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Language policy implementation challenges in postcolonial anglophone Africa: A case of Limpopo Provincial Legislature in South Africa

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Abstract: This paper sought to investigate the challenges that Limpopo Provincial Legislature encounters implement the language policy in a postcolonial Anglophone South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, demands that each province should develop its own language policy (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). The Limpopo Provincial Legislature adopted its Language Policy, Act 7 of 2000, acknowledging Northern Sotho (Sepedi), Afrikaans, English, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, and IsiNdebele as the official languages. The Act provides more details on the use of official language in executive council meetings, in public communication and in service delivery. The main research question was to what are the challenges in the implementation of the language policy at Limpopo Provincial Legislature? The study employed qualitative research method and data collection tool that was utilized was semi-structured interview. The population of the study were all 48 Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs). Semi-structured interviews were conducted until saturation was reached after 13 (thirteen) members were interviewed. The data collected were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (TA) technique where research questions were used as themes. The study's main finding revealed that Limpopo Provincial Legislature is partially implementing the language policy since English remains the main language used in debates, engagements, and written documents above other official languages.

Keywords: African indigenous languages; language policy; implementation plan; language policy; Limpopo Provincial Legislature

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges faced by Limpopo Provincial Legislature in the implementation of the language policy. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa clearly stipulates the national and provincial requirements as far as the language matters are concerned. Sections 6(1) recognizes that English, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu, Siswati, IsiNdebele, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans”, and a recently added Sign language are the official languages of the nation. Recognizing the historically declining status and use of the Indigenous African languages is stated in Section 6(2). Furthermore, it is stated that “the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of the official languages. Section 6(3b) of the demands that the national government and provincial governments may use any official language for the purposes of government, considering usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in the province concerned; but the national government and each provincial

government must use at least two official languages. Most importantly, Section 6(4), stipulates that the national government and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor their use of official languages. Moreover, “without detracting from the provisions of subsection 2, all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 8).

When the Democratic government came into power in 1994, it adopted an Interim Constitution which later became the Constitution of Republic of South Africa in 1996, that advocated for the promotion of multilingualism. Studies conducted by Madima (2019), Madima, Klu and Babane (2023) concluded that the Limpopo Provincial Legislature is not fully implementing the language policy as dictated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. The Limpopo Provincial Legislature adopted its Language Policy in 2000 recognizing 6 major languages as official. This study attempted to answer the following research questions: To what extent is the language policy implemented at Limpopo Provincial Legislature? How are official languages used at Limpopo Provincial Legislature? This study utilized the case study research design which allowed the researchers to carefully plan and in-depth investigation on the research topic from individuals in the real institution. This study solicited information by asking the following questions: What knowledge of language policy do you possess? Which language(s) are used during debates and meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature? and how is the interpreting service rendered during meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature?

2. Literature review

South Africa as a linguistically diverse country has many Indigenous African languages. They are both part of the Nguni language group. Some of South African Indigenous languages are spoken by smaller communities but are still important for preserving cultural heritage. The democratic South African government made efforts to preserve and promote Indigenous African languages. This includes initiatives such as teaching Indigenous African languages in schools, translating important government documents, and promoting language diversity in media and other domains. Despite these efforts, many Indigenous African languages face challenges such as declining numbers of speakers, limited access to education, and the dominance of English and Afrikaans in various sectors. However, it is significant to note that the status of indigenous languages may change over time as the South African government and various organizations continue to work on language preservation and revitalization efforts.

Thiong'o (1994, p. 2) refers to the “colonized mind as the most formidable barrier preventing the rapid development of Indigenous African languages”. “Despite their love for them and their unwavering commitment to preserving them in the core domains of the family, the community, and religion, many Black people do not think that their languages can or should be used for higher-order functions” (Thiong'o, 1994, p. 2). While it is correct to suggest that the government must end the impasse, Alexander (2003, p. 6) bemoans the fact that “after years of contemplation and intervention at numerous levels, it is evident that political extreme willingness and

commitment are the crucial elements if South Africa is to move from the point where the European languages dominate.” According to Alexander (2003, p. 6), “the leadership must ensure that both the public service and the private sector adhere strictly to the national language policy and plan, and to the provisions of the South African Languages Bill”.

