent the way in which Silozi has been favoured by politicians both prior to and post independence. Silozi is a foreign language of Zambian origin functioning as a type of lingua franca in Caprivi. It is a dominant teaching and communication language but it is however not the most widely spoken home language of Caprivi. Sisubya is a more dominant language (Totemeyer 2010: 13). This scenario in the Caprivi suggests that there is a neglect of certain indigenous languages for teaching and learning.

According to Wolfaardt (2005) one of the reasons why principals opt for English as a medium of instruction from Grade one is that there are too many speakers of different languages at one school to select any one language as the medium of instruction. In some multi-lingual schools, the school management has decided that it is fairer to have a neutral language which is English so that the speakers of the minority language will not be disadvantaged if the language of the majority of the speakers is used. It was found that in some schools where there is a dominant language group, the speakers of the minority languages are incorporated into the dominant language group. This is problematic because learners of the minority languages are not being taught in their home language (Wolfaardt 2005).

Given these difficulties this research examines a Windhoek school, in an urban multi-lingual context and where learners of different language groups are present within one school and even within one classroom. The issue in multi-lingual schools is that there is clearly a problem of which language to use in Grades 1-3 as sometimes each language group might be too small to warrant separate teaching. Furthermore as stated earlier there is ambiguity in the language policy; there is therefore a need to understand how teachers and principals interpret this policy.

2.3.6 Summary and conclusion

These southern African examples show that while language policies are unquestionably unique from one country to the next, there are certain issues and patterns inherently common to the language policy and planning situations of these and most Southern African states. One trend is the inheritance and maintenance of the colonial language policies as seen in the cases of Malawi and Botswana. Another common pattern is linguistic stratification and inequality as seen in Malawi and Botswana between the official language, national language and other indigenous languages (Frydman 2011: 181).

Lastly, these countries all follow the same language model which is the early exit transitional model. According to Heugh (2011:154) these models do not offer educational success. Successful education thus requires mother tongue education throughout, but an absolute minimum of six to eight years mother tongue medium of instruction (late exit transitional models).

Additionally by looking at the policy uptake of these Southern African countries one can see that there is a definite variability of the uptake of policy. To sum up, these countries experienced the following hiccups with regards to implementation:

- the issue of the importance of the teachers' mother tongue in language policy implementation
- the neglect of certain indigenous languages and the consequences it has,
- the issue of multi-lingual school contexts
- the misinterpretation of the policy document due to its wording

All these issues have an effect on the practicality at classroom level. The policy will therefore have different levels of success and failure.

It is clear that when it comes to policy implementation there are always obstacles that stand in the way. It would therefore be necessary to look at these obstacles in detail in order to gain a better understanding on the complexity of the implementation process.

CHAPTER 3: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The following chapter firstly identifies various factors that contribute to the success or failure of the implementation of a policy. These explanations are however not sufficient as they are conventional explanations. The second section of the chapter thus looks at Spillane's (2002) cognitive perspective on policy implementation by examining the "sense-making" framework. Spillane's framework involves three core elements, the individual implementing agent, the situation in which sense-making occurs and the policy signals. This framework informs and frames the study.

3.1 Implementation issues-obstacles for implementation

According to the views of Kihato & Kabemba (2001) policy implementation can be very problematic and adopting a new policy does not necessarily mean that it will be implemented or that it will produce the desired results. This is certainly the case for the education sector. There are certain key factors that hinder implementation these are the policy message, origin and conceptual understanding, policy ambiguity, zone of enactment and teachers. These factors will now be discussed in greater detail.

3.3.1 The policy message

Kihato & Kabemba (2001: 8) say that the policy message "refers to the substance of the policy, the means specified for putting it into effect, and the way in which substance and means are communicated." In essence the substance of policy is about realism. A lack of realism at the formulation stage is one cause of bad implementation. Furthermore, while certain policies may be implementable they may not be conducive to the larger goals being sought (Kihato & Kabemba 2001).

For example, in the South African case, Jansen argues that matric failures are taken to be a direct result of bad policy implementation however; this does not mean that policy formulation was unsuccessful. In 1994, South Africa had a collapsed system of education. There were high levels

of adult and matriculant illiteracy, dysfunctional schools and universities. The school curriculum was seen as a means of reinforcing racial injustice and inequality. A transformation was needed for the promotion of unity and the common citizenship and a destiny of all South Africans irrespective of class, race, gender or ethnic background (Chisholm: 2003). Jansen (2005) says that the reason for the failure to implement policy in South Africa is that policies have been driven by political considerations to the exclusion of practical consideration.

Jansen (1995) highlights this very important point when looking at the history of Namibia. The most visible legacy of apartheid in the Namibian institutions was the Afrikaans language. After independence, the new government made available considerable policy and political resources to addressing the language question. After independence, English was made the official language of Namibia and the medium of instruction in schools. According to Jansen (1995), together with other reasons, this decision was made as there was a political need to break away from Afrikaner colonialism and its manifestations. The need to break the colonial ties with South Africa overshadowed any other considerations in the choice of English as the medium of instruction in Namibian schools. In practical terms, this decision was extremely risky. Firstly, although Afrikaans was an imposition of apartheid it was spoken widely as the common language in most education regions in Namibia. Secondly, by the end of 1992 most of the available resources, textbooks and schemas of work were written in Afrikaans (Jansen 2005:11). The decision to switch over to English was therefore made without considering the availability of the resources necessary and they over looked the fact that Afrikaans was already a widely spoken language by the Namibian people.

Jansen's political argument concerning policy formulation makes us realise that policy makers that over invest in the political symbolism of policy, neglect its practical implementation and this results in implementation failure. The policy message is not the only issue that needs to be considered, there is also a need to understand the how the policy came about and where it originated from.

3.3.2 Origin and conceptual understanding

When looking at a policy it is important to bear in mind where a policy originated from and the conditions in which it was implemented. This is particularly important as many policies are borrowed and one needs to have a clear understanding of the context.

According to Heugh (2005) language education models used in African countries, have their origins from European second language programmes, which are designed to teach students a second language such as literature, conversational skills and writing tasks. These language education models do not prepare them to learn Mathematics, Geography and History etc through the second language. Heugh (2005) therefore argues that in the African context children are expected to learn through a second language before they have developed adequate proficiency and competence in this language to make this possible. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2 section 2.2, the use of the two language in education models: the subtractive and transitional do not provide educational success as learners are forced to learn in a second language as early as possible (subtractive model) or they are offered too little time to learn in their home language before a switch is made to instruction in the second language (transition model).

There is therefore a need to look at the contextual changes that need to be made when borrowing and implementing a policy such as adapting a model to suit the educational needs of the learners. Without doing this, implementation will remain a challenge.

3.3.3 Policy ambiguity

Failure to implement policies lies often in the policy's ambiguity or misinterpretation of the policy document.

Implementation involves interpretation. Implementers must therefore figure out what a policy means in order to decide whether to ignore, adopt or adapt policy maker's recommendations in their practice (Spillane: 2000). Therefore, ambiguous, unclear and inconsistent policies that lack authority maximize enactors' judgement with respect to implementation. Research done in Michigan by Spillane (2000) on the understanding of district policy makers concerning the reform

of mathematics education highlights a very crucial point which is that people's ways of understanding policy differ. Spillane explains function focused understanding and form focused understanding. The former is concerned with an understanding that focuses on deeper structural features, which are crucial in making inferences. The latter is concerned with surface features of policy and involves the tangible aspects of instruction. From these two ways of understanding, Spillane (2000) argues that drawing surface features and failing to access the deeper structural relations result in interpretations that miss the reforms point. Spillane (2002:416) states that policy makers face a serious challenge in crafting a system to communicate and enforce reforms. The objective is to communicate deep underlying principles rather than the superficial aspects of policy.

In the Namibian case, Totemeyer (2010:12) states that the wording of the first official language policy document left the door open for English medium instruction from Grade 1 onwards. As a result, some schools, particularly in Windhoek, did not opt for either the three years of mother tongue teaching or other dominant language instruction or the teaching of any of the Namibian indigenous languages as a subject. They taught in English from Grade 1 upwards. In April 2000 a Language conference in Okahandja advocated the extension of mother tongue instruction beyond Grade 3. In 2002 a new language policy was drafted. This draft policy however advocated the retention of the status quo due to lack of funding. The only changes that were made were that if schools wanted to offer English medium instruction from Grade 1, Ministerial approval needed to be given. Some principals still believe that they have the right to decide which indigenous language should be taught or not taught in their schools (Totemeyer 2010:14). The policy however states that all national languages are equal regardless of the number of speakers or the level of development of a particular language.

It is important for implementing agents to fully understand the underlying principle or theory of a policy. The policy should also be written in a clear language so that it is not open to misinterpretation from the implementing agents.

3.3.4 Zone of enactment

When looking at the process of policy implementation it is useful to understand the implementing agents "zone of enactment". Spillane (1999:144) states that the "zone of enactment refers to that space where reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners and practice, delineating that zone in which teachers notice, construe, construct and operationalize the instructional ideas advocated".

Spillane's research was based on teacher's policy uptake in Mathematics. In this research, Spillane identified three key characteristics that differentiated the enactment zones of those teachers who had changed the core of their practise from those teachers who did not. These characteristics were: enactment zones that went beyond the individual classrooms, deliberations in understanding reform ideas through reading and discussions and lastly discussions enabled by human and material resources. Spillane stressed that the extent to which teachers revise the core of their practice depends on their enactment zones.

Spillane's study showed that differences in teacher's enactment zones are vital in understanding their efforts to change the core of Mathematics instruction. As discussed earlier the first important characteristic that was identified is that these teachers' enactment zones went beyond their individual classroom and had an important social dimension. On-going discussions with colleagues and experts were central in these teachers' reform efforts. A second characteristic that was identified with these teachers' enactment zones was that their ongoing deliberations were grounded in understanding reform ideas through reading and discussions. Their conversations were grounded on their day-to-day attempts. The last characteristic of these teacher's enactment zones was that their discussions about practice and reform were not enabled by human resources but by material resources as well. These material resources were consistent with the reform ideas. This research also revealed teachers who did not conform to the reform ideas. According to Spillane (1999) these teachers zone of enactment were individualistic, they were mainly centred in their isolated efforts to enact to the reform ideas in their classrooms. Their enactment zones were very much a solo affair. Spillane's discussion of the zone of enactment adds a social dimension of policy practise relations. Differences in the ways teachers' sense-making is situated socially have important consequences for policy implementation.

From Spillane's (1999) discussion on the zone of enactment, we learn that it is important for teachers to work in collaboration concerning reform ideas. Working in collaboration allows individuals to reflect on their own practise in relation with others and to exchange valuable ideas and information, which they can then apply in their practise. Spillane also suggests to us that teachers have different zones of enactment and will thus respond to policy uptake in different ways. Some teachers operate in isolation "egg carton structure" and allow themselves few opportunities to work with their fellow colleagues and others make the effort to work collaboratively. From the above discussion it is clear that teachers play a very important role in policy implementation and their importance with regards to policy implementation needs to be further elaborated.

3.3.5 Teachers

It is generally accepted that the quality of teachers is the largest single determinant of the quality of education. Education researchers continue to argue that the effects of education policies depend chiefly on what teachers make of them. The general point is that education reform has often been compromised because there are no prospects that the teachers needed to carry them out are indeed available. Hence, for any policy to be successfully implemented, teachers must first understand it (Kambemba & Kihato 2001).

Malcolm (2001) argues that research into the existing teacher's knowledge and beliefs is important when it comes to policy implementation. In educational research, it has been well established that the most important input to effective learning is not what teacher or the textbook says, but what the learner already knows. These ideas can be applied to teachers as well. Teacher's prior knowledge and skills should be critical considerations in processes of school reform (Malcolm: 2001).

Furthermore Kambemba & Kihato (2001) state that most educators are not involved in conceptualising and formulating policy. They are also not properly trained before a particular policy is implemented. For example many of the senior officials recruited after the apartheid period in South Africa were political appointees and not education experts. There is therefore a need of a mutual adaptation process in which local educators tailor a given programme to their local needs and circumstances. This will ensure that the necessary knowledge and skills are incorporated into

the programme. Besides participating in policy formulation teachers must also have the intellectual tools and discipline required to implement the policy, education researchers in the United States have reported that, untrained teachers, federal and state policies have affected practise weakly and inconsistently. Kambemba & Kihato (2001) make us realise the importance of involving local educators in policy formulation. Teachers need to feel valued and needed in policy formulation, this affects policy uptake. Without their involvement and research concerning their prior knowledge and beliefs difficulties in implementation will persist.

