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LANGUAGE PLANNING AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE: THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION.

BY

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THESIS

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The dissertation discusses language planning and social transformation in the Limpopo Province, with emphasis on the role of language in education, with a view to suggesting a comprehensive language policy and a plan of implementation for social transformation.

Language planning refers to 'deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to the acquisition, structure or functional allocation of their language code' (Cooper 1989: 45). It is a 'government authorised, long term sustained and conscious effort to alter a language itself or to change a language's function in a society for the purpose of solving language problems '(Weinstein 1980:55).

There is no language policy in the world which is not intertwined with the politics, the culture, the geography and the socio-economic conditions found in that particular area. It is for this reason that Rubin (1968) recommends a thorough understanding of all these aspects of society, in order to guarantee an effective language planning policy. Language policy always involves language legislation and language legislation can be a unifying instrument.

Society is viewed by sociologists not as a steady state but as a process, as a continuous, unending stream of events. 'All social reality is pure dynamism, a flow of changes of various speeds, intensity, rhythm and tempo" (Sztompka 1994:9). Society is a specific social tissue or social fabric binding people together.

The Limpopo Province has been granted some political power to pursue political and socio-economic objectives regionally. Actually, political power is in the final analysis about socio-economic resources and their allocation. The Province needs to have a comprehensive language policy and plan and these cannot develop in isolation. The policy must be structured with reference to the larger national framework.

The autochthonous languages need to be promoted and developed as recommended

by the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). Language promotion can occur only if the languages concerned acquire some economic and educational value. Multilingualism ought to be the cornerstone of language policy as it broadens opportunities for some citizens to participate in political and economic affairs. It has democratizing consequences.

Bokamba (1999) argues that the African languages constitute necessary investments without which educational, economic and political development cannot occur. The development and promotion of the African languages are not intended to negate the complementary, useful roles that non-indigenous languages play. For the sake of global communication, citizens of the Province should be equipped with the competence to make them citizens of the world. Specific languages should be selected for specific purposes as this will accord empowerment to the speakers of those languages.

The solution to the language and language-related problems in the Province is to adopt a calculated multilingual policy that allocates different functions to the selected languages and thereby allows a wide access to the resources and opportunities to the interested and capable citizens.

Key Terms.
Language planning, social transformation, language education policy, mother-tongue instruction, multilingualism, language of learning and teaching, sociolinguistic profile, the Limpopo Province, sociopolitical history, language functions.

In hierdie proefskrif ondersoek die navorser taalbeplanning en maatskaplike transformasie in die Limpopo Provinsie, met besondere aandag aan die rol van taal in die opvoeding, met die doel om 'n omvattende taalbeleid en 'n toepaslike plan vir sosiale transformasie voor te stel.

Taalbeplanning verwys na doelbewuste pogings om die gedrag van ander te beïnvloed ten opsigte van die aanleer, strukturering of funksionele toekenning van 'n taalkode (volgens Cooper 1998.45). Dit word gemagtig deur die regering en is 'n volgehoue bewuste poging om 'n taal self, of 'n taal se funksies in die gemeenskap, te verander met die doel om taalprobleme op te los (Weinstein 1980.55).

Daar is geen taalbeleid in die wêreld wat nie verstrengel is in die politiek, die kultuur, die omgewing en die sosio-ekonomiese toestande wat in 'n sekere gebied aangetref word nie. Dis om hierdie rede dat Rubin (1968) 'n deeglike begrip van al hierdie aspekte van die gemeenskap aanbeveel ten einde 'n doeltreffende taalbeplanningsbeleid te verseker. Taalbeleid behels altyd taalwetgewing en taalwetgewing kan 'n eenheidskeppende instrument in die gemeenskap wees.

Die gemeenskap word deur sosioloë beskou nie as 'n statiese tostand nie, maar as 'n onafgebroke, volgehoue reeks gebeurtenisse. Sztompka (1994.9) beweer dat alle sosiale werklikhede 'n suiwer dinamiese stroom van verandering teen verskillende snelhede, intensiteite, ritmes en tempo's is. Die gemeenskap is 'n spesifieke sosiale entiteit wat mense saambind.

Aan die Limpopo Provinsie is 'n sekere politieke mag toegeken om polities en sosio-ekonomiese oogmerke op streeksvlak na te streef. In werklikheid gaan politieke mag per slot van rekening oor sosio-ekonomiese hulpmiddels en die toewysing daarvan. Die Provinsie behoort 'n omvattende taalbeleid en –plan te hê en dit kan nie in isolasie ontwikkel word nie. Die beleid moet gestruktureer word binne en in ooreenstemming met die groter nasionale raamwerk.

Die inheemse tale behoort bevorder en ontwikkel te word soos aanbeveel deur die grondwet (wet 108 van 1996). Taalbevordering kan alleen geskied as die betrokke tale tot 'n sekere mate ekonomiese en opvoedkundige waarde verkry. Veeltaligheid behoort die hoeksteen van die taalbeleid te wees, omdat dit die moontlikhede vir sommige burgers om aan politieke en ekonomiese aktiwiteite deel te neem, verbreed. Dit het demokratiese implikasies.

Bokamba (1999) voer aan dat die Afrikatale noodsaaklike beleggings veronderstel waarsonder opvoedkundige, ekonomiese en politieke ontwikkeling nie kan plaasvind nie. Om die Afrikatale te ontwikkel en te bevorder, beteken nie dat die aanvullende bruikbare rolle wat die nie-inheemse tale vervul, daardeur ontken word nie. Ter wille van globalisering, behoort die burgers van die Provinsie toegerus te word met die bevoegdheid om wêreldburgers te kan word. Spesifieke tale behoort geselekteer te word vir besondere doelstellings, omdat dit die sprekers van daardie tale in staat stel om hulle te bemagtig.

Die oplossing vir taal- en taalverwante probleme in die Provinsie is om 'n berekende veeltalige taalbeleid aan te neem wat verskeie funksies aan geselekteerde tale toeken ten einde daardeur 'n wye toegang tot hulpbronne en geleenthede aan die belangstellende en bekwame burger te verseker.

Sleutelterme.
Taalbeplanning, maatskaplike stransformasie, opvoedkundige taalbeleid, moedertaalonderig, veeltaligheid, taal van onderrig, sosiolinguistiese profiel, Limpopo Provinsie, sosio-politieke geskiedenis, taalfunksies.

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