

**A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDES OF
ENGLISH-SPEAKING HIGH SCHOOL
PUPILS IN GAUTENG TOWARDS
AFRIKAANS-SPEAKING TEACHERS
TEACHING THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF
ENGLISH**

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JANUARY 2005

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THE MEDIUM OF ENGLISH**

by

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JANUARY 2005

DECLARATION

I declare that ***A Study of the Attitudes of English-speaking High School Pupils in Gauteng Towards Afrikaans-speaking Teachers Teaching Through the Medium of English*** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Ciaran Michael Mac Carron

January 2005

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of learners at English-medium schools towards teachers whose home language was Afrikaans and who taught through the medium of English. A secondary objective was to determine whether the teacher's home language had any effect on the learners' academic performance in the subject concerned.

It was found that English-speaking learners had a slightly negative attitude to Afrikaans and did not give English much consideration except as a useful means of communication. Afrikaans-speaking learners expressed a positive attitude to - and pride in - their language. They were also much more positive to English than were the English-speaking learners towards Afrikaans.

The English-speaking learners' attitude towards Afrikaans was not generally carried over to Afrikaners. However they objected to being taught English by non-English-speakers.

Gender appeared to play a role in the learners' attitudes, as the girls were generally more positive to Afrikaans than the boys and achieved higher marks than the boys in almost all the subjects covered in this study

The academic performance of learners at the English-medium schools was adversely affected by having Afrikaans-speaking teachers since, in almost every case, the learners in these teachers' classes obtained lower marks than those who were taught by English-speaking teachers.

The principal recommendation arising from this study is that, where possible, the teachers at English-medium schools should be English L1 speakers.

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KEY WORDS

Academic performance; Afrikaans; English; High schools; Home language; Language attitudes; Learners; School subjects; Subject preferences; Teachers; Whites.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In South Africa for many years the intake of student teachers from the Afrikaans-speaking community has exceeded that of teachers from the English-speaking community. This means that the number of Afrikaans L1 teachers in formerly white-only (Model C) schools exceeds the number of English L1 teachers. In 2002 the Gauteng Department of Education employed 5 919 white English-speaking teachers and 12 132 white Afrikaans-speaking teachers (Gauteng Department of Education, 2002). This necessarily means that many of these Afrikaans-speaking teachers have had to be accommodated in English-medium schools. This is borne out by the fact that practically all the teachers in Afrikaans-medium schools are Afrikaans-speaking. In the East Rand town in which the present study was conducted all the teachers in the Afrikaans-medium schools are Afrikaans-speaking - even those who teach English as a school subject. On the other hand, a significant proportion of the teachers at English-medium schools, often even including the Principal himself/herself, are Afrikaans-speaking.

These teachers therefore have to teach their subject through the medium of English - a language with which they may not be altogether comfortable. In some cases they even have to teach English to their learners as a "First Language" subject, as is the case in at least one of the schools involved in the present study.

In this country there has long been a history of English-speakers' disparagement of Afrikaans and the Afrikaner. Much of this has been based on ignorance and much on personal prejudice, or even official policy. After the cession of the Cape Colony to the British during the Napoleonic Wars of the early 19th century, neither Dutch nor Afrikaans - or "Cape Dutch" as it was then called - had any official standing and the use of these languages in schools or in any official capacity was actively discouraged. In addition to the official attitude towards Afrikaans, it was generally regarded, particularly by English speakers, as an inferior, defective language or dialect. The following excerpt from an address given by the former Administrator of the then Bechuanaland Protectorate, Sir Sidney Shippard, to the (British) Colonial Society in 1897 (quoted by Liebmann, 1901:138), although intemperate in language, and displaying a total ignorance both of linguistics and of "Boer" characteristics, is revealing.

"They have thus been enabled to build around themselves in course of time a kind of Chinese wall, figuratively speaking, by continuing to use a nondescript mixture of Dutch, French and divers other languages forming a sort of bucolic dialect peculiar to themselves, with a ludicrously limited and insufficient vocabulary, hardly intelligible in Holland itself, devoid of literature, incapable of growth save by the admixture of pigeon-English, and in itself an insurmountable barrier against intellectual progress, expansion, or enlightenment of any kind."

It must be admitted that this statement - to a British learned society! - is somewhat extreme and intemperate and (presumably) represents the views

of a “jingoistic” British imperialist of the Victorian era. However, it must also be conceded that similar sentiments, although not as extreme as those quoted, were - and perhaps still are - shared by many English-speaking South Africans. Malherbe (1976:63) says that “there was a time when in English-medium schools Afrikaans was referred to as a ‘kitchen language’ Although English-speakers’ liking for Afrikaans does not appear to have increased, derogatory term such as “Kitchen Dutch” are rarely heard these days among English speakers. However, it is significant that South African anecdotes usually revolve around “Koos van der Merwe” and not around “Pete Smith”. After the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 - 1902, the British authorities attempted to stamp out Afrikaans in the former Boer republics and promote English. However, this could be construed as a policy aimed at welding the two white communities into one, rather than as the expression of the British official attitude towards the language *per se*.

The Gauteng Education Department (and probably also the other Provincial Education Departments) specify that a matriculation pass is conditional upon obtaining a pass mark in two of South Africa’s official languages. In the past learners had to pass both English and Afrikaans and few schools offered any of the indigenous African languages as an option. None of the schools surveyed in this study offered an indigenous African language as part of their syllabus. Many of the English-speaking learners at these schools (and probably in other schools as well) would probably not take Afrikaans as a school subject if a pass mark in that subject were not a requirement for obtaining a matriculation certificate. In addition, English is perceived almost as a universal language, a link between South Africa and the world, whereas

Afrikaans is regarded by many English-speakers as a relatively unimportant “local” language with little use outside the country.

Despite demographic changes over the last half-century, English is still the dominant language in large parts of the major metropolitan centres of this country as well as in parts of rural KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape. The formerly largely rural Afrikaans community has become increasingly urbanised, particularly since 1948 (when the Afrikaner-dominated National Party came to power) as Afrikaners entered the professional, commercial and industrial fields. In the East Rand town in which the present survey was carried out the sizes of the English and Afrikaans communities are fairly similar with, possibly, a slight preponderance in favour of the Afrikaner.

It has been found that people’s attitudes towards a language or language variety are frequently defined by their attitudes towards the users of that language or language variety. This attitude may be influenced by political, regional or social factors.

In Northern Ireland, for example, both Roman Catholics and Protestants generally speak with similar accents, conditioned only by their social status or the region they live in. In Northern Ireland there are no predominantly or uniquely Catholic or Protestant regions, so regional accents cannot be used as indicators of a speaker’s religious affiliation. However Catholics generally tend to have republican sympathies, whereas Protestants tend to favour the British connection. One result of this is that Catholics react more favourably to utterances by speakers from the Republic of Ireland, who speak with accents very different from those in the North, and Protestants generally react

unfavourably to such speakers. As discussed in Chapter 2, Cairns and Duriez' (1976:441 - 442) found that there was a direct correlation between the extent of children's retention of the contents of a discourse and their perceived identity of the speaker.

The political/religious aspect of the Irish situation is not manifested in the two white communities of South Africa, but rather by a linguistic/cultural divide.

Since many of the English-speaking learners in this country are taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers, towards whom the learners might have neutral or negative attitudes, their "retention" of what their teachers have to say, i.e. their academic performance and their attitudes towards the subjects themselves might be conditioned by these attitudes.

This aspect of language attitudes does not appear to have been explored in South Africa and such literature as could be found related mainly to the attitudes of Blacks to English and Afrikaans and not to the attitudes of the two white groups in South Africa. The results of this study may thus provide valuable insight and information to education authorities, not only in South Africa but in other multilingual countries.

In many of the multilingual or bilingual countries in which language attitudes were studied, such as Belgium, Canada and Switzerland, the users of the two language groups are - more or less - geographically separated. Switzerland has French-, German-, Italian- and Romansch-speaking cantons. Belgium is divided into French- (Walloon), Dutch- (Flemish) and German-speaking areas, in which these languages are the sole official languages of the area. It is

possible that a resident of one language area could live out his/her life without ever hearing one of the other national languages. In various parts of the United States there are strong Spanish- and French-speaking (“Cajun”) communities (mainly in the southern states, as well as German-speaking communities (the Pennsylvania Dutch). However these languages and the many other languages found in the United States do not enjoy ‘official’ status and no English-speaking American citizen is obliged to learn them, as is the case in South Africa (but see also Section 1.1: the first paragraph on page 3 above). In South Africa, however, the two white communities do not live in clearly separate and identifiable areas and so all members of both communities are exposed to the ‘other’ language on a regular basis, which is not always the case in the above-mentioned countries. Hence the studies carried out abroad may not be very relevant to South Africa, as the circumstances in this country differ from those prevailing in other countries.

1.2 Aim of the Investigation

The purpose of the investigation is to establish the language attitudes of high school learners, particularly towards Afrikaans and English (previously the two sole official languages of South Africa), both to the languages themselves and as school subjects. The purpose is also to evaluate these language attitudes and to see whether learners’ and teachers’ attitudes towards each other and towards their academic subjects play any role. In particular, it is hoped that this study will establish whether or not the fact that the teacher’s home language might not be the medium of instruction plays any part in determining the learners’ attitudes towards the subject, to the teacher himself/herself and to the ‘other’ language, i.e. to the teachers’ L1, if this is not English.

In this study the learners' attitudes to their Afrikaans-speaking teachers will be studied. It is also hoped to establish whether or not there is a link between the learners' attitude to the Afrikaans language (both in general and as a school subject) and their attitude to their Afrikaans L1 teachers. As a corollary to this it is also hoped to establish whether or not there is any correlation between the learners' attitude to Afrikaans or their Afrikaans L1 teachers and their academic performance in the subjects taught by these Afrikaans L1 teachers.

For this purpose, in addition to the four English-medium schools, the study includes two Afrikaans-medium schools, all of whose teachers are Afrikaans-speaking, and whose student bodies are more homogenous than those in the English-medium schools used in the study. Although this does not, strictly speaking, constitute one of the aims of this investigation, it was felt that it would be of interest to determine whether or not Afrikaans-speaking learners at Afrikaans-medium schools have the same attitudes vis-à-vis English as English-speaking learners have vis-à-vis Afrikaans.

1.3 Conclusion

The key points arising from this section of the study are listed below.

- (i) In general, the English- and Afrikaans-speaking communities are not geographically separated, as is broadly the case in other bilingual or multilingual communities, such as Belgium, Canada and Switzerland.
- (ii) In studies carried out in other multi-lingual countries, the tendency seemed to be to concentrate on attitudes to the users of a language, rather than on the language itself.
- (iii) Few studies that are relevant to this particular investigation have been carried out among white high-school learners in South Africa. The last major study was carried out in 1938 (Malherbe, Vol.2 : 1976:57 - 92).
- (iv) The political, social and demographic situation of South Africa has changed greatly in the last six or seven decades. As stated in Section 1.1 above (page 4), there has been a significant change in the socio-economic status of the Afrikaners as well as in their geographical distribution.
- (v) To summarise, the aim of this investigation is to:
 - a) Show that language attitudes in the two white communities have changed over the last six or seven decades;

- b) Determine the attitudes of white learners at English-medium schools towards their Afrikaans-speaking teachers;
- c) Determine the attitude of white English-speaking learners to the Afrikaans language itself;
- d) Determine whether or not the learners' preferences for any particular school subject is influenced by their attitude towards their teachers;
- e) Determine whether the fact that English-speaking learners are taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers has any effect on these learners' academic performance in the subject concerned; and
- f) Determine whether Afrikaans-speaking learners at Afrikaans-medium schools have the same attitudes towards English as their English-speaking counterparts towards Afrikaans.

2 CONTEXT OF THE INVESTIGATION: SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

South Africa has had two official languages – English and Dutch - from the time of Union until 1923 and English and Afrikaans from that year until 1994, when the constitutional status of the country changed.

For the period 1878 (the outbreak of the First Anglo-Boer War) until about the end of the Second World War in 1945 – a period spanning less than seven decades – and particularly after the end of the Second Anglo-Boer War in 1902 – there was a certain amount of animosity between the two major white groups in South Africa. This animosity expressed itself in the form of dislike by Afrikaners of the “victor’s” language, English, as well as by the contemptuous attitude of the “English” towards the Afrikaans language. For instance, Malherbe (1976, Vol. 2 : 63) quoted an Afrikaans-speaking teacher before the Second World War in a rural Afrikaans-medium school, who described the English class as another session with “the enemy’s language”. This appears to be more indicative of the inter-community attitude than of the attitude to the language itself. He also found that children in single-medium schools (in 1938) appeared to have greater antipathy to the other language than did children in dual-medium schools, thus implying that proximity and social contact fostered the development of understanding and good relations between the two communities.

Afrikaners had been cut off from their European origins for many generations by the time of the First Anglo-Boer War. Firstly, they had been abandoned by their Dutch motherland, which had ceded the Cape to the British in the early 19th Century, forcing the Cape Dutch inhabitants to live under British rule. Those who left the Cape – or who extended the borders of the Cape Colony by trekking north and east - deliberately turned their backs on Europe and European civilisation as represented by Cape Town society. Those who moved on had only – in their view – two major distinguishing characteristics - their language and their religion. For them it was a badge, a sign of nationality, to be born with pride. Van der Merwe *et al.* (1974), quoted by Hauptfleisch (1977, Vol. 1: 2 - 3) say that “Language identity forms one of the three basic characteristics of the Afrikaner as usually defined, along with religious affiliation and political affiliation.” In a survey carried out in 1973-74, Hauptfleisch (1977, Vol. 1 :72 - 73) found that Afrikaners’ attitudes towards their language “ ... are a part of greater Afrikaner values, within which language plays a major role (as do religion and politics)”. Van der Merwe *et al.* (1974), quoted by Hauptfleisch (1977, Vol. 1 :2 - 3) confirm this by saying that “Language identity forms one of the three basic characteristics of the Afrikaner as usually defined, along with religious affiliation and political affiliation.” Hence Afrikaners had an attitude to their language very different from that of the English speaker. Hauptfleisch (1977, Vol. 1 :3) says that a “similar, easily identified pattern does not exist among English-speaking South Africans” and that to the English-speaking South African “ ...language is a more functional and pragmatically considered aspect of daily life.” To ordinary English speakers, their language is more a means of communication than a “badge of identity”.

This attitude towards their own language is not restricted to Afrikaners.

Mc Nair (1980:34) says that "... For a minority group in a nation, its own language is the most powerful badge of identity, a symbol of solidarity." He is referring here to Euskara-speaking people (Basques) and Catalans in Spain.

In earlier years the English-speaking section of the population had little more than contempt for the Afrikaans language, mainly because of the depressed nature of that community and their opinion that to be an Afrikaans speaker was to be ignorant and uncouth. An extreme example of this contempt was quoted in section 1.1 (Liebmann, 1901:138). This attitude was passed on from parent to child and persisted for many years. Malherbe (1976, Vol. 2 :63) says that "... there was a time when in English-medium schools Afrikaans was referred to as a 'kitchen language'". Although English speakers' liking for the Afrikaans language does not seem to have increased, derogatory terms such as 'kitchen Dutch' are rarely heard these days among English speakers.

Following the National Party's electoral victory in 1948, after which it implemented the Apartheid policy, English-speakers were systematically eliminated from positions of influence in the Government and almost all levels of the Civil Service and a form of "affirmative action" was put in place, which gave Afrikaners greater economic power as well. This action of the Afrikaners tended to widen the differences between the two white communities. In exacerbating the animosity between the two white communities, it also increased the English-speakers' disdain for the Afrikaner and, by extension, for his language.

The white English-speaking community has for many years been much more heterogeneous than the white Afrikaans-speaking community. The English-speaking section of the white population includes such groups as the Jews (mainly of Central and Eastern European origin), other people of Eastern European descent or extraction (Lithuanians and people from the former Yugoslavia), as well as large groups from southern Europe (notably Portuguese, Greeks and Italians). In most cases - but not all - these people tended to associate with the "English" rather than the Afrikaner, to send their children to English-medium schools and to live in predominantly English-speaking areas (when they did not live in enclaves inhabited by members of their own ethnic group - that part of the Johannesburg suburb of Orange Grove, which was known as "Little Italy" during the 1950s and 1960s is an example of this).