Conclusion and Summary on Implementation issues

The above literature provided us with conventional accounts pertaining to the success or failure of policy implementation. The literature surfaced certain issues. Firstly, when implementing a policy there is a need to examine its practicality as there are certain preconditions that need to be in place before considering implementation. There is also a need to look at the existing environment in which the policy will be operating. Lastly, it is important for teachers to fully understand the rationale of the policy as it will help in the policy being implemented more effectively.

Spillane; Reiser & Reimer (2002) have however developed a cognitive framework which offers new insight into the policy implementation process. This framework is useful as it offers insight on three aspects concerning policy implementation: the individual, the social and the policy signal. This framework thus illuminates more comprehensive explanations for why policy succeeds or fails. This cognitive model is developed to supplement the conventional model of implementation.

3.4 Theoretical framework

3.4.1 Sense-making

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) provide a significant theory that assists in understanding local implementation. This theory is a cognitive perspective and is concerned with ways in which implementing agents understand their practise. This theory provides us with an in depth description of how implementing agents make sense of policy. This theory is significant in the research because it provides an understanding on how the sense-making process can influence the uptake of a policy.

According to the views of Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:389) implementation research has offered several explanations for how policy is implemented. These explanations focus on the nature of social problems, the design of the policy, the governance system and the organisational arrangements in which the policy must operate. These explanations are based on the principal agent and rational choice theories in which the principal requires the assistance of an agent to achieve a particular outcome.

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) say that most conventional theories fail to take account of the complexity of human sense-making. In these accounts implementing agents are depicted either implicitly or explicitly as intentionally interpreting policy to fit their own agenda, resources and interests.

Research in cognitive and social psychology however suggests that caution is needed here. Seeing failure in implementation as demonstrating lack of capacity or deliberate attempt to ignore policy overlooks the complexity of the sense-making process. Sense-making is more than simply the decoding of a policy message. It is a comprehensive active process of interpretation that draws on individual's rich knowledge base of understanding, attitudes and beliefs (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002:391).

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) undertook and explored a dimension of the policy implementation process. This involves an agents' sense-making to reform initiatives. Sense-making is the cognitive component/framework of the implementation process. Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) argue that:

“What a policy means for implementing agents is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive structures (including knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes), their situation, and the policy signals. How the implementing agents understand the policy's message(s) about local behaviour is defined in the interaction of these three dimensions.”

(Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002:388)

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) further state that this cognitive framework can be divided in three core elements: the individual implementing agent, the situation in which sense-making occurs and the policy signals.

3.4.1.1 The individual implementing agent

According to Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:393) individuals take in new experiences and information through their existing knowledge structures. What a policy means for an individual implementing agent is influenced and depends on their repertoire of existing knowledge and experience. Teacher's prior beliefs and practises can pose challenges because their existing understandings may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement reforms which are consistent with the intention of the designers. Spillane (2002) says that individuals must use their prior knowledge and experience to notice, make sense of, and interpret and to act on incoming stimuli. Individual implementing agents make sense of new stimuli by accessing their existing schemas. Schemas are knowledge structures that link together related ideas which are used to make sense of the world and to make predictions. Schemas guide the processing of cognitive and social information, helping to focus information processing and this enables the individual to use past understandings to see patterns in rich /ambiguous information.

Furthermore Spillane (2002) states that implementing agents understanding of a policy could only focus on the superficial features rather than the underlying structural ideas and principles. Teachers who draw on surface analogies and who fail to access the deeper structural relations contribute to a superficial implementation of policies.

From this element of sense-making Spillane suggest to us the importance and the need to understand the teacher as an individual in the implementation process. Teachers come from different backgrounds, have different knowledge bases, and will construct different understandings concerning policy uptake. The key research questions came from this element of sense-making. As discussed in chapter 1 these questions were:

- How is the language policy for Grades 1-3 understood at school and classroom level?

- How is the language policy implemented at school and classroom level?
- What are the different ways in which schools and teachers make sense of the language policy?

3.4.1.2 The situation in which sense-making occurs

Spillane (2002) further presents the dimension of the social context in sense-making. Within this dimension, we consider how knowledge embedded in social contexts as the practices and common beliefs of a community affects sense-making and action in implementation. The situation or context is a multi-faceted construct, which can be both formal and informal. At a macro-level, individual mental frameworks and schemas for understanding new knowledge depend on their thought communities and worldviews. The way in which an individual categorizes the world they live in is acquired through their socialization as children and adolescents and through their socialisation into particular professions. This influences how we define things and the meanings that we give to them.

Spillane makes us aware of the importance of the social context in the uptake of a policy. Teachers do not operate in isolation, but form part of a bigger social network. Organisations also have their own social histories, which influence implementation. Spillane stresses the importance of collaboration in sense-making. Social interactions can aid sense-making because individuals learn from each other and they bring insights and perspectives to the surface. Questions that derived from this element of sense-making were as follows:

- In what ways are policies or changes in policies discussed at your school?
- Do you have regular meetings with teachers in your Grade/ phase?

3.4.1.3 The policy signal

Spillane explores the implications of the cognitive framework for policy design and its implementation. In the sense-making framework the policy as represented through written and

verbal media is relevant in the understanding of the implementation process. Policies are not able to construct understanding for implementing agents (teachers); however the message and the design of policies have an influence on the implementing agents' sense-making efforts.

Spillane states that policies differ in the amount of change that they intend to make. "Some policies press for tremendous changes in existing behaviour; others seek less fundamental changes. These differences are consequential when it comes to policy implementation" (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer: 414). There are three levels when it comes to change. The first level is incremental change which requires little or no shift of the existing purposes or expectations of the people undertaking the change. The second level of change requires growth on those undertaking change but extant purposes and expectations remain intact. Such change can be integrated into existing schemas and frameworks rather than undermining them. The last level of change represents loss for the implementing agent as it requires the discrediting of existing schemas and frameworks. This level of social change is the most difficult to achieve. "Policies that seek for more complex and fundamental changes in local behaviour are more prone to implementation problems because they require such fundamental changes in implementing agents' knowledge structures" (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002:415).

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According to Spillane it is important to come up with ways to help people cope with change. Policy documents must focus on communicating deep underlying principles rather than the superficial aspects of specific examples. Communicating the rationale that motivates a reform is vital. Adopting a practise without fully understanding or constructing the underlying idea can lead to "lethal mutations."

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002: 417) argue that policies must be represented in ways that assist the implementing agents to understand the intentions of the designers. Providing thicker descriptions of the changes in extant behaviour is not enough. Spillane suggests that there is a need for policy representations to support implementing agents in looking beneath the surface, perhaps by juxtaposing potential form and function based understandings of central reform ideas.

¹ Refer to appendix1 for the complete set of questions.

This will help implementing agents to differentiate understandings, reflect on their practise and thus make informed choices concerning policy ideas.

A key theme that emerges for this process is that implementing agents need to make sense of a policy. Communicating a policy is not enough; there is a critical need to create learning opportunities so that stake holders can construct an interpretation of the policy and its implications for their own behaviour. These learning opportunities can be created through teacher professional development where teachers are provided with an opportunity to be engaged with policymakers presenting proposals for reform practise.

There is also a need to create a sense of dissonance in which agents see the issues in their current practise rather than seeing the new ideas as achieved within their current practise. "This dissonance, or dissatisfaction with one's own behaviour, is essential to the reinterpretation on ones beliefs"(Spillane 2002: 418).

Questions that derived from this component of sense-making were as follows:

- What language should learners in Grades 1-3 be taught in?
- Do you think MTI has positive/negative affects for a learner?
- What challenges has the school experienced with regards to the implementation of the language policy?

3.4.1.4 Summary and conclusion

The success/failure of implementation does not only involve the conventional accounts as discussed earlier. Human cognition can also be a potential obstacle to the implementation of a policy as individuals have different knowledge bases and understandings towards a policy. These knowledge bases and understandings influence the implementation process as they might not be in line with the intent of the policy. Human cognition is thus also a very important factor that needs to be understood and taken into consideration. Spillane's sense-making theory provides an understanding of local implementation from three dimensions: the individual, the situation and the policy signal. All these dimensions operate hand in hand and they influence how implementing agents make sense of policy. Teacher's prior knowledge, practises and beliefs can pose as

challenges to the implementation process of the policy. There is also a need to understand the process by which teachers construct and reconstruct policy messages in their professional communities (context).

The aim of this study is to address some of these complexities by focusing on the understandings of teachers and how their prior knowledge influences their practises. The following chapter discusses the methodology that the research employed.

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CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in this study. The study employed a qualitative approach described as “a means of understanding and exploring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data”(Creswell:2009:4).

The chapter explains the research design used for the study and the particular reasons why this design was used. The discussion focuses on the rationale of the different data collection procedures that were used and the limitations that were experienced in the study.

4.1 Case study

This study was a single case study of an urban Namibian primary school, the aim of which was to explore the different ways in which teachers understood and implemented the language policy in Grades 1 to 3. By doing this it further sought to identify any challenges that teachers were facing which would prevent them from implementing the policy. The significance of a case study according to Maree (2007) is that:

“From an interpretivist perspective, the typical characteristic of case studies is that they strive towards a comprehensive (holistic) understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they make meaning of a phenomenon under study.”
(Maree 2007:5)

A sample of fourteen junior primary class teachers was used for the study. These teachers all came from one school and were teaching grades 1 to 3. A subsample of additional participants was also used. This consisted of two Heads of Department. The one Head of Department was for grades 1 and 2 and the other one was for grades 3 and 4.

In light of the above definition the case study was thus useful in examining the interactions of the teachers at the school and how they make meaning of the language policy.

Yin (1994:1) says that “in general, case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” and “when” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus of the study is a contemporary phenomenon within some real- life context”.

Additionally Yin (1994:3) suggests that the case study can be used for three purposes: exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. Exploratory case studies in most cases respond to “what” questions and provide opportunities for further explorations. On the other hand explanatory studies attempt to answer why and how questions. The decision on which strategy to employ depends on three conditions: (a) the type of question posed , (b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events.

With regards the first condition, since the research question in this study is:”how the language policy is implemented in a government primary school”, the choice to use the explanatory case study is supported.

For the second condition as an outsider without any knowledge of the nature of the school there is absolutely no control over the actual behaviour event.

Lastly, with regards to the third condition this study focuses on contemporary events as it seeks to understand how teachers understand and make sense of the language policy. This study was thus an explanatory case study.

4.2 The sample

Sampling is the process of the selection of a portion of the population for a study (Maree: 2007). This study used purposive sampling as the school was selected because of some defining characteristic that were needed for the study (Maree: 2007). These will be discussed below.

The school was selected on the basis of its student population as well as its geographical location. This school was located in the central Namibia Khomas Region which accommodates learners who speak various home languages. It is a multi-lingual school situated in an urban context. This provided the perfect opportunity to do the research concerning the language policy as it would surface the difficulties in providing MTI when you have learners who speak different languages within a school.

The school was located in an urban economically disadvantaged setting. The teachers who participated in the study represented only one ethnic background, namely African (the previously disadvantaged ethnic) community. The majority of the learners at this school are also black learners.

Of the 16 teachers that were in Grades 1-3, 2 of them were not available at the time therefore a sample of 14 junior primary class teachers were used for the study. A subsample of additional participants was also used. This consisted of two Heads of Department: HOD Grades 1&2 and HOD Grades 3&4

4.2.1 Access to the school

A letter was written to the Ministry of Education in which permission was asked to conduct research at a government school in Windhoek, permission was then granted (see Appendix 3). A visit to the school was then made in which the principal agreed for the research to be conducted at the school.

4.3 Data collection

This research used two research methods namely interviews and observations.

4.3.1 Interviews

The interview as a research instrument was chosen because of its flexibility and adaptability this allows a “greater propensity to motivate the respondent”. Face to face interaction was important to get the expected information. Cohen & Manion (1994:284) argue that the “ the main purpose of an interview in research is that it is believed that in an interpersonal encounter, people are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves , their thoughts , their feelings and values, than they would in a less human situation.”

Newman (2000: 272) says that “face to face interviews have the highest response rate and permit the longest questionnaire. Interviewers control the sequence of questions and can use probes. He/ she can also observe the surroundings and can use non verbal communication and visual aid.”

During the three weeks at the school, interviews were conducted with the two Heads of Department as well as the teachers in Grades 1-3. Questions were asked about their understanding of the language policy, classroom practises and their perceptions and issues around the implementation process of the language policy. In total sixteen interviews were conducted. There were 5 Grade one teachers, 4 Grade two teachers, f Grade 3 teachers and two Heads of Department. (Refer to Appendix 1 for the full set of questions)

All the interviews lasted between fifteen to twenty minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted in the individual teacher’s classrooms during break time. This was the only time that this could be done as these teachers are class teachers and they do not have free periods. The interviews with the Heads of Department were done in the staff room. Teacher’s interview questions were divided into three sections.