Beukes (2004, p. 15) states that “there exist human rights’ provisions that seek to ensure that all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitable”, however, according to Ndhlovu (2008, p. 60), “language issues in South Africa remain a highly contested matter.” Ndhlovu (2008) further asserts that:

“...the documented policy of eleven official languages has given an impression of wider representation, however, this continues to be underpinned by the philosophy of linguistic homogenization and a trend towards monolingualism. Unlike during the apartheid era where the racial or ethnic difference was the underpinning ideology of linguistic imperialism and cultural domination, the democratic language policy of South Africa is premised on perceived social or political class differences. The political elites and the intellectuals have an insatiable appetite for the English language to a point where the African official languages have been essentialized as identity markers for the less-educated class” (p. 64).

Ndhlovu (2008, p. 66) adds that “the seemingly accommodative and generous language policy of South Africa has not improved the functional status of Indigenous African languages in the country.” The criticisms articulated by Alexander (2003, p. 4; Perry, 2003, p. 20; Kamwangamalu, 2004, p. 67; Kamwendo, 2006, p. 56) indicate that “the South African Language Policy is a toothless watchdog because most of its provisions have not been fully implemented.”

According to Ndhlovu (2008, p. 66), “all nine official Indigenous African languages continue to be marginalized or totally ignored in the activities of national, regional, sub-regional and continental and in South Africa, in economic programmes”. Ndhlovu (2008, p. 66) further alludes that “apart from the usually vague rhetoric on the need to protect and promote the Indigenous African languages, cultures and traditions, there is no explicit political commitment to the use of indigenous African languages.” Wolff (2003, p. 20) argues that “in the African Renaissance the language issue and the role of mother tongues in education, in the economy, and development are inadequately represented.” Kamwangamalu (2004, p. 66), argues that “the preference of English over Indigenous African languages can be understood against the background of the negative attitudes people have towards the Indigenous African languages that was created by the Apartheid-based Bantu education”. English is perceived to be fundamentally more relevant to perform well in higher functions more than South African Indigenous languages. This is also pointed out in the results of the research conducted by Roodt in 2000 which revealed that “98% of black parents in Pretoria, want their children to be taught in English, 1% preferred Afrikaans and only 1% an African language” (Roodt, 2000, p. 39). Roodt (2000, p. 39) concluded that “African-language speakers choose to abandon their Indigenous African languages by speaking English with their children.” According to Kamwangamalu (2004),

“...there are factors that interact in complex ways to impede language policy implementation, especially regarding Indigenous African languages.” Among

others, those factors include the legacy of apartheid language policy, economic powers and linguistics imperialism. “The apartheid education has rendered Indigenous African languages valueless and has induced current negative attitudes towards the proposal that these languages be used as languages of learning and teaching, only in the lower grades, in predominantly black schools” (p. 66).

Kwamwangamalu (2004, p. 69) further acknowledges that “education in an African language is a dead end aimed at denying one access to English, the current language of the ruling classes and one in which the elite reproduces itself.” Laitin (2000, p. 98) observes that “the elite uses the preferred language for intra-elite communication and a different lingua franca for communication with the masses.” In South Africa, according to Kwamwangamalu (2004, p. 65), “the linguistic behaviors of the elite is characterized by an almost exclusive use of the preferred language, English, irrespective of whether they are interacting among themselves or with the masses who have little or no knowledge of the English language.” Kwamwangamalu (2004, p. 66) further argues that “the elite, during election times, tend to use code-switching involving English and local languages when addressing the masses, but they rarely do so at any other times.”

Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 59) advise that “one of the tasks that linguists in South Africa need to undertake is to convince black parents that the answer to their needs and those of their children depends on the use of a language of learning and teaching which their children know well.” They further argue that although “English is the dominant language of economic activities, less than 25% of the Black population know it well enough to be able to use it to participate in the economic life of the country.” In addition, according to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 70), the “languages of 75% of the country’s population do not play any crucial role in the country’s economic activity since the preferred language is a barrier to a meaningful participation in the South African economy by most of the people”. The influence of English is evidence wherein many English words had been adopted into Indigenous African languages. “The pervasiveness of code-switching—the mixing of English and another Indigenous African language—is perhaps the strongest indication of the impact of English; such mixing has for many speakers become a linguistic norm, reflecting a dual identity of membership of both the elite and the African groups” (Gough, 1996, p. 9). The position of English in South Africa is what Gough (1996, p. 9) calls “indigenization or nativisation”. “This was a process through which language was accommodated and adopted to its speakers under their circumstances. It means that in a country where English is acquired and used in a various domain, the indigenization of English reflects socio-historical processes” (Gough, 1996, p. 78).