To all these people the English language represented the principal means of communication. Because of the varied background of the various members of this community, English was certainly not a "badge of nationhood". It was simply a tool to be used in preference to any other. If the South African native speaker of English thought about his language at all, he simply regarded it as a way of distinguishing him from the Afrikaner.

This attitude toward his *own* language conditioned his attitude towards Afrikaans. Apart from any feeling that English was "superior" to Afrikaans, English-speakers tend to wonder why the Afrikaner attached so much importance to his language and why the Afrikaans community found it necessary to erect monuments to the language.

In his intemperate and ill-informed criticism of the Afrikaans language, Sir Sidney Shippard (1897, quoted by Liebmann 1901:138) described Afrikaans as: "... a nondescript mixture of Dutch, French and divers other terms". He appears to overlook the fact that the English language owes its richness to having borrowed terms from every other language with which it has come into contact, including Afrikaans itself. As Alexander (1997:85) says "...English, if you care to look at it closely, is full of Greek, Latin, French and other lexical and morphological imports."

Britain and its former dependencies and dominions did not see the need to establish an "English Academy" similar to the Académie Française. No British sovereign has ever felt it necessary to promulgate an English equivalent to the Edict of Villers-Cotterets promulgated by Francis I of France in 1539, one of whose articles (Article 111) required all legal and state documentation to be "... en langaige maternel françois et non autrement" ("...in the French mother tongue and not otherwise"). This edict proscribed the use of all regional languages (non-standard French dialects, Breton, Euskara (Basque), Catalan, Provençal etc. (Ordonnances de Villers-Cotterets, 1539).

The English-speaker does not thus have the same attitude towards his language as do the Afrikaner, the French and the users of some other languages.

This attitude to the language can possibly be reinforced by the English-speakers attitude towards the *user* of the other language. This aspect is

raised by De Klerk and Bosch (1995:18) who say that attitudes are conditioned by stereotypes, which they define as: “ ... a socially shared belief that describes an attitude object in an oversimplified and undifferentiated manner”. Hauptfleisch (1997, Vol. 1:13) confirms this by saying that “ ... stereotypes are important in the social climate within which language preferences act”. Hence the average English-speaker’s attitude to Afrikaans is possibly conditioned by his attitude towards the user of Afrikaans rather than to the language itself.

Similarly, as indicated in Section 2.1 above, the Afrikaner’s attitude towards English might be conditioned by his attitude towards “the English”. This point was clearly demonstrated by Malherbe (1976: Vol.2: 63) in his description of English as “the enemy’s language”.

In the third quarter of the last century several articles and letters appeared in the South African national press from members of the “Forty percenters,” regarding the “side-lining” of English in the then dominant Afrikaans-speaking official circles and government departments. (The white English speaking community constitutes approximately 40 per cent of the total white population of South Africa). There does not appear to have been any other polemic or argument in favour or defence of English by the ordinary English-speaking South African.

Another major factor in keeping the two communities apart was the enforcement in the mid-1950s of single-language medium schools. There were very few dual-medium schools and children of both communities rarely

got the opportunity to mingle or even to know each other. This also contributed to the division between the groups and to the different attitudes held by the two white groups.

The attitudes of both white communities was strengthened by the policies enforced by the Afrikaans-speaking government following the national party's accession to power in 1948. For example, in the mid-1950s, the education departments arbitrarily forced many dual medium schools to become single-medium schools. The researcher knows of at least one case in the Eastern Cape in which officials of the Education Department came to a dual-medium school in the mid-1950s, applied an unscientific language test and summarily transferred all the learners whom they (the officials) decided were Afrikaans-speaking, to a newly established Afrikaans-medium school. The effect on the learners concerned was traumatic and certainly did nothing to promote inter-community relationships or understanding.

2.2 Changing Socio-Political Situation

Over the past ten years whatever reasons there may have been for the two white peoples to keep separate from each other have mainly disappeared. The two white communities seem to have drawn closer together, even if they have not yet coalesced.

The two white communities – especially in the urban areas – now appear to be almost one community, even if their schools are still segregated on linguistic grounds. Historically Afrikaans-medium universities, such as the Universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch, have now become virtually parallel-medium institutions.

A study carried out in Northern Ireland in the 1970s (Cairns and Duriez, 1976:441 - 442) among schoolchildren showed that these pupils' retention of the subject matter was influenced by the speaker – i.e. by their attitude towards the speaker's accent or dialect. In that case the distinction between the groups was based on religion (which, to a large extent, represented the political affiliation of the respondents).

In the present study the concept of religion was replaced by language and cultural background, which - generally though not invariably - represented the political affiliations of the two white population groups in earlier years.

In this study it is hoped to show whether the passage of time has had any effect on the attitudes of the two white groups towards each other's language and, if this is the case, to quantify this.

2.3 Literature Review

Several authors and researchers (*inter alia* Agheyisi and Fishman, (1970: 137-157) and Weber (1992) (quoted in Smit, 1996a:25) highlight the difficulty of defining "attitude". Weber says that:

"... attitude is an evaluative reaction - a judgement regarding one's liking or disliking - of a person, event or other aspect of the environment ... (it is) ... a non-neutral position (i.e. either positively or negatively inclined) about the attitude object ... (and) ... can range in its intensity."

Dyers (1996:24) says that :

"... Language attitude goes beyond the central theories surrounding language acquisition, such as the cognitive, audio-lingual, communicative and humanistic theories. Instead its basic question is how a speaker or learner of a language feels about that language, irrespective of whether it is a mother tongue, second or foreign language."(Author's emphasis.)

There is a wealth of information on *official* language attitudes, (i.e the attitudes of the authorities to non-standard varieties of a language or to minority languages, such as Provençal, Catalan, Frisian etc) including publications in French and Dutch, but very little on the attitudes of “non-elite speakers”, such as those of the ordinary “man in the street”, students or learners.

Studies carried out by Münstermann (1989:168) among student teachers in the Netherlands related to attitudes towards various non-standard Dutch dialects. He used the “matched guise” technique developed by Lambert *et al.* (1960), in which personality traits, such as intelligence, likeability, integrity etc. were evaluated, rather than the dialect itself. The conclusions arising from this study could have been extended to include attitudes towards the users of other languages, such as Afrikaans. However, since Münstermann’s study did not relate to the dialects themselves, his findings were not considered relevant to this investigation.

Such literature as is available was examined and its pertinence to the present study was evaluated. The relevant publications/articles are discussed below.

Bugarski (1990), quoted by Webb (1992:433) says that language attitudes are “ ... essentially social attitudes or, more precisely, linguistic reflections of deep-seated and often only semi-conscious socio-psychological perceptions of a territorial, ethnic or social group by speakers representing other groups”. This was certainly valid in the case of white English- and Afrikaans-speakers in the past but, even if the linguistic boundary is almost as intact as ever,

albeit becoming slightly blurred in favour of English, a more ethnic or racial element is becoming increasingly dominant and the two major white groups are tending to “sink their differences”, whether political, social or cultural.

Webb (1992:433) goes on to say that “ ... language attitudes have an important role in the life of a community. They can affect the economic, *educational*, and social life of a language group” and that “ ... language attitudes can also affect the *success of learning*” (my emphasis). It is this aspect that is discussed in this study and which was sought in the literature survey.

Many studies have been carried out in South Africa and elsewhere, notably Canada, France and the Netherlands, on language attitudes. Most of the South African studies related to Blacks. The foreign studies related more to official attitudes. As these studies did not deal specifically with white high school learners, they were not considered very relevant to the present study.

Many of the language attitude surveys conducted, among them those by Lambert *et al.* (1960: 44 - 51), Zahn and Hopper (1985: 113 - 123) and others tended to concentrate on the listeners' evaluation of the personality of the speaker, based in their accent or language variety that they used, rather than on their attitude to the language itself. For this reason their conclusions were not considered to be relevant to this particular investigation.

De Kadt (1993: 314) points out that little “... attention tends to be paid to the non-elite (*i.e. the non-native*) speaker of the language and his/her opinions about English” (italicised words added by me). This attitude could be extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to Afrikaans. However, as stated above, the present investigation is limited to white learners and de Kadt’s study dealt with Zulu speakers.

A problem with relating the results of studies carried out in other bilingual or multilingual countries such as Canada, Belgium and Switzerland with the situation in South Africa can be summed up in a statement by Jan Hofmeyr, the then South African Minister of Education, who said in Parliament (quoted by Malherbe, 1976, Vol. 2 : 86) that “ ... South Africa differs from other bilingual countries such as Canada, Switzerland and Belgium in so far that we have not got the position that the two elements in the main live apart from each other.” The result of this is that both white communities are intermingled and that English and Afrikaans speakers are in more frequent contact with each other than, for example French- and English-speaking Canadians or Flemish and Walloons. The attitudes of whites in South Africa might thus be influenced more by personal acquaintance or contact with members of the other community than by “hearsay” or “received attitudes”. This statement alone illustrates the difficulty of finding foreign publications relevant to the present investigation. The Canadian studies related mainly to prevailing attitudes among English- and French-speaking Canadians towards members of the other language group. It was in Canada that Lambert *et al.* (1960: 44 - 51) developed their now well known “matched guise” technique. Lambert (1967), quoted by Giles *et al.* (1983: 84), says that the major strength of the “matched

guise” technique “ ... lies in its ability to reveal non-consciously held attitudes.” However a major disadvantage of this technique was that it tended to elicit responses relating to peoples’ attitudes to the *user* of the other language, not to the *other language* itself.

Studies in the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and France and Wales related mainly to *official* attitudes towards regional languages and dialects such as Frisian, Catalan, Breton, Welsh etc. and to their acceptance, encouragement or promotion in schools. For example, from being merely tolerated at first, then taught as an optional school subject, Frisian has now become a medium of instruction in primary schools in the Dutch province of Friesland and has also become a mandatory school subject in that province. (Smith, 1977: 79).

It was stated above that studies of language attitudes among black learners - particularly with regard to Afrikaans - were not relevant to the present investigation. This is because of the different experiences of the Black and white communities regarding the two former official languages. Although, during the period of Reconstruction following the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 - 1902, Lord Milner, the British-appointed Governor of the defeated Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics, attempted to anglicise these territories, to impose English as the sole official language of the former republics and to limit the use of Dutch as a medium of instruction in Government school (Shorten 1970: 249), this was unsuccessful and, apart from Milner’s efforts, no serious attempt was ever made to force either of these languages on either of the white communities.

The Black situation was totally different. Firstly an unequal and inferior system of education (“Bantu Education”) was imposed on Blacks by an Afrikaans-speaking government. Verhoef (1999: 182) says that “... due to the perception that Afrikaans was synonymous with the apartheid policy of the National Party, the majority of black learners opted for English as the medium of instruction.” Then in 1976, a unilateral decision was made that the medium of instruction in certain subjects would be in Afrikaans only. This led to much violence and bloodshed and, ultimately, to the change of regime in South Africa. Black Africans therefore regarded Afrikaans as “the language of the oppressor” and it was considered that, for the purpose of the present investigation, Black South African attitudes could not be directly compared with attitudes among the two white communities. Although the opportunities available to English-speaking South Africans - and indeed to many Afrikaners who did not support the National Party - were reduced in 1948, when the National Party came to power, and although the English-speaking community was, by and large, excluded from the Civil Service, the Police, the Armed Forces etc., the English language itself was not threatened. Thus, although the white English-speaking South African may have felt aggrieved on account of his treatment by the predominantly Afrikaans-speaking ruling party, he did not feel himself oppressed as did the Blacks.

The attitudes of blacks in South Africa to the (former) two sole official languages of South Africa are conditioned by the fact that the Afrikaner believed that he had “... a divine mandate ... to keep the heathen Blacks in their subservient position and to civilise them ...” (Du Toit and Giliomee, 1983, quoted by Dirven, 1988: 219). The attitudes of whites to these two languages are conditioned by the fact that: “... Englishwas and still largely is the

language of finance, industry and technology ...” (Dirven, 1988: 220). Dirven (1988: 220) also points out that “... even in the Afrikaans community there is a strong positive bias towards English.”

An extensive literature survey revealed that the most recent publication relating to the language attitudes of high school learners in both white communities in South Africa was that carried out by Malherbe (1976, Vol. 2 : 57 - 92) in 1938, but which was only published in 1976. The information obtained from his study is referred to elsewhere in this document.

In 1993 Smit (Smit:1996b:100 - 107) carried out a language attitude survey among high school learners in the Eastern Cape. However, her subjects were Afrikaans, English and Xhosa speakers. In addition, she was investigating attitudes to both the speaker (Smit employed the “matched guise technique”) and the accent/language variety. For these reasons, her study was not considered to be directly relevant to the present investigation.

Following the change of government in this country in 1994, major changes took place in the public service and armed forces. Inevitably these changes related to the language of record and communication. In 1998, De Klerk and Barkhuizen (1998a: 155 - 179, 1998b: 215 - 235) conducted two studies among the armed forces of this country. Hitherto the *de facto lingua franca* of the armed forces - and indeed, of most State Departments - had been Afrikaans. However, with the change in the demographic make-up of the armed forces, English came to be the accepted language of communication. In De Klerk and Barkhuizen’s studies (1998a, 1998b) the attitudes of the

Afrikaans-speaking members of the military were examined. These authors found that there was a pragmatic - if resigned - acceptance of English as the language of communication. Their studies did not indicate any hostility or animosity towards English or to the users of that language. One aspect that the authors referred to was “ ... the negative connotations linked to Afrikaans at the time of the take-over by the ANC government in 1994” (De Klerk and Barkhuizen, 1998b: 218). However, as discussed above, the last-mentioned attitude refers to *Black* attitudes and is not relevant to the present study, which is limited to white high school learners.

A direct preference for the language of instruction (English or Shona/siNdebele) was elicited during a language attitudes study carried out among high school pupils in Harare, Zimbabwe (Mparutsa *et al.*, 1990: 86). However, as that study was limited to Black pupils only, and as the circumstances in Zimbabwe are very different from those in South Africa, this investigation and the conclusions therefrom were not considered to be relevant to the present study.

As Creber and Giles (1983: 155) say that “ ... language attitudes, perhaps not surprisingly, vary according to the ages of the judges”, the possibility that age might play a role was studied in this investigation, even though these authors’ paper refers to English and Welsh accents in Wales.

A similar study was carried out by Bekker (1999: 99) among speakers of the indigenous African languages to determine their attitudes towards the new (1998) language policy of the University of South Africa (UNISA). However,

this study also relates to black students' attitudes only and, for the reasons given in the preceding paragraphs, was not considered to be relevant to an investigation into the study of white learners' attitudes, although it would probably provide valuable input to any future study. (See Chapter 5 - Recommendations for Future Research.)

Van Den Heever (1987), quoted by Beukes (1991: 70), found "...negative attitudes towards Afrikaans, particularly during the 1970s, but that this attitude has changed over the years." Again, however, this finding does not relate to white people, but to coloureds, who often share the same sentiments as the English-speaking whites, despite the fact that they - the coloureds - are generally Afrikaans-speakers themselves.

Verhoef (1999: 123 - 135) carried out a thought-provoking study on the "...perception of Afrikaans as the language of oppression". This study relates to black and coloured attitudes during the Apartheid era, when the then Government was almost entirely Afrikaans-speaking, as was almost every public servant, official or police officer that the "non-white" section of the community was likely to meet. This might have helped to foster resentment against Afrikaans speakers and, hence, against the language, even by Afrikaans speakers who felt themselves oppressed.

Other studies, such as those by De Klerk (1996: 111 - 127), Kotze (1987:

47 - 63), Coetser (1993: 121 - 130) dealt mainly with black respondents and, as such, have not been included in this study, but may provide useful material for any possible future research based on comparisons of the language attitudes of whites and non-whites.

This study breaks relatively new ground in that it reveals the attitudes of white teen-age high school learners in South Africa, an attitude that has not been studied for over six decades, and hopes to indicate and explain such differences as may have occurred between 1938 and 2001.

2.4 Conclusion

The key points arising from this section of the study are listed below.