The first section paid attention to the teacher as an individual. Questions in this section were concerned with life **experience/background information** of the teachers. This provided

information about the previous experiences and understanding and how this might influence the way in which they think and act.

The second section was concerned with the social context in which sense-making occurs. According to Spillane (2002) adding the dimensions of social context suggests another way that differences in knowledge affect sense-making and action.

The last section was concerned with the policy signal and how the policy message was received by the teachers.

4.3.2 Classroom observations

“Observation is the process of gathering open-ended, first hand information by observing people and places at a research site” (Creswell: 2009:21). Observation as a form of data collection has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include the opportunity to record information as it occurs during the setting, to study individuals who have difficulties verbalizing their ideas and to study actual behaviour.

For the purposes of this research observations were a good way to capture teacher’s descriptions of their practises and pedagogical understandings about the language policy. Observations were done of Grade 1 to 3 teachers’ classroom practises. The observations were made first and then the interviews followed the next day. This was to ensure an opportunity to jot down any questions that might arise during the observation and then to follow up on such questions during the interview.

Creswell (2008:222) says that observations require one to adopt a particular role. In this case my role was a non participant observer. : “A non-participant observer is an observer who visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants”.

One to two teachers were observed per day and the lessons were between three to four a day. One grade was observed per week, this provided a sense of flow and continuity and it made it easier to compare classroom practises within teachers. The information observed was recorded manually using observation schedules during classroom instruction.

4.3.2.1 Observation design

The observation schedule (Appendix 2) looked at 3 main aspects:

- Resources for both the teacher and the learners
- Language use by the teacher and whether there was any code-switching
- Language use by the learners and the activities in class

For achieving these observational purposes, three key questions were constantly being asked, which are: (1) In what language are the resources used by the teacher and the learner? (2) What language does the teacher use for instruction? (3) Does the teacher code switch and if yes for what purpose? (4) What language are the learners using in class and for the activities that take place in class?

The above questions were necessary so that a comparison could be made with the interviews and this would offer more insight on how teachers come to understand the policy.

4.4 Limitations

The following limitations were experienced with regards to the research. Firstly the principal was not interviewed as she had taken leave during the time in which the interview was to take place. Despite the fact that she wasn't interviewed the data collected from the other teachers and the HOD's was substantial and it gave enough insight into the interpretations of the teachers who were enacting the policy. The information that would have been obtained from the principal could have provided a broader understanding of the enactment of the policy; however I do not think that it would have a major impact on the data obtained from the teachers that were interviewed.

Secondly there was a lack of private space to conduct interviews. Teachers in lower primary were class teachers and they did not have any free periods in which the interviews could be conducted. There were also no free classrooms as the classrooms were always occupied. The interviews therefore had to be done in teachers classrooms during break time. This was problematic as learners were very noisy outside and at times we had interruptions during the interview. These interruptions often ruined the flow of the interview and one as required to re ask the questions and create calm in the interview process. So although there were interruptions I still managed to acquire the desired information.

Thirdly with the observations, one has to be very vigilant on everything that is taking place in the class and this was a very difficult process to do. So it is possible that I might have missed certain aspects that were happening in the classroom environment. Unfortunately this is an inherent problem in any observation as one cannot observe completely everything; however I believe I picked up on the major aspects of the research which was how teachers understood and implemented the language policy.

The following chapter presents the results.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter examines the uptake of the language policy by teachers teaching lower primary (Grades 1-3). The research was firstly focused on the ways in which teachers in an urban multi-lingual context understand and makes sense of the language policy. Secondly, the research was concerned with the implementation of the language policy against the background of a multi-lingual context; this was done by looking at teachers' classroom practises and the social context in which the policy operates. Lastly it identifies the different factors that hinder the implementation of the language policy.

The three elements of Spillane's (2002) sense-making theory are used as analytic frames for the analysis of the data. These are: the individual sense-maker (Section 5.1), the social context (Section 5.2) and the policy signal (Section 5.3).

The final section of the chapter looks at the relationship between policy and practise.

5.1 Sense-making: The Individual Sense-Maker

As discussed previously, Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:393) say that there is a need to look at teachers as individual sense- makers because individuals incorporate new experiences and information through their existing knowledge structures.

As Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:395) say, people construct intuitive models from their experience as well as from formal instruction. They use these models to imagine a situation, essentially running a model to make predictions about its causes and outcomes. "People construct their own intuitive models that encode their biases, expectations, and explanations about how people think and how they learn" (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer: 2002:395). Therefore intuitive models of learning and classroom interactions should strongly influence how agents interpret reforms. Hence teachers as individual implementing agents with different backgrounds, knowledge

bases and intuitive models will construct different understandings, seeing what is new in terms of what is already known and believed.

The key variables used here to examine this are qualifications and experience. The data for these variables were obtained during the interview process. Evidence to support the significance of these variables was obtained through classroom observations. These variables of qualification and experience are important because looking at what a policy means for implementing agents depends greatly on their repertoire of existing knowledge and experience. (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002:395).

For the purpose of analysis the variables of qualification and experience were used to determine differences between teachers' understandings and classroom practises. I expected a variation in the understanding of policy and teachers' classroom practises between qualified and more qualified teachers and also a variation in the understanding of policy and teachers classroom practises between teachers who have less and more years of experience.

For the purposes of this research a qualified teacher is one who had a 3 year Basic Education Teachers Diploma (BETD). This is the minimum teaching qualification needed to teach in Namibia. A more qualified teacher is therefore one who had a Bachelor of Education Degree (BEd) or one who had a BETD and other additional qualifications i.e. Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE).

A teacher who had "less experience" is one who had been teaching between 0-5 years and one who was more experienced is one who had been teaching for more than 6 years.

Firstly in relation to the language policy, I expected that qualified and experienced teachers would have an in-depth understanding of the language policy and its rationale. This is because they have been exposed to it for a longer period than more junior teachers. I presume also that they have had the chance to attend workshops concerning policy. As I result I also expected them to have a better idea of what works and what doesn't so that therefore in some instances when necessary they might deviate from policy.

On the other hand, teachers who are qualified and have fewer years of experience may have superficial understanding of policy since they have not been exposed to it for a long period of time and may have had fewer chances to attend workshops concerning policy. These teachers may have the qualification but lack the experience so I expect them to follow policy without much modification.

Secondly, in relation to teachers' classroom practises it could be expected that qualified, experienced teachers to mostly stick to traditional methods of teaching (chalk and talk) since this was the popular mode of teaching and learning when these teachers were trained in earlier years. Learners in these classes may also not be very involved in the learning process as the learning environment may be very passive I also expect these teachers to be to very limited in using resources and not branch out to use alternative resources.

With qualified less experienced teachers I expected teachers to use methods of learning that are more learner centred, learners in these classes should therefore be more interactive and such teachers should also be able to handle multi-cultural learning environments. They should also exhibit the use of a wide range of resources including multi-media as they would have been exposed the latest methods of teaching and learning.

5.1.1 Teachers and learners background

This section describes the classes in terms of MOI (English MOI and Oshindonga or Nama/Damara MOI), class numbers and number of observations. Secondly, it provides information on teacher's education background (qualification, institution attended & years of experience). It lastly clarifies the variety of home languages spoken by the learners and teachers in the lower primary grade.

In this study 14 lower primary class teachers were observed and interviewed. The class numbers varied from 36 to 41 learners per class. Due to a lack of classroom space, teachers at this school work in shifts and classrooms are shared. The Grade 1's come in the morning and are taught from

7h20 to 12h30 while the Grade 2's and 3's come in the afternoon and are taught from 12h30 to 17h00.

The table indicates the number of classes observed the total of the learners per grade and the amount of lessons observed per grade. It also shows the different mediums of instruction.

Table 5.1.1: Description of lower primary grades

	Eng MOI Classes	N/D MOI	OSHI MOI	Total classes	No learners	No of observations
Grade 1	4	0	1	5	161	7
Grade 2	2	1	1	4	142	10
Grade 3	3	1	1	5	173	8
TOTAL	9	2	3	14	476	25

Key **MOI**: Medium of instruction; **OSHI**: Oshiwambo; **OTJI**: Otjiherero, **ENG**: English; **N/D**: Nama/Damara

Nine of the fourteen classes are English MOI classes and only two indigenous languages are offered as mediums of instruction (Oshindonga & Nama /Damara)

If a learner is in an English MOI class they are offered Afrikaans as a second language. If a learner is in an Oshiwambo or Nama/ Damara MOI class they are offered English as second language.

There are three promotional subjects (subjects that learners need to pass in order to be promoted to the next grade) offered in lower primary namely Mathematics, Environmental Studies and the language subjects. The non - promotional subjects are Arts, and Religious and Moral Education.

During the three week time period in which these observations were made only one observation was made on a non promotional subject and twenty four were made on the promotional subjects. As was evident from the time table the school in lower primary paid more attention to teaching the promotional subjects.

The table below shows the backgrounds of the teachers who were observed and interviewed. These backgrounds serve as variables which could impact on teachers' interpretations of policy. These variables will assist in clarifying if teachers' understanding, interpretation of policy and classroom practises differs in terms of their qualification and their years of experience as discussed in the introduction. The teachers are labelled by grade. Grade 1 teachers are from G1A to G1E.

Grade 2 teachers are from G2F to G2I and the Grade 3 teachers are from G3J to G3N. They are referred to as such in the text.

Table 5.1.2: Teachers Educational background

Pseudonyms	Gender	Teaching Qualification	Institution	Other qualifications	Years of experience
G1A	Female	BETD (diploma)	WCE	ACE	3
G1B	Female	Bed (degree)	S.A	None	11
G1C	Female	ECP	OCE	ACE & BA	17
G1D	Female	HDE	UNAM	Diploma in African languages & Diploma in Lower Primary	15
G1E	Female	ECP	WCE	None	15
G2F	Female	courses (MOBE)	MOBE	None	2
G2G	Female	BETD	UNAM	Diploma in African languages	15
G2H	Female	BETD	WCE	NONE	17
G2I	Female	BETD	UNAM	NONE	11
G3J	Female	BETD	WCE	ACE	7
G3K	Female	BETD	WCE	Diploma in African languages	12
G3L	Female	ECP	OCE	Diploma in lower primary + ACE	19
G3M	Female	BETD	UNAM	Diploma in African languages	5
G3N	Female	BETD	CCE	ACE	3

Key **BED**: Bachelor of Education (degree); **BETD**: Basic Education Teacher Diploma; **ECP**: Education Certificate Primary; **HDE**: Higher Diploma in Education; **ACE**: Advanced Certificate In Education **WCE**: Windhoek College of Education; **CCE**: Caprivi College of Education; **MOBE**: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture **OCE**: Ongwediva College of Education; **S.A**: Institution in South Africa; **UNAM**: University of Namibia

Tables 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 shows the teachers' qualifications and years of experience.

Table 5.1.3: Teacher qualifications

Teaching Qualification	Number	%
NONE	1	7.1
ECP	3	21.4
HDE	1	7.1
BETD	8	57.1
BED	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Table 5.1.4 Teachers Experience

Years of experience	Number	%
0-5	4	28.6
6-10	1	7.1
11-15	6	42.9
16+	3	21.4
Total	14	100.0

As shown in tables 5.1.3, 8 of the 14 teachers have BETD qualifications; this means that the majority of the teachers (57.1%) in lower primary had the basic qualification needed to teach. Additionally, table 5.1.4 shows that 10 of the 14 teachers (71.4%) had been teaching for more than 6 years. Hence most of the teachers in lower primary have both the qualification and the

experience and it is therefore expected that they have an in-depth understanding of the policy as stated earlier.

Tables 5.1.5 and 5.1.6 show the various home languages that are spoken by the learners and teachers in the lower primary phase at this school.

Table 5.1.5: Learners home languages and number of speakers in lower primary

	OSHI	OTJI	N/D	RUKW	SIL	AFR	OTHER	TOTAL
G1	118	8	31	3	1	0	0	161
G2	87	7	42	2	1	3	0	142
G3	110	8	47	3	2	1	2	173
TOTAL	315	23	120	8	4	4	2	476
%	66.2	4.8	25.2	1.7	0.8	0.8	0.4	100.0

In all Grades (1-3) it was clear that Oshiwambo was the most widely spoken home language. Overall 66.2% of the learners in lower primary are Oshiwambo home language speakers. As Oshiwambo was the most widely spoken home language it would be expected that if the policy was followed there would be a predominance of Oshindonga (dialect of Oshiwambo) MOI classes. However this was not the case as the previous table 4.2.1 indicated that 9 of the 14 classes in lower primary were English MOI classes and only 3 were Oshindonga MOI classes. This demonstrates that although policy strongly suggests that learners should be taught in their home language this is not the case. Reasons for this will be discussed later in the chapter (section 5.2.3)

Table 5.1.6 illustrates teachers' home languages and number of speakers in lower primary, 5 of the 14 teachers are Otjiherero home language speakers and because Otjiherero was not offered as a MOI at this school these teachers were teaching English MOI classes.

