



**University of Cape Town**

**Language variation in the Botswana speech community and its impact  
on children's education**

**Dissertation submitted in accordance with the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree in the Department of Linguistics, African  
Languages and Literatures.**

**by**

**Carol Mmamonyana Ntshabele**

**Supervisor: Associate Professor D.S Gxilishe**

**Date of submission: September 1999.**

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

## **Acknowledgements**

My very profound thanks go to my supervisor Associate Professor D.S.Gxilishe, who has patiently and wisely guided me over the years of my study. He has been both an inspiration and a pleasure to work with. My indebtedness to him is unlimited.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor S.C. Satyo, the Chair of Discipline for allowing me a space, time and the opportunity to pursue my studies in his department.

My profound thanks go to Dr Russell Kaschula, who unconditionally and constantly supported me in my information seeking during my research. I want to thank him for patiently reading through and commenting on this thesis.

I wish to acknowledge all the people who played a significant role during interviews of this study. Without their assistance and co-operation this study would not have been possible.

I am also grateful to my friends Esther, Papali and Joseph, whose friendliness enabled me to cope with my work stress.

Lastly I want to thank my children, Kabo and Thabiso for their understanding, support, patience and love they gave me throughout the lonely years of studying.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my two wonderful children, Kabo and Thabiso Ntshabele for their love, support, patience, understanding and endurance throughout the long and lonely years of absence whilst pursuing my studies.

## **Abstract**

This study seeks to investigate Language variation in the Botswana speech community and its impact on children's education. The study is premised on the assumption that the learner's non-standard language from the home environment is not accommodated in the learning environment. The language used in the classroom is the standard language.

This study deals with aspects such as language change, language contact, language interference as well as standardisation and the differences that exist in the spoken and written Setswana. Sociolinguistic factors such as language use are also dealt with.

The problem of the use of non-standard varieties, as compared to the use of standard forms in the broad educational field is investigated. The research findings revealed that it is true that non-standard varieties have an impact on learners. Learners have to learn the new language as well as content at the same time.

On the basis of the above findings, this study concludes with the recommendation that teachers should be more sensitive to linguistic diversity.

# Table of Contents

Page

## Chapter One – Introduction

1.0	Introduction-----	1
1.1	Communicative function-----	3
1.2	Aims of study-----	5
1.3	Significance of study-----	5
1.4	Organisation of study-----	6
1.5	Methodolog-----	7
1.5	Literature survey-----	7
1.6	Geographical distribution-----	12
1.7	Historical background-----	17
1.8	Conclusion-----	20

## Chapter Two – Variation, language contact and language change

2.0	Introduction-----	21
2.1	Language variation-----	22
2.2	Defining language change-----	23
2.2.1	Influence of language change-----	25
2.2.2	Causes of language change-----	26
2.2.3	Consequences of language change-----	28
2.2.4	Language change in African languages-----	31
2.3	Language contact-----	32
2.3.1	The Impact of language contact-----	36
2.3.1.1	Imitation of the superior language-----	37
2.3.1.2	Cultural differences-----	39
2.3.1.3	Foreign and fashion influence-----	40
2.4	Setswana variants-----	43
2.4.1	Sengwaketse language variety-----	44
2.4.1.1	Phonological differences-----	45
2.4.1.2	Grammatical diferences-----	46
2.4.1.3	Lexical differences-----	47
2.4.2	Sekwena language variety-----	47
2.4.3	Sekgatla language variety-----	47
2.4.3.1	Phonological differences-----	48
2.4.3.1.1	Elision of the vowel-----	49
2.4.3.2	Grammatical differences-----	50
2.4.3.3	Lexical differences-----	51
2.4.4	Sengwato language variety-----	51
2.4.4.1	Phonological differences-----	51

2.4.4.2	Grammatical differences-----	52
2.4.4.3	Lexical differences-----	53
2.4.5	Setswana language variety-----	53
2.4.5.1	Phonological differences-----	54
2.4.5.2	Grammatical differences-----	56
2.4.6	Vocabulary-----	57
2.4.7	Pronunciation-----	57
2.4.8	Lexical differences-----	58
2.4.9	Conclusion-----	59

### **Chapter Three – Standardisation and language variation**

3.0	Introduction-----	60
3.1	Standardisation-----	61
3.1.1	The Impact of standardisation-----	64
3.1.2	Problems associated with standardisation-----	66
3.2	Language variation-----	70
3.2.1	Aspects of language variation-----	71
3.2.1.1	Gender variation-----	72
3.2.1.2	Age variation-----	74
3.2.1.3	Geographical - Regional variation-----	75
3.2.1.4	Social groupings variation-----	77
3.2.1.5	Occupation and role differences-----	78
3.2.1.6	Ethnicity-----	79
3.3	Attitudes towards the teaching of non-standard varieties-----	79
3.3.1	Teachers' attitudes-----	80
3.3.2	Students' and parents' attitudes-----	83
3.4	Conclusion-----	84

### **Chapter Four – Survey of language attitudes in the educational field and problems of use of non- standard Setswana**

4.0	Introduction-----	86
4.1	Aims of the questionnaires and interviews-----	87
4.2	Data collection-----	87
4.3	Discussion-----	90
4.3.1	Use of Setswana varieties in class-----	90
4.3.2	Academic performance in Setswana-----	92
4.3.3	Learners attitudes towards non-standard varieties-----	93
4.3.4	General comments and suggestions-----	97
4.3.5	Conclusion-----	98
4.4	Results of teachers' interviews-----	99

4.4.1	Teachers' qualifications-----	100
4.4.2	Interview procedures-----	100
4.4.3	Discussion-----	101
4.4.4	Teachers' attitudes towards non-standard varieties-----	104
4.4.5	Learners' academic performance in Setswana-----	106
4.4.6	Comments and suggestions-----	109
4.4.7	Conclusion-----	110
4.5	Discussion with the senior education officer of Setswana in the Unit of Curriculum -Development -----	112
4.6	Discussion with the senior education officer (examination) in the Unit of Curriculum Development-----	114
4.7	Discussion with the secretary /treasurer of the National Setswana Language Council-----	115
4.8	Conclusion-----	117

## **Chapter Five – Summary, conclusion and recommendations**

5.0	Introduction-----	119
5.1	Summary-----	120
5.1.1	Learners' problems-----	120
5.1.2	Teachers' problems-----	121
5.2	Non teaching participants-----	123
5.3	Conclusions-----	126
5.4	Recommendations-----	127
5.4.1	Main recommendations-----	127
5.4.2	Other aspects that require attention-----	130
5.5	Future research-----	131
5.6	Conclusion-----	132

<b>Bibliography</b> -----	133
---------------------------	-----

## **Appendices**

<b>Appendix I</b> - A letter from the Department of African Languages & Literatures written by the supervisor.-----	142
<b>Appendix ii</b> - A letter written by the researcher. -----	143
<b>Appendix iii</b> - Learners' interviews (in Setswana).-----	144
<b>Appendix iv</b> - Teachers' interviews. -----	146



## **Chapter One**

### **Setswana and the Batswana speech community.**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

In Africa, multilingualism is a characteristic of the entire continent. In comparison with the range of multilingualism in Europe, it is estimated that in Africa there are on average less than 200 000 speakers per language as against Europe's 8,3million speakers per language (PSALB 1995 cited in Calteaux 1996:17). Multilingualism in Botswana is characterised by the occurrence of various linguistic varieties within its confines.

Speakers of Setswana choose from their linguistic repertoires, that is all languages and varieties that they command that variety which is most appropriate to the particular situation in which they find themselves. The impact that this linguistic situation has on education, administration, official policy, politics and indeed on every aspect of day-to-day life is felt by everyone.

In our everyday life we rarely stop to think what language is, and how we use it. Whenever we do, we tend to think of language as a form of self-expression. Stringer (1973:11) views language as our primary means of contact with other people, it is the main way in which we organise our life and relations with others.

Without language, human society as we know would be impossible. Using language, then, is primarily a social act.

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:1) see language as a social or cultural phenomenon, as a part of society, as it is partly shaped by society and in certain circumstances it also shapes society. Stringer (1973:12) states that whenever people form a social group they tend to develop their own distinctive forms of behaviour, including language. This is why in any community we find a wide variety of languages.

Setswana is a national language of Botswana. The definitions and discussions by scholars above can be applied to Setswana language as well. Setswana as a language is made up of many dialects. Nobody knows for certain the number of dialects there are, but it has been customary to name the dialects after the various chieftancies, namely, Sengwaketse, Sekwena, Sengwato, Setawana, Sekgatla and others.

A number of attempts have been made to determine the relationship amongst these dialects. These include the works of Cole (1995), Doke (1957), Janson and Tsonope (1991) and Anderson and Johnson (1996). Some of the descriptions have traced their historical ramifications in which the Bakwena broke up into Bangwaketse and Bangwato and then the Bangwato into Batawana. From a historical perspective the Bakgatla, who were late arrivals, would constitute a separate and more distant dialect.

## 1.1 Communicative function

At a societal level language serves many functions. Saville-Troike (1982:15) contends that a language creates/reinforces boundaries, unifying its speakers as members of a single speech community, and excluding outsiders from intra-group communication. Many languages are also made to serve a social identification function within a society by providing linguistic indicators that may be used to reinforce social stratification. While many of the functions of language are universal, the way in which communication operates, in any one society to serve these functions is language specific (*Ibid* p17).

A speech community is one, all of whose members share at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use. One of the characteristics of a large and diversified speech community is that, some of the varieties within their verbal repertoires are primarily experientially acquired and reinforced by dint of actual verbal interaction within particular networks. While others are primarily referentially acquired and reinforced by dint of symbolic integration within reference networks that may rarely or never exist in any physical sense. The 'nation' or the 'region' is likely to constitute a speech community of this latter type and the standard language or the regional language is likely to represent its corresponding linguistic variety (Fishman 1972:23-24).

The Batswana speech community present ample evidence of both of these base-verbal interaction and symbolic integration for functioning of speech communities.

Botswana was declared an independent nation on September 30,1966, marking the transformation of the Protectorate of Bechuanaland to the Republic of Botswana. Around this time, the colonial rule of Britain came to an end in a number of African countries. In Botswana, the British authorities had little reason to oppose independence, because the country had never generated any significant net income for the colonialists. It was one of the poorest countries in Africa and in the world, with a moderate amount of meat as its export. Independence in Botswana was achieved without any violence, by a fairly painless administrative process (Janson and Tsonope 1991:67).

After independence, the territory was transformed from a conglomeration of traditional states with hereditary rulers, into a unified state with a democratic constitution of a western type. The leadership of the state faced a daunting task indeed, as there was acute shortage of well nigh everything except the sand of the Kalahari (*Ibid*: p67).

Botswana like most countries in the world is a multilingual country. There are at least more than twenty distinct languages spoken in the country today, (Nyati-Ramahobo 1996:1) among which most are of Bantu origin (Batibo 1997:22). According to Guthrie (1948, 1967) and Doke (1967) cited in Batibo (1997:22), the Batswana Bantu languages belong to both Eastern and Western streams.

## **1.2 Aims of study**

The main aim of this study is to investigate of language variation in Setswana language and to specifically look at the following:

- i.** To give a historical overview of the language varieties spoken in Botswana as well to establish the social status of the various language varieties in order to investigate possible correlation between the status of a variety and the status of its speaker.
- ii.** Investigate attitudes of educators towards different language varieties.
- iii.** Suggest ways of creating awareness that variation is a natural phenomenon in all languages and that the languages of all children should be accommodated in the classroom.
- iv.** Demonstrate that linguistic inequality is deeply entrenched in the educational system and that the very system is responsible for the perpetuation of this kind of discrimination.
- v.** Suggest means and ways of addressing the problems.

## **Significance of the study**

Since the study focuses on the possible correlation between the language varieties spoken by the learners and their education, the end results should be of value to educational planners as well as curriculum developers.

It could also be of assistance to official language planners to plan a language on the basis of understanding how, why, where and when change takes place.

#### **1.4 Organisation of the study**

**Chapter One** will concentrate on Setswana and the Botswana speech community, the language, and people's attitudes towards it in education. Inclusive in this chapter are, aims of the study, relevance, organisation, methodology, literature survey, geographical distribution of Setswana language varieties in Botswana and the historical background of Setswana language.

**Chapter Two** will examine the language variation, contact and change. This will be examined within the Setswana language. A brief description of Setswana language varieties with special reference to their phonological, grammatical and lexical structures will be explored.

**Chapter Three** will focus on standardisation and variation within the Setswana context. It will describe the standardisation process, as well as, the effects of standardisation and variation on children's education.

**Chapter Four** will be a survey of language attitudes in the broad educational field. In the survey, the research methods employed in the collection of data will be described. The data will then be analysed and interpreted.

**Chapter Five** will conclude the study and provide recommendations.

## **1.5 Methodology**

This research will be conceived within the quantitative study of investigations. The main approach will be an ethnographic one.

The researcher will visit schools located in various dialects speaking areas of Botswana. Learners taking Setswana as a subject will be involved in the study as well as their Setswana teachers. Other people to be involved are the Setswana Advisory Council president, Setswana panel chairperson, Setswana Writers Association president, lecturers, teachers and the director of the Schools Broadcasting Unit.

Hopefully, the involvement of the above-mentioned personnel will assist in establishing a means to solve the problem under investigation. The research methodology will also include semi-structured, unstructured interviews, questionnaires and a survey on language variation attitudes amongst Setswana speakers in Botswana and variety differences.

## **1.6 Literature survey**

A brief description of what other researchers have done on the topic will now be undertaken. I concur with Nomlomo (1993:11) that such surveys will shed light on what

aspects of language variation in the Southern African context have been dealt with, as well as what aspects still need to be researched.

Lesoetsa (1997) doctoral thesis concentrates on the change and variation in Sesotho speech community as related to intra-linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. He concentrated much on the grammatical aspects of the language, that is, phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic and semantic aspects. In his study, he gave a historical background of the Basotho giving a clear picture as to the relationship between the Basotho and other Bantu-speaking families that the Batswana fall under. According to him, Tswana falls in the Sotho language group in South Africa.

According to Lesoetsa, research on linguistic variation and change in South Africa began in earnest in 1987 when the Human Science Research Council and the African Languages Association of Southern Africa launched a research programme titled: Standard and non-standard African language varieties in the urban areas of South Africa.

Nomlomo (1993) Masters degree thesis concentrated on the language variation of the Transkeian Xhosa speech community and also examined the impact of the variation on children's education. She describes Nguni languages with more emphasis put on Xhosa with regard to its dialects and their geographical distributions.

Nomlomo (1993:12) mentions Mzamane (1962) who deals with Southern Nguni dialects, namely, Xhosa, Thembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Hlubi, Baca and Nhangwini.



According to her, recent studies on Nguni language include Msimang doctoral thesis (1989) and Thipa (1989) doctoral thesis. Thipa investigates the difference between rural and urban language varieties, giving attention to how the rural languages adapt to new situations and experiences through, *inter alia*, lexical borrowing, coinages and neologisms. The effects of migration and urbanisation on the rural languages also became apparent in this study.

Smietja (forthcoming) bases her research on language shift, cultural identity, and language loyalty in Botswana, research on language use and language attitudes in Botswana.

Her paper dealing with language and identity is based on a research undertaken on language use and language attitudes done by means of a questionnaire survey and based on the framework of the Languages in Contact and Conflict in Africa (LICCA) project. The ultimate objective of the project is to contribute to the optimal use of the multilingual and multicultural potential in sub-Saharan Africa.

Calteaux research that has been conducted in the field of sociolinguistics and specifically on language contact phenomena, has mainly concentrated on individual non-standard language varieties, for example, Schuring (1985) cited in Calteaux (1996), focuses on proving that Pretoria Sotho is a *lingua franca*. Sigcau (1998) in her Masters thesis deals with how language interference and language change would cause the student to fail Xhosa. The response of schools to this situation was investigated and an attempt was

made to understand the dichotomy that exists in spoken and written Xhosa. The implications for non-standard Xhosa, of sociolinguistic factors such as attitudes, language policies, communicative influence of the mass media, and language use in multilingual societies were also investigated in this research.

Malimabe (1990) Masters thesis concentrates on the influence of non-standard varieties on the standard Setswana of high school pupils. This research has clearly indicated that the township languages have far-reaching implications for the teaching of the first language subjects and for teacher training. The place of these non-standard forms in the classroom situation is an issue of concern to many first language teachers.

According to Malimbe, apart from the need for clarity regarding the nature, status and functions of these language varieties, it has become probable that new curricula will have to take cognisance of these varieties and make provision for them in the future.

Gxilische (1996) examines the dilemma of dialect in the classroom: a case for Xhosa. He argued that dialect may be useful as a bridge to standard language, while on the other hand, initial use of the home variety has shown, to the satisfaction of many, to be beneficial in promoting the child's self-image and sense of belonging.

Awoniyi (1982) argues that since the fundamental assumption in educational theory and practice is the adjustment of the child to the life and culture of his society, it is hardly possible to take away a child's first language without adverse consequences. This ideal

situation, he further submits, can come about only if the mother tongue is also the language of formal education.

Chebanne et al. (1993) in their research on language policy and how it impacts on the teaching of language argue that language in education is part and parcel of an overall national language policy and relates to specific use of Setswana and English in education. The authors further discussed orientations in language planning, and raised theoretical issues in regard to language in education, which could guide policy decisions in designing the Setswana language teaching.

Apart from these studies, some earlier research on language contact phenomena concentrated on the borrowing of foreign words into the lexicons of particular African languages. Calteaux (1996) gives us an example of Nkabinde who addresses the question of the adaptation of foreign words into Zulu, and considered aspects of lexical borrowing.

Even though the question of variation and change seem to have received little attention, researchers have laid a foundation for further studies in the field of sociolinguistics. More research in the area of language variation and change is needed more especially in cases like that of Botswana where few researchers have addressed this issue.

## 1.7 Geographical distribution

According to Cole, (1955: XV), geographically, Setswana is the most widely dispersed Bantu language in Southern Africa, being spoken predominantly by tribes of Botswana, North-eastern Cape Province, Central and Western Free State, and Western Transvaal. Statistics show that almost ten percent of the population in South Africa speaks Setswana (Fast Facts 1992: 4). This shows that the Republic of South Africa has many more speakers of Setswana than Botswana's smaller population (Smietja: forthcoming).

Tlou and Campbell (1984: 62), contend that all the Batswana were living in the highveld of the Transvaal, although a few of them lived as far West as Zeerust. This is the reason why there are still a large number of Setswana speakers in the Republic of South Africa.

There are a number of language varieties spoken in the Botswana speech community in different areas of the country. The geographical distributions of the various language varieties in Botswana have both political and social implications. Tlou and Campbell (1984:62), highlight this by saying that the size of these groups depended on many things, not just the availability of food. Droughts were the main cause of fission. Groups split up in order to find water and pasture. If a group was rich in cattle, it attracted other small groups who had few cattle. Eventually, it became so large it was difficult for the group to find constant food supply in one place. At this stage sometimes a drought occurred and the group split. Alternatively, sons or brothers of the Kgosi envied his wealth and caused the group to split.

A large-scale trend in the development was clearly that the number of states tended to multiply, and the area inhabited by the Botswana to widen, as a result of splits, secessions and migrations and amalgamations (Janson and Tsonope 1991:33).