Given the importance of language in people’s lives, it is important to consider what can be done to improve the low status of Indigenous African languages in South Africa. According to Webb (1996, p. 156), “the solution is to implement extensive language revalorization programs that are intended to improve the status and practical utility of native African languages on a social level.” “Comprehensive linguistic knowledge and abilities are required to design such a program because it’s important to comprehend how language functions in society and what it means to individual people’ (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 69). Furthermore, the authors posit that these

designers must also know how languages can be adapted in terms of vocabulary and functions. It is common for languages to become associated with certain political philosophies or programmes, and to attain political meaning, and when this happens, they are said to have become politicized. Bamgbose (2011, p. 95) mentions that “the major factors responsible for the low status and restricted roles for Indigenous African languages are the colonial legacy, negative perception of multilingualism, language development challenges, lack of national integration, modernization and economic development, globalization, negative language attitudes, and defective language planning.”

According to Bamgbose (2011, p. 96), it is well known that “colonial powers imposed their languages in each territory they governed as languages of administration, commerce, and education”. The outcome was that the language of the colonial power became dominant while indigenous African languages took a secondary position in status and the use in various domains. According to Gellar (1973, p. 19), “another aspect of the colonial legacy is the separation of the Indigenous African languages into geographical areas arising from the artificial borders created by the partition of South Africa by the apartheid government.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 89) claims that “the effect of the partition was to diminish the numerical strength of each cross-border language in the territories concerned, thereby reducing Indigenous African languages’ claim to enhanced status, and correspondingly enhancing the dominance of the imported official language.”

The legacy of British colonialization is a complex and multifaceted aspect of the history and development of many countries around the world. English, because of British colonialism has left a lasting impact on the cultures, societies, and indigenous languages of numerous nations. In many former British colonies, English has become a dominant or official language. This had a profound influence on the linguistic landscape, with English often used in government, education, judiciary, business, and media. English colonialism introduced cultural elements, such as customs, dress, and food which were integrated into the local culture. This has led to the breeding of British or American cultural elements with indigenous traditions. Most important, English language education systems established during colonial rule continue to influence education in many countries. English medium schools and curricula are common, and English proficiency could be a key factor in increasing higher education and employment.

According to Bamgbose (2011, p. 89), “in the case of languages that already have a written tradition, it may be necessary to expand their vocabulary by creating terminology to serve adequately in wider domains. While the scholar agrees with the view that the use of language in newer domains requires language development efforts, he disagrees that certain languages cannot be used to express concepts adequately in certain domains.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 90), point that “the use of a language in newer domains in which they have not been before should occur simultaneously with language development.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 90) points out that “experience has shown that while expanding vocabulary by creating terminology, competing terms emerge through actual use of language by different stakeholders, such as teachers, writers, and media practitioners.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 90) further argues that “indigenous African languages cannot be said to be not adequately developed, since

they are used successfully as medium of instruction during the first three years of schooling at the Foundation Phase, hence, they could also be used in other phases, until university level.”

“National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a certain country and although they speak different languages, they recognize the fact that they are all one” (Khurana, 2018, p. 59). It is a sense of unity or belonging to one’s own nation, regardless of personal distinctions in terms of language, race, religion, or culture. It also entails “a sentiment that unites people of all backgrounds, languages, and religious views in a common endeavor, and when integration takes place, people are more likely to collaborate to create structures that increase a country’s and its citizens’ prosperity” (Khurana, 2018, p. 70). As far as language is concerned, Bamgbose (2011, p. 92) maintains that “the concept of national integration is linked to multilingualism and the myth of divisiveness, which is that one language unites, and many languages divide.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 93) argues that “given this myth, it is understandable why indigenous African languages are given low status in comparison with imported official languages, which are believed to unite different ethnic groups from the point of view of communication and government.”