Table 5.1.6: Teachers home languages and number of speakers in lower primary

	OSHI	OTJI	N/D	SIL	AFR
G1	1	3	1	0	0
G2	1	0	2	0	1
G3	1	2	1	1	0
TOTAL	3	5	4	1	1

Key **OSHI**: Oshiwambo; **OTJI**: Otjiherero; **N/D**: Nama /Damara; **SIL**: Silozi; **AFR**: Afrikaans; **RUKW**: Rukwangali

Therefore learners who were in English MOI classes were taught by teachers who did not speak the learners' home language and for whom English was not their home language. I therefore expected teachers especially in Grade 1 to find it challenging to teach English medium of

instruction classes to learners who have different home languages as compared to those teachers who teach mother tongue instruction classes. I did not expect these teachers to use code switching in their classrooms as the languages spoken by the learners in the class varied. I also expected to see poor English language competencies of Grade 1 learners who are in English medium of instruction classes, as they are being taught in a language that is unfamiliar to them. I however expected these language competencies to improve in Grade 2 and 3 as learners were exposed longer to the language. This scenario poses as a challenge and has an influence on teachers' classroom practises which will be discussed in the next section.

5.1.1.1 Summary of school background

This school offered English, Oshindonga and Nama/Damara MOI classes. Nine of the fourteen classes were English MOI classes. This indicates that there was a strong pull towards the teaching of English at this school. Although 66.2% of the learners spoke Oshiwambo as their home language there were only three classes offered for Oshindonga (dialect of Oshiwambo) in the lower primary with the rest of the learners in English MOI classes. The reasons for this will be dealt with in the post observation interview section (section 5.2).

5.1.2 Teachers Practices

This section looks at teachers' classroom practices. According to Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) it is important to look at these practices because teacher's prior beliefs and practises can pose challenges as they can interfere with teacher's abilities to interpret and implement reforms.

The background variables of qualification and experience were used in the analysis to identify if there were any significant differences amongst teachers classroom practises.

The data was collected through classroom observations and interviews. The classroom observations firstly looked at the language used by the teacher for teaching as well as the resources such as textbooks and posters that were in the classroom. Secondly the observations also looked at the language use of the learners in the classroom by looking at the various activities that were taking place in the classroom. The language use of the learners is particularly interesting in English medium of instruction classes where learners speak different home languages. This

was necessary as I wanted to see the different methods that teachers used to manage a multi-lingual classroom. I also wanted to see if the teachers had the necessary resources available to be able to implement the language policy. At the same time learners workbooks were also examined (where possible) to identify the language use in the books.

Twenty five lessons were observed and fourteen teachers were interviewed with regards to the implementation of the language policy. The observations are organised by grade and by MOI. The first part looks at observations made in English MOI classes and the last part looks at observations made in indigenous language classes.

5.1.2.1.1 Grade 1 observations

As the table below shows in Grade 1 a total of seven lessons from five different teachers were observed. Four teachers taught English medium of instruction classes and one teacher taught an Oshindonga medium of instruction class. Five English, one Mathematics and one Oshindonga lesson were observed. As indicated above the key variables of qualification and experience will be used to interpret the data.

Table 5.1.3.1: Grade 1 observations

Grade 1	Grade 1 learners	MOI	No. of observations	Subject
G1A	40	Eng	1	Eng
G1B	39	Eng	1	Eng
G1C	40	Oshi	2	Oshi & Eng
G1D	40	Eng	2	Maths & Eng
G1E	41	Eng	1	Eng
Total	161	5	7	

The table below shows the data that was obtained from the observations that were done in the Grade 1 teacher's classrooms.

5.1.2.1.2 Grade 1 English MOI classes

As the table below indicates four of the five Grade one classes were English MOI classes. Four of the five teachers had between 11-17 years experience while one teacher had three years of experience. One of the teachers had a teaching degree and the other three teachers had varied qualifications of diplomas and certificates.

Table 5.1.3.2: Grade 1 observation descriptions

	G1A	G1B	G1C	G1D	G1E
Teachers experience (years)	3	11	17	15	15
Teachers home language	Otji	Otji	Oshi	N/D	Otji
Teachers qualification	BETD + ACE	BEEd	ECP+ ACE & BA	HDE+Diploma in Lower Primary & Diploma African languages	ECP
MOI	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used on chalkboard	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used for posters /resources in class	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng/ND	Eng
Textbooks used by teacher	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Textbooks used by learner	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Did the teacher switch from MTI to English or vice versa? Y/N	No	No	Yes	No	No
For what purpose? FREQUENCY					
a) Explanatory	No	No	3	No	No
b) Greeting	No	No	No	No	No
c) Reprimanding	No	No	No	No	No
d) Consolidation	No	No	No	No	No
e) Revision	No	No	No	No	No
f) Questioning	No	No	4	No	No
g) Others specify					
Language used for activities in class by learners					
Reading	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Writing	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Group work /discussions		Eng			
Singing					
Assessments	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used in learner's book	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language use for recreational purposes					
Playground	Eng & HL				

Resources:

They all used English to write on the board and the resources displayed in the classroom were also in English except for the case of teacher G1D who also had resources in Nama/Damara. This was because she shared her class with a teacher who taught a Nama/ Damara MOI class. Textbooks used by teachers and learners were all in English. In most cases teachers had the textbooks and learners received photocopies or they copied work from the board. This could have been because of a lack of funds for resources. All written work done in the learners' books was done in English.

Language usage in the classroom:

All teachers who taught in English MOI classes stuck to English and did not code switch.

Learners responded to the teacher in English and mostly responded only when specifically asked something by the teacher and their responses were either one word answers or phrases and this was usually done by the whole class. There was however an exception in teacher G1B's class as there was a learner who put up their hand to ask the teacher for clarity on the group task.

The way in which learners respond to teachers may be because of various reasons firstly, learners may not be confident to speak openly to the teacher because of their age, secondly the way in which the learners responded to the teacher may have been a culture that learners came with from home and lastly it could be that learners experienced difficulty to express themselves in English. However, the exact reason was not clear although teachers tended to explain it terms of learners not attending pre-primary school as well as learners learning in a second language (see section on policy signal). Teachers had to repeat things so that learners could understand. Oral drilling was also a common practise in these classrooms. In the interviews English MOI teacher were asked if they experienced any difficulties teaching learners in English. Teacher G1D said:

“Yes they speak different languages and one must use real life objects as this will help them understand better.”

This teacher saw the importance of using real life objects when teaching learners who don't speak English as their home language.

Teacher G1A:

“Really definitely, because these kids never had pre-primary, so they came here they were just speaking their mother tongue and I couldn’t understand it, it was very difficult to help them out”.

This teacher identified the necessity of attending pre-primary especially for second language learners.

Teacher G1B was the only teacher who used group work in her class. This shows that she was willing to use the learner centred approach. This may be because she has the highest qualification in this group and has exposure to the latest knowledge with regards to teaching.

The effect of qualifications and experience on Grade 1 English MOI classes:

With regards to the four teachers who taught English MOI classes there were no significant differences that were seen except with teacher G1B who used group work in her one lesson and she was the most qualified teacher. In this case her qualification might have influenced the way in which she conducted her activities in class. She was also qualified outside of Namibia and her training was thus different from the rest of her colleagues.

5.1.2.1.3 Grade 1 Oshindonga class

Table 5.1.3.2 indicates that there was only one Grade 1 Oshindonga MOI class. This teacher (G1C) had 17 years of experience so she was the most experienced teacher in this grade.

Resources:

There was one Oshindonga MOI class. Teacher G1C wrote in Oshindonga on the board and resources displayed in the classroom were mostly in Oshindonga with a few in English as this was offered as the second language. Textbooks used by the teacher and the learners were also in Oshindonga and learners wrote in Oshindonga in their work books.

Language usage in the classroom:

During the Oshindonga lesson this teacher switched over to English three times during her lesson. This was for explanatory purposes. This was necessary as the lesson was based on phonics and the teacher wanted the learners to be clear and differentiate on how the sounds differ in English and in Oshindonga. It was also interesting to see that during the English lesson this teacher also switched over to Oshindonga for questioning. This was to make sure that learners understood

what was expected from them. Learners responded and spoke freely in Oshindonga amongst themselves as well as with the teacher. Although this was an Oshindonga MOI class the reality is that not all learners in the class speak the dialect. During the interview the Oshindonga MOI teacher was asked whether she experienced any difficulties with this. She said:

”Ya, learners especially when it comes to writing they say it is Oshindonga but the majority are Kwanyama speaking. Then you ask them to write the plural of the word ongombe (cow) the Kwanyama will write eengombe (cows) Now that is the challenge cause the child is correct but it’s not an Oshindonga word. I use to mark it correct but then I said in Oshindonga we don’t have “ee”. Even when it comes to listening and speaking. Let me say you tell a story in Oshindonga, if you ask them to retell it they will tell it in their mother tongue. You will just give them marks. Like in my class I’m just testing their understanding”.

From the above responses it is evident that this teacher experienced difficulties teaching learners with different dialects in the classroom. This became particularly tricky when it comes to oral or written assessment. These are obstacles for the policy to be implemented effectively.

The effect of qualification and experience on Grade 1 Oshindonga MOI class: Teacher G1C had the most years of experience in Grade 1. Her teaching, especially the fact that she code switched in both Oshindonga and English lessons, demonstrates that her experience in the classroom has taught her to do things in a certain way. It was however very difficult to reach a solid conclusion as she was the only teacher who taught an indigenous MOI class and thus a comparison could not be made with other teachers.

5.1.2.1.4 Grade 1 summary on sense-making

As discussed in the introduction, Spillane’s theory of “sense-making”(2002) predicted that what a policy means for an implementing agent depends greatly on their repertoire of existing knowledge and experience. The results with the Grade 1 English MOI classes showed very similar teaching methods (chalk and talk) Teacher G1C was the only one who did a group task as discussed earlier. The variable of qualification thus made an impact in this case.

Teacher G1C in the Oshindonga MOI class was the only one who code switched as indicated on the observation schedule and she also had the most years of experience (17 years). The variable of experience could perhaps explain her teaching method in the classroom.

5.1.2.2.1 Grade 2 observations

As the table below shows in Grade 2 a total of 10 lessons from 4 different teachers were observed. Two teachers taught English MOI classes, one teacher taught an Oshindonga MOI class and one taught a Nama/Damara class. Three English, four Mathematics and one Oshindonga, one Nama/Damara and one Environmental Studies lesson were observed. As discussed before the key variables of qualification and experience will be used to interpret the data.

Table 5.1.3.3: Grade 2 observations

Grade 2 Teachers	Grade 2 Learners	MOI	No. of observations	Subject
G2F	35	N/D	3	Eng, N/D & Maths
G2G	38	Oshi	3	Maths, Eng & Oshi
G2H	36	Eng	2	Maths & Eng
G2I	33	Eng	2	Maths & ES
Total	142	4	10	

5.1.2.2.2 Grade 2 English MOI classes

As the table below shows two of the four teachers taught English MOI classes, these two teachers had between 11- 17 years experience and they both had a BETD qualification.

Table 5.1.3.4: Grade 2 observation descriptions

	G2F	G2G	G2H	G2I
Teachers experience (years)	2	15	17	11
Teachers home language	N/D	Oshi	N/D	Afr
Teachers qualification	MOBE	BETD+ Diploma in African Languages	BETD	BETD
MOI	N/D	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used on chalkboard	N/D	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used for posters /resources in class	N/D	Oshi	Eng	Eng/ND
Textbooks used by teacher	N/D	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Textbooks used by learner	N/D	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Did the teacher switch from MTI to English or vice versa? Y/N	No	Yes	Yes	No
For what purpose?				
FREQUENCY				
a) Explanatory	No	1	No	No
b) Greeting	No	No	No	No
c) Reprimanding	No	2	2	No
d) Consolidation	No	No	No	No
e) Revision	No	No	No	No
f) Questioning	No	1	No	No
g) Others specify	No	praising	No	No
Language used for activities in class by learners				
Reading	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng
Writing	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng
Group work /discussions	Eng	Eng	Oshi	
Singing			Eng & Afr	
Assessments	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng
Language used in learner's book	Eng	Eng	Oshi	Eng
Language use for recreational purposes				
Playground	Eng & HL			

Resources:

Resources displayed in these classrooms were all in English and there were few resources in Afrikaans as it was offered as the second language. Textbooks used in the class were also in English, learners mostly received work that was photocopied and put in a flip file. Work in learner's

book was only in English. These two teachers used the board, flash cards and a number chart in their lessons.