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the main states populating present Botswana already existed, and all except one, were to be found approximately in their present localities. In this work attention will be concentrated mainly to five of the largest states with little reference to the minority tribes (Ibid: p34)

The Bakwena, are said to have moved into the country at a quite early date, as early as around AD 1540 (Tlou and Campbell 1984: cited in Tsonope 1991: 33). They settled in the eastern part of the present Botswana the portion that was set out as the Kwena reserve, now the Kweneng District.

During the seventeenth century two large groups, the Bangwaketse and the Bangwato, seceded from the Bakwena and formed independent chiefdoms. The Bangwaketse who are of the Sengwaketse dialect settled south of the Kweneng. Their territory that was known as the Ngwaketse reserve in the former protectorate now constitutes the Southern District. The other group, the Bangwato moved northwards and extended their power over the very large area that was formerly called the Ngwato reserve, now the Central District (*Ibid*:p. 34).

Another group seceded from Bangwato in 1795 the chief of the splinter group was

Tawana, who led his people to the area near Lake Ngami. Later on the Batawana - of the Setawana dialect also gained control over the entire North-Western part of the country. Their area earlier named Ngamiland or the Tawana reserve is the now North-West District. This shows how these four major states are closely related to each other.

The fifth large state, the Bakgatla of the Sekgatla dialect have a history largely distinct from the other groups. They only settled in the area around 1871, in Mochudi, which was then regarded as Kwena territory, but asserted their independence against the Bakwena. Their area became the Kgatla reserve now known as the Kgatleng district. The Bakgatla movement from Western Transvaal into the present Botswana was more political than the fission of other groups. They moved due to pressure from the advancement of the Boers (*Ibid*: p35).

The official language in the Protectorate had been English, the language of the colonial administration. That is to say official texts of all kinds were practically always written in English. In the traditional states, on the other hand, the language for oral communication was Setswana, which was also used to a moderate extent in the small administration that grew up around the major chiefs from the early part of this century (Janson and Tsonope 1991:74). At independence, the new administration could not, and did not institute completely new procedures and routines rather the colonial traditions provided the point of departure.

In the early years, the ministries and governmental departments of Gaborone (the capital

city) had very large proportions of Europeans holding key posts. Nowadays, the policy of localisation -replacement of expatriates with Batswana, has reduced the proportion of Europeans significantly. (*Ibid* p.74)

As a result of the above situation, the main language of administration had to be English. Indeed in practice, it became, and has remained, the only language used in official business, both in writing and in oral communication, hence the official statement that "the official languages are Setswana and English, the latter being the main language in Government" (National Development Plan 6: p.8).

This means in practice that English is used throughout in all contexts that can be regarded as official. Even in parliament, where almost all members speak Setswana as their first language, all discussions were conducted in English until a few years ago. However, the use of Setswana has now been allowed both in the House of Chiefs and in the National Assembly.

The governmental agencies in Botswana have not spent a great deal of energy on questions of language planning. The norms of the language of the modern sector, English, obviously cannot be affected by planning in Botswana. As for the several minority languages, they have attracted minimal attention thus the initiatives that can be registered concern only Setswana, the standard language (*Ibid*. p.76).

Janson and Tsonope (1991:86) point out that the official language policy in Botswana is

concerned with two languages, the official but non-indigenous English and the indigenous Setswana. Political, educational and administrative decisions are generally based upon the assumption that the citizens of Botswana all have Setswana as their mother tongue. This is not so, as there are speakers of Inkalanga, Seyeyi, Thimbukushu, Sesubiya, Otjiherero, Afrikaans, and a number of San languages, just to mention the more significant minorities. This could mean that about twenty percent of the population has a first language that is not Setswana .

In all human speech, it is a common phenomenon, that individuals differ from one another in the way they speak, this is to say that, even those whose mother tongue or first language is Setswana, do speak differently. Some of these differences are associated with particular groups of people, sex, levels of social development such as prestige, wealth and power (Nomlomo 1993:1).

According to Stringer (1973:12) peoples' language regularly marks their cultural differences, class, regional origin, occupation, interests and other aspects that can draw a distinction between two people. This is the reason why in any speech community we find a wide variety of language uses. Due to the close association between different ways of using language and different social groups, different values may be imputed to different varieties of languages that reflect their social provenance.



## 1.8 Historical background of Setswana

Setswana the national language of Botswana belongs to the South-Eastern Bantu languages (Janson and Tsonope 1991:24). They explained that Setswana is specifically rooted from the Sotho-Tswana groups. This group also includes Sesotho (Southern Sotho) and Sepedi (Northern Sotho), as well as Setswana. These languages are related to Setswana and are mutually intelligible.

According to Ratsoma (1993), the Sotho-Tswana speaking group has been in Southern Africa a long time ago at around AD 1200. The group separated due to wars among them, fighting for land and chieftainship. By then, the defeated group would run away leaving the heroes to look for refuge.

Looking at the speech community of Batswana, one finds that from one village to another there are variations in accent, grammar and vocabulary yet at no place would one find a village in which the inhabitants did not understand the speech of the next village (*Ibid* p33). Investigations by Vossen (1984) show that several languages spoken by the groups in Botswana are related, and in fact fairly closely so.

The Batswana speech community has an intricate pattern of language variation broadly corresponding with main tribes' speech patterns. Language variation reflects differences in speech patterns of the different tribes, sex, class, regional, origin, occupation, wealth and power relations in the speech community. The Batswana society is a case in point

where a speaker's status and chances of upward mobility are directly linked to the status of that speaker's variant. That is to say, the speech patterns of the dominant social groups are always regarded as the norm for the whole society. (Montgomery 1989:64)

Janson and Tsonope (1991:45) state that "people who speak Setswana have been politically divided and geographically dispersed. Four of the major tribes in present Botswana are formed by the decedents of people who probably moved in as one coherent group a few hundred years ago". They also point out that the fifth dialect, Sekgatla, has a particular position as the Bakgatla moved into the country from the east, later than the other four groups, and they clearly brought their dialect with them. The situation is different for the other four main dialects of Sengwaketse, Sekwena, and Setawana. The origin of all four dialects probably is Sekwena.

There are dialectal differences, because when groups of people became geographically and politically separated, there also developed differences in the form of speech. These differences are found mainly in phonology and in lexical changes. This means that in societal terms - the speech of different regions slowly drifted apart. A number of attempts have been made to determine the relationship between these dialects. These include the works of Cole (1995), Doke (1957), Janson and Tsonope (1991) Tlou and Campbell (1984) and Anderson and Johnson (1996). Some of the descriptions have traced their historical ramifications in which the Bakwena broke up into Bangwaketse and Bangwato and then Bangwato into Batawana. From a historical perspective the Bakgatla who were late arrivals would constitute a separate and more distinct dialect.

According to Janson and Tsonope (1991:108), interference of the different Setswana language varieties often takes place. It is referred to in various documents, such as the National Commission on Education report on Education for Kagisano (p.88), that "Botswana language policy is not written, it is understood, inferred and observed from reality, that is from what is actually taking place".

On the contrary, the Setswana Language Committee that is another body dealing with methods of language planning came up with the Setswana standard orthography in 1981. It had reference made to the orthography of 1910 and that of 1937, which has to date been retained as the official orthography of Botswana (Janson and Tsonope 1991: 77).

According to (Smietja -fc), this standard, now gradually being developed by the broadcasting services may become the future national language, because it is felt that one standard variety of the whole country is necessary. This very standard speech seems to be related to the standard orthography according to her. The National Setswana Language Council (1992) reports that it would have been meaningless for Botswana to tackle the orthographic and linguistic problems with the exclusion of South Africa, its powerful neighbour, by demographic and other developmental endowments.

The language varieties of Setswana that will be dealt with from south to north, are Sengwaketse, Sekwena, Sekgatla, Sengwato, Setawana. Other varieties are Setlokwa, Selete, Serolong, and Setlhaping.

The minority language varieties include, Ikalanga, which belong to the Chishona language group, and its varieties, Sekgalagadi and its varieties, Sebirwa, Setswapong, Ecisubiya, which belongs to the Tonga groups, Otjiherero, Seyeyi, Thimbukushu, and all the Khoisan languages varieties which many are actually constrained by language death. According to Smieja, the low status of some of these minority dialects and the low esteem in which they are held even by their own speakers in many cases is due to historical facts.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

From the above discussion, it is deduced that language variation is related to such factors as geography, social class and ethnicity. It has been shown that there are indeed dialectal differences. That is, when groups of people become geographically and politically separated there also developed differences in the form of speech. This is quite in accordance with results from traditional studies in dialectology.

It is a fact that variation within a language tends to influence language change. The following chapter will reflect some factors that influence language contact and change.

## Chapter Two

### Variation, language contact and language change.

#### 2.0 Introduction

We all, in daily life, speak and sometimes act as if there existed neatly circumscribed language communities wherein all members are expected to behave linguistically in exactly the same way. Those who do not, in all details are said to speak with an 'accent' if their deviations from an assumed norm are mainly phonic. They are supposed to speak a 'dialect' if their aberrance extends to grammar and lexicon, particularly if communication is thereby somewhat impaired ( Martinet 1962:103 ).

Martinet (1962:104) argues that languages are first and foremost instruments of communication. It is fairly natural that we should assume at least as an ideal, that all people who use one of them share the bundles of articulatory habits and vocal reactions to various stimuli whose sum total we call language. Communication would be best secured if all people concerned spoke exactly in the same way, some variety is no doubt welcome in human affairs, but when efficiency is at stake, relevancy is what counts exclusively. When people communicate, they tend to identify their speech habits and linguistic reactions.

This chapter will provide an overview of language variation with reference to Setswana.

It will also deal with language change as well as factors influencing language change and the advantages of language change. Causes and consequences of language change will also be dealt with in this chapter. The next part of the chapter will then concentrate on Setswana language varieties, examining their phonological, grammatical and lexical differences.

## **2.1 Language variation**

According to Lesoetsa (1997:8) language variation like language change is a consequence of social interaction. He goes on to point out that independent variables such as age, gender, social status, language group and marital status may correlate with dependent variables such as phonology, the lexicon, morphology syntax and semantics.

No two persons use a language in the same way. Even the highly structured aspects of language such as phonology and morphology, may differ in important matters from one speaker to another without impairing mutual understanding and even without being noticed by the interlocutors.

Burling (1992:10) points out "that all languages that are spread over a wide area exhibit dialectal variation and all languages offer their speakers a varied range of styles". We find that all languages keep changing. As we look more closely at language we find endless variations, its words, sounds, and syntax vary not only from one region to another, but also from one social group to another and from one situation to another. As

some varieties gain favour and spread, others decline and then disappear.

Linguistic variety on a large scale within one community is by both laymen and linguists, usually dealt with in terms of dialects. Downes (1984:78) regards variation as a central process, or an indication of language change. Language is inherently variable at a number of structural levels, in phonology, morphology and syntax in particular.

## **2.2 Defining language change**

Language change is a universal phenomenon and may take place from within the language through internal innovation, or from outside, as the result of adoption and interference (Caultex 1996:25). Nomlomo (1993:36) points out that language change can be a constant change in word, meaning, pronunciation and grammatical structure, which is the normal condition of everyday language spoken by a people. It deals with the phonetic, lexical, syntactic and stylistic changes continuously taking place within one language system. Coulmas (1997:81) points out that language change in different ways at diverse places and times. Lesoetsa (1997:18) contends that languages change when circumstances within the society change.

Holmes (1992:212) points out that the possibility of linguistic change exists as soon as a new form develops, and begins to be used alongside and with the existing form. If the new form spreads, change is in process if it eventually displaces the old form the change has been completed. Holmes goes on to say that social factors such as age, sex, and

region affect the rate of change and the directions in which the waves roll most swiftly. The wave metaphor is one useful way of visualising the spread of change from one group to another.

Calteaux (1996:25) contends that languages do not exist independently from their speakers, and internal innovation emanating from one individual may eventually reach the entire speech community through cultural borrowing. If accepted by the entire group, language change results. Calteaux continues to point out that the result of contact between two communities who speak different languages will then be termed 'external innovation'. During this process, linguistic material from one or both languages filters through to the other. Setswana like other languages undergoes the same processes though Janson and Tsonope (1991:44) point out that almost nothing has been written about linguistic change in Setswana.

Jespersen (1922:255) is of the opinion that many theories have been advanced to explain the indubitable fact that languages change in the course of time. Some scholars thought that there ought to be one fundamental cause working in all instances, while others more sensibly, have maintained that a variety of causes have been and are at work. They think that it is not easy to determine which of them have been decisive in each observed case of change. The greatest attention has been given to phonetic changes, and in reading some theorists, one might almost believe that sounds were the only thing changeable.



### **2.2.1 Influence on language change**

According to Coulmas (1997:82) language change occurs due to certain types of change that has an effect on large groups of people. This change may affect the entire society and become macrolinguistic. These changes involve entire language structures, and often involve deliberate, conscious decisions, institutionally promulgated as part of language planning programs. One such process is that of standardisation, in which a single dialect is put as the official for the entire multidialectal area. Coulmas goes on to point out that, again when languages come into contact on a large scale, such as Setswana and English, bilingualism may become common and this is likely to produce such typical language contact phenomena as code-switching between Setswana and English. The introduction of loan words from one language into the other and the assimilation of grammatical patterns toward those of the language to which social value is attached, in this case being English is diffused into Setswana.

On a more microlinguistic level, linguistic change may be initiated by a single individual, or by a small group, and subsequently imitated by others who attribute social value to it, in some cases such innovations may spread through an entire society. In the case of new vocabulary items, the motivation may be conscious in the form of a new concept or invention (Coulmas 1997:83).

### 2.2.2 Causes of language change

Setswana like all other world languages, is not stagnant, it is in a constant process of change due to influences from a number of factors. Normally one distinguishes between non-planned and planned language change that affects vocabulary, meaning, sounds and even grammar. The non-planned change normally takes place due to linguistic, social and substratum factors that Setswana has largely gone through. These factors include Linguistic factors that involve causes that are associated with the language and such changes become conspicuous with time. These factors are sometimes known as chronological factors.

Linguistic factors include factors like the generation gap, which shows us that children acquire languages differently from their parents, of which after several generations significant differences are noticed in the language character. In Botswana, the younger generation does not learn and speak Setswana like adults. Janson and Tsonope (1991:128) state that when it comes to pronunciation, there is considerable dialect mixture already among young town dwellers and clear signs that the children who grow up in town have their brand new dialects.

Socio-economic factors are factors that can be responsible for language change, particularly in the area of vocabulary and meaning of words. In Botswana the main factors have been, fast urbanisation. The fast rate of urbanisation has brought with it new life-styles, food, dress, buildings, roads and many of the urban facilities such as

electricity, telephones etc. Hence the rural based traditional vocabulary is fast giving way to modern vocabulary. This has given rise to new concepts and therefore borrowed vocabulary, extension of meaning or creation of new words. For example, nowadays people talk of televisions and films and no more about folktales (*mainane*) which used to be told around evening fires by old women to youngsters.

The expansion in education has resulted in many people to be educated and therefore to have wider knowledge about the environment as well as to use English language more extensively. This has brought about more cases of borrowing, code-mixing and code-switching, interference from English and other languages. For example, one would say, '*ke ne ke batla go emeila, jaanong computer-lab e tswetswe*' mixing Setswana and English, meaning, 'I wanted to e-mail but the computer lab is closed'. The rapid socio-economic transformation has brought with it new economic activities such as industries, banking, manufacturing, mining and construction. Such activities have required new vocabulary that has been brought into the language through borrowing, expansion of meaning of existing vocabulary or creating new ones. New expressions have also been created to deal with formal situations. Hence Setswana traditional vocabulary items such as *meuba* (ironsmith bellow), *bora* (hunting bows), *segai* (spear) are less and less used. One would not be surprised if the next generation will not have any idea about them as they are disappearing.

Substratum influences are becoming more and more prominent in Setswana as other people speak Setswana as a second language. These new speakers would have influences

from their mother -tongues. Such characteristics can easily infiltrate into the language and effect change.

The features that diffuse easily in languages are speech sounds and vocabulary items. Superstratum factors could affect a language if forms of a dominant language are imposed on a language. In Setswana the superstratum elements have come in the form of borrowings from English and Afrikaans.

Linguistic maps show change as the co-existence of forms belonging to different stages of evolution. This system is a shifting one, with each period of years the percentages of the older forms are lowered and the new forms gain (Entwistle 1951:34). Most linguists have maintained that change itself cannot be observed, all that one can possibly hope to observe are the consequences of change, most importantly being those that make some kind of difference to the structure of a language (Wardhaugh 1989:192). Johnson (1976) cited in Nomlomo (1993:36) points out that constant change in word meaning, in pronunciation and in grammatical structure is the normal condition of every language spoken by a living people. Lesoetsa (1997:41) adds to the above by saying that language change and variation occur not only in spoken, but in the written form as well.

The above discussion shows that language change can be as a result of many situations. After all, languages are used for communication purposes, and there will be change in communicative needs under any changing social conditions. It also makes it clear that generally, changes in language go along with changes in society. They are so interrelated

that it is impractical to deal with one in isolation to the other.

### **2.2.3 Consequences of language change**

According to Gxilishe (1996:9), the existence of language variation in a society has the necessary inevitable consequence of language change. He argues that it is realistic to regard language change as a fact of life, and the absence of change as the defining characteristic of a dead language. The variation and the instability inherent in a language that is in constant use automatically entails linguistic change.

Holmes (1992:211) argues that, in reality, it is not so much that language itself changes, as that speakers and writers change the way they use the language. According to Holmes, 'speaker innovation' is a more accurate description than language change.

Setswana speakers like any other speakers of any language innovate, sometimes spontaneously, but more often by imitating speakers from other communities. If they adopt the innovations and diffuse them through their local community and beyond, into other communities, then linguistic change results.

The first step in studying language is to identify it. Historical linguists study different stages of language in order to identify the kinds of changes that have taken place. The fact that language does change can easily be seen in the differences between old English and modern English (Nanda 1987:119).

The vocabulary of a language also undergoes both internal and external changes. Words change their meanings and new words are added. Sometimes as cultures come into contact, cultural items are borrowed and the original name for the item kept, for example 'television' is called '*thelebishini*', 'computer' is called '*khomputara*', 'bicycle' is called '*baesekele*', 'contract' is called '*konteraka*' in Setswana, etc.

Labov (1990) observation cited in Eastman (1990:167) is that language changes when people imitate prestige speakers. His view regarding why upper-working class people such as teachers and politicians, and so forth are at the cutting edge of language change is that these are the people in the community who have power. The variety of language such people use is referred to by Labov as a 'local dialect', which becomes the language of negotiation, a way of claiming local rights and privileges.

Janson and Tsonope (1991:12) also contend that the study of language change is the domain of historical linguistics, an old and well established part of linguistics. Linguistic changes are called for when the situation of the users changes in such a way that they need to talk about new topics or cease to talk about old ones. For example, a word for 'computer' in Setswana was needed when computers were introduced, and the word 'sledge' is no longer needed when no one ever uses sledges. In general terms, changes in capacity are directly connected with changes in culture in a wide sense.