- (i) The English- and Afrikaans-speaking communities are not geographically separated as is broadly the case in other bilingual or multilingual communities, such as Belgium, Canada, France, Spain and Switzerland, although they are still segregated in schools on the basis of their language.
- (ii) Except possibly in the case of Canada, the linguistic communities in the above-mentioned countries were not divided by war and conquest, as in the case of the two white communities in South Africa.

- (iii) The results of surveys carried out among other multilingual communities were not altogether applicable to the type of investigation forming this study, mainly because of the geographical separation of the different language groups in those countries, as mentioned above. In addition, this study was limited to high school learners, whereas most other studies concentrated on university students, student teachers and (particularly in the case of South Africa) the armed forces.

- (iv) The two white communities in South Africa appear to have two different attitudes to their own language - the Afrikaner tending to regard Afrikaans as a badge of identity, whereas the English-speaking South African regards English as simply a means of communication.

- (v) The attitudes of learners belonging to other ethnic groups (black, coloured, Indian) have not been analysed in this study, since it was considered that political, racial and social factors played a role in the attitudes of these groups to the “white” languages, particularly Afrikaans.

In the case of the coloured community, it is probable that the members of this group feel aggrieved at being excluded from the mainstream of the development of the Afrikaans language (although this group has a vibrant variety of Afrikaans, which has generally been ignored in favour of the “white” variety). The Indian community has always been accorded second class status and its members were totally excluded from predominantly Afrikaans-speaking areas, such as the former Orange Free State, until comparatively recently.

The introduction of “mother tongue education”, which was also perceived to be inferior, was regarded by the Blacks as degrading and as a deliberate attempt to keep the Blacks in a inferior position by excluding them from the benefits of modern learning and technology, which were available in the major European languages and Afrikaans. Hence the attitude of the members of these communities differs from that of the whites, particularly with regard to Afrikaans.

3 DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION

3.1 Introduction

Any study of attitudes to a language or language variety is extremely difficult. There are almost as many different definitions of “attitude” as there are workers in the field (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1970: 137). People’s attitudes towards a language or language variety may be more indicative of their attitude to members of the group using that language or variety than to the language itself. Ryan *et al.* (1982, quoted by De Klerk and Bosch, 1995: 17) sum this up quite neatly when they say that language attitudes are “ ... any effective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative actions towards different language varieties *or their speakers*” (my emphasis).

In selecting the most appropriate method of determining learners’ attitudes to another language - in this case Afrikaans - the researcher seeks to be able to conclude from the data with some degree of statistically significant confidence that (for example) “white English-speaking high school learners in Gauteng feel that learning Afrikaans is a waste of time.”

3.2 Description of Possible Approaches

There are several methods for determining language attitudes. These are described briefly below.

One well-known method for determining language attitudes is the 'matched guise' technique developed by Lambert *et al.* (1960: 44 - 61) for Canadian students. In this method a single researcher assumes the accent/speech patterns of a member of two or more social/linguistic groups, e.g. a French-Canadian and an English-speaking Canadian, and an identical passage - prerecorded on tape - is played to the respondents in the language varieties under investigation. However, the characteristics measured often relate to aspects such as likeability, intelligence, etc. This method therefore tends to measure the respondent's attitude towards the *users* of the language rather than to the language itself. The 'matched guise' technique is usually more quantitative than qualitative in that the subjects' responses can be analysed statistically, as the researcher lists the characteristics under investigation and assigns numerical values to these or has some other way of enumerating them, which the respondent then has to mark or rank in one way or another. A disadvantage of this method, however, is that the researcher will have already decided what aspect or character he or she is investigating and may inadvertently fail to obtain the information required, through asking the wrong questions or for some other reason. Consequently the aspect that he or she is investigating may not actually be the one that is being sought.

The qualitative method is another useful technique for determining language attitudes. In this method the researcher interviews the respondents, mainly posing open-ended questions or through unobtrusive observation of the subjects interacting among themselves. By the use of this method an impression is gained of the subjects' personal views of the situation being investigated. This method has both advantages and disadvantages. One of its main advantages is that this approach enables the researcher to determine more clearly what the situation *actually* is, thus enabling him/her to hone in on a more detailed and directed investigation. It is thus more exploratory in nature than either of the other two approaches. However, one of the disadvantages of this approach is that the researcher cannot quantify the results of the investigation.

The third commonly used approach is the quantitative approach. In this approach the responses of (usually) a large number of respondents (obtained by means of questionnaires, interviews or by other means) relating to the topic being investigated, are evaluated on a numerical scale. The results can be calculated by appropriate statistical methods and statistical inferences drawn. The researcher may thus be able to establish correlations between given characteristics and the population (or sections of the population) being investigated. It will be the researcher's task to determine whether a particular characteristic, feeling or sentiment is shared by the population as a whole or by any particular section or sub-group of the population, i.e. by the residents of a particular town or region, by women only, by young adults, learners etc. A major advantage of this approach is that it is relatively easy to process the results of the investigation and to draw conclusions from these. The availability of computers and calculators facilitates the calculation of statistical

parameters such as standard deviations, means, correlations etc. In addition, there are many well-proven statistical methods for determining the significance and validity of the results obtained. A disadvantage of the quantitative approach is that the researcher has to ask pointed questions, which can either be replied to by 'yes' or 'no' or evaluated on a numerical scale. The researcher thus has to know what questions to ask and how to elicit the desired response. He or she may fail in this objective if he or she asks the 'wrong' questions, places the emphasis incorrectly or words the questions badly. It should, however, be pointed out that, even if the results of the statistical analysis show that there is no correlation between the responses of a group or sub-group and the aspect being investigated, this does not necessarily mean that the investigation is valueless. There may indeed be no correlation between two aspects or features being investigated, but this might be because the researcher should have asked a different question, because the respondents misunderstood the question or because there was, in fact, no correlation, or even because the researcher started out with the wrong hypothesis in the first place.

3.3 Selected Approach

For this research project a quantitative approach was used. The required information - supplied by a large number of respondents - was evaluated on a numerical scale of 1 - 5. The results were then analysed statistically and features such as means and percentage of responses were calculated. In addition, the statistical correlations between the different variables were determined and their statistical significance determined. The statistical

methods used are described in detail in Chapter 4. Except in the case of subject preference, the rating used was based on a numerical scale of 1 (poorest or least favourable) to 5 (best or most favourable). This rating scale was developed by Likert (1932), which is stated by Garrett *et al.* (2003:40) as giving “ ... more reliability and being less laborious to prepare than (the) Thurstone scales”, described by Garrett *et al.* (2003:39). The numerical rating scales that appeared to be the most popular were the five-, six- or seven-point scales. Many researchers prefer the even number rating scales as they force the respondent to make a choice on one side of the median or “neutral” point, whereas in a 5- or 7-point scale, the respondent might take the easy way out and opt for the central, neutral rating. However Garrett *et al.* (2003: 41) say that “ ... in most language attitudes research, five- and seven-point scales are used, with researchers preferring to live with the ambiguity of the mid-point.” For this investigation the five-point scale was adopted.

The respondents’ responses are expected to be subjective, in that they indicate each respondent’s personal attitude to the particular characteristic or aspect being investigated. In addition, if statistical analysis of the responses reveals that a proportion of the respondents have a certain attitude or opinion, the attitude may be regarded as, for example, the attitude of a particular social class or of the inhabitants of a particular region. However, the quantitative approach is not entirely satisfactory on its own. There may be other aspects that may not have been covered by the interview, questionnaire or the selected means of obtaining the information required. For this reason, every research project should have some element of a qualitative approach, in which open-ended questions are asked. These cannot be evaluated on a

numerical basis but may give additional information to support (or refute) the researcher's findings or may provide additional material to enable him to ask more appropriate questions or for further investigation.

In this investigation the more qualitative approach of open-ended questions was also included in the questionnaire. The purpose of adding two open-ended questions was to obtain additional information which may not have been covered in the 'closed' questions and which could also supply information to substantiate the subjects' responses.

3.4 Respondents

The survey was limited to white high school learners at all the high schools in one town on the East Rand. However, all the learners in the classes surveyed (black, coloured, Indian and white) were asked to complete the questionnaires. The questionnaires completed by those learners who were excluded were not discarded but were retained as they may provide material for possible similar future research projects based on both racial and language aspects. For convenience, and also because of the numbers involved, the survey was limited to Grade 11 learners at all the schools to be surveyed. The researcher would have liked to have carried out the investigation among the Grade 12 (matric) learners as well but, as the survey was carried out in the latter half of the year, these learners were too preoccupied with their final year studies. In addition, the schools concerned were reluctant to sanction any break in these learners' routine. The schools concerned also agreed to make the year-end marks available to the

researcher, which were much easier to obtain from the schools than from the final Matriculation examination results. The investigation included learners from both Afrikaans-medium and English-medium high schools in the same town.

Because of time constraints imposed by the six schools concerned and the possible total number of respondents (approximately 500), it was decided to make use of questionnaires to obtain the information. The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions. One of the final two questions was an open-ended question dealing with the topic of selection/reduction of the number of official languages. In one of the open-ended questions respondents were invited to add anything that they feel might not have been covered by any of the previous questions. This questionnaire was prepared in English with the assistance of a qualified psychologist and was then translated into Afrikaans. Copies of the English and Afrikaans versions of the questionnaire are attached in Appendix A. Other than a general address by the researcher to the learners when the questionnaire was completed there was no direct communication with the respondents. Each of the schools concerned made one class period available to the researcher and all the questionnaires were completed in his presence and submitted to the researcher at the end of the session. In addition, the principals of the schools concerned provided details of the teachers concerned. The only details of the teachers that were used in evaluation of the responses were the teacher's gender, subject, home language (L1), as well as any special (intra- or extra-mural) characteristic perceived by the learners which might influence their responses either positively or negatively. For example, one of the teachers at one of the schools surveyed is a nationally

famous athlete. Her prowess might possibly make her a sort of role model and thus influence a learner's responses.

3.5 Personal Details

3.5.1 Nationality

In order to ensure that the attitudes and opinions of the learners surveyed would generally be those of their peers, the survey was limited to white South Africans and to permanent residents of South Africa who had been in the country for at least five years and had thus received all their secondary school education in this country. This aspect was considered to be important as the purpose of the investigation was to determine the attitudes of English-speaking high school learners in Gauteng. All learners not meeting these criteria (e.g. visiting exchange students and relatively recent immigrants) were excluded. However, only one learner, a German exchange student, was excluded on these grounds.

3.5.2 Home Language

Unlike the Afrikaans schools (whose student bodies - mainly white and coloured - are almost entirely Afrikaans-speaking), the learners in the English-medium schools come from different ethnic backgrounds (Greek, Italian, Portuguese etc) and may speak languages other than English at home, notably Portuguese. It was hoped to determine whether or not the learner's home language (L1) had any effect on his/her responses and, in particular

whether the responses of the members of these groups differed from each other and/or from those of their English-speaking classmates.

Only 16 learners - all of Portuguese extraction - stated that their home language was not English or that they spoke both English and Portuguese at home. This is more fully discussed in Sections 4.3.1.2 and 4.3.1.4 below.

3.5.3 Religion

Each learner was asked to state his/her religion. It was hoped to establish whether the learner's religion had any effect on their responses and consequently, on the findings from the proposed investigation. For example, a 16 year-old Portuguese-speaking Roman Catholic girl would probably have an approach to life and possibly attitudes to other individuals and ethnic groups differing from those of an English-speaking Jewish boy of the same age. The members of some religious denominations have a perceived more developed 'work ethic' than others and, as it was hoped to establish whether there was any correlation between academic performance and attitude towards Afrikaans it was considered that religious background or upbringing might be a contributory factor. It was hoped that these differences, if they existed, would be manifested in the learners' responses.

The inclusion of religion was prompted by Cairns and Duriez' (1976: 441 - 442) experience in Northern Ireland, in which religion (Roman Catholicism and "Protestantism" - mainly Presbyterianism) and political sentiment (republicanism and the British connection respectively) were closely correlated.

Although this - or any similar religious/socio-political correlation - was not expected to be an issue in South Africa, as the situation in this country differs totally from that prevailing in Northern Ireland, this aspect was included in case any form of correlation between religious belief and any of the aspects dealt with in the questionnaire manifested itself.

3.5.4 Social and Economic Status

The possibility that any observed differences in responses and apparent attitudes could be ascribed to the learners' social or economic background was considered. However the white population of this particular town is fairly homogenous as regards social and economic status - there being very few white families at either extremity of the economic scale. No attempt was made to determine the incomes or socio-economic status of the learners' families since this would have been regarded as an unwarranted invasion of privacy and, in any case, would not have been supported by the schools concerned. In addition, the schools themselves refused to divulge this information

3.5.5 Gender

The learners were also asked to state their gender. It was hoped from this to establish whether or not there was any significant difference between the boys' and girls' reported attitudes and their academic performance. These responses would be statistically analysed separately, as well as in combination with the other aspects described above.

3.6 Subjects Taken

All the schools surveyed offer a wide range of subjects. However not all of these are common to all six schools that participated in the survey. Although all the learners in all the schools listed all the subjects taken, only those responses relating to those subjects common to all the schools - both Afrikaans- and English-medium - were analysed. The number of subjects was further reduced by taking into account only those subjects taught at the English-medium schools by both Afrikaans- and English-speaking teachers and which were also taught at the Afrikaans-medium schools (by Afrikaans-speaking teachers only). It is hoped to establish whether this aspect has any effect on the learners' responses and attitudes.

3.7 Subjects in Order of Preference

Learners were asked to list their subjects in order of preference (not from best to worst). It was hoped to establish whether there was any correlation between the teacher's L1 and the subject concerned and, indirectly between preference and the learner's attitude to Afrikaans. Based on the responses of the learners, and using the statistical methods described by Moroney (1953: 286) and Butler (1985: 144, 180) it was hoped to establish whether any of the aspects described in 3.5 above had any influence on the learners' responses.

3.8 Preferences for the Two Former Official Languages

In addition to determining the learners' preference for the subjects taken, the learners' preference for English and Afrikaans was determined. The preferences of both boys and girls at English- and Afrikaans-medium schools were determined separately and the statistical methods described by Moroney (1953: 121) were used to determine whether the responses of any of the sub-groups differed significantly. Although the learners of both language groups would naturally prefer their own language to the other, it was also hoped to establish whether there were any significant differences in the learners' ranking of the other language between learners of both language groups.

3.9 Teachers

In order to eliminate the possibility of teachers acting as "role models" or of personal dislike for any particular teacher, which may mask the learners' actual attitudes, several questions were devoted to the learners' personal attitude to their teachers. In order to ensure that the learners gave honest replies, the schools agreed that no teacher would see or have access to the questionnaire. This was made quite clear to the learners by the researcher when the questionnaires were given out. For this reason all the questionnaires were completed in the researcher's presence and handed to him at the end of the session. The learners' confidence was respected completely.

3.10 Open-ended Questions

One of the open-ended questions dealt with the current language policy in South Africa and what suggestions the learners had to alter or improve this. The other question was totally open-ended in that the learners were invited to enter anything relevant to the investigation. The purpose of these two questions was to encourage the learners to state their views openly and directly. It is hoped that the responses to this question will validate the responses made in the first part of the questionnaire.

These last two questions were more qualitative than the preceding eleven questions. The purpose of inserting these two questions was, as stated above, to confirm or elaborate on any of the responses made in the first part of the questionnaire and also to provide any further information that the researcher may have overlooked in preparation of the questionnaire. In addition, the information received from the responses to these two questions could possibly provide material for a related research project.

Processing of the responses to these last two questions will depend on the nature of the responses themselves.

3.11 Conclusion

The key points raised in this chapter are:

- (i) The survey was carried out among all the Grade 11 learners at six schools - both English- and Afrikaans-medium - in one town on the East

Rand. However, the analysis and research was limited to white learners who had received all their high school education in South Africa.