Language usage in the classroom:

As indicated in the table, teachers taught in English throughout. Teacher G2H however switched over to Otjiherero twice in her class to reprimand a learner. Learners responded to the teacher in English. With teacher G2H activities were done as a whole class (repeated several times) and the class responded to the teacher as a group. Teacher G2I activities were more individualistic as learners were called one by one to do work that was on the board. This could be teacher G2I's general way of pedagogy or perhaps her preferred method of teaching for this particular day. As with the teachers in Grade 1, teachers in Grade 2 teachers also stated that using real life objects was a way of coping with learners in English MOI classes.

Teacher G2H said:

“Yes there are some obstacles hindering that's why you have to have concrete the real objects, like flash cards but those in the mother tongue if you were to say something then of course they will know already.”

Teacher G2I responded:

“When they come to school and its first year English, it's difficult for them because they don't understand English. Now as a teacher you must teach in English they don't know what you talking about. If you are teaching without real life objects you will never get something.”

This teacher also further elaborated on this situation by saying:

“Yes while I'm teaching because some kids really don't understand what I'm talking about. Most are Oshiwambo learners if I ask another child, what this thing in Oshiwambo is then they are going to explain to others. Now these learners who are speaking.... mmmm what do you call it Damara, now who is going to explain to them?”

Teachers in Grade 2 did not only state using real life objects in their teaching but also the need to use other learners in class to explain certain concepts to others in their home language when the need arises.

The effect of qualifications and experience on Grade 2 English MOI classes:

No observable significant differences were seen in these two teachers' classrooms. Both of these teachers had the same qualification and although their years of experience differed by 6 years, the impact of this variable was insignificant.

5.1.2.2.3 Grade 2 Nama/Damara and Oshindonga MOI classes

There was one Nama/Damara and Oshindonga MOI class in Grade 2. Teacher G2F was an unqualified teacher with only two years experience and taught the Nama/Damara MOI class and teacher G2G was a qualified teacher with 15 years experience and she taught the Oshindonga MOI class.

Resources:

As the table above indicated there was one Nama/ Damara and one Oshindonga MOI class in Grade 2. Resources in these classrooms were mostly in Nama/ Damara and Oshindonga and few were in English and Afrikaans. Textbooks were also in the indigenous languages. Work done in the learners books was in Nama/Damara and Oshindonga respectively.

Language usage in the classroom:

These teachers taught in the respective indigenous languages. Teacher G2F only taught in Nama/ Damara and did not code switch. Learners in her class responded to her in Nama/Damara. As the table shows teacher G2G used Oshindonga throughout her teaching and switched over to English when she was reprimanding learners and also for praising them e.g. "clap hands for her please". Teacher G2G also switched over to the learners home language (Oshindonga) during the English lesson. This was done twice as the teacher wanted to test if they knew the meaning of the word in Oshindonga. The teacher asked: "what is to scratch learners?" The learners then responded to the questions in Oshindonga. Learners responded in Oshindonga and in Nama/ Damara in their respective classes. As with the Grade 1 teacher (G1C) the Grade 2 Oshindonga teacher (G2G) was also asked about her experience in teaching learners who speak different dialects.

This teacher explained the difficulty of dialects when it comes to learners reading (confusion and substitution of letters).

“Yes I cannot say that it is a problem of dialects, but actually it is I think the children’s language themselves. Because some they don’t have L they use R and some they don’t have B the use MG. So to read the word as it is they have to put another word then you have to correct them because it is difficult”.

The effect of qualifications and experience on Grade 2 Oshindonga and Nama/Damara MOI classes:

As shown in table 5.1.3.4 teacher G2F is an unqualified teacher with only two years experience as compared to teacher G2G who is a qualified teacher with 15 years experience. Only the Oshindonga teacher (G2G) code switched. The Nama/ Damara teacher stuck to English in her English lesson. This is perhaps because teacher G2G is a qualified teacher and has been in the teaching profession for a longer period of time and has thus been able to identify methods of teaching which help learners to understand better. In this case there were pedagogical differences between teacher G2F and G2G. These differences may be related to qualification and experience.

5.1.2.2.4 Grade 2 summary on sense-making

As elaborated in the previous summary of sense-making, qualification and experience should make a difference in teachers’ sense-making. This however could not be seen with the Grade 2 English MOI classes. This is perhaps because these two teachers have had similar training in Government institutions and hence teach similarly. So in this case the variables did not make much of an impact. The variables were only applicable with teachers in the indigenous language classes. In this case it was easier to reach a conclusion (in comparison with the Grade 1 indigenous language teacher) Teacher G2G code switched in the class when needed and teacher G2F only stuck to Nama/Damara. These pedagogical differences could be because of teacher G2G’s qualification and experience in comparison with teacher G2G who is an unqualified teacher with only two years of experience.

5.1.2.3.1. Grade 3 observations

As the table below indicates eight lessons were observed in 5 different Grade 3 classes. Two English, one Nama/Damara, one Afrikaans, two Environmental Studies, one Mathematics and one Religious and Moral Education lesson was observed in this grade.

Table 5.1.3.5: Grade 3 observations

Grade 3 Teachers	Grade 3 Learners	MOI	No. of observations	Subject
G3J	31	N/D	2	RME & N/D
G3K	37	Eng	1	Eng
G3L	36	Oshi	2	ES & Eng
G3M	34	Eng	1	Afr
G3N	34	Eng	2	Maths & ES
Total	172	5	8	

5.1.2.3.2. Grade 3 English MOI classes

There were three English MOI classes. Teachers in these classes all had the same basic teaching qualification plus other additional qualifications. Their years of experience ranged between 3 to 12 years.

Table 5.1.3.6: Grade 3 observation descriptions

	G3J	G3K	G3L	G3M	G3N
Teachers experience (years)	7	12	19	5	3
Teachers home language	N/D	Otji	Oshi	Otji	Sil
Teachers qualification	BETD + ACE	BETD + Diploma in African Languages	ECP+ Dip in African Languages +ACE	BETD + Dip in African Languages	BETD + ACE
MOI	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used on chalkboard	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language used for posters /resources in class	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Textbooks used by teacher	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Textbooks used by learner	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Did the teacher switch from MTI to English or vice versa? Y/N	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
For what purpose?					
FREQUENCY					
a) Explanatory	No	No	No	No	1
b) Greeting	No	No	No	No	No
c) Reprimanding	No	No	No	No	No
d) Consolidation	No	No	No	No	No
e) Revision	No	No	1	No	No
f) Questioning	No	No	No	No	No
g) Others specify	Reading	praising	requests	No	No
Language used for activities in class by learners					
Reading	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Writing	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Group work /discussions		Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Singing	N/D & Eng		Eng & Afr		Eng & HL
Assessments		Eng	Oshi	Eng	
Language used in learner's book	N/D	Eng	Oshi	Eng	Eng
Language use for recreational purposes					
Playground	Eng & HL				

Resources:

All these teachers' resources were in English and work written on the board was in English. Textbooks used by the learners were also in English as well as all written work.

Language usage in classroom:

The table shows that teachers who taught in English MOI classes did not code switch. Learners in these classes responded to their teacher in English. It was interesting to see that teacher G3N encouraged the learners to speak in their home language during her Environmental lesson on indigenous plants. When asked during the interview why she did this she said:

“I do this as some learners are shy to express themselves in English. I also want to motivate them and make them feel accepted”.

Additionally this teacher also sang a greeting song at the beginning of the school day which was sung in different Namibian indigenous languages.

She explained this during the interview

“I want to accommodate all the learners“.

This teacher was the only one who accommodated different learner's home languages in her classroom environment. She was the most recently trained teacher in comparison to her colleagues. A possible explanation for her difference in classroom practise may be that she has been exposed to the latest knowledge such as ways of teaching in a multi-cultural context.

Teachers in Grade 1 and 2 stated the need of using real life objects as they were teaching learners whose home language was not English. These challenges were however not felt with Grade 3 English MOI classes. When asked if they experienced any difficulties in this regard they responded as follows:

Teacher G3M:

“Not really, because they are being taught in this medium of instruction from Grade 1, so now I'm teaching Grade 3 so I don't find any challenges. Grade 1 teachers are having that problem. In Grade 3 they know English very well, they speak and express themselves very well, it's just a few who cannot read and write but the majority is just good”.

Teacher G3N:

“The learners are a pleasure to teach, the reason for this is that most of them understand English and this is the medium of instruction, so I don't find any problems teaching them, and the Afrikaans that they also learn. They are just a pleasure to have because they understand”.

The difficulties and challenges of teaching English medium of instruction classes were more prevalent with Grade 1 and 2 teachers. This is understandable as this is where the initial foundation is laid. By the time learners reach Grade 3 the foundation has already been laid and teachers in Grades 3 do not seem to experience these problems.

These teachers taught English MOI classes but they were also asked what language they thought was best to use in instruction. Of the three English MOI teachers, two of them (G3K and G3M) agreed that mother tongue instruction was best as learners will be able to understand better.

Teacher G3N who did not agree with the rest said the following:

“I think English would be the best because it would be very easy for the learners to cope in upper primary once they are taught in English than now whereby learners are finding it very difficult to translate what they have learnt in their mother tongue to English, so they find it very difficult to cope. It is like they are learning new things when they go to upper primary”.

This one teacher whose opinion differed from the rest was a recently trained teacher and has the least experience in the teaching field. This could perhaps explain why her attitudes and knowledge of the language policy differs from the rest of the teachers that were interviewed.

The effect of qualifications and experience on Grade 3 English MOI classes:

Although teacher G3N said that she thinks it is best for learners to be taught In English, she also acknowledged that at certain times it was necessary to try and accommodate learner’s home languages as seen in her Environmental Studies lesson and with her morning classroom routine (greeting song). She had the least years of experience and thus means that she had been recently trained. Her classroom environment could perhaps be a reflection of her exposure to the latest knowledge on teaching.

5.1.2.3.3 Grade 3 MOI classes Nama /Damara and Oshindonga MOI class

There was one Nama/ Damara and one Oshindonga MOI class in Grade 3. Teacher G3L taught the Oshindonga MOI class and her qualifications were an Education Certificate Primary (ECP), Diploma in African Languages and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). She had 19 years

of experience. Teacher G3J's qualification were a Basic Education Teachers Diploma and an Advanced Certificate in Education. She had 7 years of experience.

Resources:

Resources displayed in the Nama/Damara class (G3J) as well as textbooks were in Nama/Damara. In the Oshindonga MOI class (G3L) textbooks were in Oshindonga, there were however no resources displayed around the classroom. During the interview she said it was because her classroom was very vulnerable to theft. However, this classroom was not any different from the others. Therefore there was no reason why her classroom could not have had resources. Work in the learners' books was also done in the respective indigenous languages.

Language usage in the classroom:

In both classes teachers taught in the indigenous language. However during teacher G3J's Religious and Moral Education lesson it was interesting to see that one of the worksheets she used was in English, so it was read in English first and then she translated it into Nama/Damara. This may have been because of two reasons as she explained in the interview:

“Ya I agree totally we are suffering. Most of the things are in English and we have to translate and that also takes time especially my first year that I taught Nama/Damara. My dear I was suffering. From textbooks to whatever resources, whatever the English teachers do I have to translate into Nama/Damara and it's also time consuming.

“Ya I am also stressing it to them (learners) that no next year is not Nama/Damara anymore. We start speaking English cause all these teachers which you are going to are not Nama/ Damara teachers they will not know any Nama/Damara words. So it's better for you to learn now. I'm also encouraging them to speak when they are with their peers at break time and during the class period I mostly teach them more English compared to Nama/Damara as a subject. I concentrate more on English and I hope next year the third term will change to English”.

As revealed in the interview the use of the English worksheet during the Religious and Moral Education could have been because of the lack of resources in the indigenous languages or because of the individual teacher's choice in exposing learners to English in preparation for English MOI classes the next year.

Teacher G3L mainly taught in Oshindonga and switched over to English when making requests and for reprimanding the learners. e.g. "John please hand out the books for me over there". It was also interesting to see that during her English lesson she first laid the foundation in Oshindonga and then switched over to teaching in English at a later stage. When asked why she did this she said it for learners she said

"It's so that learners can understand better and also so that they can Remember".