#### 2.2.4 Language change in African languages

Changes in Setswana language did occur, but at a relatively slow pace. According to Janson and Tsonope (1991:128), speakers of Setswana lived in a comparatively static society and the language changed little, as did other institutions of that society. From independence, the rate of change has accelerated in a dramatic way for one large group of language users, namely the new inhabitants of towns. Many of the adult generation have lost so much of the traditional vocabulary and the traditional idioms that they actually do not understand their grandparents in the village as well. The young ones also use many new words that are unknown to their grandparents. For examples they say '*skela*' for 'school', '*nhlahleng*' for 'home', '*go mmoja*' for 'its okay'. The authentic Setswana words are *sekolo* for school, *gae* for home and *go siame* for its okay.

With regard to pronunciation, there is considerable dialect mixture among young adults, (more especially town inhabitants) and there are clear signs that the children who now grow up as the first indigenous town dwellers are creating a new dialect, or possibly several dialects. This is true to what is happening in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. Researchers like Janson and Tsonope (1991:129) point out that there is an emerging language in this city that is quite different from the norm. It is obvious, then that the rapid changes in social life in towns are accompanied by equally rapid changes in the linguistic system among the groups affected.

### 2.3 Language contact

Language contact according to Richards, Platt and Weber (1985) cited in Nomlomo (1993:19), is contact between different languages and one of the languages is influenced by the contact. It often takes place when there is a high degree of communication between the people speaking them. It is due to the movement of speakers from one speech group to the other, which usually involves the convergence of the speakers of a non- prestigious language towards the language of prestige (Hoffman 1991:181).

According to Lehiste (1988) cited in Calteaux (1996:19), "two or more languages can be said to be in contact when they are used alternatively by the same persons". Obviously, when speakers of different languages meet, they would have to understand each other and may need a certain measure of competence in producing comprehensible utterances in other language in order for communication to take place. In time some speakers would have become bilingual or multilingual.

Weinreich (1953:1) points out that language contact may result in code switching, borrowing or adoption. A phenomenon of interference will also occur. This is the re-arrangement that results from the introduction of foreign elements into the more highly structured domains of language, such as the bulk of the phonemic system, morphology and syntax as well as some areas of the vocabulary. This is the case with Setswana that has a considerable amount of borrowed and adopted words as well as the speakers use of codeswitching and codemixing phenomena.



Some anthropologists consider language contact as but one aspect of culture contact, and language interference as a facet of cultural diffusion and acculturation. In linguistic interference, the problem of major interest is the interplay of structural and non-structural factors that promote or impede such interference (*Ibid:* p5).

Sociolinguistics frequently deals with speech communities where more than one language variety is spoken. Weinreich (1954) cited in Eastman (1990:171) views such communities as representing situations of language in contact. There are numerous consequences of language contact. These are **bilingualism, diglossia, multilingualism, codeswitching-codemixing, borrowing and style shifting**. All these involve deviation from the norms of each language or dialect used. Such deviations result from familiarity by members of the speech community with one or more other languages or dialects. Speakers have a tendency to transfer patterns from their first language to the other languages that they learn. Such instances are called **interference**.

According to Eastman (1990:171), bilingualism refers to the practice of using two languages alternatively. Normally, bilingualism involves a mother tongue and another language, often a lingua franca For example Setswana in Botswana. Bilingualism is a common practice in Botswana, more common than multilingualism, which refers to the alternative use of two or more languages (Weinreich 1954:1). It is now widely recognised as a natural phenomenon that relates positively to cognitive flexibility and achievement at school (Agnihotri 1995 cited in Gxilishe 1996:2). The language children speak at home and in the community are neglected at school and are often stigmatised in

the classroom. Botswana can be said to be multilingual since more than twenty languages are spoken within its borders.

Codeswitching is another language contact situation it "is the use of more than one language in the course of a single communicative episode"(Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:73). Thus, bilinguals and multilinguals codeswitch while diglossia keep their variants separate. Codeswitching does not involve either the integration of linguistic elements into the other variety or repeated and frequent instances of use (Joshi 1985 cited in Eastman 1990: 172). When many members of a society can speak more than one language, switching between two or more languages in the same conversation is a common phenomenon (Calteaux 1996:129). Codeswitching applies in Setswana and is used mostly by younger people as compared to elderly ones. Thipa cited in Calteaux (1996:131) considers codeswitching to be " the consequence of the native speaker's unfamiliarity with, or ignorance of, an appropriate word, the speaker has no choice but to switch to the language with which he seems to be more familiar". Contrary to this, people also codeswitch to show off the fact that they know that language and possibly that they are educated, it is a form of identification with that language's speakers.

Younger people use codeswitching more than elderly people, because they do not know the appropriate words as they are torn between their variants. Because of the standard language they meet with at school as well as the English, they end up choosing English because it does not have many varieties. This makes children end up being more fluent in the second language than in their mother tongue as they feel more comfortable in

speaking it than speaking their own language. They also use codemixing that is "where the speaker 'borrows' words or phrases from a second language in the course of a conversation conducted mainly in one of the languages (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:73). It involves using linguistic units (morphemes, words, phrases and clauses) from two or more languages or varieties within a sentence and within a speech situation. This is an unconscious situation as compared to borrowing.

Another situation of language contact is borrowing which is of importance to Setswana because Setswana language uses it a lot. This is when monolinguals borrow words from other languages when there is no word known to them for a particular object. Batswana borrow by learning vocabulary in one of their second languages for concepts they may not have used before. Jumpers (1982:66) defines borrowing as the introduction of single words or short, frozen, idiomatic phrases from one variety into the other. The items in question are incorporated into the grammatical system of the borrowing language, in this case Setswana. These items are treated as part of the lexicon, take its morphological characteristics and enter these into its syntactic structure. Setswana has borrowed extensively from English and Afrikaans, and the foreign elements have been adapted to fit into the framework of Setswana (Janson and Tsonope 1991:27). For example, '*gouta*'-*goud* (Afrikaans), '*selefera*'-'silver' (English/Afrikaans), '*taemane*'-'diamond' (Afrikaans /English), (*Ibid* :p137).

Codeshifting phenomena (shifting, mixing, borrowing and switching) are used to negotiate power and to the rights and obligations people in a speech community have

with respect to each other (Scotton (1986) in Herbert (1992:167). The rights and obligations balance is derived from whatever situational features are salient for the community for that speech event. Setswana like most languages of the world has undergone linguistic changes because it is constantly in contact with languages with which it is genetically and typologically related.

### **2.3.1 The impact of language contact**

The information sketched above provides a picture of the use of language patterns in multilingual speech communities. Now the question remains, 'what impact do these patterns have on the learning of language by children more especially when it comes to learning the standard language? It has been discussed by several scholars that the impact of this language contact situations has the most severe consequences for the younger generations, that is the children. Calteaux (1996:63) points out that language acquisition by children is severely hampered by the use of non-standard varieties in their environment. The result being that these children can no longer distinguish between correct and incorrect uses of the standard language, putting the teaching of the standard language in serious trouble as well as the future of the language itself. At the same time, however, Khumalo (1995 cited in Calteaux 1996:63) argues that non-standard varieties are essential to the functioning of the community as well as bringing people closer together and are even enriching the vocabulary of the standard language.

Mothertongue instruction is appropriate for Setswana as it is for the rest of the world.

Additive or maintenance model is good for education. It is indeed a fact that not every child may have the opportunity to learn in his/her language and therefore, searching for the above conditions is certainly helpful but not enough. This is mainly because people of different languages live together they go to the same schools and sit next to each other in class. They therefore, cannot be taught in their individual languages (Ramahobo 1996:9) as this might be expensive. However, in such situations, normally there would be a common community language or a dominant language that is used for everyday communications.

### **2.3.1.1 Imitation of the superior language**

Montgomery (1986:66-7) argues that certain patterns of pronunciation become preferred within a speech community because they are inherently more correct, or because they are intrinsically more pleasing to listen to. It is solely social evaluation that confers prestige or stigma upon certain patterns of pronunciation. For one thing the prestige of one language area can turn out to be the stigmatised form of another. So there are no purely linguistic grounds for preferring one form of pronunciation to another. It is primarily a matter of social attitude, the speech pattern of the dominant group come to be regarded as the norm for the whole society.

Bolton and Kwok (1992:146) argue that, in both social and historical linguistics, prestige is very frequently appealed to as an explanation for arrested linguistic change. The appeal to prestige is not an innovation in recent sociolinguistics, but has a respectable

place in the historical linguistic tradition, that is to say, sociolinguistic have continued to appeal to prestige as an explanation for change.

People borrow from other languages that they regard as prestigious, because prestige is regarded as the norm in most cases, and the acquisition is for social and economic advancement. This is similar to education where children have to acquire the norm for their academic success.

The prestige that is afforded some particular dialect is not generated by the structural or systematic properties of the variety, rather, it seems that the language variety used by influential people becomes prestigious because of the power those speakers hold in society (Kaschula & Anthonissen 1995:55).

Labov cited in Bolton and Kwok (1992:150) summarises the above by stating that "speakers who lead sound change are those with the highest status in their local communities as measured by social class index. Among persons of social status, the most advanced speakers are the persons with the largest number of local contacts within the neighbourhood, yet who have at the same time the highest proportion of their acquaintances outside the neighbourhood that is not the case with Botswana".

### 2.3.1.2 Cultural differences

The word 'culture' here is used in the sense of whatever a person must know in order to function in a particular society (Wardhaugh 1998:215). People of different cultures often have different norms about various aspects social life, for example it is possible that what is perceived as offensive in one community will be considered perfectly acceptable in another (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:48).

According to Herbert (1992:1) language is one of the universal features of culture in all societies and as such changes in language may take place in response to cultural changes. When people acquire cultural innovations, there are additions to their vocabulary. For example, in cases where Setswana cultural activities have been replaced by modernised forms, the vocabulary is also of modern origin. For example the word 'party' is '*phathi*', 'film' is '*filimi*', 'glass' is '*galase*' in Setswana that came into existence as a result of the adoption of the western culture by Batswana.

Montgomery (1986:159) believes that "the way in which different cultures draw upon language in the conduct of their everyday interactions does in fact make possible characteristically different modes of relationship between members of a culture. Some cultures are more 'verbal' than others in the sense that people spend more time talking in some cultures, less in others" thus, we can see that talk can enter the everyday communicative economy of different cultures in subtly different ways. It opens up for its users different modes of relatedness and differing ways of connecting.

Saville-Troike (1982:34) contends that the very concept of the evolution of culture is dependent on the capacity of humans to use language for purposes of organising social co-operation. The vocabulary of a language provides us with a catalogue of things of import to the society, an index to the way speakers categorise experience, and it is often a record of past contacts and cultural borrowings. The grammar may reveal the way time is segmented and organised, beliefs about animacy and the relative power of beings and salient social categories in the culture (Whorf 1940 and Witherspoon 1977 cited in Saville-Troike 1982:35).

### **2.3.1.3 Foreign and fashion influence**

According to Janson and Tsonope (1991:22), Batswana came in contact with two European languages during the nineteenth century namely English and Afrikaans. Although the number of mother tongue speakers of these languages in the country has always remained low, the influence of both has been considerable. The English influence is by far the most important, although Afrikaans influence seems to have been dominant in the early period except in the field of religion. At present contacts with English are much more important than any other linguistic influence (*Ibid.* p134). English established themselves in the Cape colony during the Napoleonic wars. Missionary activities and trade in the early decades of the nineteenth century first brought them in contact with the Batswana.

Ever since that time there has existed a group of bilinguals in English and Setswana.



Downes (1984:29) concurs with the above statement and states that distinct languages may come into contact through immigration, invasion, conquest or trade. As for Afrikaans, the contacts between the Boers and the Batswana became frequent in the mid-nineteenth century, and the language became well established in its spoken form. Only a small number of Boers settled in Botswana permanently, for example, one group arrived in 1894 in Gantsi (a remote locality in the Kgalagadi), and there still exists a small population of white speakers of Afrikaans in that area. A few are also found in other parts of the country like Bokspits where there are strong links with South Africa (*Ibid.* p22).

However, the main area of contact between the Batswana of Botswana and the Afrikaners has been in the field of labour and commerce. Much of the business conducted in the Protectorate and later in Botswana has been handled by Afrikaaners. Above all, there is a long and strong tradition of Batswana going to South Africa for employment, most importantly being workers in the Johannesburg gold mines which have been in operation since 1886. Many Batswana took up domestic and other manual work, in which some knowledge of Afrikaans was often necessary (*Ibid.* p22). Their absence, often prolonged has led to many changes in social life, and greatly affected the adherence of the people to traditional customs and beliefs (Schapera 1947:1). This proves Hoffman (1991:190) correct when he asserts that industrialisation, urbanisation and prestige are contributory factors to language contact.

Afrikaans played a significant role in various Setswana language varieties, more

especially in those varieties from which many people worked or are still working in South Africa. Sekgatla is one of those language varieties that are seriously influenced by Afrikaans. To this day there are still those Bakgatla who use Afrikaans words more often than Sekgatla words.

Schapera (1934:111) points out that "the indigenous forms of speech, rich as they are in vocabulary, flexible as they are may be in the expression of ideas, admitting many shades of accuracy and delicate nuances of meaning, could not in their unaltered state serve as an instrument of expression when it comes to designating, all the new things, all the new ideas, all the new content of man's civilisation". The European control over the whole Southern Africa inevitably produced changes in traditional life of the Bantu. There is hardly a single tribe which does not already show signs of having been affected, if only superficially by the economic and political institutions of the Whites (*Ibid*: p3).

Language change may be due to sounds shifting from their original pronunciation (Aitchison 1981 in Nomlomo 1993:37). These changes usually affect the vocabulary and are very common among the youngsters. For example;

*o seka wa wara - do not worry*

*ke batla go chencia course ya me - I want to change my course*

Aitchison (1987) cited in Lesoetsa (1997:149), views fashion in language as unpredictable as fashion in clothing, and that the driving force behind fashion is a search for identity with members of a prestigious language.

## 2.4 Setswana language varieties

Before discussing Setswana language varieties and their implications in education, it is necessary to define the term 'variety'. Ferguson (1971) cited in Wardaugh (1986:22) defines a variety as "any body of human speech patterns that is sufficiently homogeneous to be analysed by available techniques of synchronic description and which has a sufficiently large repertory of elements. Their arrangements or process with broad enough semantic scope to function in all formal contexts of communication". This definition is comprehensive in that it allows us to call a whole language a variety, and also any special set of linguistic uses that we associate with a particular region or social group.

Reagan (1992) cited in Nomlomo (1993:21) states that the differences from one speaker of a language to another might be in the area of phonology, syntax or lexicon. The differences may also be in the way people carry melody over phrases, i.e. intonation (Kashoki in Nomlomo 1993:21).

Setswana language varieties are differentiated from proper Setswana on the basis that they are not like the standard orthography of Setswana, and as such, they are referred to as non-standard varieties. In addition to the standard orthography that we have, there are a number of regional varieties that have many features that are different from the standard Setswana in terms of grammatical forms and vocabulary. They display some

grammatical forms and some terms of vocabulary that are specific to the region where they are spoken.

Schapera (1955:34) points out that Batswana are divided into more than fifty separate tribes. Each tribe is politically independent of the rest, manages its own affairs under the leadership and authority of a chief. It has its own name, derived usually from some chief who is a traditional founder of the present dynasty, sometimes from the totem of the royal family. The site of an ancient capital, its own variety, territory and all people domiciled there being regarded as its members. Membership of a tribe is determined firstly by descent; normally a man belongs to the same tribe as his father, and remains there for life, but every tribe has a population of mixed origins. The members of a tribe sometimes also differ in custom and language, this being the case with the Batswana.

As mentioned above, it is clear that there are some observable regional differences. We have to observe and identify some dialectal peculiarities and study them very closely. According to Moloto (1964:61) "it should be borne in mind that there is no Setswana dialect, as spoken today, which can be said to be 'pure". There fore the forms given in this comparison are those that we consider typical for each dialect.

#### **2.4.1 Sengwaketse language variety**

Cole (1955:xvi) pointed out that the Sengwaketse variety is spoken by Bangwaketse tribe. They are the offshoot of the Bakwena, and still acknowledged the Bakwena as their

seniors in tribal rank. The Ngwaketse tribe occupies the reserve in the central part of Botswana, their principal settlement being at Kanye. Their language variety shows evidence of Kgalagadi influence and it also has a lot in common with the Sekwena variety. This is supported by examples that follow.

#### 2.4.1.1 Phonological differences

When followed by [i], [kh] becomes palatal rather than velar, and is often pronounced as a true palatal aspirated explosive, in the Sengwaketse variant it even becomes prepalatal, for example,

khiba (skin apron) often being pronounced as t'hib'a

[ke] (I) as [k'e] [sekhi] as [set/hi] (thornbush)

[kika] (mortar) as [k'ik'a] (Cole 1955:23).

This sound is not common among the educated Bangwaketse speakers (Janson and Tsonope 1991:95). Probably it is due to the influence of education which eradicates the non-standard form, it is often observed among the uneducated people.

In Sengwaketse, the semi-close vowel [e] and [o] before the locative suffix [n] may be so raised that they become more or less identical with [i] and [u] respectively. Examples, [pe'lun`] instead of [pelong]<[pelo] (heart), [mmelin`] instead of [mmeleng]<[mmele] (body) (Malepe 1966:61). Another difference or variation is found in the pronunciation of the form 'water' and 'bag'. They pronounce them as, [me`ts`e] and [me`ts`i] (water) and

[*khe`tsi*] for (bag).

#### 2.4.1.2 Grammatical differences

The noun class with prefix /*lo*/ (class 11) together with the array of agreement markers related to it is more productive in Sengwaketse variant than it is with other variants (Janson and Tsonope 1991:95). For example, they will say:

*lofeelo* (broom) instead of *lefeelo*

*lofetlho*    *lefetlho*

*losire* (veil)                                      *lesire*

*lokesi* (coffin)                                   *lekesi*

Moloto (1964:74) comments that the use of [*lo-*] and [*le-*] words in alteration has resulted in grammatical difficulty. For example, '*lolwapa*' and '*looka*', since the plural form of the singular prefix [*lo-*] is [*di-*], the plurals of '*lolwapa*' and '*looka*' should be '*dilwapa*' and '*dikoka*', but we find "*malwapa*' and '*maoka*'. Moloto is of the idea that this matter of exactly which words should be written with [*lo-*] or [*le-*] needs thorough investigation in which I agree with.

The Sengwaketse variety is also marked for its tendency to omit noun class prefixes in words whose stems are formed out of two or more syllables. This prefix deletion occurs in utterances where there are agreement markers, which invariably contain a phonological cue for the omitted prefix (*Ibid*: p96). For example:

## **Sengwato**

## **Sengwaketse**

*borotho jwa me bo monate* (my bread is nice)    *'roto jwa me bo monate*

*bogobe jo bo molelo* (this porridge is hot)    *'gobe jo bo molelo.*

### **2.4.1.3 Lexical differences**

Some words are used in one variety meaning one thing, and meaning a different thing in another variety. For example; '*Papa*' means (mealie meal) in Sengwaketse and it means 'dye' in Sekgatla. *Kopi* (mug) in Sengwaketse and means 'teacup' in Sekgatla

### **2.4.2 Sekwena language variety**

Sekwena variety is spoken by Bakwena tribe whose capital is in Molepolole in the eastern part of Botswana. They are similar in many respects with the Ngwaketse that is to say their variety also has traces of Sekgalagadi influence (Cole 1955:xvii). The examples that are used for Sengwaketse language variety also apply to this language variety.