- (ii) The survey took the form of a questionnaire, which was completed by the respondents in the researcher's presence during one or two class periods. It was considered that the "matched guise" technique was not appropriate in this case.
- (iii) Learners were asked to state their home language, in order to enable the researcher to determine whether there was any correlation between this and any of the aspects being investigated.
- (iv) Learners were asked to indicate their religious denomination, in order to enable the researcher to determine whether there was any correlation between this and any of the aspects being investigated.
- (v) Learners were asked to indicate their gender. The purpose of this was to enable the researcher to determine whether there was any difference between the boys' and girls' responses.
- (vi) The subjects on which the survey was based were restricted to those subjects in the English-medium schools which were taught by both Afrikaans- and English-speaking teachers - in addition to Afrikaans itself, which was taught solely by Afrikaans L1 teachers - and which were

common to all the participating schools, both English- and Afrikaans-medium.

- (vii) Learners were asked to indicate their subject preferences. The purpose of this was to determine whether there was any correlation between their preference for the subject concerned and the teacher's home language (in the case of the English-medium schools) and (when the year-end marks were made available) to establish whether there was any correlation between the teacher's home language and the learner's academic performance in a subject.
- (viii) Learners at both the Afrikaans- and English-medium schools were asked to indicate their preferences for the two former sole official languages. The purpose of this was to determine their attitude to these languages.
- (ix) Learners were asked to give confidential information on their attitude toward their teachers. The purpose of this was to eliminate, as far as possible, any possibility of a particular teacher being a role model (or the opposite), thus influencing the other responses.
- (x) Although anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed (each learner being given a unique number, which was used in this investigation - see Tables B.2 and B.3 in Appendix B), respondents were asked to give their names so that their responses could be correlated with their academic performance (year end marks).

- (xi) Although the researcher would have liked to have included socio-economic status as a variable, this was not possible owing to the schools' unwillingness to divulge this type of information. Inclusion of this information could possibly have resulted in some modification of the conclusions reached.

4 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the information supplied by the learners in the questionnaires is analysed and discussed. Conclusions based on these responses are then drawn.

In order to preserve the anonymity of the schools and learners, each school was coded according to medium of instruction: E (English) or A (Afrikaans). The four English-medium schools are listed from EA to ED and the two Afrikaans-medium schools are listed as AA and AB. Each learner is individually coded according to his/her school, e.g. EA1 represents Learner 1 at English-medium school EA. The learners are also grouped according to sex (M and F). They were also asked to indicate their home language, nationality (if not South African) and religious denomination.

4.2 Statistical Analysis of Results

As virtually all the findings and conclusions in this investigation are based on statistical analyses of numerical values (subject preferences, year-end marks and numerical values of the responses to questions 10 to 20), an explanation of the statistical terms used would not be out of place.

The terms “mean”, “arithmetic mean” and “average” are used interchangeably and represent the sum of all the numerical values in a set of variables, divided by the number of variables in the set.

The term “variable” refers to the aspect being investigated. In this investigation the variables are home language, gender, year-end marks, subject preferences and responses to questions 10 to 20 (the latter of which are represented on a numerical scale of 1 to 5).

The standard deviation or root-mean-square deviation (σ) of a set of variables is a measure of the dispersion or scatter of the variables around the mean. In the case of the learners’ ages, for example, the mean age of the learners who participated in this study is 17.37 years and the standard deviation is 0.44 years, indicating that the ages of 95 per cent of the learners fall within two standard deviations of the mean age, i.e. between 16.93 and 17.81 years and that less than 1 per cent of the learners’ ages lie more than three standard deviations from the mean age, i.e. below 16.05 years or above 18.69 years. It is thus a measure of the uniformity or homogeneity of the set of variables. The closer the standard deviation is to zero, the more uniform is the set of variables. The standard deviation (σ) is calculated from the following equation:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2}{n}} \dots\dots\dots \text{Eq. 4.1}$$

- where:
- x = Each individual learner’s age
 - \bar{x} = Mean age of all the learners
 - n = Number of learners
 - \sum = Sum of all the values.

For the correlation between two sets of variables to be statistically significant there must either be a strong correlation between the two sets of paired variables or the differences between the means of two sets of variables should be great enough to allow the researcher to say that the two sets of variables belong to different populations. In statistics the term population “is used ... to refer to any collection of entities of whatever kind, that is the object of the investigation” (Butler, 1985:1). In the example below, the two populations are the *ratings* given by the boys and girls, *not* the boys and girls themselves. For example, the numerical mean value of the responses to Question 10 by English-speaking girls (3.5) who were taught Accounting by Afrikaans-speaking teachers differed from those of the boys’ (2.7) to such an extent that it can be said that gender played a significant role in their responses. (See also Table E.23 [shaded] in Appendix E.)

4.3 Summary and Analysis of Results

4.3.1 Personal Details

4.3.1.1 Numbers of Learners Participating in the Survey

The total numbers of white learners who completed valid questionnaires are given in Table B.1 of Appendix B.

4.3.1.2 Nationality of Respondents

In order to ensure that only South Africans or those with a long-term connection with South Africa were included in the survey, thus excluding foreigners who might have different opinions or outlooks (such as visiting exchange students, etc.), only South African learners and those who had been in the country for at least five years (i.e. those who had received all their high school education in this country) were included in the survey. Only one learner, a German exchange student, had to be excluded for this reason and is not included among the respondents.

It was noted that many of the learners of Portuguese extraction at the English-medium schools stated their nationality as Portuguese. However, from further investigation, and as a result of personal acquaintance with many of these, all of whom had been born in South Africa, mostly to South African-born parents or to parents originally from Portugal or Mozambique, it was decided that these learners were confusing “ethnic group” with “nationality”. All these

learners were thus recorded as South African. Full details are given in Tables B.2 and B.3 of Appendix B.

4.3.1.3 Religion

The possibility was considered that learners' attitudes and responses might be influenced by their religious affiliation. This was inspired by the fact that in Northern Ireland religion has a socio-political aspect, a person's religious affiliation being, by and large, an indication of his or her political sympathy, as discussed in Chapter 1. Although the socio-political situation in South Africa differs from that in Northern Ireland, the possibility of there being any correlation between religion and attitude was investigated. Each learner was thus asked to state his/her religion. Although it is most unlikely that religious beliefs would influence a person's attitudes towards a particular language *per se*, they might influence one's attitude towards the user of the language and, by extension, to the language itself.

It was found that English-speaking Methodists showed a significantly greater preference for English as a school subject than did the Roman Catholics. This figure might possibly be skewed against the Catholics in general, because of the large proportion of learners of Portuguese extraction in the Catholic group and who, despite their assimilation into the "English" group, might not have the same attachment to English as their classmates of non-Portuguese extraction. However, as discussed in Section 4.3.1.4 below, most of these ethnic Portuguese had virtually no contact with the Portuguese language, did not use it and could not speak or understand it.

The religious affiliations of the learners are given in full in Tables B.2 and B.3 of Appendix B and summarised in Tables B.4 and B.5.

One possible aspect that was not touched upon in this investigation was a possible overlap between home language, religion and “nationality” (or ethnic background). As a sizeable proportion of the English-speaking learners are of Portuguese extraction, who, irrespective of their home language, are almost all Roman Catholic, their attitudes could be influenced more by their background than by their religion.

The aspect of religious denomination was thus not considered in this study as a possible determinant of attitude or academic performance.

4.3.1.4 Home language

Learners were asked to state their home language. Almost without exception all the learners at the Afrikaans-medium schools listed their home language as Afrikaans. Sixteen of the learners in the English-medium schools gave their home language as “Portuguese” or “Portuguese/English”. However, through personal acquaintance with many of these learners and their families (see 4.3.1.2 above), the researcher was able to establish that, in fact, almost all of these so-called Portuguese-speaking learners actually spoke English at home, even to their parents, even if their parents often spoke Portuguese among themselves. (The researcher is personally acquainted with one Portuguese girl who is now [2005] in Grade 12. She cannot speak any Portuguese but when she is out of school she often wears a T-shirt with the words “Portuguese and proud of it”). Also, many of the learners with

Portuguese surnames entered “English” only as their home language. The latter are thus recorded as English-speaking. The learners’ stated home language is given in Tables B.2 and B.3 of Appendix B.

In all, 16 Portuguese-speaking learners were identified - 12 girls and four boys .

The following formula (given in Moroney, 1953: 221) was used to calculate whether the preferences and marks of the various groups identified, e.g. boys and girls, differed significantly or whether these groups could be considered as belonging to the same population (in the statistical sense of the term), at a 95 per cent level of confidence.

$$\sigma_{\text{Group A}}, \sigma_{\text{Group B}} = \frac{\sqrt{(\sigma^2/n_{\text{Group A}}) + \sigma^2/n_{\text{Group B}}}}{\dots\dots\dots}\text{Eq. 4.2}$$

where:

$\sigma_{\text{Group A}}$ = Standard deviation (Variable relating to respondents in Group A)

$\sigma_{\text{Group B}}$ = Standard deviation (Variable relating to respondents in Group B)

n = Number of respondents in each group.

A 95 per cent level of confidence (or 5 per cent level of significance) means that there is only a 5 per cent probability that the observed differences between the mean values of each variable studied are due to chance or to other factors not catered for in the calculation of the means. If the measured

difference between a pair of means is greater than the significance value calculated according to Eq. 4.2 above, then the difference between these is real and highly significant, and the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under investigation (e.g. language preference ratings for boys/girls or marks obtained by the boys and girls), otherwise the measured variables of the two populations may be considered as being similar.

Since the numbers of Portuguese-speaking learners were too small to allow any meaningful statistical conclusions to be drawn on the basis of home language, gender or teacher's L1, the Portuguese and non-Portuguese learners were considered as one group in this study. The numbers of learners taking each subject are shown in Table 4.1 below.

4.3.1.5 Gender

In order to determine whether there was any correlation between the learners' gender and their preference or performance in language subjects or in the subjects taught by English- and Afrikaans-speaking teachers, all the learners were subdivided according to gender, teacher's L1, grade (higher or standard) and subject.

The proportion of girls (57.2 per cent) included in the survey was greater than that of the boys (42.8 per cent). In the case of the English- medium schools, the girls and boys represented 51.4 and 48.6 per cent of the total respectively. In the case of the Afrikaans schools, there was a much larger difference between the proportions of girls and boys, the corresponding proportions being 66 and 34 per cent respectively.

Any differences in the responses of the boys and girls may thus be attributed principally to gender. Any differences between the boys' and girls' subject preferences are discussed in Section 4.3.3 below.

4.3.2 Academic subjects

4.3.2.1 Subjects taken and included in the survey

In order to ensure that the same variables were measured throughout, only those subjects common to all the schools participating in the survey - both English- and Afrikaans-medium - were included in the investigation. These are listed below. In addition, apart from Afrikaans (the teachers of which were all Afrikaans-speaking), only those subjects offered by the English-medium schools in which some of the learners were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers and some by English-speaking teachers are listed. This resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of data to be processed. However, all the data relating to all the subjects offered by all the schools were saved.

The purpose of listing the school subjects was to determine to what extent the learners' attitude towards - and possibly academic performance in - a particular subject might be influenced by the home language of the teacher of that subject. This was considered to be an indirect method of determining the learners' attitude to the teacher concerned and to the teacher's L1.

The subjects included in the investigation are listed in Table 4.1 below and in Tables C.1 and C.2 of Appendix C.

Table 4.1 Numbers of Learners Taking Each Subject (by School)						
School	Subject					
	Afrikaans	English	Mathematics	Biology	Accounting	Geography
English-medium Schools						
EA	113	113	87	55	31	35
EB	51	51	47	15	12	36
EC	57	57	42	45	14	18
ED	75	75	60	23	15	28
Afrikaans-medium Schools						
AA	166	166	120 (129)*	69	44	24
AB	31	31	23	21	14	9
Totals	493	493	380	229	130	150

* Nine learners from one school took Mathematics at Functional (Lower Grade) level. However, in order to enable the responses of learners at the same level in each subject to be compared, these nine learners were omitted from the Mathematics evaluations.

4.3.3 Subject preferences

4.3.3.1 Preferences for language subjects

The subject preferences and year-end marks of both boys and girls for both higher grade (HG) and standard grade (SG) language subjects, at both English- and Afrikaans- medium schools are given in full in Tables D.1 and D.2 of Appendix D respectively and summarised in Table 4.2 below.

As stated above, the purpose of listing these was to determine to what extent the learners' attitude towards English might be influenced by the teacher's home language of the teacher of that subject. In addition, the learners' preferences for the two former official languages might be indicative of their

attitude towards the language itself and not so much their attitude towards their teachers.

The numbers of learners listing English and Afrikaans among their three most preferred subjects are given in Table 4.3 below. Full details of their language subject preferences are given in Tables D.1 and D.2 of Appendix D and summarised in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.3 shows that 111 (37.5 per cent) of all the learners at the English-medium schools included both English and Afrikaans among their three favourite subjects, with 103 (34.8 per cent) favouring English only. Only one boy (representing 0.3 per cent of all the respondents) included only Afrikaans as one of his three favourite subjects.

Of all the learners at the English-medium schools, 60 (39.5 per cent) of the girls and 51 (35.4 per cent) of the boys included both languages among their three favourite subjects, irrespective of the teacher's home language, with 46 (30.3 per cent) of the girls and 57 (39.6 per cent) of the boys listing only English among their three favourite subjects. Thirty-five of the boys (24.3 per cent) and 46 of the girls (30.3 per cent) did not include either language among their three favourite subjects.

Table 4.2 Language preferences and year-end marks of learners at English-medium schools (English and Afrikaans)							
Gender		M	F	All	M	F	All
English							
English (English-speaking teachers)				English (Afrikaans-speaking teachers)			
Pref.	No.	124	137	261	20	15	35
	Mean Rating	2.56	2.642	2.602	2.50	2.67	2.57
	Std. Dev	(1.568)	(1.679)	(1.625)	(1.732)	(1.952)	(1.803)
Year-end Marks	No.	124	127	261	20	15	35
	Mean Mark	56.3	56.2	54.73	50.2	55.47	52.46
	Std. Dev	(8.702)	(8.490)	(8.688)	(5.935)	(5.249)	(6.166)
Afrikaans							
Afrikaans (Afrikaans-speaking teachers)							
Pref.	No.	144	152	296			
	Mean Rating	4.13	3.76	3.94			
	Std. Dev	(1.648)	(1.594)	(1.628)			
Year-end Marks	No.	144	152	296			
	Mean Mark	54.3	60.7	57.60			
	Std. Dev	(13.109)	(13.807)	(13.827)			

The “mean rating” is the mean of the learners’ preference for the subjects concerned, on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being the most preferred.

As stated above, all the learners at the English-medium schools were treated as one group in an attempt to determine whether the teachers’ L1 had any influence on the learners’ preferences. The significance of the difference in the proportions of the two groups of learners at the English-medium schools who listed English as one of their three favourite subjects and who were taught English by English- or Afrikaans-speaking teachers was determined according to the following test for the significance of differences in proportions (at a 95 per cent significance level) (Harper, 1977:175):

$$1.65(\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2) = \sqrt{p(1-p)/n_{(Afr. L1 Teachers)} + p(1-p)/n_{(Eng. L1 Teachers)}} \quad \text{Eq.4.3}$$

where:

$\hat{\sigma}_{(p_1 - p_2)}$ = Critical Value for the difference between the proportions of learners who were taught English by English and Afrikaans L1 teachers

p_{Eng} = Proportion of learners with English L1 teachers

p_{Afr} = Proportion of learners with Afrikaans L1 teachers

n = Numbers of respondents in each group.

It can be seen that the difference between the two proportions is:

$$(193/261 - 21/35) = (0.74 - 0.60) = 0.14$$

The Critical Value determined according to Eq. 4.3 above is 0.1438. As the difference in proportions is less than the Critical Value, it must be concluded that the teachers' L1 has no effect on the learners' inclusion of English among their three favourite subjects.

The significance of the difference in the proportions of the boys and girls at the English-medium schools who listed English as one of their three favourite subjects was also determined according to Eq. 4.3 above. This yielded a Critical Value of 0.0519. As the difference between the proportions of boys (0.75 or 75 per cent) and girls (0.6974 or 69.74 per cent) listing English as one of their three favourite subjects (0.0526) exceeds the Critical Value, it is

concluded that the learners' gender plays a role, with more boys than girls favouring English. This could be because the boys favour English as a "soft option" by comparison with Afrikaans and the non-language subjects studied (as well as the subjects studied subjects studied (as well as the subjects not included in this study for the reasons given in Section 3.6 above).