Bamgbose (2011, p. 78) defines globalization as a “phenomenon involving increased contact between countries and regions of the world in terms of communication, trade, technology, information, travel, and culture.” Kabanga (2008, p. 78) argues that “as to whether globalization is beneficial to Africa or not, particularly in terms of access to expanding markets and technological innovations against the process’ resulting economic inequalities and cultural invasion.” According to Kabanga (2008, p. 78), “as far as language choice is concerned, the assumption seems to be that the language of globalization has to be a language of wider communication, such as English, since it is only such language that can facilitate maximum access and participation in the global village.” Pasi (2016, p. 90) states that “English is the key for international understanding and world regulation, under the phenomenon called globalization.” Ota (2015, p. 69) argues that if the term “globalization is used to refer to a phenomenon that involves sweeping and comprehensive changes across the world, then globalization is not a new concept, since the whole world, and human beings, have been experiencing globalization from the beginning of the world. Ota further indicates that modernization and industrialisation based on industrial revolution have clearly been a globalization process, although they have not yet reached every part of the world. English language is a modern tool for the international organization.” The advent of the Internet, English language is fundamental becoming more efficiently used in research.

Barker (1992, p. 110) argues that “where languages are concerned, attitudes to a language can be described as positive, negative, or indifferent and these become more pronounced where speakers become bilingual or speak several languages”. Bamgbose (2011, p. 94) supports this by pointing that “speakers of indigenous African languages display negative attitudes towards their languages”. Mukhuba (2005, p. 98) on the other hand indicates that “there are indigenous African languages speakers (for example, the Zulus) who are so proud of their language, and they had developed a negative attitude not surprising that parents from lower socioeconomic groups want their kids to get an education comparable to that towards other indigenous African

languages.” Bamgbose (2011, p. 94), contends that “the most common indicator of a positive attitude towards a language is when the elites prefer education of their children in the imported language”. It is of the elites. Minority language speakers also display a certain kind of negative attitude. According to Bamgbose (2011, p. 101), “speakers of minority languages frequently disparage their own tongues in favour of the national language or an official language that was imported, even though linguists are quick to condemn the marginalization of these languages and support their use in specific contexts.”

3. Research methodology

This study utilized qualitative research methods in data collection. A qualitative method is known for relying on in-depth information rather than statistics. A choice of this method was because by conducting interviews with the participants, the researchers would be able to solicit more information. Prior to data collection, permission was sought and granted by the Office of the Speaker of Limpopo Provincial Legislature. The study population were all forty-eight (48) Members of Limpopo Provincial Legislature. Out of the total population, 20 (twenty) were sampled using purposive sampling technique based on proportional representation of political organization at the legislature. Data were collected through the semi structured interviews under the following questions: What knowledge of language policy do you possess? Which language(s) are used during debates and meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature? and how is the interpreting service rendered during meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature?

As a qualitative study, this data collection tool was ideal and assisted the researchers to collect in-depth information. Face-to-face interviews were conducted by the main researcher at Limpopo Provincial Legislature. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirteen (13) MPLs representing different political parties such as ANC (9), EFF (2), and DA (1). Interviews took place after the portfolio meetings. Participants were asked the same questions, but not following the same order on the schedule. The researchers stopped interviewing more interviewees when saturation was reached. This method provided a relaxed atmosphere which was neither stressful nor intimidating to the respondents and offered an opportunity to probe for more information while remaining in command of the whole process. Participants’ we given pseudo names, such as P1, P2, P3 etc. to protect their identity. The collected data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis and data were classified under questions asked in the semi-structured interviews. Content Analysis was preferred since it is a descriptive presentation of qualitative data and limited to textual information.

4. Results

The collected data in this study revealed that Limpopo Provincial Legislature is faced with some challenges in the implementation of the language policy. Data were classified under the following main research questions with some probing to solicit in-depth information.