### **2.4.3 Sekgatla language variety**

Sekgatla is a language variety spoken by Bakgatla who settled in Mochudi in the eastern part of Botswana. Unlike other tribes they are recent immigrants from the Western Transvaal. Both culturally and linguistically the Bakgatla differ from the other four tribes. Unlike the latter, the Bakgatla do not occur as a relatively homogeneous tribal

unit, but are widely spread and mixed in the areas which they occupy. The Bakgatla are predominant, though themselves sub-divided into at least five sections namely: Bakgatla baga Kgafela, numerically being the most important with their settlement in Mochudi, Bakgatla baga Motsha, Bakgatla baga Mmakau, Bakgatla baga Mosetlha, and lastly Bakgatla baga Mmanaana (Cole 1955:xvii).

According to Schapera (1934:40) Bakgatla have been in contact with western civilisation for nearly a century. Even before they left Transvaal they had already been influenced to some extent that they have steadily absorbed elements of European culture from a variety of sources. The local vernacular was also being corrupted by the intrusion of Afrikaans and other European words and some educated youth regarded it as quite fashionable to speak English amongst themselves (*Ibid*.p57).

#### 2.4.3.1 Phonological differences

Strictly speaking, no two articulations of a 'speech sound' even by a single person, are exactly alike (Cole 1955:1). In Sekgatla, the glottal fricative [h] is replaced by the dentilabial fricative [f], pronounced as in English (*Ibid*:p25)

Examples:

<b>Setswana</b>	<b>Sekgatla</b>
[huma] (become rich)	[fuma]
[huhula] (sweat)	[ fufula]
[huduga] (move away)	[fuduga]



[hudua] (stir)	[fudua]
[hutsafala] (be sad)	[futsafala]
[sehuba ](chest)	[sefuba]

Vowel substitution of source language is common in Setswana, for example:

bus > base

bag > beke

gas > kese

In Sekgatla, the vowels [e] and [o] are merely raised to [e] and [o] respectively in such cases as [pelong]> [pelo], [mmeleng]>[mmele] (Malepe 1966:62). Vowel elision between [l] occurs in all Setswana language varieties, but it is however a more common phenomenon in Sekgatla than in other Setswana varieties. In such cases the first [l] is syllabic, for example, [-lla]>[lela] (cry), [-bolella]>[bolelela] (tell), [-dirolla]>[dirolola] (undo) (*Ibid*:p72).

#### 2.4.3.1.1 Elision of vowels

The historical elision of a vowel between resonant consonants is common within the Sekgatla variety (Kruger & Snyman undated p.102). It is not very common in the other Setswana language varieties. For example;

<b>Setswana</b>	<b>Sekgatla</b>
<i>molelo</i> (fire)	<i>mollo</i>

*selelo* (cry)

*sello*

*bofolola* (untie)

*bofolla*

#### 2.4.3.2 Grammatical differences

Most troublesome perhaps, is the alteration of the class prefixal morphemes [le-] and [lo]. Bakgatla use the [le-] class prefix, for example, [legong] (wood), [leso] (death), [lebone] (lamp) (Moloto 1964:48).

Some changes in contrast with sound changes are caused by morphological processes and these are found mostly in Sekgatla (Kruger & Snyman undated p.98). For example:

#### **Setswana**

selo se`

a mo raya a re

kwa ga etsho

#### **Sekgatla**

so` se`

a mo' ra` re

kwa'etsho

Treatment of the concordial morpheme [o] or [e] after a subject is very common in Sekgatla. For example the standard form is, '*ngwaga e e tlang*' (next year) > '*ngwage tlang*' in Sekgatla Treatment of concordial morpheme [o] and [a] after a predicate facilitate interesting contraction in Sekgatla. For example, standard form is, '*mo re ye o re*' (tell him that) > '*mo roore*', in Sekgatla, '*a mo raya a re*' (he then said to him that) > '*a mo raare*' etc (Moloto 1964:49).

### 2.4.3.3 Lexical differences

In Sekgatla, some words have different meanings from what they mean in other language varieties. For example: '*papa*' (colour/ dye from washed clothes), mealie meal porridge in Sengwaketse, *kopi* (tea cup), mug in Sengwaketse, *lentswe`* (hill), means stone in Sengwaketse and *thaba`* (be happy) means hill in Sengwaketse.

### 2.4.4 Sengwato language variety

Sengwato is the language variety spoken by the Bangwato tribe, occupying north central part of Botswana called Serowe. They are also outnumbered in their reserve by non-Tswana speaking people of whom the Kalanga are the most important and show the effects thereof in their speech (Cole 1955:xvii).

#### 2.4.4.1 Phonological differences

In the Sengwato language variety, there is a tendency to use the lateral ejective explosive /tʎ/ in place of /t/ (Cole 1955:22). For example:

<b>Setswana</b>	<b>Sengwato</b>
<i>tlala</i> (hunger)	<i>tala</i>
<i>tila</i> (come)	<i>ta</i>
<i>tlou</i> (elephant)	<i>tou.</i>

Thus *tau* (lion) will sometimes be pronounced as; *t'au*.

*motogo* (soft porridge) as *motl'ogo*

There is also a tendency to substitute the aspirated lateral explosive /**tlh**/ for /**th**/. That is they will spell words like:

*tlhala* (divorce) as *thala* , and thus

*tholo* (kudu) is sometimes pronounced as [**tl'holo**]

#### 2.4.4.2 Grammatical differences

There is a notable tendency in Sengwato speech to raise [o] in some lexical words, especially in the morpho-phonological environment of the velar nasal (written *-ng*). For example [o] is at times pronounced as something approximating [u] (*Ibid.* p96). For example,

##### **Setswana**

*ntlong* ( in the house)

*nkoko* (grandmother)

*bogologolong* ( in the olden days)

##### **Sengwato**

*ntung*

*nkuku*

*bugulugulung*

#### 2.4.4.3 Lexical differences

Sengwato has a lot of lexical ambiguity resulting from the absence of a contrast between

/t/ and /tl/ and between /th/ and /tlh/. The phonological difference between *thama* 'not to fit', and *tlhama* 'compose' is neutralised into one homophone, *thama*. Similarly *ata* 'multiply', and *atla* 'kiss' are rendered as *ata*.

In Sengwato, when they talk of;

*kopi*, they mean (a mug)

*lentswe* (stone)

*thaba* (hill)

#### **2.4.5 Setawana language variety**

According to Cole (1955:xvii) Setawana language variety is spoken by the Batawana tribe, whose capital is in Maun in the northern part of Botswana. The Batawana are a relatively recent offshoot of the Bangwato, from whom they separated towards the end of the eighteenth century. Their language variety has been influenced quite considerably by the non-standard languages of Ngamiland like Siyeyi, Sembukushu, Sekoba, and others.

As recent offshoot of the Bangwato, from whom they separated towards the end of the eighteenth century Cole (1955:xvii) the Batawana's language variety is not very different from Sengwato language variety, except for a few elements of stress and intonation.

##### **2.4.5.1 Phonological differences ( general overview)**

Phonological process is a process that occurs systematically when sounds adopt some or

the features of neighbouring sounds. These changes only occur when the phonetic environment is favourable, for example by certain morphological processes such as affixation. (Kruger & Snyman: undated p97). In word formations like / *ba-mp'ontshits'e* / **they have shown me**, there are a whole lot of morphological process, so much so that the phonetic form of some morpheme is almost unrecognisable. Cole (1955:1) points out that there are probably no two languages which have the identical sets of speech-sounds, or which use them in exactly the same way. For example, the sound represented by /ng/ in English **sing** is also found in Setswana, but in English it occurs only medially and finally in a word, never initially, whereas in Setswana it occurs in all three positions. Strictly speaking, no two articulations of a speech-sound even by a single person are exactly alike.

In a language such as Setswana, with a number of language varieties, it is often found that there are divergent pronunciations of the same word. For example, there are at least three different pronunciation of **f** in the word *fela* being; [*fela, hela, fhela*]. These pronunciations are 'the bilabial fricative', 'the glottal fricative' and 'the dentilabial fricatives'. The interchange of these three sounds is not governed by any rules as in the case of members of phoneme, nor are they mutually exclusive. The selection of one or the other of these sounds in pronunciation depends entirely on the variant used by the speaker.

As it has already been mentioned earlier on that language contact inevitably leads to interference, this interference can take various forms. It can be lexical, or semantic. The

sound systems of language are also affected by language contact. For instance, the Bakgatla speakers would employ Afrikaans pronunciation and accent in their speech. This can be referred to as phonological interference (Khumalo 1995 cited in Calteaux 1996:77), and it is this type of interference that contributes a lot to the difference in Setswana language varieties.

Phonological interference concerns change in the sound systems of language. When some foreign words are adopted into a language, some extensive phonological changes take place (Koopman 1994 cited in Calteaux 1996:77). For example, when English words, **hospital**, **school** and **book** are adopted into Setswana as; *sepatela*, *sekole* and *buka*, one clearly see the phonological changes the words went through. In other examples, the most changes usually take form of vowel additions, that is to say that words with final consonants get an appended vowel. For example Setswana *bolo* is from English 'ball', *biri* from 'beer' (Janson and Tsonope 1991:27).

The Bakgatla will talk of things like; *sekere*, *selaga*, *sekurufu*, *boleke*, which are words adopted from Afrikaans originally being; **sker** (scissors), **slag** (butcher), **skroef** (screw), **blik** (tin can).

Madiba (1994) in Calteaux (1996:101) describes this pre-structuralist approach as "the speakers of a language, in hearing a foreign sound replace that sound with the most closely related phonetic unit in its inventory". According to this view, foreign sounds are not reanalysed as isolated phenomena, but instead fit into the phonological system of the

borrowing language.

The adaptation of foreign words into Setswana has influenced the Setswana sound system in many ways. Certain phonological structures which may not be acceptable in the early stages of language contact, do become acceptable later on, especially by educated speakers, who have become familiar with the phonological structures of the source of language (Koopman 1994 in Calteaux 1996:103), for example, **Mochudi** used to be **Motshodi**. The /c/ was never used in the Setswana sound system. The analysis of the adaptation of loanwords reveals that the European language has left an indelible mark on Setswana, leaving the Setswana language very different from what it was before.

#### 2.4.5.2 Grammatical differences

Setswana speech like that of other languages is divided up into sentences, each of which consists of one or more words. Sentences change form, words change structure, new sounds creep in and new meanings are attached to both words and sentences. Foreign words are borrowed with new concepts and are adapted to the structure of the target language. Grammatical differences normally start being noticed when there is already significant distinction in pronunciation and vocabulary. Such grammatical distinctions could involve differences in forms and structures. For example, in the northern part (Sengwato and Setawana) they use plural when referring to elderly people than it happens in the southern region. They will say **bomme** as opposed to **mme**, meaning **mother**, **bontate** as opposed to **ntate** meaning **father**.



#### 2.4.6 Vocabulary

The foreign linguistic influence may not affect natural processes alone, but the pronunciation of sounds as well. Vocabulary is the sum of meaningful words used in a given language. It may happen that within one language group some words are used in one area and not another or two different words are used for the same meaning in respective areas. For example, in Sekgatla they talk of *moso`ko* (thick mealie meal porridge) while in Sengwato it is called, *masenyane*, and in Sengwaketse they call it *papa*, more examples in the lexical differences.

#### 2.4.7 Pronunciation

In a dialect- cluster such as Setswana, numerous variations in pronunciation of individual words are to be expected (Cole 1955:51). Difference in pronunciation of some words is normally the first feature that is noticed when a language starts to develop different dialects. One might notice that one group or part of the area use [h] where others use [f] or [g] or [k] where others use [k/] etc. Like where a Sengwaketse speaker will say; *k/e a lwala* instead of, *ke a lwala* (I am sick). The Bakgatla will say; *fa ke lwala ke ya ngakeng* or *ge` ke lwala ke ya ngakeng* as opposed to; *ha ke lwala ke ya ngakeng* (when I am sick I go to the doctor). With time, these differences in pronunciation may become more and more conspicuous.

Setswana speech, like that of other languages, is divided up into sentences, each of which

consists of one or more words. A 'sentence' here meaning a word or group of words which constitutes a relatively complete utterance in its context or situation (Cole 1955:57).

#### 2.4.8 Lexical differences

Lexical differences mean the differences in the vocabulary of the variants. Speakers of variants use different vocabulary in their speech.

Word	Sekgatla	Sengwaketse/Sekwena	Sengwato/Setawana
mosetsana (girl)	monyana	mosetsana	kgarejwana
mosimane (boy)	moshimane	mosimane	lekawana
( porridge for beer brewing)	serobo	mosheto	mogeto
itaya (beat)	shapa	betsa	itaya
thuga (pound)	sila	setla	thuga
shapa (← <i>shana</i> )	thuma	shapa	tunka

In lexicon, some variety terms are distinguished from Setswana, for example,

Setswana	Other language varieties
go palama (to ride)	go pagama, go tana
molemo (medicine)	setlhare
lebota (wall)	lekoma, lebotana, lekotswana

mojako (doorstep)	monyako, kgoro
setswalo (door)	lebati, lomati
masi (milk)	maswi
mmidi (maize)	mmopo, semanka

#### **2.4.9 Conclusion**

The above discussion has shown that variation is a common phenomenon in almost all the speech communities. It leads to language change that is also a result of language contact. There are many factors influencing language change and language contact. Some of these factors are linguistic factors, socio-economic factors, influence of foreign languages, fashion cultural differences, etc. It has been confirmed that this is true to Setswana language varieties in some areas of phonology, grammar and lexicon. It is also evident that language change causes some deviation from the norm. The next chapter will then examine the standardisation and the variation of Setswana language.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Standardisation and language variation**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter will examine the standardisation process in the Batswana speech community. It will examine problems encountered or brought about due to standardisation as well as exploring its implications on children's education. The second part of the chapter will examine language variation and its relationship to standardisation. People's attitudes towards standardisation and variation will also be explored in this chapter.

In Botswana, the National Setswana Language Council has been entrusted with the elaboration of the Setswana language. Their main task is to empower Setswana and give it the capacity to respond to its new roles. The most important achievement has been to improve Setswana orthography as well as to standardise some of the technical terms. Other bodies that have been involved in the elaboration exercise are the Department of African Languages and Literature -University of Botswana, the Colleges of Education and the Department of Curriculum Development (Janson and Tsonope 1991:77). This shows that Setswana like other languages is still in the process of development and it will be premature to dwell much on other things like evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness and social acceptance of the language before it is sufficiently developed. However some

things will be discussed in general and specification where there is much evidence.

### **3.1 Standardisation**

Crystal (1985) in Kamwangamalu (1996:91) defines standardisation as a natural development of a standard language in a speech community or an attempt by a community to impose one dialect as standard. For Hudson (1980:32), standardisation is a direct and deliberate intervention by society to create a standard language where before, there were just dialects (i.e. non-standard varieties). It is the dialect that comes to be regarded as the more respectable variety of the language (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:55). According to Haugen (1966a) quoted in Hudson (1980:32-33) and Wardhaugh (1986:31), a typical standard language will have passed through the following processes:

**Selection :** First a particular variety must be selected as the one to be developed into a standard language. The selected variety may be an existing one, such as the one used in an important political or commercial centre, but it could be an amalgam of various varieties. The selection has political significance since the selected variety gains prestige and so the people who already speak it share in the prestige (Hudson 1980:31).

**Codification :** The systematised fixing of the grammatical rules of the chosen language in grammar books and dictionaries, so that everyone agrees on what is correct, after which the members of the relevant speech community will have to learn it.

**Elaboration of function:** The functions of the selected variety must be elaborated or expanded. That is, once accepted as the standard language, the variety should be used in all the functions associated with central government and with writing, for example, in parliament, the courts, education, administration, commerce, massmedia, and in various forms of literature (Wardhaugh, 1986; Hudson 1980).

**Acceptance:** The selected variety must be accepted by a wider community and thus serve as a strong unifying force for the state. Acceptance also entails that a measure of agreement must be achieved about what is in the variety and what is not (Wardhaugh 1986:31).

This is one of the major known societal behaviour toward language, 'the codification and acceptance, within a community of users' (Steward 1968 in Fishman 1972:18). Codification is typically the concern of such language variety 'gatekeepers' as scribes, storytellers, grammarians, teachers, and writers, i.e., of certain groups that arise in most diversified societies and whose use of language is professional and conscious. This is formulated and presented to all or part of the speech community via such means as grammar, dictionaries, spellers, style manuals, and exemplary texts, whether written or oral. Finally the acceptance of the formally codified (standardised) variety is advanced via such agencies and authorities as the government, the educational system, the mass media, the religious institutions, and the cultural establishment (Haugen 1966a in Fishman 1972:19).

Not all languages have standardised form, and where it exists, it does not necessarily replace the non-standard varieties from the linguistic repertoire of the speech community for functions that are distinct from but complementary to those of the standard variety. Standardisation according to Fishman (1972:19) is not a property of any language per se but a characteristic societal treatment of language, given sufficient societal diversity and need for symbolic elaboration. Coulmas (1997:52) in addition to the above says that standardisation is commonly in progress, and not completed in any language except a dead one.

Standard languages are usually associated with prestige and cut across regional differences, providing a unified means of communication, and thus an institutionalised norm which can be used in teaching the language to foreigners, and so on. Trudgill (1983:161) argues that standardisation is necessary in order to facilitate communication, to make possible the establishment of an agreed orthography, and provide a uniform form for schools books.

As regards Setswana, there is no common standard norm for spoken Setswana. There was none in the colonial era and there is still none in the pre-colonial times. That is to say, there is no official statement about standard Setswana, or even about the desirability of such a standard. The decision on orthography of 1981 is an official declaration of a written standard for Setswana in Botswana. This is not based upon the pronunciation in any one of the major language varieties but rather represents a compromise between them (Janson and Tsonope 1991:106). Even though there is no common spoken Setswana,

there are different language varieties that are confined to the tribal groups people belong to and each tribe has its own language variety.

Basically language planning during that period (after independence) consisted almost exclusively of writing, planning and almost restricted to the problem of spelling. That is why the system was not clearly associated with one language variety but rather a compromise which does not reflect the actual pronunciation of any one group speaker. It is quite normal for members of a community that has a standard language to continue to use both the native and the learnt (standard) variety in different situations in their lives. The results of such language practice and the implications will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **3.1.1 The impact of standardisation**

Standard language is also seen as a language which is taught in schools and is regarded as in some sense false since it is not usually used by children as a medium for ordinary conversation (Giles and Powesland 1975 in Sigcau 1998:33). It is used only for written purposes and for formal occasions such as speeches and ritual performance (Giles and Powesland 1975 in Sigcau 1998:33).

The standard written language is related more closely to the standard spoken language than to other spoken forms. From a descriptive linguistic point of view, the relations between the written and the spoken standard are always complex, and often quite distant.



However, literate users of the language tend to equate the two and to think of both as the national language (Janson and Tsonope 1991:12). Ryan et al. (1982) in Gxilishe (1996:3) add to the above by saying that, "varieties which are used in written communication have a much more likelihood of being standardised than those which are used solely in the modality of opportunity and social advancement".