Table 4.3 Numbers of learners listing English or Afrikaans among their three favourite subjects: English- and Afrikaans-medium schools (English- and Afrikaans-speaking teachers)

English - medium schools										Afrikaans - medium schools		
English-speaking teachers			Afrikaans-speaking teachers			All teachers			Afrikaans-speaking teachers			
All			All			All			All			
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
English only	50 (40.3%)	43 (31.4%)	93 (35.6%)	7 (35.0%)	3 (20.0%)	10 (28.6%)	57 (39.6%)	46 (30.3%)	103 (34.8%)	6 (9.0%)	26 (20.0%)	32 (16.2%)
Afrikaans only	-	-	-	1 (5.0%)	-	1 (2.9%)	1 (0.7%)	-	1 (0.3%)	14 (20.9%)	26 (20.0%)	40 (20.3%)
English and Afrikaans	46 (37.1%)	54 (39.4%)	100 (38.3%)	5 (25.0%)	6 (40.0%)	11 (31.4%)	51 (35.4%)	60 (39.5%)	111 (37.5%)	40 (59.7%)	68 (52.3%)	108 (54.8%)
Neither	28 (22.6%)	40 (29.2%)	68 (26.0%)	7 (35.0%)	6 (40.0%)	13 (37.1%)	35 (24.3%)	46 (30.3%)	81 (27.4%)	7 (10.4%)	10 (7.7%)	17 (8.6%)
Totals	124	137	261	20	15	35	144	152	296	67	130	197

Table 4.4 Mean preference ratings of learners at English-medium schools: English		
	Boys	Girls
Learners' mean preference rating	2.55	2.64
Standard Deviation	1.586	1.701
Number of respondents	144	152
	Difference in mean values	Critical Value
	0.09	0.191
Difference in means and Standard Error of Difference (Critical Value) as determined according to Eq. 4.2	As the differences between the mean values are less than the Critical Value, the difference between the boys' and girls preference ratings are not significant at a 95 per cent level of confidence, i.e. although the boys are slightly more positive towards English than the girls, the difference is insignificant and it may be concluded that boys and girls have the same preference for English as a subject.	

Table 4.5 Mean preference ratings of learners at English-medium schools: Afrikaans		
	Boys	Girls
Learners' mean preference rating	4.13	3.76
Standard Deviation	1.648	1.594
Number of respondents	144	152
	Difference in mean values	Critical Value
	0.037	0.189
Difference in means and Standard Error of Difference (Critical Value) as determined according to Eq. 4.2	As the difference between the mean values is greater than the Critical Value, the difference between the boys' and girls preference ratings are statistically significant at a 95 per cent level of confidence, i.e. the boys are more negative towards Afrikaans than the girls.	

The “mean rating” is the mean of the learners’ preference for the subjects concerned, on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being the most preferred.

N.B. Words in parentheses indicate the group with the more positive rating.

The subject preferences of the learners at the English-medium schools (for both the language and non-language subjects), as a function of the subject teacher's home language are given in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 below.

In these tables the mean subject preferences are rated from 1 (favourite) to 6 (least liked) subject, together with the numbers and percentages of learners indicating that subject preference rating.

TABLE 4.6 LEARNERS' SUBJECT PREFERENCES - ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS								
Teacher's L1	Learners	Subj. Pref.	Afrikaans	English	Accounting	Biology	Geography	Mathematics
Afrikaans	Boys	1	1 (0.75%)	9 (45.0%)	2 (11.8%)	-	1 (5.9%)	3 (15.05)
		2	40 (27,8%)	3 (15,0%)	3 (17,6%)	5 (71,5%)	-	4 (20,0%)
		3	15 (10,4%)	2 (10,0%)	4 (23,5%)	1 (14,3%)	2 (11,8%)	5 (25,0%)
		4	16 (11,1%)	2 (10,0%)	-	1 (14,3%)	(47,1%)	3 (15,0%)
		5	27 (18,8%)	3 (15,0%)	4 (23,5%)	-	2 (11,8%)	3 (15,0%)
		>6	45 (31,2%)	1 (5,0%)	4 (23,5%)	-	4 (23,5%)	2 (10,0%)
	Girls	1	5 (3,3%)	8 (53,3%)	4 (15,4%)	3 (20,0%)	1 (9,1%)	-
		2	48 (31,6%)	-	4 (15,4%)	3 (20,0%)	2 (18,2%)	-
		3	13 (8,6%)	1 (6,7%)	4 (15,4%)	4 (26,7%)	3 (27,3%)	3 (33,3%)
		4	31 (20,4%)	2 (13,3%)	4 (15,4%)	2 (13,3%)	3 (27,3%)	1 (11,1%)
		5	28 (18,4%)	3 (20,0%)	3 (11,5%)	1 (6,7%)	-	3 (33,3)
		>6	27 (17,8%)	1 (6,7%)	7 (26,9%)	2 (13,3%)	2 (18,2%)	2 (22,2%)
	All	1	6 (2.0%)	17 (48.6%)	6 (14.0%)	3 (13.6%)	2 (5.4%)	3 (10.3%)
		2	87 (29.4%)	3 (8.6%)	7 (16.3%)	8 (36.4%)	2 (5.4%)	4 (13.8%)
		3	28 (9.5%)	3 (8.6%)	8 (18.6%)	5 (22.7%)	5 (13.5%)	8 (27.6%)
		4	46 (15.5%)	4 (11.4%)	4 (19.3%)	3 (13.6%)	20 (54.0%)	4 (13.8%)
		5	56 (18.9%)	6 (17.1%)	7 (16.3%)	1 (4.6%)	2 (5.4%)	6 (20 7%)
		>6	73 (24.7%)	2 (5.7%)	11 (25.6%)	2 (9.1%)	6 (16.2%)	4 (13.8%)
English	Boys	1	-	51 (41,1%)	3 (23,1%)	8 (24,2%)	16 (28,6%)	11 (10,0%)
		2	-	15 (12,1%)	1 (7,7)	4 (12,1%)	12 (21,4%)	10 (9,1%)
		3	-	17 (13,7%)	-	6 (18,2%)	7 (12,5%)	31 (28,2%)

		4	-	22 (17,7%)	2 (15,4%)	8 (24,2%)	6 (10,7%)	14 (12,7%)
		5	-	17 (13,7%)	3 (23,1%)	6 (18,2%)	11 (19,6%)	22 (20,0%)
		>6	-	2 (1,6%)	4 (30,8%)	1 (3,0%)	4 (7,1%)	22 (20,0%)

TABLE 4.6 (Contd) LEARNERS' SUBJECT PREFERENCES - ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS								
Teacher's L1	Learners	Subj. Pref.	Afrikaans	English	Accounting	Biology	Geography	Mathematics
English	Girls	2	-	16 (11,7%)	2 (12,5%)	20 (24,1%)	8 (23,5%)	8 (8,2%)
		3	-	16 (11,7%)	-	19 (22,9%)	7 (20,6%)	32 (32,6%)
		4	-	20 (14,6%)	4 (25,0%)	11 (13,2%)	6 (17,6%)	13 (13,3%)
		5	-	23 (16,8%)	2 (12,5%)	15 (18,1%)	5 (14,7%)	10 (10,2%)
		>6	-	5 (3,6%)	6 (37,5%)	7 (8,4%)	5 (14,7%)	29 (29,6%)
	All	1	-	108 (41,4%)	5 (17,2%)	17 (14,9%)	19 (21,1%)	17 (8,2%)
		2	-	31 (11,9%)	3 (10,3%)	24 (21,0%)	20 (22,2%)	18 (8,6%)
		3	-	33 (12,6%)	-	25 (21,9%)	14 (15,6%)	63 (30,3%)
		4	-	42 (16,1%)	6 (20,7%)	19 (16,7%)	12 (13,3%)	27 (13,0%)
		5	-	40 (15,3%)	5 (17,2%)	21 (18,4%)	16 (17,8%)	32 (15,4%)
		>6	-	7 (2,7%)	10 (34,5%)	8 (7,0%)	9 (10,0%)	51 (24,5%)
English and Afrikaans	All	1	6 (2,0%)	125 (42,2%)	11 (15,3%)	20 (14,8%)	21 (16,5%)	20 (8,4%)
		2	87 (29,4%)	34 (11,5%)	10 (13,9%)	32 (23,5%)	22 (17,3%)	22 (9,3%)
		3	28 (9,5%)	36 (12,2%)	8 (11,1%)	30 (22,1%)	19 (15,0%)	71 (30,0%)
		4	46 (15,5%)	46 (15,5%)	10 (13,9%)	22 (16,2%)	32 (25,2%)	31 (13,1%)
		5	56 (18,9%)	46 (15,5%)	12 (16,7%)	22 (16,2%)	18 (14,2%)	38 (16,0%)
		>6	73 (24,7%)	9 (3,0%)	21 (29,2%)	10 (7,3%)	15 (11,8%)	55 (23,2%)

TABLE 4.7 LEARNERS' MEAN SUBJECT PREFERENCE RATINGS - ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS								
Teacher's L1	Learners		Preference rating (from 1: most preferred to 6: least preferred)					
			Afrikaans	English	Accounting	Biology	Geography	Mathematics
English	Boys	Number	-	124	13	33	56	110
		Mean rating	-	2.56	4.0	3.1	2.9	3.8
		Std. Deviation	-	1.568	2.041	1.548	1.715	1.592
	Girls	Number	-	137	16	83	33	97
		Mean rating	-	2.64	4.25	3.2	3.4	4.0
		Std. Deviation	-	1.679	1.844	1.535	1.542	1.597
	All	Number	-	261	29	116	89	207
		Mean rating	-	2.60	4.14	3.2	3.1	3.9
		Std. Deviation	-	1.625	1.903	1.534	1.661	1.594
Afrikaans	Boys	Number	144	20	17	7	17	20
		Mean rating	4.13	2.50	3.8	2.4	4.3	3.2
		Std. Deviation	1.65	1.732	1.942	0.787	1.312	1.585
	Girls	Number	152	15	26	15	11	9
		Mean rating	3.76	2.67	3.7	3.1	3.3	4.4
		Std. Deviation	1.59	1.952	1.845	1.668	1.572	1.263
	All	Number	296	35	43	22	28	29
		Mean rating	3.94	2.57	3.8	2.9	4.0	3.6
		Std. Deviation	1.63	1.804	1.850	1.457	1.452	1.578

The difference between the proportions of boys and girls at the Afrikaans-medium schools who listed English among their three favourite subjects (6 + 40 out of 67 boys and 26 + 68 out of 130 girls) was statistically insignificant (see Table 4.3). However, in the case of Afrikaans as a subject, the boys were slightly more favourably disposed to Afrikaans than the girls, the difference between the proportions of girls (26 + 68 out of 130) and boys (14 + 40 out of

67) who included Afrikaans among their three favourite subjects (8.29 per cent or 0.0829). However, this difference was less than the Critical Value calculated according to Equation 4.3 (0.0985). This indicates that gender did not play a significant role in the Afrikaans learners' preference for Afrikaans.

Of the learners at the English-medium schools who were taught English by English L1 teachers, 193 (73.9 per cent) included that subject in their three favourite subjects (96/77.4 per cent and 97/70.8 per cent) in the case of boys and girls respectively) (See Table 4.3), in contrast to 21 of the 35 learners (60.0 per cent) who were taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers (12/60.0 per cent and 9/60.0 per cent) of the boys and girls respectively). The difference between the proportions of the two groups of learners is less than the Critical Value calculated according to Equation 4.3 and indicates that the English teacher's home language has a significant effect on the preference of the learners at the English-medium schools for English as a subject, since the proportion of learners who were taught English by English-speaking teachers and listed that language among their three favourite subjects was significantly greater than the corresponding proportion of learners who were taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers.

Table 4.3 above shows that 111 (37.5 per cent) of all the white learners at the English-medium schools include both former official languages among their three favourite subjects and that 81 (27.4 per cent) do not list either of these languages among their three favourite subjects. This could be indicative of their lack of interest in language *per se* or of their greater interest in their other school subjects. A possibility that should not be overlooked is that the learners

find the syllabus uninteresting. Although this was not brought out in responses to the questionnaire, the researcher was able to establish through personal acquaintance with many of the learners and with those who have left school in the last few years that the learners are not interested in, for example Shakespeare's plays or Dickens' novels. They find them difficult to follow and the language difficult to understand. One item on the English syllabus (a film review) has been unchanged for at least six years. The learners do not enjoy the latter and find it boring. They would prefer to have more modern literature on the syllabus than is currently the case.

In contrast to the English-speaking learners, the Afrikaans learners are much more positive to English and Afrikaans (see Table 4.3 above), with 108 (54.8 per cent) of them including both these languages among their three favourite subjects and 17 (8.6 per cent) omitting both of these. In addition, 32 (16.2 per cent) of them include English only among their three preferred subjects. This is indicative of their fairly positive attitude towards English, either because they regard it as the dominant language in South Africa or as an international means of communication.

In Tables 4.2 to 4.8 the values relate to the learners' preference for any particular subject, i.e. (1) represents the best liked subject and (6) or (>6) represents the least liked subject.

It can be seen in Table 4.8 below that the Afrikaans-speaking learners as a whole gave English a slightly lower preference rating (2.9) than did the English-speaking learners (2.6). If the differences between the Afrikaans boys'

and girls' preferences for the two language subjects ($2.35 - 2.24 = 0.11$ and $3.02 - 2.85 = 0.17$ for Afrikaans and English respectively) are evaluated according to Equation 4.2 above, it can be seen that the learners' gender did not have a significant effect on their preferences, although the boys were slightly more negative to English than the girls. In the case of the learners at the English-medium schools, however, gender does appear to have played a role, since there is a statistically significant difference between the girls' and boys' preference rating for Afrikaans, with the girls being much more favourable to Afrikaans (3.76) than the boys (4.13).

In addition, the Afrikaans-speaking learners showed a greater preference for English than did the English-speaking learners for Afrikaans. If the difference between the last mentioned preference ratings ($3.94 - 2.90 = 1.04$) (See Table 4.8) are evaluated against the Critical Value determined according to Equation 4.2 (0.139), it can be seen that this difference is highly significant and appears to be indicative of a greater acceptance of English by Afrikaners than of Afrikaans by English-speakers.

The girls at the English-medium schools were more positive towards Afrikaans than the boys. (See Tables 4.5 and 4.8.) This may be due to the fact that the boys are *less* interested in language subjects than the girls, rather than that the girls are *more* interested or motivated. The English-speaking learners - both boys and girls - rated Afrikaans very low in their list of preferences, with 50 per cent of the boys and 36.2 per cent of the girls listing that language among their two least-liked subjects. See Table 4.6. This is indicative of the

persistent disinterest in Afrikaans by the English-speaking section of the white community.

TABLE 4.8 MEAN LANGUAGE SUBJECT PREFERENCES - AFRIKAANS- AND ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS					
School	Subject	Learners	Boys	Girls	All
Afrikaans	Afrikaans	Number of Learners	67	130	197
		Mean Preference Rating	2.24	2.35	2.31
		Std. Deviation	1.46	1.81	1.69
		Mean difference	0.11		<i>0.239*</i>
English	English	Number of Learners	67	130	197
		Mean Preference Rating	3.02	2.85	2.90
		Std. Deviation	1.59	1.34	1.43
		Mean difference		0.17	<i>0.227*</i>
English	Afrikaans	Number of Learners	144	152	296
		Mean Preference Rating	4.13	3.76	3.94
		Std. Deviation	1.65	1.59	1.63
		Mean difference		0.37	<i>0.188*</i>
English	English	Number of Learners	144	152	296
		Mean Preference Rating	2.55	2.64	2.60
		Std. Deviation	1.59	1.70	1.64
		Mean difference	0.09		<i>0.191*</i>

NB. Preference rating from 1 (favourite) to 6 (least liked)

* Figures in italics represent the critical values determined according to Equation 4.2.