4.1. What knowledge of language policy do you possess?

This study revealed lack of language policy knowledge by the majority of the Members of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature. When language policy is not adequately understood by the policymakers, its implementation is also compromised and may lead to the erosion of certain languages. This erosion can result in the loss of cultural heritage and identity, as language is closely tied to a community's history and traditions. Lack of understanding of language policies may lead to citizen discrimination or exclusion from various aspects of society, such as employment, government services or access to information. Furthermore, lack of language policy knowledge could result in government and other institutions not taking effective measures to preserve endangered languages, culminating in their eventual extinction. Governments, organizations, and institutions often communicate with the public through official languages. A lack of language policy knowledge can lead to ineffective communication, reducing the ability of these entities to reach and serve their constituents effectively. Lack of language policy knowledge may have far-reaching consequences that impact on culture, education, social inclusion, economic development, and more. It is essential for governments, institutions, and individuals to be well-informed about language policies and their implications to ensure equitable and inclusive societies that value linguistic diversity. This study revealed lack of knowledge by people who are supposed to implement the policy they developed. Participant 2 mentioned that:

“We do not understand the language policy. One thing that we must also do is to make sure that everybody understands the language policy. It is something else to say we must promote the African languages. When we say they must be equal, what do we mean? Are we supposed to speak in all indigenous African languages and be able to write them?”

Members are not workshopped about language matters resulting in lack of knowledge regarding the language policy of the legislature.

4.2. How is the interpreting service rendered during meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature?

The major challenge facing the Limpopo Provincial Legislature is that English is the dominant language while the Constitution of the Republic demands that at least two official languages should be used for the purpose of government. Members of the Legislature appear not willing to promote other official languages of the province, because they prefer English. Denying citizens to receive the information in their language is to disadvantage them their basic right to access information. Attitudes towards Indigenous African languages is not good for most of them are still regarded as not developed and cannot be used in debates and speeches at the Legislature.

The Apartheid government used languages as tools to implement the policy of divide and rule. One approach in the implementation of the language policy is to encourage people to use their languages in all domains. Since there is no systematic way of using languages at the Limpopo Provincial Legislature, therefore, English remains the dominant language. Participant 7 stated that:

“The records of debates are in English language, which are translated into other

official indigenous African languages of the province. Hansard as records of the proceedings, capture everything that happened during the deliberations. If a member spoke in an African language, it will be recorded as such.”

Participant 11 also mentioned that:

“It is a well-known fact that English is the language of records. Official documents are written in English. Even those that are made available in other languages they are originally translated from English.”

4.3. How is the interpreting service rendered during meetings at Limpopo Provincial Legislature?

According to the Northern Province Language Policy (2000), IsiNdebele is an official language of Limpopo Province, however, it is marginalized. This is opposite to what the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa demands, which is that a language(s) that is/are chosen as official should be utilized for government purposes. Limpopo Provincial Legislature has members who speak different Indigenous African languages, but they are not fluent in all official languages of the province. When asked why they prefer English, they indicated that English is the neutral language understood by all people. English language in South Africa is to address the divisions of the past where languages were used as tools to divide blacks by the Apartheid government. Participant 8 mentioned that:

“If you speak about challenges on implementation of the Language Policy, I will say to you that it is ignorance and attitude of the people. I may not know other factors like; how much is needed to do these things? What are the personnel and resources required to be able to do that? Maybe, there are resources constraints and other things that are impending the Legislature from doing that, I do not know. I can only answer the question by mentioning the two—ignorance and attitude.”

Lack of sufficient interpreting facilities in portfolio committee meetings means that members use English in committee rooms. Interpreting facilities are only available in the sittings of the Legislature. Lack of interpreting facilities may be associated with the cost, but one may also relate it to lack of political will. Lack of resources to promote the use of all official languages results in documents not translated in all official languages because it could be costly for the Legislature, so the language of records remains being English. Large sums of money are being poured into various programmes of democratization and good governance, but lack of interest in language-related issues betrays a narrow-minded understanding of what democracy entails in South Africa. On this question, participant 4 responded that:

“We are not implementing the language policy as expected. Like I said that the dominant language is English. When we say we are making them equal, it means in a meeting you sat as an observer, you were supposed to have people speaking in all the languages equally. Not like we did in yesterday and today’s meeting. It was more that ninety-nine percent English. And indeed, people are just greeting in indigenous African languages. Even in the premier’s open day in his State of Provincial Address (SOPA), the greetings will be in indigenous African languages”.