According to Appel and Muysken (1987) in Gxilishe (1996:5), "the attainment of the standard variety brings numerous socio-economic advantages to its speakers. It provides better chances of upward social mobility and economic success". On the other hand lack of knowledge of the standard variety may block access to other resources such as education, jobs, wealth and political positions (O'Barr and O'Barr 1972 in Gxilishe 1996:5). This is applicable in Setswana, because since independence the language policy has deliberately sidelined minority groups in political presentations. For instance, leaders or chiefs of the eight Setswana speaking tribal groupings are ex-officio members of the House of Chiefs while leaders of the non-Setswana speakers are not, they need to be elected or be specially elected by the government (Constitution of Botswana, sections 78 and 79; 0045), (Nyati-Ramahobo 1996:1).

One main problem in Setswana at the beginning was which dialect should form the basis for writing, for in a phonemic writing system like the Latin alphabet, phonological dialect differences cannot be ignored. The most successful orthographies were founded on the Setlhaping dialect, but that was hardly a reason for anyone to perceive it as superior or even particularly important (Janson and Tsonope 1991:132). Setlhaping was used

because the missionaries when they first came, they settled among the Batlhaping and started their work there, even the writings in Setswana language started there including the translation of the Bible into Setswana.

The orthography used in Botswana is said to be a supraregional standard because to an extent, different items were taken from different dialects. It is said to be representing a compromise of all the varieties in Setswana, but if one looks at this orthography very closely, one will find that it represents the majority language varieties more than it represents the minority. For example, if you look at Sekalaka, Sekgalagadi, and Seyeyi one finds that they are by far different from the standard orthography and are not included in the items of the orthography. Standard languages have traditionally enjoyed the highest status of all the varieties spoken in the villages, and this is what Setswana is enjoying at the expense of other language varieties. The standard languages are regarded by the older generation as the carriers of their traditions and culture, and as such there is a strong feeling that these languages should be protected from external influence (Calteaux 1996:50).

### **3.1.2 Problems associated with standardisation**

David Corson (1994) in Sigcau (1998:37), sees standard language as a model of 'excellence' and 'correctness', but according to Eastman (1994:14), "what is 'correct' for one person might not be 'correct' for another".

Taking other language varieties spoken in Setswana, their speakers will never consider standard orthography used in Botswana as correct or excellent because it does not cover their language varieties, so they will only look at it as being biased. Nyati-Ramahobo (1996:1) concurring with the above says that "the Botswana language policy is insensitive to the number of speakers in each tribal group because it is like the criterion used was that of Setswana speakers versus non-Setswana speakers and not numerical significance". She points out that the Bayeyi have always been more than the Batawana, yet the constitution lists the latter as one of the eight principal tribes. Using geographical occupation and population density, the Bakalaka are more than the Bangwato and yet the latter are not listed as one of the principal tribes. People who do not always use standard variety are regarded as people who lack education, (Corson in Sigcau (1998:37), and non-standard varieties are also associated with low economic educational achievement (Appel & Muysken 1987:59).

Since the standard language enjoy higher status than the non-standard varieties, societies have the belief that the standard language is inherently superior than the non-standard varieties and that users of non-standard varieties are, for the same reason in some sense inferior (Van Wyk 1992 in Sigcau 1998:34). In the education context, it is assumed that the speakers of these senior tribe language varieties have better life chances than those people who are speakers of the low status language varieties. Arguably, this is not always true. There are many people who are from these so-called low status varieties who are holding higher post in the governmental organisations as well as non-governmental organisations. This could be an indication that having better life chances depends solely

on one's progress in life.

In Botswana, language diversity is generally a problem, a reversal or negation of democratic gains, a threat to unity, social harmony (kagisano), and a threat to development, Nyati-Ramahobo (1996:5). Tsonope (1992) in Nyati-Ramahobo (1996:5), notes that "attempts to raise language policy issues even where these are articulated in the best interest of the country are met with suspicious contempt - invoking secessionist, tribalistic, regionalistic or other sentiments deemed inimical to national unity and progress". Tsonope (1992) further notes that "many decision makers are convinced that the encouragement of several languages militates against national unity. The risk of accentuating cleavages between communities and the danger of being left outside the main currents of knowledge and information flow are often invoked to justify the choice of one or a restricted number of national languages, even, perhaps a foreign language as official languages".

This is perhaps the misconception that unity can only be achieved by sweeping the rest of the languages under the rug and forgetting about them. In fact, the contrary is true, when people are respected, recognised and their language varieties are valued, they have no reason to rise up in revolt on linguistic grounds, but when they are swept under the rug, that is in itself a good reason for revolt (Nyati-Ramahobo 1996:5). To highlight the above Nyati-Ramahobo (1996:10) states "that linguistic diversity brings about a rich culture, diverse patterns of social interaction and fosters cultural pluralism". Language diversity brings about unity when everyone is recognised, respected and viewed as member of the

society and it also promotes multilingualism.

Language contact has a severe impact on the language use of pupils in the schools. It often happens that the language which the child is expected to learn in the mother tongue classroom, is in fact not the language which is used in the home (Calteaux 1996:147).

The language variety learners use at home are also different from one another due to the influence by other languages. For example, Sekgatla is influenced by Afrikaans, Sekwena and Sengwaketse have Sekgalagadi influence, while Sengwato has Sekalaka influence and Setawana has Ngamiland languages influence, such as Seyeyi, Sembukushu, Seherero, and others. So when children from these varieties meet at school they are expected to learn and use standard Setswana for instructions in their learning process.

Apart from the influence of other African languages, English also has its mark on the use of standard language in schools. Pupils learn it at school as a subject. Malimbe (1990) in Calteaux (1996:147) indicates that the compositions written in African language classrooms (mother tongue subjects), often contain a number of adoptives from English and sometimes even from Afrikaans words because these languages are used at home. This is to say that without a proper knowledge of dialectal differences the children can easily confuse them, or use dialectal forms indiscriminately.

### 3.2 Language variation

Each person speaks somewhat differently from all others (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:2). Older people speak differently from younger ones, women speak differently from men, people living in a certain area speak differently from those in another area, people with more power speak differently from those without power etc.

Those language varieties that initially and basically represent divergent geographic origins are known as dialects (Ferguson & Gumperz 1960, Hillday 1964b in Fishman 1972:17). However, dialects may easily come to represent other factors than geographic ones. Language varieties may be viewed as regional at one time and social at another. Varieties may be reacted to as regional within the speech community of their users and as social or ethnic by outsiders.

Their functional allocations however are derivable only from societal observation of their uses and users rather than from any characteristics of the codes themselves. All language varieties of Setswana are equally expandable and changeable all varieties are equally contractible and interpenetrable under the influence of foreign models. Their virtues are in the eyes and ears of their beholders, and their functions depend on the norms of the speech communities that employ them. These norms, in turn change as speech communities change in self-concept, in their relation with surrounding communities and in their objective circumstances (*Ibid.* p.18). Setswana varieties change from time to time to suit their speakers' current situations.

Wardhaugh (1993: 166-167) points out that language variation may seem to be as regrettable a fact about language as language change. A single language used by speakers throughout the world with no variation may appear to many people to be a perfect state of affairs. An artificial language may be promoted largely to serve such a purpose, at the very least they appear to offer people everywhere a fixed and invariant second language.

Given a fixed and invariant language, people would not have to worry either about being quite unable to talk to people from other parts of the world or about their speech, in their personal relationships closer to home.

Wardhaugh also argued that it is good to believe that language change and variation are inevitable and that very little can be done about it. This is impossible because all languages have dialects even in homogeneous countries language variation exists.

### **3.2.1 Aspects of language variation**

Language contact is considered a major aspect of language variation because no one who speaks a particular language can remain in close contact with only speakers of that language. Batswana like other people from all over the world move all over the world in search for greener pastures and come into contact with other languages which in turn influence their own languages resulting in them changing. Some examples of this will be words like; (*lifiti*) from an English word (lift), (*motorokara*) from (motorcar), (*matshini*)

from (machine) etc.

According to Crystal (1992:409) variation is a system of linguistic expression whose use is governed by situational variables such as regional, occupational and social class factors. There are many factors that contribute to language variation and some of these will be dealt with below. Clair & Giles (1980:194) point out that most variation in language is products of learning.

### **3.2.1.1 Gender variation**

Men and women speak differently, mostly as a result of social processes and this differ from culture to culture. These differences result from the domination of women by men and the expectation that our society has about who should play what kind of role. (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:34,35). Sometimes these differences, if they exist, are barely recognisable while in other instances the differences are so distinct (*Ibid*: p49). Trugill (1983) cited in Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:49) draws attention to the fact that "differences between men's speech and women's speech cannot be explained on the same grounds as social or geographical differences". An explanation for gender differences can rather be tackled in a different manner.

Jespersen advanced the explanation by saying that the growth of separate gender vocabularies may be closely tied up with taboos concerning particular objects or activities (*Ibid*: p49). For example, because Batswana men are not allowed to take part



in (bojale) girls initiation, then they are not allowed to use the language appropriate to such ceremonies. On the other hand Batswana women are not allowed to take part in (bogwera) boys initiation and likewise are not allowed to use the language appropriate to such activities. Women cannot sing songs for men's ceremonies as much as men cannot sing songs for women ceremonies.

Language is also used differently in kinship and gender relations, that is the way sons talk to their fathers is different from the way they talk to their peers, this means that sometimes the gender of the speaker or the addressee will determine the form of language used (*Ibid*: p49).

On the other hand men's speech differ from women's speech due to their sound systems, partly because of biological differences between sexes. Men's voices are generally deep and loud than those of women (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:51). According to Setswana "a woman is seen not heard", this is a proverb which means that women are not supposed to speak too loud but softly. Setswana women show some kind of conciousness and sensitivity to others, more especially when they speak to men, while men are straight forward in what they say and do not care how they say it which makes them kind of insensitive and of more power than women.

In Setswana tradition, mothers are closer to their daughters than to their sons, while sons are closer to their fathers than to their mothers. This could be interpreted as, mothers having more to share with their daughters than their sons, while fathers' share with their

sons than their daughters

### **3.2.1.2 Age variation**

Adults are shown to be more conservative in their use of variables than younger age groups (Labov 1966, Wolfram 1969, Trudgill 1974, Macaulay 1977, in Coulmas 1997:164). This conservatism has been attributed to the pressure for use of standard language in the place of work. Reed (1971:209) also contends that studies of ongoing linguistic changes follow that children may not learn the same language that their parents learned. Children tend to acquire languages differently from their parents.

After several generations significant differences are noticed in the language character. A generative perspective in Setswana, the younger generation does not learn and speak Setswana like adults. This is true considering the fact that the world is changing and a lot of things are also changing due to modernisation and technology. Batswana used to learn about things around their immediate surroundings and lives, but today their children learn about all the happenings of the world, hence learning even about things which are not there in their own countries, as well as things they have never seen.

Labov (1966) cited in Coulmas (1997:165) based on some evidence that older men's speech is less conservative than the immediately younger age group suggests that older men's linguistic behaviour seems to relax as they lose concern with power relationships.

In the case of Setswana all the above mentioned facts seem to be true. The adults speak differently from the younger generations. The younger generations language is mostly laced with language contact phenomenon of codeswitching, codemixing and borrowing. Some of the words older people use, are not familiar to the young people for example older people tend to use proverbs more often as they speak. The younger generation speaks 'Tsotsitaal', 'Slang', and many other fashions the older people have no idea of.

Although there is what is called respect for age in African societies, some of these children have never been exposed to the right ways of talking to the elderly people. That is to say they grew up in situations where only such kind of talk is used irrespective of age. Wardhaugh (1993:153), in agreement with the above statements points out that the language of early adolescence is influenced by peer pressure and is particularly likely to show such influence. Later part of the period may be characterised by adoption of special vocabularies of 'slang' terms, whose principal function is to identify the members of particular groups. Examples which could be found in these groups are that they call their mothers' "o'lady" and fathers "timer".

### **3.2.1.3 Geographical/ Regional variation**

According to Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:29) "geographical features such as mountains, swamps or wide open plains often become regional barriers which affect people's language". Home is where many speakers speak their local dialect or among family or friends of the same dialect area. This is to say people in different areas who

speak the same language use different versions of the grammar, vocabulary or sounds. For example Bakgatla speak Sekgatla, but in different ways. Ellis & Beattie (1986:93) point out that sometimes accent makes the speech mutually unintelligible. Geographical locations principally affect pronunciation but clearly there are other differences as well, for example, in word usage or grammar (Ellis & Beattie 1986:93).

Dialectologists produced a geographical account of linguistic differences, the product often taking the form of a series of maps showing the broad areal limits of the linguistic features (lexical or phonological) chosen for study. These boundaries known as isoglosses are plotted on the map, which show the lines drawn around an area with a particular 'form of dialect' (Wardhaugh 1993:137) marking the geographical boundary distribution of that form.

This is what marks the salient dialectal difference in the sound system which concerns the dental stop with lateral release, spelled /**tl**/ and pronounced approximately as the medial consonants in 'butler'. The consonant occurs with great frequency in the morpheme /**tla**/, which is both an auxiliary for future tense, 'shall, will', and a full verb meaning 'come'. In the northern dialects, that is with the Bangwato and Batawana variants this consonant has changed to an ordinary /**t**/, and the less frequent aspirated /**tlh**/ has changed to /**th**/.

#### **3.2.1.4 Social groupings variation**

Human societies are made up of all sorts of groupings, many of which manifest themselves in distinctive languages. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:29) point out that the society within which we live can affect our language in many ways, and the effect is clearly seen in differences in pronunciation, in vocabulary, in rules for interruption and turn taking. Societal variables that result in such differences may be the social class of speakers, their ethnic groups and their gender.

In many countries though not all, upper class speakers speak a prestige variety of the language compared to lower -class speakers (Cook 1997:167). The way that someone speaks proclaims his membership of a particular group, whether age, sex class or whatever.

There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that social grouping affect language at a number of different levels. According to Ellis & Beattie (1986:94), working class and middle class people speak differently, certain phonological, lexical and even grammatical features do seem to be affected by social class. In Botswana the kind of language people staying in rural areas use is much different from that used by educated people and people living in urban areas. One finds that people living in rural areas who do not have much contact with the modern world, use the old version of the language. Difference in speech can be correlated with social or class differences, educated speech tends to be less markedly different between one region and another than the speech of less educated

people, presumably because of the greater mobility of educated people. The spread of universal education is one factor tending at the present time toward the lessening of dialect division (Robins 1964:56).

Throughout the world we find that isolated mountains, valleys and provincial frontiers are apt to contain linguistic relic areas, in which older forms of the language are preserved long after they have been replaced for most speakers of the variant (Reed 1971:189). This could be the case with the Bangwaketse and the Bakwena, as their variants are extensively influenced by Sekgalagadi that is the language of the first inhabitants of the regions they are now settled in.

#### **3.2.1.5 Occupation and role differences**

Occupation and role differences can also be associated with language differences. Occupations tend to have their own 'jargon', i.e. technical linguistic usage, including their own ways of using otherwise familiar words. Linguistics is full of special words it also uses familiar words in unfamiliar ways. For instance in Botswana, preachers, doctors, and many other people of different professions use different words in different ways for different purposes. Language is also varied according to the role a person is playing for, example, father, mother, son, drinking companion, daughter and others, speak differently from one another.

### **3.2.1.6 Ethnicity**

Ethnicity also plays some part in language variation we can identify certain styles of speaking with ethnic groups, that is to say "people take on the linguistic characteristics of the people they live in close contact with" (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995:33). Clearly though, where people are living together in large ethnic groups there may be a link between language and ethnicity.

In Setswana, people are able to distinguish between Bangwato, Batawana and Bakgatla just by their accents, tones and expressions. Using a few features for the purpose of classification is clearly demonstrable in the above tribes relationships in general and in speech in particular.

### **3.3 Attitudes towards the teaching of non-standard varieties**

According to Calteaux (1996:156), more negative attitudes than positive ones, which prevail towards the non-standard varieties, prevent them from being acceptable in the classroom situation. However, it is known that certain non-standard varieties are more acceptable than others.

Appel and Muysken (1987:59), associate the non-standard varieties with low economic educational achievement. Van Wyk (1992:37) in Sigcau (1998:37) supports this by saying that, "the non-standard varieties are used for lower functions such as interaction

by peer groups, families at home and by players and spectators on the playground".

The use of these varieties tends to hinder the progress of Setswana pupils in the classroom situation, because they are used to using these varieties in their homes, they now tend to use them in the classroom forgetting that they are in a different situation. This supports Sigcau's (1998:37) argument that this is a reflection that there is conflict between the language used at home and the language used at school.

Mother-tongue varieties in education have received but lip service in Botswana due mainly to, inter alia, elite closure as well as the perception that it is not resourceful. Elite closure refers to the isolation of the elite with their preferred language (i.e. a former colonial language) from the lower strata of the population and their languages (i.e. indigenous languages). Mother-tongue education has also hardly been associated with access to economic resources, employment, or higher education. Besides all these, researchers have established a resolution that the child's mother tongue is the gateway to success.

### **3.3.1 Teachers attitudes**

MacGroarty's opinion (1991:91) is that, "for teachers, respect for all forms of language used in the communities in which they teach is essential". The Setswana teaching profession is an important group for the study of language attitudes and for the future status and development of Setswana. Janson and Tsonope (1991:91) believe that



Botswana now has its first generation of qualified teachers of the majority language, from which most of them are educated within the country. He further believes that the attitudes and beliefs of these people concerning language are likely to spread very efficiently through the schools and permeate society through other channels. He believes that the teachers are likely to influence the course of linguistic events to a considerable extent, because they are crucially involved in both language change and in metalinguistic change.

Many children only encounter standard languages in the classroom, as these are not their home languages. Mastery of the standard languages, for these children, therefore depends entirely on the teacher. One finds that in urban areas, some of the teachers teaching Setswana, mostly in secondary schools, are not actually Batswana by birth, unlike those who teach in rural areas. This therefore makes those pupils in rural areas have an advantage over those in the urban areas as the language use of their teachers shows less interference from other languages ( Malimbe 1990 cited in Calteaux 1996:153).

The language use of teachers is an important issue. Malimbe (1990) cited in Calteaux 1996:154) indicates that teachers are often unable to express themselves in the pure standard languages. Their speech includes language contact phenomena such as codeswitching and the use of adoptives, which leads to unintentional encouragement of non-standard forms. Errors are sometimes marked correct leading to incorrect language learning by the pupils. In some cases, the teachers who have been allocated to teach Setswana do not have the credentials to do so, but just because they are desperate to

secure their positions, they just accept such appointments. As a result such teachers also contribute unintentionally to the errors made by the pupils, further exacerbating the situation.

According to Calteaux (1996:154), when asked to respond to the above mentioned observation, teachers indicated that they use English words in their speech for the sake of prestige, as it makes them feel more like teachers. The other problem is that teachers are expected to teach various content subjects as well as the vernacular class, and find it difficult to switch to standard Tswana for that specific period. They were of the opinion that some of these problems could be alleviated if they could be allowed to specialise in one subject.

The above mentioned problems are the same problems faced by Setswana teachers in Botswana, which could also be minimised if not eradicated by the introduction of specialisation. Specialisation would also help in the sense that teachers will teach what they know and like and be able to master it even more, hence becoming more productive in such areas.