Just over 41 per cent of the learners at English-medium schools who were taught English by English L1 teachers stated that English was their overall favourite subject. The corresponding figure for those taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers was almost 49 per cent. See Table 4.6. As the difference between the proportions of learners who were taught by teachers of the two language groups (7.2 per cent) is less than the Critical Value determined according to

Equation 4.3, this indicates that the teachers' home language has no effect on the preference of the learners at the English-medium schools for English as a subject. This is one of the six aspects of language attitudes being investigated in this study. [See Section 1.3 (v) (d) on page 9 above] and confirms that the learners at the English-medium schools have little or no antipathy towards their Afrikaans-speaking teachers, despite some of their responses to the open-ended questions. (See Section 4.3.5 below.)

However, on page 64 above it was stated that the teachers' L1 had a significant effect on the learners' preference for English as a subject. This apparent contradiction is due to the fact that the proportions mentioned on that page related to those learners who listed English as one of their three favourite subjects and may or may not also have included Afrikaans as one of their three favourite subjects. The conclusion drawn in this paragraph is based on statistical analysis of the proportions of learners for whom English was the overall favourite subject. It can be seen in Table 4.6 that the proportions of learners - both boys and girls - at the English-medium schools, for whom English was the second or third favourite subject, were much smaller than those for whom English was the overall favourite, thus skewing the results to some extent.

In the case of Afrikaans, only 2 per cent cited Afrikaans as their favourite subject and 29.4% listed it as their second favourite. (See Table 4.6.) This is indicative of their lack of interest in Afrikaans.

The girls were more negative to English and more positive to Afrikaans than the boys. As stated earlier, this could be due to the boys' preference for more "practical" subjects. However, the differences in the girls' and boys' preferences are not statistically significant. (See Tables 4.4 and 4.5.)

Based on the means of their stated preferences and on the proportions of learners citing English as their overall favourite subject or as one of their three favourite subjects, this appears to indicate that preferences/liking of the learners at the English-medium schools for the two language subjects were influenced to some extent by the teachers' home language and that those taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers were even more positive towards English than those taught by English L1 teachers. In view of some of the responses to Questions 21 and 22, as well as of the unfavourable ratings given to Afrikaans-speaking teachers of English, it is difficult to explain this apparent contradiction.

However, the mean overall rating given by the learners at the English-medium schools to their Afrikaans speaking teachers (1.94), by comparison with that given to their English-speaking teachers (3.38), together with some of the responses to the open-ended questions (see Table E.13 in Appendix E), clearly indicate that, although they may like that subject, they object to being taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers.

The responses also appear to indicate that the English-speaking learners' attitude towards English is more neutral than that of the Afrikaans-speaking learners. The former appear to accept English unquestioningly, without

attaching any particular value to it, whereas the latter seem to regard it as an essential means of wider, international communication. English has now - to all intents and purposes - become the *de facto*, if not the *de jure*, language of record in South Africa. In addition, some historically Afrikaans-medium universities, such as the University of Pretoria and the Rand Afrikaans University are now virtually dual-medium universities. These factors may possibly also explain the relatively high preference rating for English at the Afrikaans-medium schools.

In the case of Afrikaans, the English-speaking learners' low preference rating may be explained by their own acceptance of English as a "functional and pragmatically considered aspect of daily life" (Hauptfleisch, 1977, Vol. 1:3), which is barely touched by Afrikaans.

In Section 2.2 it was stated that the aim of this investigation was to show whether the previously mentioned inimical attitude of each community to the other community's language and to the members of that community still prevailed. The figures in the tables in the appendices appear to indicate that, although English-speaking high school learners generally have little antipathy towards Afrikaans or Afrikaners, they are not interested in that language as a school subject. However, based on statistical analyses of the learners' responses to Questions 11 to 20 of the questionnaire, as well as by their responses to Question 21 (see Table E.13 in Appendix E), English-speaking learners strongly object to being taught English by Afrikaans L1 teachers, as indicated by statements such as "... (My English teacher) can't speak Englishhave to correct her when she reads. A Dutchman!";

“ ... We have an Afrikaans English teacher- what more can you say?” and
“ ...English teachers who can't even read proper English but teach it!”.

The teachers' L1 seemed to have little effect on the preferences of the learners at the English-medium schools for any of the subjects covered in this investigation. The learners' preferences for the non-language subjects covered by this investigation are given in Table 4.6 above. This confirms that the teachers' home language had no effect on the learners' preference for any particular subject, which was one of the aspects investigated in this study. [See Section 1.3 (v) (d) on page 9 above.]

The English-speaking learners rated Afrikaans very low (approximately 4th) on their list of subject preferences. This rating, together with some of the responses given to Questions 21 (*Are there any additional comments you would like to make about your teachers, their command of English/Afrikaans etc, subjects - anything?*) and 22 (*South Africa has 11 official languages at present. If these were to be reduced to 3 or 4 languages, which languages would you suggest, and why?*), appears to indicate that there is still disinterest in - and possibly even a negative attitude to Afrikaans among English-speaking learners. One of the responses to Question 21 related to a “Portuguese” teaching English. However, as stated in Sections 4.3.1.2 and 4.3.1.4 above, the “Portuguese”, particularly the teacher in question, are fully assimilated into the English-speaking community. (This particular response appears to indicate a xenophobic sentiment in the respondent.)

The Afrikaans-speaking learners tended to give English a preference rating similar to that given by the English-speaking learners. These learners also, naturally, because of their background and culture, tended to give a slightly higher preference rating to Afrikaans than to English, because, as Van der Merwe *et al.* (1974) [quoted by Hauptfleisch (1977, Vol. 1:2 - 3)] said, “Language identity forms one of the three basic characteristics of the Afrikaner”. It was only Afrikaans learners who expressed any opinion of Afrikaans as a language. However the differences between the Afrikaans learners’ preference for both languages were not statistically significant and indicate that the Afrikaans-speaking learners valued both languages to more or less the same extent.

Any possible anti-Afrikaans or anti-Afrikaner bias was not generally reflected in the English-speaking learners’ subject preferences. However, in the open-ended questions (see Table E.13 in Appendix E) some English-speaking learners referred to “stupid Afrikaners”, “Dutchmen” and “Capie”, by which it is assumed that he meant “Afrikaans”. One learner did, however state that “... (my Afrikaans) teacher can be boring but Afrikaans can be fun”.

4.3.3.2 Non-language subjects

The learners’ responses to questions relating to the non-language subjects were also analysed. As mentioned in Section 4.3.2.1 above, this part of the study was restricted to subjects common to all the schools participating in the survey and (in the case of the English-medium schools) which were taught by both Afrikaans- and English-speaking teachers.

The subjects studied are listed in Table 4.1 above.

As discussed in Section 4.3.1.4 above, the numbers of Portuguese learners were too small to allow any meaningful conclusions to be drawn from separate analyses of these. The only differences thus are related to gender, school and teacher's home language.

Differences in the learners' preferences for each of these subjects, both as a function of the learners' gender and the teacher's home language were analysed according to the method described in Section 4.3.1.4 (Eq.4.2).

Few significant differences were found in the learners preference ratings. Geography taught at English-medium schools presented the greatest number of statistically significant differences, the boys who were taught by English-speaking teachers indicating a much greater interest in Geography than the girls. The converse was true in the case of the learners who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. Taken as a whole, the learners who were taught by English-speaking teachers tended to show a greater preference for Geography than those who were taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers. These contrasting results for this subject appear to indicate that both gender and teacher's home language play a role in the learners' liking for this subject.

The only other significant difference was observed in the learners' preference rating for Mathematics. No significant differences were noted in the preferences of the learners who were taught by English-speaking teachers, but

there was a highly significant difference in the preferences indicated by those who had Afrikaans-speaking Mathematics teachers. Although the boys gave a higher preference rating to Mathematics than did the girls, irrespective of the teachers' L1, the boys who were taught by English L1 teachers gave that subject a statistically significantly higher preference rating than did those who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. As in the case of Geography, this appears to indicate that both gender and teachers' home language play a role in the learners' preference for Mathematics.

The significance of these preference ratings is discussed later.

4.3.4 Academic performance

4.3.4.1 Language subjects

The learners' year-end marks were made available to the researcher at the end of the 2001 academic year. These are given in full in Tables D.1 and D.2 of Appendix D and the marks for the two language subjects are summarised in Table 4.9 below. The mean absolute differences were determined by simple subtraction of the mean values for the learners at both the Afrikaans- and English-medium schools as a whole, and the significance of the differences determined according to the method described in Section 4.3.1.4 (Equation 4.2). They are analysed and discussed below.

The purpose of listing the learners' year-end marks was to determine to what extent the learners' performance in a particular subject might be influenced by

the home language of the teacher of that subject, and possibly to establish whether the learners were disadvantaged in any way by being taught by a non-native speaker of English. This was set out as one of the aspects to be investigated in this study. [See Section 1.3 (v) (e) on page 9 above.]

A secondary reason was to determine whether gender played a role in the learners' academic performance. However, it is not the purpose of this investigation to show that the learners of either gender are more studious or intelligent than those of the other gender.

In Table 4.9 it can be seen that the home language of the teachers at the English-medium schools generally had a statistically significant effect on the learners' performance in English, particularly in the case of the boys. Although the girls obtained better marks than the boys, irrespective of the English teacher's L1, all the learners were adversely affected to some extent by having Afrikaans-speaking English teachers. In addition, in the case of the learners' academic performance in English, as deduced from the year-end marks, it may be concluded that the learners' gender had an influence, with the girls outperforming the boys.

As regards academic performance in Afrikaans, it can be seen in Table 4.9 that the girls obtained higher marks (60.7 per cent) than the boys (54.3 per cent), the difference in their mean marks (6.4 per cent) being statistically significant at a 95 per cent level of confidence (Critical Value of 1.56, determined in accordance with Equation 4.2). This appears to indicate that the girls at the English-medium schools appear to be more motivated to learn

Afrikaans than the boys and that gender is the dominant factor governing the girls' apparent superiority in Afrikaans.

It can be seen in Table 4.9 that the boys who were taught English by English L1 teachers obtained higher marks (53.0 per cent) than those who were taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers (50.2 per cent), the mean difference (2.8 per cent) being statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. Although the girls who were taught by English-speaking teachers obtained better year-end marks than those who had Afrikaans-speaking teachers, the difference in their mean year-end marks is not statistically significant. However, as a group, all the learners who were taught English by English L1 teachers obtained higher marks (54.7 per cent) than those who were taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers (52.5 per cent). The difference between the mean marks of these two groups as a whole (2.2 per cent) is statistically significant and indicates that the learners are disadvantaged to some extent by being taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers, the possibility of which formed one of the aspects to be investigated in this study, as stated in Section 1.3 (v) (e) above.

In the case of the two language subjects, the girls performed better than the boys, irrespective of the teacher's home language. This was most pronounced in the case of both Afrikaans and English which were taught by Afrikaans L1 teachers, the differences in all cases being statistically significant. As stated above, this might be indicative of the boys' lack of interest in the language subjects, rather than of the greater interest and effort shown by the girls.

TABLE 4.9 MEAN YEAR-END MARKS IN LANGUAGE SUBJECTS ENGLISH- MEDIUM SCHOOLS						
Subject	Teacher's L1		Boys	Girls	All	
English	English	Number	124	137	261	
		Mean Year-end Mark	53.0	56.3	54.7	
		Std. Deviation	8.377	8.702	8.688	
		Mean difference (boys/girls)/ <i>Critical Value</i>		3.3/1.06		
			Mean difference (English/Afrikaans L1 Teachers)/ <i>Critical Value</i>	2.8/1.52	0.8/1.55	2.2/1.17
	Afrikaans	Number	20	15	35	
		Mean Year-end Mark	50.2	55.5	52.5	
		Std. Deviation	5.933	5.249	6.166	
Mean difference (boys/girls)/ <i>Critical Value</i>			5.3/1.90			
Afrikaans	Afrikaans	Number	144	152	296	
		Mean Year-end Mark	54.3	60.7	57.6	
		Std. Deviation	13.109	13.807	13.827	
		Mean difference (boys/girls)/ <i>Critical Value</i>		6.4/1.56		

4.3.4.2 Non-language subjects

Both learners' gender and teachers' home language appear to have had an influence on the academic performance of the learners at the English-medium schools in the non-language subjects, as reflected by their year-end marks. Their marks are summarised in Table 4.10 and are discussed below.

In the discussion below the words "significant" or "significantly" have their statistical connotation, i.e. that the difference between the values of the two variables being examined differ to such an extent that the two values may be considered (at a 95 per cent confidence level) as belonging to two different populations (in the statistical meaning of the term).

Overall results

Except possibly in the case of Mathematics, the year-end marks of the learners at the English-medium schools were negatively affected by having Afrikaans-speaking teachers. As in the case of the language subjects, this confirms the hypothesis in Section 1.3 (v) (e) above that learners are generally adversely affected by being taught by a non-native speaker of English.

Accounting

The mean year-end mark of the learners who were taught Accounting by English-speaking teachers (58.9 per cent) was higher than that of the learners who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers (54.2 per cent), the difference (4.7 per cent) being statistically significant at a 95 per cent confidence level (the Critical Value, calculated in accordance with Equation 4.2 being 3.49). In particular, the average mark of the boys who were taught by English-speaking teachers (61.3 per cent) was much higher than that obtained by the boys who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers (51.2 per cent). This difference of 10.1 per cent is highly significant (Critical value 5.16) and clearly indicates that the learners - and the boys in particular - were disadvantaged by being taught by an Afrikaans-speaking teacher. Gender does not appear to have been an influencing factor here, as the differences in the boys' and girls' marks did not differ significantly.

Biology

All the learners at the English-medium schools who were taught by English-speaking teachers obtained significantly higher year-end marks (54.3 per cent) than those who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers (43.4 per cent). Gender also appears to have played a role in the learners' academic

performance, as the girls - irrespective of the teachers' home language - obtained higher marks than the boys, although the differences are not statistically significant. This may be indicative of the girls' greater interest - and motivation to do well in Biology than the boys.

Geography

The results from that part of the study dealing with Geography are very similar to those relating to Biology. At a 95 per cent confidence level it can be concluded that the girls performed significantly better than the boys, irrespective of the teacher's L1 and that the mean marks of the learners who were taught by English-speaking teachers (52.5 and 56.0 per cent for boys and girls respectively) were significantly higher than those who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers (45.4 and 49.8 per cent respectively). As in the case of Biology, this may indicate that the girls are more motivated than the boys.

Mathematics

For this subject, the effect of gender appeared to prevail slightly over the effect of the teachers' home language. Although the mean year-end mark of the learners who were taught Mathematics by English L1 teachers (46.1 per cent) was higher than that of the learners who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers, the difference (2.9 per cent) is less than the Critical Value determined according to Equation 4.2 and is not statistically significant. However, the girls who were taught by English-speaking teachers performed better than the boys. These girls also performed better than the girls who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. In the case of the learners who were

taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers, although the boys obtained a mean year-end mark (43.4 per cent) that was slightly higher than that of the girls (42.8 per cent), the difference is insignificant and, overall, it may be said that the girls were slightly superior to the boys.

4.3.5 Learners' attitude towards their teachers

In order to eliminate or reduce the possibility of the learners' responses being influenced by the teachers themselves, either through personal dislike of the teacher or through the teacher being a kind of "role model" because of some extra-mural activity or for some other reason, some of the questions (particularly Questions 12 and 16 below) were devoted to the learners' attitudes to their teachers as people.

Question 12: What are the qualities you most admire in this teacher:

- (a) - Knowledge of subject? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (b) - Extramural achievements?(Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (c) - Teaching skills? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (d) - Discipline in the class situation? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (e) - Fairness towards students? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).