The learners responded to the teacher in Oshindonga. As with teacher G3J, teacher G3L also saw the importance of the increased use of English in the classroom. During the interview she said the following:

"I use a lot of English. They can understand already in vernacular language but I try to use in Mathematics in Environmental studies more English so that they understand better next year, to prepare for them".

As with the Grade 1 and 2 Oshindonga teachers, (G1C and G2G) the Grade 3 teacher (G3L) was also asked in the interview if she experienced any difficulty in teaching learners with different dialects in the classroom. She said:

"That languages (different dialects) we can understand each other but in writing we are using only two in writing books. We using only two languages in Oshiwambo in writing books. If it's not Oshindonga its Oshikwanyama but really using only Oshindonga. We try for them to write in Oshindonga not to use other languages. We try just to make a correction, if the learner writes in a language which they are talking at home, that learner is correct but we try to make a correction".

From the above response it is evident that these teachers (indigenous languages) experienced difficulties teaching learners with different dialects in the classroom. This became particularly tricky when it comes to oral or written assessment. These are obstacles for the policy to be implemented effectively. Hence there is a need for teachers to be assisted on how to handle such situations in their classrooms.

The effect of qualifications and experience on Grade 3 Nama/Damara & Oshindonga MOI classes: Experience seemed to play a major role when comparing these two teachers' classroom practises. Teacher G3L (who has 11 years more experience than teacher G3J) showed a different approach in her teaching methodology as she code switched in her lesson as explained above in her English lesson.

5.1.2.3.4. Grade 3 summary on sense-making

Once again these teachers in Grade 3 were trained in similar educational institutions and hence it was difficult to see the impact of these variables additionally, the extra qualifications i.e. ACE did not make an impact. There was however a slight difference with teacher G3N in the Grade 3 English MOI classes as explained previously. Her prior knowledge as a recently trained teacher could have exposed her to the latest knowledge about teaching and learning. With the indigenous language teachers, experience and qualification played a major role as discussed earlier as there were differences in their teaching methods. Teacher G3L code switched in her classroom and teacher G3J only stuck to Nama/ Damara in her lessons. Teacher G3L had 11 years experience and she had an additional qualification (Diploma in African Languages).

5.1.3 Summary of Individual Sense-making

In section 5.1 of Chapter 5, the key variables of experience and qualification were used to identify difference in teachers' classroom practises. All in all there were minor variations amongst teachers in Grades 1-3 in terms of their classroom practises. Teachers used the same basic pedagogy (chalk and talk) where there was limited involvement by the learners. There were however a few exceptions in the various grades.

In Grade 1 the variable of qualification made an impact with teacher G1B who taught an English MOI class as she was the only one who used group work in her lesson. She was the only teacher who had a BEd degree and this could perhaps explain her difference in teaching. The variable of experience did not create an impact despite the range of experience which was from 3 to 15 years.

In Grade 2 a difference was seen with the Grade 2 indigenous language teachers. In this case both variables of qualification and experience created an impact. As teacher G2F was an unqualified teacher with 2 years experience. Whereas G2G was a qualified teacher with 15 years experience. Teacher G2G displayed teaching methods (code switching) that were different to that of G2F. She explained in her interview that it was for learners to understand better.

With regards to the indigenous language teachers in Grade 3 both experience and qualification seemed to have an impact on these teachers' classroom practises. Teacher G3L who had 12 years more experience than teacher G3J and who had an extra qualification (Diploma in African Languages) showed a different approach in her teaching as discussed earlier in her lesson when she code switched.

It was very difficult to identify the impact of qualification as most teachers were trained in Namibian institutions. These institutions are more likely to have similar curricula and similar basic in service training and teachers have also been exposed to the policy in similar kinds of ways. Teachers are hence more likely to be similar than different. These similar patterns of behaviour may also be a result of the general culture of the school and hence there is a need to look into the social context of the school.

5.2 The Implementing Agent and the Social Context

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:404) state that although individual cognition and the search for universal patterns are important, sense-making is not only an individual affair. Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:404) say that social psychologists, scholars working on situated and distributed cognition and researchers working in the Cultural, Historical Activity Theory tradition, argue that the situation of the individual is vital in understanding human cognition. Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) say that social norms and organisation structures are important contexts for implementing agents work and for their efforts to make sense of policy. "Social interactions can aid sense-making not only because individuals learn from one another but also because group interactions bring insights and perspectives to the surface that would otherwise not be made visible to the group" (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002: 406). Moreover the potency of policy levers in getting

teachers to change their practise depends on part on teachers “zone of enactments” (the spaces where the world of policy meets the world of practice) Studies revealed that teachers whose enactment zones extended beyond their individual classrooms to include frequent and ongoing discussions with other teachers and experts about policy proposals and their implications for practice understood the standards in ways that resonated with policy makers proposal.

The data and evidence for this section on teacher’s collective interactions was obtained from the interviews. It is expected that teachers who make the effort to have social interactions with colleagues concerning policy proposals to have shared understandings of policy and these shared understandings become a filter for ideas about revising existing practice. On the other hand teachers who operate in isolation may not have these shared understandings as they allow themselves little opportunity to discuss and share knowledge that is embedded in the social context.

The interview questions (see appendix 1) were therefore concerned with the organisational context and the social relations of the teachers. As explained earlier in the chapter the teachers in Grades 1-3 were split in terms of teaching as Grade 1 and 2 teachers taught in the mornings and Grade 3 teachers in the afternoon. It was therefore interesting to see how their social relations would be in this regard. When asked about staff meetings and how information (i.e. policies) was communicated to the teachers they said the following.

Two types of meetings took place at this school: formal and informal meetings. This section will first focus on the formal meetings. The formal meetings were either staff meetings or grade/phase meetings. The staff meetings involved all staff members and they usually took place at the beginning of the school day. Since the Grade 1 and 2 teachers came in the mornings their staff meeting took place in the mornings before the start of the school day.

When asked about staff meetings and how information (i.e. policies) was communicated the Grade 1 & 2 teachers said the following:

Teacher G1A:

“Normally we are informed through circulars or sometimes they call us and they give us information”.

Teacher G1C:

"Oh ok ,ya normally we have 3 days briefing per week Monday, Wednesday and Friday and we usually use those briefings for information sharing."

Teacher G2G:

"Um through office administration, If there is a change they have to call us. If not the staff meeting they have to call the subject head/section head or HOD so they come together and explain".

Teacher G2H:

"Normally we get the circulars which are being read in a formal meeting".

The staff meetings for Grade 3 teachers took place in the afternoon at the beginning of the school day. The Grade 3 teachers responded as follows:

Teacher G3M:

"Normally they just send us circulars from the government then it goes to the principal first then the principal reads it for us and sometimes makes copies so we can read it for ourselves. It is done in a formal meeting".

Teacher G3K:

"We are informed through the circulars from the regional office".

Teacher G3J

"Well we usually have briefings on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and then they are talking about their issues, about anything that is concerning the school. So it's through our management that we hear things that are happening".

From the above responses it is clear that despite the split nature of the school in terms of teaching both groups of teachers Grades 1&2 and Grade 3 teachers at this school had an opportunity to discuss and share information as a staff. In this case it was done formally.

There was also a need to see if teachers interacted with each other within their grades. This was important as it would determine if teachers were operating in isolation or whether they were interacting with each other as interactions aid the sense-making process.

This section focuses on the formal grade and Phase meetings. It was however not very clear on when and how often these meetings took place. At these meetings teachers discussed topics such as planning, assessments, teaching methods and discipline.

The responses in Grades 1 & 2 were as follows:

Teacher G1D:

"[At] grade meetings we talk about the progress of the learners, teaching methods. If I'm not good in multiplication I can go to Mrs Willem and she can come explain".

Teacher G1B

"Yes we have phase meetings, we are learning a lot, sometimes you don't know what to do in your class and then the other person is having a better idea. Then you get ideas from the others how to discipline your kids".

Teacher G1C:

"Yes the discussions are always on Let me say everything. But most of these meetings we use to have after the holiday and before we close. Before we close we use to talk about the problems and how we are going to solve them, also new developments if there are. After the holidays we start again and we say this is the beginning of the term let us do this. It depends what you having".

Teacher G2H:

"Yes we do have meetings, we are having briefings and phase meetings, whereby we air our views and help each other in terms of teaching and everybody is given a chance to participate. Yes we learn from each other. We share teaching materials if we find something. We help each other and we work so well together."

Teacher G2G:

"Ya we use to meet especially too much in preparation. When we prepare we have to sit together and prepare together and when the topic is finished we come together again to prepare the next topic."

HOD Grade 1&2

"In the meetings we discuss all over cause we are having a phase meeting because its lower primary. We are not sitting according to the subjects. Its where we discuss all the problems such as punctuality, seriousness of work , handing in of preparation files and

CASS files and to discuss topics to be covered for the assessments and the teachers also tell us their problems”.

From the above responses it was clear that teachers in Grades 1 & 2 were not working in isolation. They were making the effort to interact with each other.

Responses from Grade 3 teachers were as follows:

Teacher G3N:

“Yes once a week whereby we sit and do our lesson planning. Yes we do learn from each other.

Teacher G3K:

“Yes we are having meetings, phase meetings and staff meetings. We are planning and like the phase meetings we plan for instance this term what are we going to do and when is the due date for the assessments and what assessments we should prepare”.

Teacher G3L:

“Yes we are having grade meetings with our section head. We discuss about preparation”.

Teacher G3M:

“Yes, sometimes at the beginning of the term and at the end of the term, we sit together to see whether we follow the syllabus and we are supposed to see that we covered the whole syllabus”.

HOD Grade 3&4:

“Yes it’s something that is compulsory in lower primary, the phase meetings that’s where we discuss our problems. This is a department of working together from Grade 1-4 “.

Teachers made very little reference to informal meetings, except teacher G1D and G1B who stated that they consulted other teachers to help in matters concerning teaching methods and discipline. However this is not an indication that informal meetings did not take place it was just a result of how the questions were asked.

Across all grades it was evident that teachers were not working in isolation but met regularly to discuss matters concerning teaching and learning and this was also confirmed by the two HODS.

It was however interesting to see that the staff meetings appeared to take place more regularly than grade and Phase meetings. This is because teachers could point out the exact days when these meetings (staff) took place i.e. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. However with the Phase and grade meetings this was not the case. The HOD for Grade 3 & 4 was the only one who mentioned that Grade1-4 worked together as a department.

Additionally Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) state that when looking at the social context there is a need to look beyond the formal education system

“ In thinking about the situated nature of implementing agents sense-making , however , it is important to take into account not only the formal education system but also the vast nonsystem of textbook publishers, professional development providers and educational consultants “.

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002:409)

Therefore ways in which teachers come to understand policy and their ways of interpreting it are influenced by non- state or non system agencies. Certain questions in the interview focused on the availability of resources (textbooks) to be able to put the policy into effect. The teachers who taught the indigenous language classes responded as follows:

5.2.1 Resources: Textbooks

All 5 teachers who taught indigenous language classes experienced the problem of a lack of resources.

Teacher G1C:

“That one is a major problem. We don't have materials even the syllabus from NIED I don't know what they are doing there. We don't have materials we don't have textbooks. Like in my cupboard there you won't find a text book there. We are having that old syllabus and the new scheme of work. The new scheme of work and that syllabus they are not corresponding. So you have to run around ask colleagues what are you having at your school? You are just doing your own stuff. We don't have books”.

This point was also brought up by one of the HOD's during her interview.

HOD Grade 3&4:

"The problem we are having right now the syllabus we are having and the books does not correlate. There is a great difference. The teachers although they are having problems of the language itself they have to run around to get the information which is related to the syllabuses and that is a serious problem. We don't have correct books for the syllabus. The textbooks and the syllabus don't correspond at all".

Teacher G2G:

"Indeed there is a lack of materials and it is difficult to translate in English. Because some policies, manuals/curriculum many of them are in English. Oshiwambo we are not having books. Even for reading we are not having enough books. Yes we are struggling you have to collect materials from here to there and combine them together so you can make something".

Teacher G2F:

"From my capacity from my side of view the recourses are very poor. Truly speaking there are no books. I am only having Nama/Damara for reading. No grammar. Most of the things I am trying from my part to translate so that I can teach. Translating is a problem. There is not even a schedule which is being drafted for the particular grades that we are doing. So we are really suffering a lot. For Mathematics there is a book which is not that much useful. For arts there is no book. For Environment there is also a book which is also not that much useful. We struggle a lot".

Teacher G3L:

"For me it was easy for me because when I just moving here to Grade 3 and I did not find more resources to the Grade 3. I try to run corner to corner and bookshop to bookshop so I can get this. I'm having a lot of.... This one is for Environment I'm having 4 Environment for the learner to understand the topic very well. These are day by day for Mathematics but they are not enough things so I can go and buy printing, its having a lot of information for the learners. This printing is working together with the scheme of work then here only a few. I don't have a problem; it's only for learners we try to order books for them because we supposed also to have a textbook to read themselves and to write the exercise.