Calteaux also points out that a very serious problem in schools is that the teachers teaching the content subjects often undermine African languages by indicating that these languages are not important as they are not used internationally and will be of little benefit to the pupils later on in life. This applies to Batswana children who think that learning Setswana is of no benefit as it is not needed in the field of work.

According to Nyati-Ramahobo (1991:147) Setswana is not required on the job market, and in the school, teachers feel that Setswana has no place in the modern world, the world of work of opportunity and social advancement. It is also assumed that the attitudes of Setswana teachers promote student's negative self- concepts that may lead to poor performance of students. Students seemed to be penalised for using non-standard forms at school. All these assumptions will be investigated in the next chapter.

### **3.3.2 Students and parents attitudes**

The attitudes of students and parents are particularly shaped by the personal experience of schooling and by the specific warming context. The educational situations of the first language students adding prestige variants or acquiring literacy in their nature language, and those of second language students working to develop oral language proficiency and often literary too, are not necessary comparable although they may overlap (McKay 1996:18). McKay (1996:19), suggests that linguistic behaviour, especially in advanced-level students is a product of many factors in addition to choose to use prestige variants. Even if their close friends are not from the mainstream prestige dialect community, if they sense that using such forms makes a difference in achieving their goals. The attitudes of parents according to McKay (1996:21) reflects the personal histories, including their responses to the wider themes framing their own experiences.

This is to say parents who believe that they have been stigmatised because of their variants are particularly eager to have their children acquire a standard language. They

may have value of their home variant in certain contexts, but insist that their children have ample opportunity to develop skill in the prestige standard (*Ibid.* p.19). Many parents would send their small children to multiracial crèches so that they can acquire a knowledge of English, they would even make the sacrifice to speak English fluently at home. This is rather ironic that the same sacrifice is not made for the preservation for Setswana. Students have often borne the sole responsibility for increasing their communicative repertoires through mastery of the dominant school or mainstream language variety (*Ibid.* p.21).

Most parents are dedicated to the education of their children. They try their level best to ensure that their children receive an education which is something many of them never had, irrespective of the cost, (Calteaux 1996:153), though not all parents share the same sentiments. Children need to be shown the value of learning their African languages, this means that a general change in attitude towards the languages needs to be engineered, in order for them to be regarded once more as valuable and prestigious languages worthy of study and development.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, it is argued that language change and language contact, are the main factors that influence language variation. According to sociolinguistic factors language change is natural and inevitable.

It is also observed that change in society leads to change in culture. Although there are more negative than positive attitudes towards the use of non- standard varieties in classroom situations, there is proof that mother-tongue is the best language which can be used to teach children and achieve best results for the economic as well as the political diversification of the country.

## Chapter 4

### Language attitudes in the educational field (the non-standard Setswana)

#### 4.0 Introduction

It was claimed in the previous chapters that learners and teachers encounter some problems in so far as the use of non-standard varieties in the class is concerned. Learners tend to write the way they speak, and their speech is not acceptable. On the other hand, educators are opposed to the use of non-standard varieties in schools.

This chapter investigates such problems in the broad educational field. The research procedures used in the collection of data, as well as results will be presented in this chapter.

It has also been hypothesised in this study that learners perform poorly in Setswana because they are not proficient in the use of standard Setswana. Almost all Setswana learners use a number of language varieties, which differ from the standard Setswana and are regarded as incorrect.

#### **4.1 Aims of the questionnaires and interviews**

The aims of the questionnaires and interviews are to:

- a) Establish the social status of the language varieties in order to investigate the possible correlation between the status of a variety and the status of its speaker.
- b) Investigate the attitudes of educators towards different language varieties.
- c) Suggest ways of creating awareness that variation is a natural phenomenon in all languages and that the language varieties of all learners should be accommodated in the classroom.
- d) Demonstrate that linguistic inequality is deeply entrenched in the education system and that every system is responsible for the perpetuation of this kind of discrimination.
- e) Suggest means and ways of addressing the problems.

#### **4.2 Data collection**

The subjects involved in this study include standards 4, 5, 6, and 7 Primary school learners, (grades 2,3,4 and 5), the teachers for the same standards, the Setswana Language Council Secretary, a Senior Education Officer for Setswana in the Curriculum Division, and a Senior Education Officer in Examination Unit.

The data was collected in ten primary schools in the different districts in Botswana. In order to find the correlation between varieties spoken and the performance of the learners, the schools from which the samples were drawn were those schools located in

variety-speaking areas of the country.

These schools and their districts are:

<b>District.</b>	<b>School (s).</b>
1. Ngwaketse District Council.	Maisantwa Primary School
2. Lobatse Town Council.	New Look Primary School
3. Gaborone City Council.	Ben Thema Primary School
4. Kgatleng District Council.	Seingwaeng Primary School & Isang Primary School
5. Kweneng District Council.	Lewis Primary School
6. Central District Council.	Tshekedi Memorial School & Western Primary School
7. North West Dist. Council.	Moremi Primary School & Botswelelo Primary School

The sample is evenly distributed throughout the country covering the variants the researcher was focusing on. This will make a realistic and representative assessment sample on which analysis can be based.

The researcher had to seek permission from the education officer of each district she was to visit. The researcher had a letter from her supervisor and one she had written to present to the education officers, asking for permission to use the schools that she had chosen. (see appendix i and ii) The researcher had to present the letter of approval from the



education officer to the headteacher before she could be allowed to do the research in that particular school. Each school was allocated 50 questionnaires to be responded to by 50 learners in that school, 10 for standard 4 sample, another 10 for standard 5 sample, 15 for standard 6 sample and another 15 for standard 7 sample (see appendix iii). The research questionnaires (see appendix iv) were given to the teachers concerned who in turn administered them in their classes during their spare times.

The questionnaires were written in Setswana for the respondents to understand and be able to express their views. The questionnaires were administered and collected the same day in some schools, while in other schools the questionnaires were collected by the teachers concerned and the researcher collected them the following day. This was due to the fact that it was nearing the end of the term and the learners were writing end of term tests and preparing for the school closure hence time was limited.

Teachers were also given questionnaires to respond to. The criteria used for choosing the teachers were that the teacher had to be teaching standard 4,5,6 or 7 class (grades 2,3,4 and 5). The questionnaires were given to the teachers during the researcher's visits to schools. During visits to schools, the researcher was introduced to the staff members by the head-teacher and later on given time to introduce herself and explain what is needed of the questionnaire as well as the purpose of the research.

Other subjects involved in this data collection were, the secretary of National Setswana Language Council, Setswana Education Officers in the Curriculum Development Unit.

These officers were not given structured questionnaires, the researcher had an informal discussion with each one of them at their convenient times and places. The researcher led the discussion by asking questions orally.

### 4.3 Discussion

When asked about their home languages, the respondents indicated that they spoke different variants of Setswana. That is to say the languages they use at home are different from the one they use at school.

In order to find out about the impact of non-standard Setswana varieties on children's education, the learners were asked if they were allowed to use their varieties in class, and if not, why was it so.

#### 4.3.1 Use of Setswana varieties in class

**Figure 1.**

District No.	No.	Not allowed in %.	No.	Allowed in %.	Total.
1.	45	90.	5	10.	100
2.	40	80.	10	20.	100
3.	35	70.	15	30.	100
4.	45	90.	5	10.	100
5.	37	74.	13	26.	100

6.	43	86.	7	14.	100
7.	45	90.	5	10.	100

An average of 83 percent of the respondents said they were not allowed to use their varieties in class. They pointed out that their varieties were different from the language used at school and they had a tendency of writing the way they talk which was not acceptable at school. To this effect, Nomlomo (1993:96), is right to say that the closer to the norm the fewer the problems, and conversely, the further from the norm, the more the problems experienced.

An average of 17 percent of the respondents was allowed to use their language varieties in class, these are learners whose language varieties are not very different from the standard form. Though 83 percent of the learners speak a different language variety at home, only 20 percent of the learners indicated that they had problems in learning in Setswana. They mentioned different reasons, like, some said they did not know Setswana, as their varieties were far different from Setswana. These were varieties like Sembukushu, Sekalanga, Seherero, Seyei, which differ extensively from Setswana. They also indicated that some of their teachers did not know Setswana very well as they also fall in the category of Sembukushu, Sekalanga, Seherero and Seyei variety speakers as well as other languages apart from Setswana.

They also said that some Setswana words are difficult to pronounce. Some think that Setswana is more difficult compared to English and this is worsened by a situation

whereby teachers code-switch from time to time when teaching. This confuses learners even more. This shows that teachers are often unable to express themselves in the standard language. Kgomoeswana (1993) in Calteaux (1996:148) pointed out that codeswitching often occurred more for the benefit of the teacher than for that of the learners.

Learners in the Central district indicated that they were being taught the Sekgatla variety in school. This is due to the fact that the Sengwato variety does not have /l/ like in words such as, '*tlala*' meaning 'hunger', in such situations they would say '*tala*' without an /l/.

Sekgatla variety has these /l/s and so is the standard form and that is why the learners think that they were being taught in Sekgatla, when in actual fact they were being taught the standard form of the language. Janson and Tsonope (1992:98), contends that schools normally encourage the use of /tl/ and /tlh/ because of the spelling conventions.

#### **4.3.2 Academic performance in Setswana.**

Due to the above- mentioned problems, learners pass rate was mostly in the average and below average. Very few learners did very well in Setswana as far as performance was concerned. Below is a table of pass rates across schools visited,

**Pass rates of learners in Setswana across the schools visited in %.**

**Figure 2.**

<b>District.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Above average.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Average.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Below Average.</b>	<b>Total.</b>
1.	19	38 %	25	50%	6	12%	100%
2.	18	36 %	27	54%	5	10%	100%
3.	8	16%	30	60%	12	24%	100%
4.	13	26%	28	56%	9	18%	100%
5.	14	28%	30,5	61%	5,5	11%	100%
6.	7	14%	36	72%	7	14%	100%
7.	9,5	19%	33	66%	12,5	25%	100%

Learners indicated that at times they lacked vocabulary of the standard form and they resorted to using their non-standard vocabulary which was unacceptable. They think that Setswana is difficult, complicated and not as rich in vocabulary as English is. Most of the respondents indicated that they had problems in learning Setswana idioms and proverbs.

**4.3.3 Learners attitudes towards non-standard variants**

From the so-called minority languages 10 percent of the learners said that they were shy to speak their language variety in the presence of other people. These learners said that they did not want other people to associate them with those varieties, and as such they

wanted to quit their language varieties and concentrate on the standard Setswana as well as English. These two are the only official languages that are taught in schools and English is also needed in the field of work. They felt that their language varieties were not important as they were only used at home and nowhere else. This made learners have negative attitudes towards their own language varieties as they came to realise that they were not wanted in schools, and the influence of these negative attitudes on their self-concept is self-evident.

On the other hand, about 32 percent of the learners felt that they should be taught in their own varieties as in that case they would understand better and be able to pass their examinations very well. This would make them proud of their own language varieties because they are their mother tongues and part of their cultures. About 62 percent of the learners wanted to use their varieties outside school only, the rest were neutral.

The 62 percent said that they wanted to learn the standard form as well as English because it is the policy that only the standard form and English be used in schools. They pointed out that all examinations are written in English except for Setswana.

They went on to say that English is an international language and it enables one to communicate with the outside world. Learners indicated that they were punished for using their language varieties in class. There were those learners who wanted to be taught only in English. These learners said that Setswana is difficult and not straightforward, as is the case with English. These were the learners who code switched most of the time

when speaking Setswana because they said they ran short of Setswana words but get English words easily to make their points. They brought up a point that all examinations are written in English. This is one of the reasons they wanted to be taught in that language. They indicated that all the subjects in school were taught in English except for Setswana, and they were supposed to use English in class and in the school premises not their language varieties nor Setswana. They indicated that if they used their language varieties or Setswana in school premises, they were punished for that because it was not acceptable. They argued that English is needed in the job market, all jobs and school interviews are conducted in English not in Setswana.

Some respondents from urban areas added to the above by saying that English is used almost everywhere. That is, they used it at their homes, in school, when talking to friends, on television, at movies, and they were saying almost all the sign posts, advertisements and most newspapers are written in English and as such there was little time for Setswana.

Most of these learners said that they were brought up in urban areas and were used to urban area language, and these were the learners who could not manage to complete a Setswana sentence without using an English word, because they were so used to speaking English than Setswana. This shows that there is a greater tendency in urban variety to borrow from English than does rural Setswana.

About 32 percent of the learners indicated that they understood better when taught in

Setswana, while 44 percent of the learners said they understood better when taught in English. The rest said that they would understand better if they were taught in their language varieties because they understand them very well and are able to express themselves fluently using them. They mentioned that if they were taught in their language varieties, their parents would be in a position to help them with their schoolwork, as most parents do not speak English.

When asked what books they like reading most, about 15 percent of the learners indicated that they liked reading Setswana books, while 42 percent said they liked reading English books. About 20 percent liked reading both Setswana and English books and the rest were neutral. They said that they would have chosen books written in their variants, but now most if not all the material used in schools were written either in Setswana or English, nothing is written any language variety.

In writing compositions and letters, 24 percent of the learners preferred writing in Setswana, while 35 percent preferred writing in English. About 17 percent would have preferred to write in their language varieties while the rest chose both Setswana and English.

Learners indicated that they had problems in speaking English, which is the language to be used in schools for learning and teaching all subjects except during Setswana period. This is due to the fact that English is a second language to most learners and a third language to those whose varieties are very different from Setswana. This makes it even



more difficult for them because they have to learn two new languages (Setswana and English) at the same time together with the content. They indicated that they did not have ample time to learn the standard form because it was used only during the Setswana period.

#### **4.3.4 General comments and suggestions**

At the end of the questionnaire, there was a question inviting learners to bring up their comments and suggestions. Some of the comments and suggestions brought forward were as follows:

1. Some learners wanted to be taught through the use of their language varieties, because they could not speak proper Setswana.
2. Some learners indicated that they wanted to be taught in English only now that Setswana has lost value over English and nobody seems to know proper Setswana anymore.
3. According to the Botswana Policy of Education, learners are supposed to use only English at school and Setswana only during its lesson. Most of them said that they were not very conversant with speaking English fluently nor reading it fluently as it is their second language and a third language to others.
4. Learners commented that they had problems in learning Setswana sounds. This was due

to the fact that different language varieties use different sounds. For example in the Sengwato variety, they do not have letter /l/ in words such as, *lethare-leaf*, and *tlou-elephant*. They would say, *lethare-leaf*, and *tou- elephant*. So when coming to the standard form they became confused on where to add these /l/'s.

5. They said that teachers code-switched a lot during teaching, which brought about confusion to learners. Teachers tend to forget the correct words to use in Setswana, and used English words instead of which learners were not very conversant.

6. Learners criticised teachers for punishing them for speaking their variants in class. They said that they liked their variants, understood themselves better when communicating in them and could learn better when using them.

#### **4.3.5 Conclusion**

From the above findings, it is observed that speakers of other variants seem to be regarded as subordinate members of the society of Botswana rather than members of various distinct groups.

This has considerable consequences for the non-standard variants in the educational system, because instruction is in Setswana from the first day of school, and the fact that the learners may not understand a word of it seems not be taken into consideration.

Learners have indicated that they would learn better in their variants, while on the other hand the policy is restricting them by forcing them to learn in languages foreign to them. It becomes very difficult for learners to learn new languages together with the content at the same time. Nyati-Ramahobo (1987:1) contends that this disadvantage the non-standard speakers because while they are still working on acquiring comprehension and speaking in Setswana, Setswana speakers are already working on reading and writing in Setswana.

#### **4.4 Results of teachers interviews**

Since the teachers had received the same training and were using the same syllabus and materials to educate the learners under the same department as well as same conditions of work, the researcher decided not to divide them according to areas like it was done with learners.

The sample comprised of 98 teachers drawn from 10 primary schools of Botswana earlier mentioned. The criterion, which was used to select these teachers, was that they should be teaching either standard 4,5,6-or7 class (grades 2,3,4 and5).

From urban areas Gaborone and Lobatse, Ben Thema and New Look Primary schools were chosen, which will be labelled Group 1 in the discussion. This leaves us with 74 teachers from villages of Kanye, Molepolole, Mochudi, Serowe, and Maun, which will be, labelled Group 2 in the discussion.

#### 4.4.1 Teachers' qualifications.

Figure 3.

	Qualifications:						
	PTC.	PL.	Dip.	B.Ed.	ETC.	Unqualified.	Total.
Group 1.	21	1	1	-	-	1	24
Group 2.	57	3	3	1	4	5	74

The teachers who have no formal training as far as teaching is concerned are obviously unqualified to teach and should not be allowed to teach more especially language. Calteaux (1996:154) commented that teachers who are not qualified to teach the language subjects obviously contribute to the errors made by learners. It should also be borne in mind that the single most important factor in the education of a child is the quality of the teacher and not principally the language of instruction.

#### 4.4.2 Interview procedures

Each teacher was given a questionnaire (see appendix) to fill at his/her own time. The questionnaires were collected either that same afternoon or the following day.

The questionnaires were written in English. Some of the issues dealt with in the questionnaires covered issues like,

a) Problems encountered in teaching Setswana to non-standard variants.

- b) Teachers attitudes towards variants
- c) Learners academic performance in Setswana
- d) Status of other variants in the field of education
- e) General comments and suggestions by the respondents.

**4.4.3 Discussion.**

**Problems encountered by the teachers in the teaching of Setswana.**

The respondents were asked whether they encountered any problems in the teaching of Setswana or not, and the following information was found:

**Figure 4.**

	Encountered problems.		No problems.		Total.
	No.	%.	No.	%.	No.
<b>Group 1.</b>	14.	58.3	10.	41.7	24
<b>Group 2.</b>	55.	73.3	19.	25.7	74
<b>Totals averages.</b>	<b>69= 70%.</b>		<b>29=30%.</b>		<b>98=100%</b>

Respondents who indicated that they did experience problems in teaching Setswana are 70 percent. They indicated their problems as follows,

- There was not enough support material relevant to the syllabus to make teaching

easier. These were materials like, teachers' guides, learners' readers, charts, work- books, teaching kits and others like in English.

- The Setswana syllabus does not cater much for grammar.
- Objectives in the syllabus are not clear to users. The respondents said that some of these objectives are not comprehensible to them. The syllabus is written in English.
- There is no reference as far as standard orthography is concerned which teachers could refer to when they were stuck.

All the above mentioned problems make the teaching of Setswana difficult, more so that teachers also came from different non-standard varieties and needed guidance as far as the standard form is concerned.

Some teachers also indicated that like their learners they had problems in teaching idioms and proverbs, this is due to the fact that items such as proverbs and idioms are very culture bound and difficult for 'other' speaking learners as well as their teachers (Nyati-Ramahobo 1987:9). Tsonope and Jason (1992:101), agrees with the above. He says that it seems clear that knowledge of idioms and proverbs as part of the language and culture is losing ground among the young.

Teachers also pointed out the fact that teaching Setswana to learners whose first language is different from Setswana is very difficult. This means that the teacher has to teach both the content and the language at the same time, which confuses learners.

They also explained that if a learner does not understand a concept, the teacher usually switched to the vernacular to clarify the point, but then if the learner does not know the language, teaching such a child becomes a problem. Nyati-Ramahobo (1987:11) agreed with the above by saying that it is easier for a learner to deal with two languages when one is their first language than with two languages when neither is their first language.