Table 4.10 Mean year-end marks for non-language subjects according to teachers' home language					
Subject	Gender	Year-end Mark	English-medium schools		Afrikaans-medium schools
			English L1 teachers	Afrikaans L1 teachers	Afrikaans L1 teachers
Accounting	Boys	Mean Std. Dev. No.	61.3 13.6 13	51.2 14.5 17	62.9 21.9 15
	Girls	Mean Std. Dev. No.	57.0 16.8 15	56.2 12.4 26	66.7 17.2 43
	All	Mean Std. Dev. No.	58.9 15.311 29	54.2 13.312 43	65.7 18.385 58
Biology	Boys	Mean Std. Dev. No.	52.4 14.5 33	40.7 9.3 7	52.3 13.7 23
	Girls	Mean Std. Dev. No.	55.0 12.7 83	44.7 9.7 15	53.5 14.7 68
	All	Mean Std. Dev. No.	54.3 13.218 116	43.4 9.550 22	53.2 14.415 91
Geography	Boys	Mean Std. Dev. No.	52.5 12.1 56	45.4 8.2 17	49.3 13.7 15
	Girls	Mean Std. Dev. No.	56.0 14.0 33	49.8 12.5 11	47.3 22.8 18
	All	Mean Std. Dev. No.	53.8 12.887 89	47.1 10.156 28	48.2 18.939 33
Mathematics	Boys	Mean Std. Dev. No.	41.8 13.7 110	43.4 21.1 20	49.7 15.3 51
	Girls	Mean Std. Dev. No.	51.0 12.8 9.7	42.8 14.3 9	53.6 15.7 92
	All	Mean Std. Dev. No.	46.1 14.051 207	43.2 18.976 29	52.2 15.636 143

Question 16: What are the qualities you most like in this teacher:

- (a) - Knowledge of subject? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (b) - Extramural achievements? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (c) - Teaching skills? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (d) - Discipline in the class situation? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).
- (e) - Fairness towards students? (Poor (1) to Best (5)).

However it appeared that many of the learners did not understand the difference between Questions 12 and 16 and regarded Question 16 as a repetition of Question 12. Many of the learners did not complete Question 16 and many of those who did simply repeated the responses given to Question 12. It was thus decided to exclude the responses to Question 16 from the survey, although the responses received are included in Tables E.1 to E.12 of Appendix E and summarised in Tables E.17 - E.35. It was also found that there was only one teacher - at one of the English-medium schools - whose extra-mural activities or other qualities might have had an influence on the learners' responses (she is a world-renowned athlete). Based on the learners' responses, however, they seemed to regard her as "just another teacher".

In the English-medium schools, except in the case of English itself, the teachers' home language did not appear to have had any effect on the learners' evaluation of their teachers. See Tables E.17 to E.35 in Appendix E (pages E.57 - E.67). In most cases, again except for English itself, the learners gave a more favourable rating to their Afrikaans-speaking teachers

than to their English-speaking teachers. Other than the learners' objection to being taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers (and one "Portuguese"), there was no indication of any animosity towards Afrikaners, which was one of the aspects studied in this investigation.

In the case of English as an academic subject, these learners were more negative towards their Afrikaans-speaking teachers than to the English-speaking teachers in every aspect covered in the questionnaire. This can be seen in Tables E.17, E.18 and E.34 in Appendix E.

4.3.6 Responses to questionnaire

4.3.6.1 Closed questions

General

The ratings given by the learners to their teachers (questions 10 - 20) are given in full in Tables E.1 to E.12 of Appendix E. The learners are grouped according to learners' gender, teacher's home language and medium of instruction.

The responses were analysed statistically. Statistical analysis of the responses allows firm conclusions to be drawn at a given level of confidence (in this case 95 per cent).

The results of these analyses are discussed below.

Mean values and standard deviations

The differences between the ratings given by the various sub-groups were determined as described in Section 4.3.1.4 above and their statistical significance calculated according to Equation 4.2.

It can be seen in Tables E.17, E.18 and E.34 of Appendix E that the home language of the English subject teacher in the English-medium schools had a major effect on the learners' responses to Questions 10 to 20. In every case the learners reacted unfavourably to being taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers.

The girls at the English-medium schools had a less negative attitude towards their Afrikaans subject teachers than did the boys, as can be seen in Table E.34 of Appendix E. In most cases their responses were significantly more positive than those of the boys. This may be indicative of the girls' greater motivation and diligence rather than of their superior intelligence.

In the four non-language subjects the differences between the English-speaking learners' evaluations of their English- and Afrikaans-speaking teachers did not differ materially with regard to the teachers' language skills, intelligibility, etc (Question 13). The most noticeable differences between the ratings given to the English and Afrikaans L1 teachers related to likeability, teaching skills, discipline in class, etc. In several instances, as indicated by their responses to the questionnaire (notably Questions 17 to 20), the learners reacted negatively to the Afrikaans teachers' pronunciation.

4.3.6.2 Open-ended questions

Question 21 : Are there any additional comments you would like to make about your teachers, their command of English/Afrikaans etc, subjects - anything? (Remember: no one will see this form and your answers will not be discussed with ANYONE. Any information you give is just to give further background or to complement your replies to Questions 1 - 20).

English-medium schools

Only 141 learners (47.6 per cent) of the learners at the English-medium schools responded to this open-ended question. Of these, only 23 respondents (16.3 per cent) gave responses relevant to this investigation and are discussed here. The remaining responses consisted of statements relating to favouritism, unfairness, bringing personal problems to school etc, as indicated in Table 4.11 below.

If these results are correlated with the responses to Questions 10 - 20 of the questionnaire, particularly Questions 12b, 12c, 13a, 13b, 13c, and Questions 17 - 20, all of which dealt with the teachers' accent, pronunciation, intelligibility etc., it can be seen that, in general, the learners had a more negative attitude towards their Afrikaans-speaking teachers of Afrikaans and English than did the Afrikaans-speaking learners towards

their teachers of English, which is not altogether surprising, since all the teachers at the Afrikaans-medium schools are Afrikaans teachers are Afrikaans-speaking. This, however, was not reflected in the English-speaking learners' overall attitude to their Afrikaans-speaking teachers of the other subjects. In fact, in most cases they generally rated these Afrikaans L1 teachers more highly than their English L1 teachers.

Aspect	English-medium Schools	Afrikaans-medium Schools
Fairness/Favouritism	42	10
Teaching Skills	50	13
Language	18	4
Offensive Language		2
Class Discipline	13	1
Knowledge of Subject	7	
Personal Problems	14	
Interesting/Boring	10	
Ethnic Background	2	
Sexism/Racism	4	
Attention to Slower Learners	4	
Other	21	5

A possible explanation for this is that the Afrikaans-speaking teachers might be better teachers, more experienced or more highly qualified than their English-speaking colleagues. Also, many of the Afrikaans-speaking teachers at the English-medium schools appeared to be older than their English-speaking colleagues.

However, many of the responses to Question 21 appear to contradict the numerical ratings given by the learners. Typical comments relevant to this investigation were “My English teacher can’t speak English” and “Get a biology teacher who can speak English”. In addition, in several subjects not covered in this investigation, the learners expressed negative sentiments towards their Afrikaans L1 teachers such as “.... often has to use Afrikaans to explain”; “... can’t speak English ...”; “ ... have bad attitudes towards us. This influences our marks badly because nobody wants to learn Afrikaans”; “How can a Portuguese teacher teach English?”. Some of the English-speaking respondents appeared to show antipathy towards Afrikaners in general (“a stupid Afrikaner who can’t explain”; “ ... is a Dutchman...”). Only one of the 23 respondents who gave relevant responses had a relatively positive attitude toward her teachers: “Teachers have good language and help us understand, but are sometimes aggressive”.

Fourteen of the relevant comments (60.8 per cent) came from the boys. One of the boys’ comments was “Teacher seems German”. As the teacher in question was an Afrikaans-speaking English teacher, it is assumed that the learner was referring to the teacher’s accent/pronunciation rather than to the discipline commonly associated with Germany.

Afrikaans-medium schools

Thirty learners (15.2 per cent) of the Afrikaans-speaking learners replied to Question 21. Of these only 6 (20 per cent) were relevant, the remainder (as in the English-medium schools) dealing with favouritism, unfairness etc. Relevant responses included comments such as “My English teacher doesn’t use good

English” and “(teacher’s) pronunciation is extremely poor”. One learner suggested that extra English classes be given as the learners were doing badly in that subject.

Question 22 : South Africa has 11 official languages at present. If these were to be reduced to 3 or 4 languages, which languages would you suggest, and why?

English-medium schools

Two hundred and seventy-nine (94.3 per cent) of the learners attending the English-medium schools replied to this open ended question.

Many of the learners appeared to have misunderstood the question and suggested that French, Portuguese, etc. should be official languages. Those learners who suggested the addition of a foreign language appeared to be thinking more of South Africa’s contacts with the outside world rather than of the convenience of South Africa’s inhabitants and inter-group contact and communication. Several facetious or irrelevant suggestions were made, such as Cantonese, Polish, “Islamic”, Tsotsitaal etc. These were disregarded.

Almost all the respondents proposed a reduction in the number of official languages to English, Afrikaans and one or two of the indigenous African languages (mainly Zulu and/or Xhosa). Fifty-five learners (19.7 per cent of the English-speaking respondents) did not include Afrikaans at all in their

proposed official languages. Comments in this regard included “dying language”, “don’t enjoy the language” and “irrelevant”.

Eighteen of the English-speaking learners (6.4 per cent of the respondents) included Afrikaans among their proposed reduced number of official languages, but placed it after an indigenous African or a foreign language. Two learners listed Afrikaans first in their selection. In all other cases English and Afrikaans (in that order) were proposed as first and second official languages respectively. Of the 18 learners who suggested the inclusion of Portuguese, only 5 (27.8 per cent) were of Portuguese extraction. Comments by these learners included “ ... many Portuguese in South Africa”. Some of the comments received were either racially offensive or irrelevant and were excluded from the responses analysed.

Afrikaans-medium schools

One hundred and nine learners (55.3 per cent of the respondents) responded to this question. As in the case of the English-medium schools, this question may have been misunderstood, since languages such as German, French, Chinese, Japanese and “Romans” (*sic*) were included for reasons such as “ ... want ek wil andere lande leer ken” (“ ... because I want to get to know other countries”). Two learners also included Sign Language and Braille. These responses were not taken into consideration in this study. As might have been expected, almost all the Afrikaans-speaking learners listed Afrikaans first, followed by English and one or two of the indigenous African languages (mainly Zulu, Xhosa and Sotho). Two learners proposed Afrikaans only and two proposed English only. Six of the Afrikaans-speaking learners (unlike their

English-speaking counterparts) expressed positive sentiments towards Afrikaans as a language, such as “my taal - ek is trots daarop” (“My language - I’m proud of it”) and “dis ‘n lekker taal” (“It’s a nice language”).

The responses to Question 22 are given in full in Tables E.15 and E.16 of Appendix E.

4.4 Responses to Questions 10 to 20 taken as a whole

English-Medium Schools

It is interesting to note that, of the 52 teachers at the English-medium schools who taught the subjects taken into consideration in this study, only 3 were male. Gender might therefore play a role in the learners’ preferences and performance, not only the learners’ gender, but also that of the teachers. Although there was no indication of this in the learners’ responses or in their assessment of their teachers, it is possible that the boys reacted more favourably to their female teachers than to the males.

It can be seen in Table E.34 that the boys who were taught Biology and Geography by English L1 teachers in English-medium schools gave higher mean ratings to these teachers than did the girls. On the other hand, the girls who were taught Accounting and Mathematics by English L1 teachers gave higher mean ratings to their teachers than did the boys. There was no significant difference between the boys’ and girls’ evaluation of the English L1 teachers who taught them English. These differences in the learners’

evaluations of their teachers may possibly be related to gender, since, for example, the girls' more favourable evaluation of their Mathematics teachers seems to outweigh their lower preference for that subject.

All the learners who were taught English by Afrikaans L1 teachers gave significantly lower ratings : 1.95 - 2.07, based on a scale of 1 (poorest/worst/least favourable) to 5 (best/most favourable) to these teachers than those given by learners who were taught by English L1 teachers (3.83 - 3.89). In the case of Afrikaans as a subject, the boys gave their teachers a relatively low overall assessment rating of 2.89, a rating significantly less favourable than that given by the girls (3.31), the difference of 0.42 being significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. The girls who were taught Accounting by Afrikaans-speaking teachers gave their teachers a more neutral mean rating (3.10 as opposed to 3.97) than that given by the girls who were taught by English L1 teachers. This seems to indicate that the learners' main objection stems from being taught Accounting by Afrikaans L1 teachers rather than from any animosity to the teachers themselves.

The boys who were taught Biology by Afrikaans L1 teachers rated their teachers more favourably (3.69) than did the girls (3.32). The difference of 0.37 in their overall evaluation of their Biology teachers is statistically significant, since it exceeds the critical value calculated according to Equation 4.2 (0.30). See Table E.34. This indicates that the learners' gender was a factor in their evaluation of their Biology teacher. However, since the Biology teachers at all the English-medium schools were women, it is also possible that the boys reacted more favourably to them than did the girls. As stated

above, this may have as much to do with the teachers' gender as with the learners'.

The boys gave their Afrikaans L1 Geography teachers a mean rating (3.46) less favourable than that given by the girls (4.16) to the same teachers. They also rated their English L1 teachers (3.91) more favourably than did the girls (3.36), the differences between the boys' and girls' ratings in both cases (0.70 and 0.55) being statistically significant (Critical Values of 0.09 and 0.17 respectively) . See Table E.34. It is difficult to determine which is the dominant factor here, since boys and girls give different ratings, depending on their teachers' L1. This rating may be influenced by the fact that, with one exception, all the Geography teachers were female. The sole male Geography teacher, an English speaker, only had girls in his class. These girls gave him a rating of 3.0, implying that the other girls rated their (female) Geography teachers less favourably.

The overall rating for the English L1 geography teachers might also be skewed by the fact that the geography teacher at one of the schools concerned (EA) has one of the largest geography classes of all the schools surveyed (see Table 4.1 above) and the learners in this teacher's class describe her as "boring" and say that she should make her classes "more interesting and exciting".

In the case of Mathematics, the boys taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers gave these teachers a more favourable rating (3.76) than did the girls (3.63). Both boys and girls also gave a significantly higher mean rating to their

Afrikaans-speaking teachers than to their English-speaking Mathematics teachers (3.31 and 3.48 respectively). Taken as a whole, the learners rated their Afrikaans-speaking teachers more favourably than their English-speaking teachers. The generally favourable assessment is probably owing to the preponderance of boys, as well as to the greater differences between the ratings given by the boys and girls to their English L1 and Afrikaans L1 teachers. These differences could possibly be related to gender, since the boys have a higher preference (3.8) for Mathematics than the girls (4.0). Also, as discussed in Section 4.3.5, some of these Afrikaans-speaking teachers are older - and probably more experienced - than their English-speaking colleagues. Also, since Mathematics is one of the optional subjects, the fact that a large proportion of girls chose that subject rather than other, less "technical" subjects, such as Domestic Science etc., indicates that they may be more motivated than the boys to excel in that subject.

Another aspect that could possibly be taken into consideration is that, in today's world, long-term careers and tertiary training are assuming increasing importance. Many girls who previously might have been content to become housewives or secretaries or to follow relatively low-skilled occupations such as shop assistants or supermarket cashiers are now looking to more rewarding careers such as accounting, law, teaching, engineering etc., which formerly were almost exclusively male preserves and are now becoming increasingly open to women. In addition, many of these relatively low-skilled jobs have now almost entirely been taken over by blacks as a result of affirmative action, resulting in opportunities in these fields becoming increasingly closed to white girls. This may motivate them to try to excel at school since they are now competing with males on a more equal footing.

Afrikaans-medium schools

The only significant differences recorded were those between the evaluation ratings given by the girls and boys to their English (3.78 and 3.42), Afrikaans (3.67 and 3.73) and Mathematics teachers (3.79 and 3.51) respectively). See Table E.35 in Appendix E.

The reasons for these differences are probably similar to those cited above for English-speaking girls.

As all the teachers at the Afrikaans-medium schools were Afrikaans-speaking, the teachers' L1 was not a factor.

4.5 Conclusion

- (i) A survey was carried out among white learners at six high schools in one East Rand town in Gauteng -four English- and two Afrikaans-medium schools.
- (ii) In the English-medium schools all the subjects dealt with in this study, including English itself, were taught by both English- and Afrikaans-speaking teachers. In the Afrikaans-medium schools all the teachers were Afrikaans-speaking, including the English teacher.