5. Discussion

The article reveals that Limpopo Provincial Legislature is faced with some challenges in implementing the language policy. The Constitution of South Africa demands that at least two official languages should be used at the Provincial Legislature. However, English is the only language that is used for debates, documentation, reports and meetings. Although interpretation services are used during debates, not all languages enjoy that service. A language like isiNdebele does not have language practitioners to provide such service, whereas it is one of the official languages in Limpopo Provincial Legislature. The non-use of Indigenous African Languages deny them the opportunity to be promoted to the level of English. The study revealed that some MPs lacked knowledge about the Language Policy of Limpopo Provincial Legislature. Apart from being lawmakers, MPs are supposed to monitor the implementation of the policy. This shows that there is no political will among the politicians when it comes to the promotion of African languages. English is used as a language of politics where it is used in political rallies and meetings. For one to be regarded as a powerful politician, should be fluent in English. One of the participants indicated that in their community engagement programmes, they prefer to use interpreters. Politicians are role models to many people, and what they do is emulated by those who follow them. Therefore, the dominant use of English by politicians makes it difficult for the promotion of indigenous languages in South Africa.

Limpopo Provincial Legislature recognizes six official languages. Using all languages equally, is a challenge when it comes to funding. Since indigenous languages were not used as official during Apartheid government, there is a need for them to be promoted to the same level with English and Afrikaans. Government is not willing to spend money on the promotion of indigenous languages, hence the persistence use of English. Some MPs indicated that English is a neutral language, but it is surprising when looking how it was imposed to the South African people. It is surprising that among the four indigenous languages spoken in Limpopo, there is no single one seen to be suitable to be utilised in the same position as English.

The Language Policy during Apartheid was based on separation development. South Africans were separated along ethnic groups according to the languages they spoke. The legacy of this policy is still prevailing now after thirty years of the democratic government. Some MPs are still adamant that the use of an indigenous language would be seen as a way of reversing the Apartheid system of government. Since this is a case study, its findings could be also applicable in some provinces and the national government of South Africa. This study recommends that the Limpopo Provincial government should develop a strategic plan for the implementation of language policy aimed at the promotion of the indigenous languages.

6. Limitations

This is a language planning study which focused only on the challenges faced by Limpopo Provincial Legislature in the implementation of the language policy. This is one of the areas in Linguistics that, amongst others, deals with language policy implementation. The study was conducted only in Limpopo Provincial Legislature which is one of the nine provincial legislatures of South Africa and not in all provinces.

Participants' linguistics background was not obtained since the study focused only on policymakers and not language practitioners. Only qualitative method was used for the purposes of data collection and analysis.

7. Conclusions

From time in memorial, the implementation of the language policy in South Africa has been a complex and multifaceted process. While the post-apartheid era brought significant changes to the language policy, including the recognition of twelve official languages, the challenges are on the implementation of the language policy. The recognition of linguistics diversity of the country has been a bold step towards the right direction of promoting the previously disadvantaged indigenous languages. However, recognition without implementation results in inequality, discrimination, and the persistence dominance of English language in all domains of life. English always enjoys more extensive use and resources in areas like education, government, and business. The dominance of English in various domains has led to language shift and the potential erosion of Indigenous African languages, particularly among younger generations. Furthermore, there has been resistance to changes in language policy, particularly from those who see English as important for economic opportunities. This has created tensions in language planning and policy implementation.

The challenges faced by Limpopo Provincial Legislature in the implementation of the language policy are likely to be happening in the other eight provincial legislatures of South Africa as well. The Limpopo Language Policy was intended to empower the people of Limpopo through the recognition and development of Indigenous African languages. The 1996 South African Constitution which recognizes multilingualism, symbolises the nature of the African states, however, the responsibility is upon those in power and the South African society, to see to it that this progressive language policy is fully implemented for the development of the previously-disadvantaged masses. A lot is still to be done in the implementation of the language policy at the provincial level as there is a need to develop a strategic implementation plan to be used as a guiding principle.

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