Some respondents also pointed out the fact that they were not speakers of the standard form, and being non-standard variants speakers, they might also contribute to misleading learners in their learning of the standard form as they were sometimes not sure of which was the right word to be used. They also indicated that they had problems in teaching some sounds in Setswana, for example, digraphs and trigraphs.

This is a problem mostly in variants which do not have such sounds, like Bangwato who will have a problem in saying */letlhare/* meaning 'leaf', they will say */lethare/* without an */l/*.

Respondents in urban areas complained of learners mixing languages all the time. They said learners in those areas could hardly finish a Setswana sentence without including an English word. They think that this is due to the fact that they lack standard Setswana vocabulary.

Blom and Gumperz (1972) in Gxilishe (1992:94) are of the opinion that people code-switch to affirm group membership or identity. Similarly, the expressive function has

been stressed by Poplack, (1980) in Gxilishe (1992:94), that speakers emphasise a mixed identity through the use of two languages in the same discourse. I believe that is what is happening in urban areas.

#### 4.4.4 Teachers' attitudes towards non-standard variants

To find out about teachers attitudes towards non-standard variants, respondents were asked what their attitudes towards these variants were, and whether or not learners were allowed to use their variants in class and why. The following information was obtained:

**Figure 5.**

	Positive Attitudes.		Negative Attitudes.		Total.
	No.	%.	No.	%.	No.
<b>Group 1.</b>	5.	21	19	79	24
<b>Group 2.</b>	27.	36	47	64	74
<b>Totals.</b>	<b>32=33%.</b>		<b>66=67%.</b>		<b>98=100%</b>

An average of 67 percent of the respondents had negative attitudes towards other variants. The respondents believed that non-standard varieties were regarded as being not important in the education system of Botswana. They were of the opinion that those varieties would confuse learners more if they were allowed to use them in their learning process. These respondents believed that learners' performance was lowered by the use of those variants. They also said that learners wasted time in using those variants instead of



learning standard Setswana and English as these are the only languages used in school.

By testing the teachers' attitudes towards non-standard variants, the researcher wanted to establish if this was indeed the case with Botswana. All the above observations show the negative attitudes of teachers as far as the use of non-standard varieties in class was concerned. Nomlomo (1993:97) in her study confirmed that teachers do have negative attitudes towards the use of non-standard varieties in class.

About 33 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that these variants should be maintained and used in schools as they were people's mother tongue and needed to be respected as part of their culture.

On the other hand 40 percent of the respondents opposed the above statement by saying that it is better for the government to train people to specialise in the teaching of standard Setswana which will unify than non-standard varieties which might in the end lead to tribalism.

An average of 47 percent of the respondents believed that if learners were allowed to use their variants in class, there would be a lot of confusion.

There would be some communication breakdown, because learners would not understand each other as well as their teacher who will also be using his variant.

They believed that the only solution to this problem of language was for only English to

be used in teaching and Setswana only as a subject and when need be.

#### **4.4.5 Learners' academic performance in Setswana**

To find out about academic performance of learners in Setswana, some of the questions asked were the following:

- How their learners performed in Setswana.
- In what language did the learners understand the teacher better.
- In what language did the teacher think he taught better.
- In which language did their learners read better.
- In what language did learners express themselves better.

An average 53 percent of the respondents indicated that their learners' performance is mostly on the average. They said that, 25 percent of the learners did well and 22 percent performed below average. An average of 67 percent of the respondents believed that their learners understood better when they were taught through the medium of Setswana than English. This was the case for both towns and villages, but 53 percent of the teachers said that they felt more comfortable when they were taught through the medium of English than Setswana. They were not very comfortable in teaching in Setswana, as they said Setswana is difficult and needed serious specialisation. They said that they always lacked vocabulary and ended up switching to English.

National Commission on Education (1977) in Nyati-Ramahobo (1996), contends that

practice indicated that teachers actually code-switch between Setswana and English throughout the primary school level. Code switching is for the benefit of the teacher than is for the learners. The respondents said that their learners expressed themselves better in Setswana.

An average of 54 percent of the respondents believed that their learners read better in Setswana, while 27 percent believed that their learners read better in English. About 19 percent believed their learners read better in both Setswana and English. When it comes to writing letters and compositions, 55 percent of the respondents believed that their learners wrote better letters and compositions in Setswana. About 70 percent of the respondents said that their learners expressed themselves better in Setswana than in English.

In as far as teaching learners whose home language is other than Setswana is concerned, 60 percent of the respondents indicated that they experienced some problems. They said that they themselves did not speak those languages and in most cases when a learner did not understand, the teacher usually switched to the mother tongue for the learner to understand, but if the learner speaks a language the teacher does not know, it becomes a problem.

The respondents indicated that it was true that learners mixed languages, more especially during oral discussions and when they were playing and talking to their colleagues.

The respondents also indicated that it was true that learners were not allowed to use their variants in class. They said that this would bring confusion in class, and it was a waste of time because their variants were not used anywhere in the education system. An average of 57 percent of the respondents agreed that other variants were of low status in the field of education because they were not catered for in this field. They were said to be unimportant and very little is written in these languages. On the contrary, the professional view is that early concept formation is best provided in the mother tongue (National Commission on Education 1993:459).

An average of 60 percent of the respondents believed that learners who stay in rural areas use Setswana better than those who stay in urban areas. They said that this was due to the fact that those who stay in rural areas used the language most of the time. They stay with their grandparents who always used the language, and there was no code switching in rural areas as contact with other languages was of limited scale. People in rural areas still respect their cultures and they are exposed to a lot of cultural activities.

They said that learners in urban areas used a mixture of languages all the time, because they meet with a variety of people who speak different languages and they wanted to imitate them. They were exposed to the modern world of television; newspapers, magazines, radio, and they were exposed to activities like politics, strikes and many other activities happening in towns that rarely or never took place in rural areas.

They also acknowledged the fact that there was too much imitation in urban areas. People

in urban areas are influenced by their environment; even parents have adopted the Western culture type of life. Tsonope and Jason (1992:81), adds to the above by saying that young Batswana in towns often converse and write well in foreign language, and as has been explained above, many of the daily transactions in town life are in fact performed in English.

#### **4.4.6 Comments and suggestions.**

In the questionnaire, the researcher invited the respondents to make their comments and suggestions. Some of the comments and suggestions brought up by the respondents were the following:

- There should be teachers who specialise in teaching Setswana.
- Something needed to be done concerning the gradual disappearance of Setswana.
- Schools should be equipped with lots of Setswana reading material.
- All books should be checked to verify that they were written in standard Setswana before they could be recommended for use in schools.
- Teachers who did not know Setswana and those who did not like it should not be allowed to teach it.
- Setswana is not given as much attention as English is. Setswana as a subject should have the same status as English in the Primary School Leaving Examinations and in the selection process for secondary schools.
- Children learn better in their mother tongue, so they should be taught in it.

- There needed to be a format on standard orthography to be used throughout the country for uniformity sake.
- Educators should contribute in the writing of the syllabus.
- Setswana should be given first priority, as it is the national language.
- The Syllabus should be written in Setswana for better understanding of its users.
- More time should be allocated for language teaching. Time allocated to Setswana in the school timetable should be increased.
- There should be more reference material accompanying the syllabus. There should also be text -books and other materials on the methodology of teaching Setswana.
- Teachers neglected Setswana too much.
- Learners imitated other speakers for prestige.
- Unlike English, Setswana has very little learning materials such as, teachers guides, pupils books, work books, practice books, readers, kits, charts and other materials which can make teaching a success.
- There are no reference books to guide teachers and lead them to using perfect Setswana.

#### **4.4.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is observed from the above discussion that, teachers and learners of Setswana face many problems as far as language use in the classroom is concerned. The major problem is that non-standard varieties are not accepted in class.

It is also indicated that teachers have negative attitudes towards the non-standard

variants, and as such these variants are regarded as of no importance and unacceptable in the education system.

Teachers also experienced more problems with learners who were speakers of non-standard variety, than those speakers whose varieties were closer to the standardised form, because the closer the speakers were to the standardised form, the better was their academic performance.

From the above discussions, it is also noted that members of the non-standard varieties often face special obstacles on the path to literacy. Among many such groups in Botswana, the primary language of the home is not Setswana. The school system is based on the primacy of English and Setswana only. Once the learner is at school, the language differences between home and school can limit the learner's ability.

One could say that teachers are to a great extent responsible for learners' dropout rate, low esteem and low achievement, mainly due to the way they treat them in the classroom. For example, learners are punished for using their varieties in class, hence their culture being looked down upon. This shows that cultural sensitivity is a key element which is lacking in most teacher education programmes.

#### **4.5 Discussion with the senior education officer of Setswana in the department of Curriculum Development Unit.**

During the discussion with the Senior Education Officers in the unit for curriculum development, the researcher asked the officers if they came across any problems in the development of the curriculum as far as Setswana is concerned. They were asked what problems they usually came across. The officers were also asked if they were aware of any problems as far as the teaching of Setswana is concerned.

The senior education officer for Setswana indicated that they were aware of problems as far as the Setswana language teaching is concerned. He said that learners from Setswana speaking communities had an advantage in writing Setswana, for example in writing letters and composition, but they took it for granted that they knew Setswana and did not give themselves much time to study it seriously. The officer went on to mention that terminology and orthography are the major problems in the teaching of Setswana. Dialects always interfered with the teaching of standard Setswana. The officer mentioned that non-Setswana speaking learners also learned and spoke Setswana fluently, because they did not know the language, they gave it more and serious time during study and got good results.

Some non- Setswana speakers had negative attitudes that hinder them from learning; those attitudes emanated from their homes where they were told that Setswana was not their language. The officer commented that teachers also had a problem in differentiating



the standard form from dialect as well as standard terminology.

He said that at times teachers did not interpret the syllabus correctly, and indicated that this was a serious problem, which cuts across all levels, that is, it was a problem at primary school, junior secondary through to senior secondary school. He said that this problem was due to the fact that teachers were uncomfortable with innovation.

The officer also pointed out that Setswana used not to be planned at primary school level and it used to be taught through the medium of English at secondary level. The other major problem lied with the orthography, which was delayed in planning.

The issue of Botswana having no language policy was also brought up; this makes it difficult for Setswana to be uniform because there is nothing to refer back to in the process of teaching. To contend with the above, Chebanne (1984), said that there was need for a true orthography handbook that will enhance the teaching of the Setswana language. This orthography document must therefore be a more formal handbook that is legal and official, and not just a report. The officer recommended that Setswana be taken as a qualification to work or profession as it is done with English. Janson and Tsonope (1992:82), adds to the above by saying;

The main problem with Setswana in school seems to be that pupils do not take the subject very seriously. The prevalent attitude seems to be that skill in Setswana in not really anything that matters very much.

The ultimate reason for this is that there are no important awards for such skill in Setswana that can be acquired at school. In the modern sector and in the higher echelon of the educational system, there is very little demand for Setswana at all.

#### **4.6 Discussion with the senior education officer (examinations) in the department of Curriculum Development Unit.**

The researcher had an informal discussion with the senior education officer for examinations, in the unit for curriculum development. The purpose of this discussion was to find out how learners from different variants perform in Setswana during examinations.

The officer said at the present moment new programmes were in use, and in addition to that, the system of testing was also new in all levels, that is upper primary, junior secondary as well as senior secondary. She went on to say that it would not be proper to make conclusions that children were doing badly or very well because the systems being used were still new. The learners could not be performing to standard because they had problems with the new system. Their performance might improve as they got used to the new system.

The officer also indicated that criterion reference testing was used now in school, starting from 1997. Before then, they used to write norm reference testing.

Since criterion reference testing is taught according to objectives and is tested on the basis of objectives, the problems could emanate from the fact that teachers did not follow the system properly, and as such contributed to learners failure of Setswana.

The officer believed that Setswana syllabus caters for all dialects, though it used standard Setswana. This meant that the learners were not penalised for using dialect words in the examination, but they were simply corrected and the correct form of the word acceptable was written for the child to use correctly in future. The officer indicated that they were aware of the parents' negative attitudes towards the teaching of Setswana, which contributed a lot to learners' low performance in school.

People despised their own language but were proud of other languages; for example, in Botswana people were proud of English. This is influenced a lot by the background of our society which says English is life, that is to say that one has to know English in order to have a better life. The officer concluded by saying that, the teaching and upgrading of Setswana was set back by the fact that the education policy did not cater for Setswana.

#### **4.7 Discussion with the secretary/treasurer of the National Setswana Language Council**

The researcher met and had an informal discussion with the secretary and treasurer of the National Setswana Language Council. Some of the questions the researcher posed to him were:

-What is the National Setswana Language Council, and what are its duties as far as Setswana is concerned.

-What are its terms of reference.

-What are its aspirations as far as standard Setswana and other non-standard variants are concerned.

The officer explained that this Council is a body formed in 1985, and its membership is all-inclusive, drawn from the wider community. The council was formed with terms of reference to help it run accordingly.

The council has, as one of its major objectives the promotion of the use and understanding of the national language Setswana, through the development of an appropriate orthography encouragement of writing in Setswana as well as overseeing effectively the efforts of government and non-governmental organisations to disseminate information through the various publications ( Setswana Language Council Minutes 1986).

Capacity had to be created to enable the council to diversify its activities as far as it is practical in order to advise government on both curricular and development needs of other languages spoken in Botswana.

Some of the council's duties were to discuss examination results of Setswana Language at junior secondary and Cambridge level. They also reviewed books to check if they were

relevant to Setswana culture and could not lead learners astray. They work hand in hand with book publishers and examine books before they were passed to schools. They find words, which could be best, used in Setswana. They deal with origin of words, their meanings and use in education, culture and terminology. They also help the radio with good words and phrases to use in the news broadcasting. (Setswana Language Council Minutes; March 1986.)

The officer commented that translation in Setswana was very poor more especially in court cases where magistrates did not know Setswana. He suggested that proper translation training be taken into consideration. He also commented on standard seven (grade 5) examination papers, which had words that were not Setswana, and needed to be seriously ironed out.

He also suggested that, although Setswana is a national language, people should speak their different dialects when not handling national issues, and it should also be borne in mind that Setswana is a second language for some of our learners. He recommended that the University of Botswana should take the lead in the efforts to perfect Setswana.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

In the above discussions one detects that learners face a serious problem in their learning process as they are not allowed to use their variants whatsoever during the learning process. It is observed that most of the learners speak different variants at home and other

variants differ extensively from Setswana.

Teachers also encounter problems in the teaching of Setswana as they come across a lot of obstacles. They come across children whose home languages are other than Setswana and this makes teaching difficult for them. Teachers also run short of relevant teaching materials which could make teaching a success.

On the other hand authorities responsible for language issues are also facing some problems in making Setswana teaching a success. They are working hard to make the teaching of Setswana smooth, they make changes, amendments and recommendations in Setswana.

It is very clear that the teaching of the mother language in schools at primary levels could have no ill effects. On the contrary, it could only have beneficial effects. Teacher training should also emphasise sensitisation into the various cultures represented in the country and the importance of knowing and respecting the learner's culture in the learning process.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Summary, conclusion and recommendations.**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The primary objective of this work has been to study language variation in the Batswana speech community and its impact on children's education. The several investigations presented in the preceding chapters contribute in various ways to what is happening and has happened. The study has argued for the importance of non-standard varieties within the learning situation. It has looked at attitudes towards language varieties, the main focus being on the use of non-standard varieties in a classroom situation. The problems as regard to the use of non-standard varieties were surveyed.

In this final chapter, the researcher deemed it necessary to provide an overview of the main features of the research. It will also contain some recommendations found necessary to alleviate problems of the study.

## **5.1 Summary**

### **5.1.1 Learners' problems**

The study revealed problems faced by learners in learning standard Setswana in Botswana schools.

The study revealed that learners from villages are more competent in standard Setswana than those in urban areas, because in urban areas there is too much contact with many other languages and language varieties.

Most learners indicated that they would want to be taught in English as they feel Setswana has no value. They stated that English is the language for international communication and is the most important in the field of work. Parents also prefer their children to be fluent in English. Learners tend to prefer English to Setswana because of the prestige associated with its use. The use of English as a medium of instruction is also not always satisfactory, as many learners are not competent in English to understand the entire contents of each lesson. Kashoki in Herbert (1993:145) pointed out that no education, which leads to the alienation of the child from his ancestral environment, could be right, nor can it achieve the most important aim of education, that of developing the powers and character of the child. This makes us aware of the fact that, neglect of the local language involves the danger of crippling and destroying the learners' productive powers by forcing them to express themselves in a language foreign both to themselves and to the genius of their race.



The incompetence of learners in standard Setswana contributes a lot to poor results. It should be taken into consideration that, it is a universally acknowledged principle in modern education that a child should receive instruction both in and through his mother tongue and this privilege should not be withheld from the African child (Kashoki in Herbert 1993:145).

### **5.1.2 Teachers' problems**

Although all people have an inherent right to their own languages, teachers are supposed to be the people who teach learners the correct standard language. The study revealed that they faced a lot of problems as far as teaching Setswana is concerned. Some teachers are not competent in the standard language, as they are speakers of various non-standard variants. The incompetence of teachers as far as standard language is concerned, contributes to learners' failing Setswana. To curb these problems, learning should take place within an atmosphere of tolerance.

To add to the above, Malimabe (1990:71), pointed out that the problem of writing and speaking Setswana was not confined only to learners. It stems from the way teachers express themselves to learners in Setswana reflecting the influence of the language of the area, as they cannot avoid the influence of other languages.

The other problem related to the teaching of Setswana is that in some schools, teachers are allocated to teach Setswana, although there is nothing in the teachers' credentials that

states that they are capable of teaching Setswana. Desperate teachers accept such allocations to secure their jobs. This forces them to contribute to the mistakes learners make.

The other problem is that, in schools there are so many subjects, which are taught through the medium of English, that when the Setswana period comes, switching to pure Setswana is difficult for them, hence specialisation could be the remedy. There were also too many learners in a class, that teachers did not have time to attend to all of them individually to help them with their language problems.

Teachers considered non-standard variants unacceptable in class. They have negative attitudes towards speakers of non-standard variants and their variants. Kaschula & Anthonissen's (1995:38), opinion on the above statement is that, it would be wrong for teachers to evaluate students on how 'standard' their speech is, as fluency in the standard form of a language is not a reflection of intelligence. Education is best and more efficaciously imparted by means of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

Teachers were of the opinion that penalising learners would help stop them from using their variants in class. This contributes seriously to learners' negative conclusions that their variants are unimportant and worthless as they cannot be used in schools and they were wrong to be speaking such variants. Mtuze (1992:49), expresses the importance of the child's language in his education by saying that, it is of value to use the mother - tongue in education in order to maximise the development of the intellectual potential of

the child.

These negative attitudes of teachers promote negative self-concepts in learners. Hudson in Nomlomo (1993:144), concur with the above by saying that teachers may reinforce negative prejudices which the pupils may already have against their own speech, thus making the pupils self image more negative. The process of over-emphasising standard language use and pronunciation can have serious implications for the learners' self image and self-esteem, as the pupils' language is directly linked to the formation of his or her identity ( Kaschula & Anthonissen 1995:38).