Teacher G3J:

"Ya I agree totally we are suffering. Most of the things are in English and we have to translate and that also takes time especially my first year that I taught Nama/Damara. My dear I was suffering. From textbooks to whatever resources, whatever the English teachers do I have to translate into Nama/Damara and it's also time-consuming. I think they

translated most of the subjects from English to Mother tongue. But for Arts our scheme of work is also in English but maybe it's up to the teachers to sit together and draft their own Nama/Damara .Like we did at the workshop for Nama/Damara and they also encourage us to write our preparation in Nama/Damara in our language. In that sense we also are upgrading ourselves because it doesn't help to write preparation in English while you are teaching the kids in Nama/Damara. So I think for us actually the things are there but the work is so much we are just concentrating on the main subjects”.

Teacher G3L also made the point that the lack of resources was only for the learners themselves. This problem was however not only unique to teachers who taught indigenous classes but two Grade 1 teachers who taught English MOI classes also raised this issue during their interviews.

Teacher G1A:

“I have never taught mother tongue, so I don't know anything about that, for English we are having the same problem we don't have textbooks. The learners don't have textbooks, but the few that we have they are outdated, they don't correspond to the syllabus”.

Teacher G1D:

“Textbooks are not enough and reading books are also a problem”.

Obstacles to the implementation of the language policy were also due to the lack of teachers to teach mother tongue classes. This was explicitly said by five of the teachers that were interviewed. One teacher also stated problems with enrolments. They responded as follows:

Teacher G1C:

“What you see here is not a true reflection of the parent's wishes. Like in January you find even those sitting there most of them are struggling to get places in Oshindonga. Some of them they put them in Oshindonga in Grade 2 not in Grade 3. Like this year we have one boy in Oshindonga in Grade 5 because the parents wanted him in Oshindonga he was not accepted. They try in Grade 2 no place, Grade 3 no place, and Grade 4 no place. This year he got a place in Grade 5. For the first time in Grade 5. Why we only have one class (Oshindonga MOI class) is just because of the lack of teachers. There were two classes but the grades were growing. They took the teacher from Grade 1 and put them in Grade 3 because that one left the school. But the demand is there people want Oshindonga “.

Teacher G1D:

“There are problems with enrolments. Parents don’t come on time to enrol their kids as they don’t have money. So by the time they enrol the classes for Nama/Damara are closed already and learners have to go to English classes”.

Teacher G3J:

“Ya we struggle with teachers that are qualified to teach Nama/Damara. Really every year it used to be a problem. I don’t know even at college itself when we were trained we were only six in the class and it’s already full and it’s not even a major it’s a minor (subject). If only more students will come out then we wouldn’t have a problem like we are facing at the school cause the learners are suffering. Maybe even the whole term without a teacher and that’s actually what forced me to come to the Nama/Damara stream cause I was trained in English and Nama/Damara was my minor. But because of this demand I just decided no let me come and fill up this gap” .

In terms of resources three major problems surfaced from the interviews. Firstly there was a lack of resources for both English and the mother tongue MOI classes. The lack of indigenous language teachers was also a cause for concern. Secondly, teachers in mother tongue instruction classes said that there was a problem of translating resources from English to the target language and this was very time consuming. Lastly there was a lack of correlation between the textbooks and the syllabus. These are serious issues that need to be dealt with and without solving this problem implementation will remain a challenge.

5.2.2 Professional development providers

According to Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) one of the aspects that affects the social context of policy are the professional development providers. Four of the five indigenous language teachers said that they attended workshops concerning Mother tongue instruction. Their responses were as follows on their experiences of workshops.

Teacher G1C:

“Yes they give us information about how to tackle this learner centred approach, how to teach them mother tongue as that is the main thing. You know when it comes here in Windhoek they say it is Oshindonga but you look like in my class there are few Oshindonga speakers. So when it comes to teaching they want us to teach the real Oshindonga but the dialects are different. So the workshops are ok, but sometimes the things that they are

telling us to teach these learners are typical Oshindonga ones. Number one these learners are not speaking Oshindonga it's a mix of languages”.

Teacher G2G:

“Yes really because year to year as the curriculum has changed they have to call you for renewing so it useful”.

Teacher G3J:

“Yes really you learn things and some things that you think are not there, you actually come and discover that the things are actually there and exist. It's helpful and I think there should be more of them cause it also encourages teachers to better themselves “.

Teacher G3L:

“Yes we are doing workshops to just put the poster together and we set up the same question paper with our learners so that they can understand. Yes it is useful we can also change the scheme of work and put it in local languages, change from English to Oshindonga”.

One of the 5 teachers however admitted that she did not attend such workshops. This could be that she was relatively a new teacher (only taught for two years) and perhaps did not get a chance to attend such workshops yet.

All four of the teachers who attended the workshops found that the workshops were useful in some way. Teacher G1C however said that at times these workshops did not take into consideration the classroom realities such as the different dialects that are spoken by the learners in the classroom and which affect assessment in particular. There is therefore a need for workshops to take classroom realities (dialects) into account and to perhaps offer solutions on how teachers can deal with such situations.

5.2.3 Summary of sense-making in the social context

Spillane's theory (2002) suggests that the formal as well as informal social context affects an individual's sense-making process. As revealed in the interviews teachers at this school allowed themselves opportunities to interact with each other. This was done either formally as a whole staff during briefings which were done by the principal. Teachers also stated that they had grade and

Phase meetings where teachers discussed, planning, teaching methods and policy. Teachers found these meetings to be very informative and useful.

The interviews also revealed a lack of resources for both indigenous and English MOI classes. The lack of resources especially for indigenous languages is a major concern. Although policy suggests that it is beneficial for learners to be taught in their home language, the non formal system and in this case the textbook publishers did not provide enough material for the indigenous languages as they mainly concentrated on English materials as stated by one of the teachers in the interview. This scenario may influence teacher's sense-making process because policy emphasises the need for mother tongue instruction while on the other hand the non formal system, was concentrating more on publishing English materials. Teachers in the study had collegial interactions both formally and informally. They had the opportunity to attend workshops where policies were discussed. They thus developed common understandings with regards to the language policy. These understanding will be discussed more fully in the next section.

The individual sense-making process and the social context are important as they influence how the policy is received.

5.3 The Policy Design, Representations and Implementing Agents sense-making

The final part of Spillane, Reiser & Reimer's theory (2002) is concerned with the policy design and representation. "In our sense-making framework for the implementation process, the policy as represented through verbal and written media, including regulations, directives, legislation, workshops and pamphlets of various sorts – is relevant to an understanding of the implementation process" (2002:415).

Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) say that conventional accounts of policy implementation fail to take into account the role of external representations used by policy makers to convey their proposals for changing behaviour. Policy makers face the challenge of crafting a system to communicate and enforce reforms. Communicating the rationale of the policy is critical, adopting a new reform without understanding or fully constructing the underlying idea can lead to types of "lethal mutations".

Some teachers at the school were exposed to the policy through workshops. The formal staff meetings were also a way in which teachers were informed about policy. Teachers explained that the principal was the one who shared the information and teachers were required to have a copy of the policy. That which the majority did have. This section therefore discusses how the policy was received.

The data concerning this section was obtained from interviews with the teachers and the HOD's

5.3.1 Language use in schools

As discussed in Chapter 1, the language policy was developed as guide on how languages should be used in schools. One of the goals of the language policy states that “The 7 year primary education cycle should enable learners to acquire reasonable competence in English, the official language, and be prepared for English medium of instruction throughout the secondary cycle”(Ministry of Education & Culture 1993c: 4). As was also discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3.5) the language policy is ambiguous as it states that learners should be taught either through a home language, a local language or English. This opened up the door for English to be used as a medium of instruction right from Grade 1. The policy is therefore not clear and the way in which it is written makes school opt for English MOI classes from Grade 1.

It was therefore important to see how teachers understood mother tongue instruction.

5.3.2 Understanding of policy (importance of mother tongue instruction)

According to Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002) it is important to know if implementing agents fully understand the intent of a policy or a reform. People can be misled by superficial similarities in situations and understandings may focus on superficial features and analogical reasoning. Spillane, Reiser & Reimer (2002: 401) therefore say that “the tendency of teachers in reform efforts to be overly reliant on superficial features is also consistent with studies of implementation failures”.

It was therefore important to know if teachers fully understood the intent of the language policy and hence this section was included in the interview schedule.

As discussed in Chapter 2 the language policy states the importance of MTI in Grade 1-3 for three main reasons firstly, “the fact that for pedagogical reasons it is ideal for learners to study through their own language particularly in the early years of schooling when basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation are acquired” (Ministry of Education & Culture 1993c:3). Secondly, the policy also states that a person’s identity is contained in the language and the culture that has been inherited from forefathers and hence mother tongue instruction is needed to be an individual in a multi-cultural society and thirdly MTI is needed for communicative purposes (Ministry of Education & Culture 1993c:3). Of the fourteen teachers that were interviewed thirteen of them agreed that it is important for learners to be taught in the mother tongue. Some of their responses were as follows:

Teacher G1A:

“I think in lower primary learners should be taught in their mother tongue, that would help them understand better and if they understand their mother tongue better it would be easier to translate to the other language”.

Teacher G1B:

“In mother tongue because they will understand you better and some of them did not attend pre-primary and is it difficult for them to understand English that is why I prefer mother tongue and it would be better for them even reading”.

Teacher G2I:

“Learners in Grade 1-3 should be taught in their mother tongue, because from home their parents speak mother tongue. When they come to school and its first year English its difficult for them because they don’t understand English. Now as a teacher you must use English and they don’t know what you are talking about. If you are not teaching with real life objects you will never get something”.

Teacher G2H:

“Mother tongue would have been the best one, but it depends on the background of the learners, the teachers and how they convey the message. It’s just all about how you are teaching the learners”.

Teacher G3L:

“Um the language which they are speaking at home is better to be used as a first language when you are starting for the first time up to Grade 3 “.

The two HOD’s were also asked on the importance of mother tongue instruction

HOD Grade1&2

“I think mother tongue is best because learners understand the things better”

HOD Grade 3&4

“Mother tongue cause it’s already in their blood. If you say something in the mother tongue it’s easy for the child to imagine and they know exactly what you are talking about.”

One teacher however did not agree that learners should be taught in mother tongue.

Teacher G3N:

“I think English would be the best because it would be very easy for the learners to cope in upper primary once they are taught in English than now whereby learners are finding it very difficult to translate what they have learnt in their mother tongue to English, so they find it very difficult to cope. It is like they are learning new things when they go to upper primary”.

Of the fourteen teachers that were interviewed one teacher did not agree that learners should be taught in mother tongue. This one teacher whose opinion differed from the rest was a recently trained teacher and has the least experience in the teaching field. This could perhaps explain why her attitudes and knowledge of the language policy differs from the rest of the teachers that were interviewed.

When grouped these responses suggested that these teachers had similar understandings concerning the importance of MTI and this was for the purpose of understanding and communication in the classroom context. This is in line with the policy’s intention however this common understanding of teachers is relatively superficial in relation to the 3 aims discussed in the policy.

Additionally it was also interesting to see that teacher G2H agreed that it’s important for learners to learn in their mother tongue but she also recognised the importance of the quality of teaching of the teachers. If the quality of teaching was not up to standard then mother tongue instruction would be insignificant.

Teachers neglected to mention other beneficial factors such as the importance of mother tongue instruction in the development of the identity of a learner. Knowing other underlying principles of the language policy may assist in having a full understanding of the rationale of the language policy.

Teachers were also asked whether learners perform better when taught in mother tongue. Their responses were as follows':

Teacher G2G: (Oshindonga MOI)

“Positive especially if you look at the background of our school. The learners who are taught in mother tongue they are performing very well, because in reading and whatever they are doing very well”.

Teacher G1A: (English MOI)

“Absolutely they perform better “.

There was general agreement that learners who are taught in mother tongue tend to perform better. However once again teacher G2H raised the issue that learners academic performance did not necessarily depend on the language in which they are taught in but on the actual teacher who was teaching them.

Teacher G2H: (Eng MOI)

“It depends on how they are being taught. I've seen that in some instances it's just deteriorating the situation just depends on the situation. I think that sometimes those ones (learners taught in English) are better off than the ones taught in mother tongue”.

5.3.3 Summary of policy design, representations and implementing agents sense-making

Teachers at this school were exposed to the policy mainly through verbal forms (workshops and formal meetings) and through written forms (copy of policy)

The learners in the school were all offered two languages as subjects although not all learners were being taught in their mother tongue (see section 5.4).