- (iii) In order to assess whether the attitudes of the learners at the Afrikaans-medium schools towards English differed from those of the learners at the English-medium schools with regard to Afrikaans, their responses relating to the two language subjects were compared with those of the learners at the English-medium schools.

It was found that the Afrikaans-speaking learners were more positive towards English (with a mean preference rating of 2.90) than were the English-speaking learners towards Afrikaans (mean preference rating of 3.94). See Table 4.8 above.

- (iv) The attitudes of the learners at all the schools were determined by means of questionnaires, in which they recorded their responses on a numerical scale. These were used to assess their attitudes towards their teachers and to determine whether their teachers' home language had any influence on their subject preference.

It was found that, with the exception of Geography, the teachers' home language did not have a statistically significant influence on the English-speaking learners' mean preference rating for any particular subject. In the case of Geography (see Table 4.7) this was because the boys were significantly more negative to their Afrikaans-speaking teacher (mean subject preference rating of 4.3) than the girls in the same group (3.3),

whereas the subject preference for Geography of the girls who were taught by both English- and Afrikaans-speaking teachers was not significantly influenced by the teachers' home language.

- (v) The effect of gender on the learners' attitudes was also investigated. It was found that in many cases gender - not only the learners' gender, but possibly also the teachers' - was the dominant factor governing the learners' responses.

As stated in Section 4.4 above (Page 94) girls are now more career-orientated than formerly, resulting in their being more motivated to try to excel at school since they will have to compete with males on a more equal footing.

- (vi) In addition to determining the learners' attitudes towards their teachers, as indicated by their responses to the questionnaire, the scope of the investigation was broadened to determine whether or not the learners were adversely affected by being taught by teachers whose home language was not English. For this purpose the schools concerned made the learners' year-end marks available to the researcher.

The responses of the learners at the English-medium schools indicate that the learners were generally disadvantaged through being taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. In all subjects the learners who were taught by English-speaking teachers received higher year-end marks than those who were taught by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. See Tables 4.9 and 4.10.

- (vii) Although some of the learners at the English-medium schools sometimes referred to Afrikaners and Afrikaans in derogatory terms, there was little evidence of outright hostility to that language or its speakers. None of the learners at the English-medium schools expressed any particular sentiment for - or particular attachment to - English, except that they objected to being taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers.
- (viii) The Afrikaans-speaking learners expressed pride in their language and also seemed to have a more positive attitude towards English than did the learners at the English-medium schools towards Afrikaans. This is supported by such comments as “...’n lekker taal” (“a nice language”) and “ek is trots daarop” (“I’m proud of it”).
- (ix) Today’s Afrikaners - especially Afrikaans youth - show no resentment at having to “wrestle with the enemy’s language”, as was reported by

Malherbe (1976, Vol. 2 :63). This is borne out by the mean preference rating given by Afrikaans-speaking learners to English (2.90), which was more favourable than that given to Afrikaans by English-speaking learners (3.94) (see Table 4.8). This is also supported by the Afrikaans learners' generally more favourable attitude to English as reflected in their responses to Question 22. See Table E.16 in Appendix E.

- (x) The reasons for this may have changed: nobody living today personally remembers the Anglo-Boer War and many of parents of the learners in this study had not yet been born during the resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism just before the Second World War. As stated earlier, the two communities are arriving at their own form of "toenadering" ("getting closer"), particularly in the urban areas, even if they have not yet coalesced. However this latter point is also open to doubt since almost 20 per cent of the respondents in the English-medium schools surveyed in this study have Afrikaans surnames and over 12 per cent of the respondents at the Afrikaans-medium schools have Irish or English surnames. The proportion of English-speaking teachers with Afrikaans surnames at the English-medium schools was almost 12 per cent.

- (xi) Although it would have been desirable to investigate the effect of socio-economic status on the learners' responses, this was not possible as the schools concerned declined to make this type of information available.

It is possible that this fourth variable (in addition to teacher's home language, learner's home language, learner's gender) might have led to different conclusions being reached.

(xii) It was thought that the learners' religion might have had an influence on attitudes as it does, for example, in Northern Ireland. However, as the socio-political situation differs from that in Northern Ireland and, indeed, in many other countries, this aspect was considered to be irrelevant and was not investigated.

(xiii) The findings from this investigation and recommendations arising therefrom are presented and discussed in Chapter 5.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Findings

Throughout this investigation statistical methods were used. In all cases the analyses were based on a 95 per cent probability, i.e. that the conclusion arrived at is based on the probability that there is only a 5 per cent chance that aspects other than those being investigated might have influenced the results and, consequently, the findings. Based on the statistical analyses of the data obtained from the questionnaires, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- (i) English-speaking learners generally have a negative attitude to Afrikaans, particularly as a school subject and, to a lesser extent, as one of the official languages of South Africa. This is supported by the mean negative preference rating (3.94) given to Afrikaans, by comparison with that for English (2.60). See Table 4.8 in Section 4.3.3.1. Some of the responses to the open-ended questions confirm this, such as “a dying language” and “Nobody wants to learn Afrikaans” and “Afrikaans - but I don’t like it” (responses to Question 22). However, none of the learners referred to Afrikaans in derogatory terms, such as “Kitchen Dutch”, (referred to in Section 2.1 (page 12), except possibly for one , who referred to “Capie”.

This attitude was not, however carried over to their Afrikaans-speaking teachers, who were frequently rated more highly than their English-speaking teachers. The only negative sentiments to Afrikaners came from those learners at the English-medium schools who were taught English by Afrikaans-speaking teachers. This, however stemmed from their objection to having Afrikaans-speaking English teachers, rather than from an anti-Afrikaner bias.

- (ii) The learners at the English-medium schools had a much more negative attitude towards Afrikaans than did the Afrikaans-speaking learners towards English. This was reflected in the two language groups' preference ratings for these languages (mean preference rating of 3.94 of the English learners for Afrikaans, by comparison with the Afrikaans learners' preference rating of 2.90 for English). See Table 4.8 in Section 4.3.3.1. Although most of the English-speaking respondents included Afrikaans as one of the languages to be retained if the present number of official languages were reduced (Question 22), there were also several anti-Afrikaans responses such as "NOT Afrikaans - a dying language" and "Don't enjoy the language". (See Tables E.15 and E.16 in Appendix E.) Nearly all the Afrikaans-speaking respondents included English as one of their three proposed official languages and no Afrikaans learner expressed any dislike for English or referred to it in disparaging terms. Based on some of the responses to Question 22, the Afrikaans-speaking learners appeared to appreciate the value of English as a world-wide means of communication.

- (iii) Girls - both Afrikaans- and English-speaking - had a more positive attitude to both these languages than did the boys. This is reflected by the higher ratings given by the girls. This is possibly because the boys have a more negative, neutral or disinterested attitude to language than the girls and, if they think about their mother tongue at all, simply regard it as a means of communication.

- (iv) All the English-speaking learners objected to being taught English by non-English-speaking teachers. This is reflected by the overall low ratings given by English-speaking learners to their Afrikaans L1 teachers and by comments such as “We have an Afrikaans English teacher. What more can you say?”; “English teachers who can’t even read proper English but teach it!” and “How can a Portuguese teach English?”

- (v) Except in the case of English, the *qualities* of the teachers (as perceived by the learners and reflected in their responses to Questions 10 - 20) did not appear to have played any part in the learners’ preferences for – or academic performance in – any particular subject.

- (vi) The teachers’ L1 did not appear to have had any influence on the learners’ preferences for any particular subject. However the English-speaking learners appeared to have a more favourable attitude to their Afrikaans L1 teachers of non-language subjects than to their English L1 teachers of the same subjects. This, as discussed in Section 4.3.6.2 (page 87) might be because the Afrikaans-speaking teachers are more experienced - and possibly have better class discipline and

understanding of their learners - than their English-speaking colleagues (the Afrikaans-speaking teachers tend to be older than the English-speaking teachers at the English-medium schools).

- (vii) The academic performance of the learners in all the subjects that were taught by English L1 teachers was superior to that of learners taught in English-medium schools by Afrikaans L1 teachers. See Section 4.3.4 (pages 74-80). This could possibly be due to the Afrikaans-speaking teachers' inability to explain or "put it across" rather than to the learners' tendency to "switch off" when being taught by a teacher whose use of English may be defective. This is illustrated in some of the responses to Question E.15 in Appendix E, such as "... stupid Afrikaner who can't explain"; "... should learn to speak English"; "... often has to use Afrikaans to explain" and "... can't speak English makes us read as she can't ... have to correct her when she reads". (The last-mentioned is an Afrikaans-speaking English teacher.)
- (viii) Gender was a major factor influencing the learners' language and non-language subject preferences. In almost all cases the girls' responses were more favourable than those of the boys. The girls also obtained higher marks than the boys, particularly in the language subjects. The reasons for this were given in par (iii) above. (See also Section 4.3.3.) The girls' subject preferences may also have been due to the fact that women are now generally interested in meaningful careers and are thus more motivated to succeed in what were formerly male-dominated fields.

- (ix) Almost all the learners - both English- and Afrikaans-speaking, supported the idea of there being only three or four official languages for South Africa. Most of them supported the retention of both English and Afrikaans as two of the official languages of the country. The majority of the learners were also in favour of the retention of only two indigenous African languages - notably Zulu and Xhosa - as official languages, the other languages losing their official status.

Forty-six (16 per cent) of the 282 English-speaking respondents did not want Afrikaans as one of this country's official languages. Some of the comments were "NOT Afrikaans"; "irrelevant"; "dying language". The remainder favoured the retention of both English and Afrikaans, sometimes with the addition of one or more of the indigenous African languages. See Table E.15 in Appendix E. This tends to support the proposition that there is still some bias against Afrikaans among English-speaking South Africans.

In contrast to the English-speaking learners, only 7 (6.3 per cent) of the 111 Afrikaans-speaking respondents to Question 22 entered "Afrikaans" as the sole official language of the country. Four Afrikaans-speaking learners (3.9 per cent) entered "English" only, the remainder in favour of retaining both these languages, sometimes with the addition of one or more of the indigenous African languages. Some of the comments included "English - necessary" and "English - international". See Table E.16 in Appendix E. This is indicative of the Afrikaners' recognition of

English as an international means of communication and of their acceptance of English as a necessary internal means of communication.

(x) A significant number of Afrikaans-speaking learners proposed the adoption of major European languages - mainly French and German, because “ek wil die andere lande ook leer ken” (‘I want to learn to know other countries’). It appears that many of them lost sight of the fact that the question related to communication *within* and *between* the various linguistic/ethnic communities in South Africa. These responses seem to reinforce their feeling that Afrikaans is only a local language and that a major European language is necessary for external communication. It also seems to confirm the Afrikaners’ acceptance of the downgrading of Afrikaans in the new dispensation in South Africa, from its position of privilege to merely one of eleven official languages, of which English is now the *de facto* dominant language.

(xi) The Afrikaans-speaking learners - particularly the girls - generally appeared to obtain higher marks than the English-speaking learners in English, and the English-speaking learners to gain better marks in Afrikaans than the Afrikaans-speaking learners. This is probably owing to the fact that the two language courses differ for the English- and Afrikaans-speaking learners, a distinction being drawn between “Afrikaans First Language”; “Afrikaans Second Language”; English First Language”; English Second Language”.

- (xii) The animosity of Afrikaners to the “English” and their language, referred to by Malherbe in Section 2.1 (Malherbe, 1976, Vol. 2 : 57 - 92) appears to be non-existent among Afrikaans-speaking learners. In none of the questionnaires completed by the Afrikaans-speaking learners were any comments made - either disparaging or complimentary - about the English-speaking group or the language.
- (xiii) The results of this investigation as a whole appear to indicate that the present-day attitudes of both English and Afrikaans speakers, particularly among the youth, have moderated over the last seventy years and there is greater acceptance of each other than previously. However, English-speaking learners still disparage Afrikaans to some extent.

This inter-community “toenadering” may be based on the fact that both white groups now consider themselves to be ‘endangered species’ under the new dispensation in South Africa and that the former South African motto “eendracht maakt macht” (“unity is strength”) now applies more than ever to whites.

5.2 Relevance and Possible Application of Findings

This investigation was carried out with very little relevant background information. Most of the inter-language or inter-community information that was available did not apply to the particular aspect of the South African situation that formed the basis of this investigation. The only truly relevant information that was available dated back to over six decades ago, when the social and political circumstances were very different from those currently prevailing.

The most striking fact to emerge from this investigation is that subjects taught in English-medium schools should be taught by English L1 teachers. The employment of Afrikaans L1 teachers in English-medium schools appears to have a detrimental effect on learners' academic performance. Policy-makers in the various provincial education departments should take all possible steps to promote the training of English-speaking teachers and to encourage their employment in English-medium schools - with the possible exception of those teachers teaching Afrikaans. In particular, English as a school subject in all schools, irrespective of the school's medium of instruction, should be taught by English-speaking teachers. Although this did not form part of the investigation and, despite the fact that Afrikaans-speaking teachers generally form the majority of the white teaching profession, consideration should also be given to promoting the employment of English-speaking teachers as teachers of English in Afrikaans-medium schools. This could only be of benefit to the learners. At present (at least in the Afrikaans-medium schools surveyed) there are no English-speaking teachers and Afrikaans learners have no basis of comparison, as do the English-speaking learners.

Shalem (1990:23) found that “No statistic is available on the ethnic upper reaches of the hierarchy, but it is commonly held that it is dominated by Afrikaans-speaking persons.” This may be because, as Shalem (1990: 265) says, “More Afrikaans-speaking than English-speaking teachers , even on a proportional basis, ultimately gain merit awards.”

Most English-speaking teachers in the former Transvaal Education Department felt that “... the Education Department is an Afrikaans department that employs a few English speakers and that the top jobs are the exclusive preserve of Afrikaners “(*sic*) (Brown, 1982, quoted by Shalem (1990:301).

Lee (1987:3) Found that “... the shortage of English-speaking teachers is created by factors such as poor remuneration in relation to equivalent occupations in the private sector, lack of autonomy,lack of identification with government ideology and dissatisfaction with the organisational climate in education generally.”

Although these statements were made over 15 years ago and the Transvaal Education Department no longer exists, many of the conditions then prevailing still exist, albeit in a different form, as the hierarchy is now black rather than Afrikaans. There is thus still little incentive for young English speakers to join the teaching profession. Some sort of “affirmative action” policy may be required to ensure an adequate supply of English-speaking teachers for English-medium schools. But it is not within the scope of this investigation to

suggest how this could be achieved. However the Departments of Education could give consideration to addressing the problems referred to above by Shalem and Lee.

Many of the learners at both the English- and Afrikaans-medium schools had friends/girlfriends/boyfriends of the “other” language group. Although this aspect did not form part of this investigation, consideration should be given to the establishment (or re-establishment) of parallel medium schools, in which learners could be taught in their own language, but would mix socially at “break” and on the sports field, much more so than at present.

Although this aspect was not considered - or even envisaged - at the outset of this investigation, an aspect worthy of promotion by South Africa’s education departments would be consideration of the extension of high school curricula to include, not only at least one of the indigenous languages of South Africa (Zulu, Xhosa or Sotho), but also a major European language (French, Portuguese or German).

However, this should not be realised by dropping any of the more “career-oriented” or “practical” subjects from the syllabus.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Although the questionnaires on which this investigation was based were completed by all the learners in the schools concerned, analysis of the results was limited to those completed by white learners. It is suggested that a similar investigation be carried out among the other racial or ethnic groups - blacks of various ethnic groups, coloureds and Indians - and that the investigation be extended to evaluate possible differences in attitude, not only between these particular groups, but possibly also between learners in these groups and white learners.

Some of the English-speaking learners were of Portuguese extraction. Although it was stated at the outset that most of these "Portuguese" had English as their first language, valuable information might be obtained from comparative analyses of the "Portuguese" data and, possibly, of other relevant data. Such an investigation would have to take into account aspects such as religion, ethnic background and stated home language, as these three factors may be interlinked.

The aspect of social class was not touched upon in this investigation. As stated earlier, the schools were unwilling to make this type of information available. Any possible future investigation of this type could possibly include this aspect. However it is considered that income level alone is not a valid criterion, since many people of the artisan or "blue collar" class have higher incomes than many people in "white collar" occupations or professions.

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