Teachers in the study all agreed that learners should be taught in their mother tongue. They only drew on superficial features of the policy as discussed earlier and failed to draw on its underlying principles. This policy representation thus failed in helping teachers to develop better understandings of the intentions of the designers. There is therefore a need for the language policy to communicate deeper underlying meanings to its implementing agents.

5.4 Conclusion

Spillane's (2002) sense-making framework consisted of three core elements: the individual sense-maker, the social context and the policy signal which were used in the analysis of the data.

For the individual sense-maker the two variables of qualification and experience were used in identifying differences in teachers' classroom practises. Minor differences were seen in terms of teacher's classroom practises i.e. with teacher G1B who used group work in her lesson, in her case she was the only teacher who had a teaching degree and she was also qualified outside the country. So her qualification may have influenced this difference that was seen. Differences were also seen with indigenous language teachers. For example in Grade 2 there was teacher G2F who was an unqualified teacher with only 2 years experience. Teacher G2G was however qualified with 15 years experience and her teaching methods involved code switching so that learners could understand the lesson. This method was not used with teacher G2F. So in this case qualification and experience could have influenced this teachers teaching method. Despite these minor differences, in general these teachers appeared to be more similar than different. As discussed earlier this could be because they have been exposed to similar kinds of training in similar institutions. This finding is quite surprising given the variation of experience, teaching qualifications and other additional qualifications.

When looking at the social context of the school, teachers at this school also had the opportunity to interact with each other formally through staff meetings and Grade/ Phase meetings. They also attended workshops concerning language policy which they found useful. These interactions allowed them to discuss and to create shared understandings about policy.

Thirteen of the fourteen teachers in the study in both English and indigenous language classes all agreed that it was important for learners to be taught in their home language. Only one teacher thought that learners should rather be taught in English. It was also interesting to see that these teachers underlying reasons for the importance of MTI were similar. They all agreed that MTI was important for learners to understand and to be able to communicate. They therefore understood and made sense of the policy in a similar manner. There is thus a need for these teachers to be acquainted with other underlying principles of the language policy so they can have a deeper understanding of the policy's intentions. Teachers had copies of the policy and they attended workshops concerning MTI however their understandings were superficial and only focused on the aspect of communication. Although there was a general agreement that learners should be taught in their home language, the reality was that most of the teachers were teaching in English MOI classes.

As indicated in table 5.1.1 at the beginning of the chapter there was a dominance of English MOI classes despite the fact that Oshiwambo was the most widely spoken language in lower primary. Additionally there were other minority languages that were spoken by learners at the school i.e. Silozi and Otjiherero. No classes were offered for learners who spoke these languages. The reason for this could be that these numbers were too small to create classes and thus these learners had to go to English MOI classes. Of the five indigenous classes that were at the school, all these teachers' experienced similar problems with regards to the implementation of the policy i.e. lack of resources, lack of teachers to teach indigenous languages, difficulty in translating materials from English to the indigenous languages and the lack of correlation between the textbooks and the syllabus. Teaching and learning materials in the indigenous languages are needed for teachers to be able to teach in the mother tongue. There should also be an availability of teachers who are able to teach in the indigenous languages and these teachers should be trained in indigenous language teaching. The actual language policy is also not explicit on guidelines with regards to pedagogy. There is perhaps also a need for these guidelines to be available.

The dominance of English MOI classes could perhaps be because of the problems that were experienced with teachers teaching indigenous languages (as explained above) or because of the ambiguity of the policy as discussed in chapter 1.

Teachers understood and supported mother tongue teaching so in principle there was no reason why the policy could not be implemented.

So in essence it could be that although there is willingness for teachers to teach learners in their home language, they end up teaching in English MOI classes by default as the necessary preconditions i.e. (resources and teachers) are not available and it makes highly unlikely for the policy to be implemented effectively. These preconditions therefore need to be taken into consideration in order for the policy to be implemented more effectively.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As was discussed in Chapter 1 the focus of this study was on how teachers in Grades 1-3 understand and make sense of the language policy. The sense-making framework of Spillane was used to inform the study. This framework consisted of three elements: the individual sense-maker, the social context and the policy signal.

With regards to the first element of the framework the two key variables of experience and qualification were used to identify differences in teachers' classroom practises. These practices are an expression of individuals' interpretations of, in this case, policy. Here there were minor differences seen in teachers' classrooms practises as teachers appeared to be more similar than different despite their range of experience and qualifications. As suggested this could be because most of them were trained in similar institutions where they have centralised training and curriculum. Attention therefore needs to be paid to curriculum in colleges.

With regards to the social context, teachers at this school did not work in isolation. They had the opportunity of interacting both formally and informally through staff, Grade and Phase meetings. This enabled them to develop a shared understanding towards policy. There was a general consensus that learners should be taught in mother tongue for communicative purposes. Teachers at this school also had an opportunity to attend workshops concerning language policy. This shared understanding concerning language policy was evident in the way in which the policy message was received.

However although the teachers saw the value of MTI, what was evident from the context of the school was the lack of resources for indigenous language teaching. Teachers complained of a lack of resources for indigenous language teaching as well as a shortage of teachers trained to teach indigenous languages. In order for the MTI policy to be implemented effectively there is a need for learning support material as well as available teachers who are trained in indigenous language teaching. This will help in bridging the gap between policy and practise.

With respect to the third aspect, the policy signal, teachers at this school were exposed to the policy through its written form, through attendance at workshops as well as through formal and informal meetings. When asked about the importance of MTI, all teachers understood it in a similar way as communication and did not mention other key underlying rationales such as MTI for cultural identity and cognitive development. This highlighted the importance of the communication of a policy and the need for it to be clear and unambiguous. If a policy is read superficially and the teachers who are the implementing agents do not fully understand its intent then weak implementation is likely to occur.

Taking all these three aspects of sense-making together, teachers having had similar training, there being a general agreement about the value of MTI, having a shared understanding (albeit limited) of its purpose, and a common training in or exposure to policy, there is in theory no reason why the policy should not be implemented. However in practice the policy is difficult to implement effectively due to the following reasons discussed below. Three key preconditions are needed for the policy to be implemented effectively.

- There is a need for the language policy to be communicated more effectively and for teachers to fully understand the rationale for MTI.
- There is a need for learner support material in indigenous languages for both teachers and learners and
- There is a need for indigenous language teachers that are properly trained for indigenous language teaching.

This scenario of the difficulty of implementation was not only unique to Namibia, as the literature suggests in Chapter 2 (section 2.3) other southern African countries also experienced similar problems with regards to policy implementation. As Jansen (1995) suggest policies that neglect the practicality of the implementation process are more likely to experience failure.

Only once these three factors are given precedence will the language policy be implemented more effectively and learners be given a chance for equality and equity in education.

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APPENDICES

University of Cape Town

Appendix 1

Teacher interview

Grade

Teachers Name

1. Who or what influenced you to become a teacher?
2. How long have you been teaching in junior primary? (Grades 1-3)
3. What interested you to become a teacher in the junior primary phase?
4. Which qualification do you have and from which institution?
5. Where did you practise your in-service training for teaching and which grade/s were you teaching?
6. Do you think your teaching experience influences the way you teach? In what ways?
7. Tell me about your class
8. Do you think your training prepared you to teach in mother tongue? Yes, in what ways? If not explain your reasons.
9. Have you participated in workshops regarding MTI?
10. Do you find these workshops useful, in what ways are they useful or not useful?

11. What language should learners in grade 1-3 be taught in? Explain? If in MT do you find 3 years of MTI adequate? Yes explain your reasons, No Explain your reasons.
12. Do you think that MTI has positive/negative effects for a learner? In what ways? Prompts (how does MTI affect the learner individually and academically in the lower primary? How does it affect them when they to the senior phase how does it affect them when they go out in society? Positive/negative
13. In your personal experience do you think that learners perform better if they are taught in their mother tongue? Explain
14. Do you experience any challenges teaching English to learners who have different home languages?
15. What challenges do you experience in this regard and how does this affect your teaching

16. What differences have you seen between the old language policy and the new revised one? Why do you think these changes were needed?
17. What goals do you think the language policy aims to achieve in the primary cycle?

18. What are your views about resources and mother tongue instruction?
19. What are some of the limitations/ constraints of implementing the language policy in your current workplace?

20. In what ways are policies or changes in policies discussed at the school?
Prompts (are they discussed formally or informally? do you learn anything from these discussions? What exactly do you learn?)
21. Do you have regular meetings with teachers in your grade/phase?
Prompts (are these meetings formal or informal? Is everybody given a chance to participate in meetings?)

22. What do you discuss in your meetings? Do you discuss any matters concerning the language policy in your meetings? What exactly do you discuss about the policy?
23. Do you think the teachers in the grade/phase learn from each other?
Prompts (If yes how do you know? Give me examples of things that they often learn from each other)

24. What challenges has the school experienced with regards to the implementation of the language policy? How did the school address these challenges? What changes were needed to address these challenges?
25. Were these changes easy or difficult to achieve? Explain
26. Are there any support structures that the school has put in place to support teachers with these changes?

Appendix 2

Classroom Observation sheet for Junior Primary lessons

Date: _____ School: _____ Location: _____

Teachers name and home language: _____ Grade: _____

Number of pupils: _____ Subject: _____

Range of home- languages spoken by the learners in the class

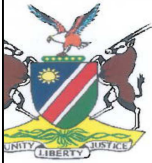
Oshiwambo	English	Afrikaans	Herero	Tswana	Damara>Nama	Silozi	German	Rukwangali	

Others specify _____

Official medium of instruction _____

Prompts	Observation Notes
Language use by teacher /teaching	
Language used on chalkboard	
Language used for posters /resources in class	
Textbooks used	
Does the teacher switch from MTI to English Y/N	
For what purpose?	
FREQUENCY	
a) Explanatory	
b) Greeting	
c) Reprimanding	
d) Consolidation	
e) Revision	
f) Questioning	
Others specify	
Language used for activities in class by learners	
Reading	
Writing	
Group work /discussions	
Singing	
Assessments	
Language used in learner's book	
Language use for recreational purposes	
Playground	
Moving between classes	
Others specify	

Appendix 3



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION

Tel: [09 264 61] 293 4364
Fax: [09 264 61] 231 367
Enquiries: Ms T Seefeldt

Private Bag 13236
WINDHOEK

23 August 2011

Ms Iyaloo Nambala
North Grange Flats No.9
Cape Town
South Africa

Dear Ms. Nambala

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MOSES !GAROEB PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your letter on the above subject bears reference.

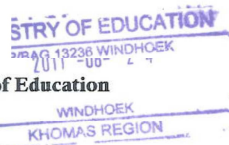
Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research at Moses !Garoeb primary school "on the implementation of language policy in schools and its uptake by teachers in grades 1-3" on condition that:

- The Principal of the school to be visited must be contacted before the time and that an agreement is reached between you and the principal.
- The normal school academic programme will not be disrupted.
- Teachers/learners who will take part in this exercise will do so voluntarily.
- Regional Office should be provided with a copy of your thesis after conclusion of the study.

We wish you all the best.

Yours sincerely

Ms. I Seefeldt
Acting Director of Education
Khomas Region



Appendix 4

Researcher name: Iyaloo Nambala

Name of University: University of Cape Town-Humanities Graduate School, S.A

E-mail: iyaloonambala@yahoo.com

Address: P.O. Box 48 Oranjemund

Enquires: Mr J.D Gilmour

E-mail: james.gilmour@uct.ac.za

Consent to participate in research

I am a Masters student at the University of Cape Town, majoring in Educational Administration, Planning and Social Policy. I hereby wish to conduct my research project on the implementation of the language policy in schools and its uptake by teachers in grades 1-3.

The objective of my study is to fulfil the requirements towards my Master's degree while the ultimate goals is to broaden the scope of Language policy and provide feedback through assessing the ways in which local implementers understand and implement it in a multi-lingual urban context. The value of this study therefore lies in the contribution it makes to broaden the knowledge base on factors that may contribute to the success and failure of the implementation the language policy.

Please take note

1. The observation will be recorded manually on a structured classroom observation schedule
2. The interviews with the class teachers, phase heads and school principal will be tape recorded to ensure the accuracy of the statements
3. Pseudonyms will be used throughout the study and thus your confidentiality will be highly respected.

Yours sincerely

Iyaloo Nambala

Date.....

Signature.....

Participant school response

PLEASE CIRCLE:
GRANTED

PERMISSION GRANTED

PERMISSION NOT

School name.....

Authorized by:..... in his/her capacity as:.....

Signature.....

Date.....