On the other hand, some teachers felt that non-standard variants should be promoted and used in the educational system, as they seemed to be the gateway to learners' success. Thus learners will be learning using the languages they understood better. These languages could be used as a tool to promote learners self image and sense of belonging (Gxilishe 1996:1).

## **5.2 Non teaching participants**

These, include the senior education officer of Setswana, the senior education officer in examinations unit, both under the department of curriculum development and the secretary and treasurer of the National Setswana Language Council.

The senior education officer for Setswana in the curriculum department pointed out that

the problem lies with learners from Setswana speaking communities who take it for granted that they know Setswana and do not give it time during study hence failing it. He went on to point out that if all learners could give Setswana a chance and be serious in studying it, they could all do better than they were doing now. This could be true because some learners from non-Setswana speaking communities do well in Setswana because they study it seriously.

The officer mentioned the major problems being the unavailability of the standard terminology and orthography. Teachers do not have anything to refer to, when they are caught up with situations where they cannot differentiate the standard from the non-standard. Teachers also have problems in interpreting the syllabus, and this makes their teaching of Setswana not interesting. This is mainly due to the fact that teachers are uncomfortable to innovations and the syllabus is entirely written in English.

The senior education officer in the examination unit, pointed out that criterion reference testing, which is taught and tested according to objectives had recently been introduced in schools. If teachers did not follow this innovation correctly, they might lead to learners failing Setswana.

Both education officers indicated that, they were aware of the negative attitudes amongst both learners and their parents as far as the teaching of standard language was concerned. These attitudes lowered the learner's performances. They concluded that the teaching and upgrading of Setswana is set back by the fact that the education policy does not cater for

Setswana, and if only it could be taken as a qualification or profession as is done with other subject like Science and English.

The secretary and treasurer of the National Setswana Language Council, pointed out that it is not only the teachers and learners who have problems with the standard form, translations to Setswana in court cases is a disaster. There should be serious consideration for proper training of these people to make their work more meaningful to the community.

He mentioned the other problem of some words, which are used in standard seven examinations, which are not proper Setswana. He called for a serious consideration of standard orthography and terminology.

Television and radio also contribute a lot to the interference of Setswana by other languages. Our children find themselves attracted to television and radio programmes where different languages are used. Malimabe (1990:75), pointed out that, young and inexperienced children tend to consider radio and television language as correct, hence the rapid development of a new and common dialect amongst town dwellers. Hence government in collaboration with others should come up with a proper language policy to curb this confusion.

### 5.3 Conclusions

With regard to the learners and teachers responses stated above in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn:

It is regrettable that the non-standard varieties are never taught in schools or discussed in grammar books because they are not standard. This has led to poor performance in the language subject because pupils are discouraged from learning the spoken language and forced to assimilate a language, which only lives in textbooks.

It is very vital for a careful consideration to be given to the handling of the non-standard varieties in drawing up syllabuses for Setswana and in laying down the rules and content of what has to be examined.

The question of standard and non-standard forms is problematic. The main problem lies in an accurate characterisation of these forms, it seems, they cannot be defined with any precision.

Children are facing real problems in the school and in the home due to the impact that the non-standard varieties are having on the use of the standard language.

In general one can say that the Botswana educational system needs to be carefully looked into, and be made the kind of system which removes negative attitudes between different

ethnic groups. A kind of system which will help every citizen to know and appreciate the differences in cultures and languages which exist in the country and endorse them as important facets of the total culture of Botswana (Nyati-Ramahobo 1987:12).

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Main recommendations**

After having gone through this research, the researcher deemed it necessary to make some recommendations, which could help alleviate the problems arising from language variation in Botswana schools.

(i). The major problem was that of negative attitudes towards non-standard varieties, the recommendation is that the negative attitudes towards the non-standard varieties be curbed through the introduction of upliftment programmes to promote the use of these languages. A change in attitude towards the languages should also be promoted.

(ii). Setswana be declared an official language, and should be a requirement for professional courses. All minority languages should be recognised as distinct entities and their development encouraged.

(iii). Pride in these languages should be re-instilled, that is to say that strategies should be set in motion to narrow the gap between the present official languages and the indigenous

languages with a view to encouraging mutual respect and cross cultural co-operation between the speakers of these languages.

(iv). Incentives should be provided for people to study these languages. Like it has been recommended in the Botswana National Policy of Education (March 1994), that Setswana teachers should enjoy enhanced entry salary and parallel progression similarly to Science and Mathematics, this should really be put into practice.

(v). The youth should be made aware of the positive consequences of learning these languages, as well as raising their functions and status.

(vi). Textbooks should be written by the native speakers of the language concerned, and this should be in consultation with the National Setswana Language Council Board.

(vii). The vocabulary of Setswana should be improved by writers by means of new dictionaries which give new words which are used in modern technology.

(viii). The provision of quality educational materials is the most economical way to bring about acceptable standards of education and training in developing communities. This is to say that quality educational materials be provided.

(ix). Teachers must be equipped, through adequate and applicable training to manage linguistic diversity in the classroom phenomena.



(x). Improvements in the teaching methodology will also assist dealing with some of the problems caused by the use of non-standard varieties in the classroom. This is to say that, teachers should be exposed to as many language teaching methods as possible so as to provide a variety for the teacher and the learner, with emphasis on communicative approaches, and therefore make Setswana more interesting as a subject.

(xi). The curriculum must be designed in such a way that it caters for learners from different backgrounds, so that a learner can get a chance to participate in language discussions even if he or she is not fluent in the standard language.

(xii). The syllabuses of Setswana need to be redesigned and made applicable and more dynamic, and be written in Setswana for better comprehension.

(xiii). A new language policy for Setswana is required which will meet the needs of all learners. Mother-tongue speakers should be involved in the language planning process.

(xiv). It also seems advisable for the government to make a clearly documented language policy which will recognise all ethnic groups existing in their own right.

(xv). Language planning in education, must involve education specialists, including specialists in child and educational psychology.

(xvi). It is vital that the decisions of policy-makers be communicated effectively to their

stakeholders.

#### **5.4.2 Other aspects that require attention**

The following are some of the aspects that require attention to make the teaching of Setswana a success.

\*Learners should be encouraged to read as many Setswana books as possible, their reading should not be confined to prescribed books only. Library facilities should be utilised maximally, and in this way their vocabulary will be enriched. Debates and loud reading should also be encouraged.

\*Teachers need to be equipped with the necessary skills to manage the use of non-standard varieties in the classroom successfully. Inadequate development of the curriculum to deal with this diversity, and inadequate opportunities for pre- and in-service training are the main contributing factors of the problem.

\*Teachers also need to find more dynamic ways of presenting the subject material to learners. Methods such as role-play, video learning, and others need to be investigated for fresh and dynamic approaches to language teaching (Calteaux 1996:182).

\*Textbooks could be made more interesting and learner-friendly by including, for instance, cartoons, pictures, crossword puzzles, and by making the layout more

interesting and dynamic. These books need to be written by native speakers of the language concerned.

\*Setswana Terminology and Orthography should be used constantly so as to ensure correct spelling, division of words, correct breaking of words when writing as well as correct pronunciation. New terms and expressions can be coined only in the case where indigenous ones are non -existence. This will discourage learners from using unacceptable loan words.

It should also be taken into consideration that learners are victims of circumstances, and they cannot be held responsible for the use of non-standard varieties. Therefore punishing them for their use of non-standard varieties is not only agonizing but also unjust to them.

## **5.5 Future research**

Future research should identify properly the distinctive dialects or non-standard languages in Setswana.

The non-standard languages should be classified properly to show the distinction among the groups, how far or how closely related they are to Setswana. In fact, most speakers would make the distinctions ethnically rather than linguistically. A critical perspective in the teaching of Setswana could be looked into, through the teacher's behaviour in the classroom, which is causally related to learner performance or attitude.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The full implementation of these recommendations may not be possible with immediate effect, but steps should be taken immediately to ensure a gradual movement in this direction. In the process of implementing, the language authorities should make full use of the languages and culture promotion, as well as language planning specialists and educationists.

It indeed sounds very strange to hear that learners perform at a lower level in Setswana. This requires us the community, teachers and learners to change our attitudes and approaches towards Setswana if we wish to get enhanced performance.

Love and respect for Setswana is also needed to see Setswana take its rightful place alongside other languages. Areas of language teaching and learning need greater attention than they did in the past.

## Bibliography

- Appel, R. & Muysken, P.  
1987. *Language Contact and Bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd.
- Awoniyi, T.A.  
1982. *The Teaching of African Languages; Foundations of Education in Africa*. London: Hodder and Toughton.
- Batibo, H.M.  
1997. A Lexicostatistical Survey of the Bantu Languages of Botswana. *South African Journal of African Languages*. Vol.18(1).
- Batibo, H.M.  
1998. A Lexicostatistical Survey of the Setswana Dialects spoken in Botswana. *South African Journal of African Languages*. Vol.19(1)
- Bloomfield, L.  
1983. *An Introduction to the Study of Language*. Amsterdam. John Benjamin's Publishing Company.
- Bolton, K. & Kwok, H.  
1992. *Sociolinguistics Today: International Perspectives*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Burling, R.  
1992. *Patterns of Language: Structure, Variation, Change*. New York: Academic Press Inc.
- Calteaux, K.  
1996. *Standard and non-Standard African Language Varieties in the urban areas of South Africa*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Publishers.
- Chaika, E.  
1994. *Language: The social mirror*. Boston: Heinle And Heinle.

- Chebanne, A.M.  
1984. *The Setswana Orthography according to the Report of a workshop on the Setswana Orthography.* University of Botswana: 10-15 July. \*
- Chebanne, A.M., Nyati-Ramahobo, L. & Tsonope, J.  
1993. The Impact of Language Policy on Education in Botswana. Gaborone: *Botswana Educational Research Association*. Mosenodi, Vol.1(1).
- Clair, R.N. & Giles, H.  
1980. *The Social and Psychological contexts of Language* New Jersey: Lawrence & Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Cole, D.T.  
1990. *An Introduction to Tswana Grammar.* \* Johannesburg: Longman.
- Cook, V.  
1997. *Inside Language.* London: Faber & Faber Ltd.
- Coulmans, F.  
1997. *The handbook of Sociolinguistics.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Coupland, N. & Jaworski, A.  
1997. *Sociolinguistics: A reader and course book.* New York: St. Martins Press, Inc.
- Crystal, D.  
1992. *An Encyclopedic dictionary of Language & Languages* Great Britain: Hartnolls.
- Doke, C.M.  
1954. *The Southern Bantu Language.* New York: Oxford University Press. \*
- Downes.  
1984. *Language and Society.* London: Fontana Paperbacks.

- Downes, & Eastman, C.M. 1990. *Aspects of Language and Culture*. U.S.A: Chandler and Sharp Publishers, Inc. ✱
- Eastman, C.M. 1990. *Aspects of Language and Culture*. U.S.A: Chandler & Sharp Publishers, Inc.
- Ellis, A. & Beattie, G. 1986. *The Psychology of Language and communication*. New York & London: The Guilford Press.
- Entwistle, W.J. 1951. *Aspects of Language*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd. ✱
- Fast Facts. 1992. *Language Planning and the New Constitution*. Number 3/92. April.
- Fishman, J.A. 1972. *Readings in Sociology of Language*. Paris: The Hague.
- Fishman, J.A. 1972. *The Sociology of Language: An Interdisciplinary Social Science to Language in Society*. Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers.
- Guy, G.R. et.al. 1995. *Towards a Social Science of Language: Papers in Honour of William Labov. Variation and Change in Language and Society*. Vol.1 Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Gxilishe, D.S. 1996. The Dilemma of dialect in the classroom: A case for Xhosa. *Journal of Language Learning*. Vol.12(1).
- Herbert, R.K. 1992. *Language and Society in Africa*. Witwatersrand: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Herbert, R.K. 1993. Not With One Mouth: Continuity and Change in *Southern African Language Studies*. Vol.52(2).

- Hoffman, C. 1991. *An Introduction to Bilingualism*. London: Longman.
- Holmes, J. 1992. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. London & New York: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Hymes, D. 1964. *Language in Culture and Society*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Hudson, R.A. 1980. *Sociolinguistics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Janson, T. & Tsonope, J. 1991. *Birth of a National Language: History of Setswana*. London: Heinemann Botswana. \*
- Jerspersen, O. 1922. *Language: Its Nature Development and Origin*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Kamwangamalu, N.M. 1966. Language Frontiers, Language Standardisation, and Mother-Tongue Education: The Zaire-Zambia Border Area with reference to the Bemba cluster. *South African Journal, African Languages*. Vol.17(3). University of Natal. Durban.
- Kaschula, R.H. & Anthonissen, C. 1995. *Communicating Across Cultures in South Africa: Towards a Critical Language Awareness*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Kruger, C.J.H. & Snyman, J.W. Undated. *The Sound System of Setswana*. Goodwood: Via Africa Limited.
- Lakoff, R. *Language and Woman's Place*. New York: Harper &



1975. Row Publishers.
- Lesoetsa, N. P.  
1997. *Aspects of Language Change and Variation in Lesotho*. Doctoral Thesis. University of Port Elizabeth.
- Malepe, A. T.  
1966. *A Dialect- Geographical Survey of the Phonology of the Central, Eastern and Southern Dialects of Tswana*. Masters Degree Thesis. University of South Africa.
- Malimabe, R. M.  
1990. *The Influence of non-Standard Varieties on. The Standard Setswana of High School Pupils.* ✕  
Masters Degree Thesis Rand Afrikaans University.
- Martinet, A.  
1962. *A Functional View of Language*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. ✕
- Milroy, J.  
1980. *Linguistic Variation and Change on the Historical Sociolinguistics of English*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Molosiwa, A.  
1998. *A Report on Conference attended at the University of Namibia. The fifth Triennial Conference of the Linguistic Association of SADC Universities*. Windhoek: 11-14 August.
- Moloto, E. S.  
1963. *A Critical Investigation into the Standardisation of Written Setswana*. Masters Degree Thesis. University of South Africa.
- Montgomery, M.  
1986. *An Introduction to Language and Society*. London: Methuen & Co.

- Mtuzze, P. T.  
1992. *The Language Practitioner in a Multilingual South Africa. South African Journal of African Languages.* Vol. 13 (2)
- Mutasa, D. E.  
1995. *The Language Situation in Zimbabwe with special reference to the sociological, orthographic and linguistic problems of minority language group. South African Journal, African Languages.* Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Nanda, S.  
1987. *Cultural Anthropology.* California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- National Commission on Education.  
1977. *Education For Kagisano.* Vol. 1. Gaborone: Government Printers.
- National Commission on Education  
  
1993. *Report of the National Commission on Education.* Gaborone: Government Printers.
- Nomlomo, V. S.  
1993 *Language Variation in the Transkeian Xhosa Speech Community and its Impact on children's Education.* Masters Degree Thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Nyati- Ramahobo, L.  
1987. *Minority Language users in a multilingual and Early educational hurdles: The case of Botswana.* \*  
University of Botswana.
- Nyati- Ramahobo, L.  
1996. *Education Planning in a changing Education System. The case of Botswana.* Photocopy of article in Geneva.
- Nyati- Ramahobo, L.  
1996. *Language in Education and the quality of life in Botswana.* A paper presented at the Botswana Society's Symposium on the quality of life in Botswana.  
  
Gaborone: 15-18 October.

- Nyati- Ramahobo, L.  
1996. *Language Policy in Botswana: A Paper Presented at the Primary Teachers Training College Tutor's Workshop on Language Policy.* Botswana: Lobatse College of Education.
- Paul, H.  
1990. *Principles of the History of Language.* London: \* Longmans, Green & Co.
- Pride, J. B. & Holmes, J.  
1972. *Sociolinguistics.* New York: Penguin Books.
- Ratsoma, N.  
1993. *The Impact of Language Policy on the teaching of Setswana.* London: University of London.
- Reed, C. E.  
1971. *The Learning of Language.* New York: Appleton-Century – Crofts Educational Division.
- Republic of Botswana.  
1985. *National Development Plan 6.* Gaborone: Botswana Government Printers and N.I.R.
- Rheinalt, J. D. & Doke, C. M.  
1942. A Short of the Bangwaketse. *African Studies Journal.* Vol. 1 (1). Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Robins, R. H.  
1964. *General Linguistics: An Introductory Survey.* London. Longman, Green & Co. Ltd.
- Romaine, S.  
1955. *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ryan, B. & Giles, H.  
1981. *Attitudes Towards Language Variation.* London: Edward Arnold Publishers.
- Saville- Troike, M.  
*The Ethnography of Communication:*

- 1982 *An Introduction.*  
Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schapera, I.  
1942. *A Short History of the Bakgatla-baga-Kgafela of Bechuanaland Protectorate.* Cape Town: New Series. No. 3.
- Schapera, I.  
1947. *The Political Annals of the Tswana Tribe: Minutes of Ngwaketse Public Assemblies 1910-1917.* University of Cape Town.
- Schapera, I.  
1953. *The Tswana, Ethnographic Survey of Africa Part III.* London: International African Institute.
- Schapera, I.  
1955. *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom.* London: Oxford University Press.
- Sigcau, N.E.  
1998. *Educational Implication of non-standard varieties of Xhosa.* Masters Thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Smietja, B. (forthcoming). *Language Shift, Cultural Identity and Language Loyalty in Botswana: A Research on Language use and Language Attitudes.* Germany: Gerhard-Mercator. University of Duisburg.
- Stringer, D.  
1973. *Language Variation and English.* Great Britain: The University Open Press.
- Ting-Toomey, S. & Korzenny, P.  
1989. *Language, Communication and Culture: Current Directions.* California: Macmillan Botswana. \*
- Tlou, T & Campbell, A.C.  
1984. *History of Botswana.* Gaborone: Macmillan Botswana.
- Trudgill, P. *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and*

1983. *Society*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Vossen, R.  
1984. *Patterns of Language Knowledge and Language use in Ngamiland*. Botswana.
- Wardhaugh, R.  
1986. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Basil & Blackwell.
- Wardhaugh, R.  
1993. *Investigating Language: Central problems in Linguistics*. Oxford & Cambridge: Basil & Blackwell. ✖
- Weinreich, U.  
1953. *Language in Contact: Findings and Problems*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Westphal, E.O.J.  
1962. *An Example of Complex Language contacts in Ngamiland*. BP. 2nd Meeting on the Inter-African Committee on Linguistics Symposium on Multilingualism. 16-23 July. Brazzaville.



**Department of African  
Languages & Literatures**

Private Bag · Rondebosch 7700  
Telegrams Alumni Cape Town  
Fax (021) 650-3726  
Telephone (021) 650-2301

03 March 1999

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**MS C M NTSHABELE – FIELD WORK RESEARCH**

Bearer C M Ntshabele is a student at the abovementioned university in the Department of Linguistics and Southern African Languages and is studying towards an MA degree in the African Languages and Literatures Section.

Carol is now returning to Botswana to conduct research on certain aspects of her study and we would greatly appreciate your help and co-operation in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D S Gxilishe'.

D S Gxilishe  
Associate Professor/Supervisor



Department of African  
Languages & Literatures

03 March 1999

Private Bag - Rondebosch 7700  
Telegrams Alumni Cape Town  
Fax (021) 650-3726  
Telephone (021) 650-2301

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

FIELD WORK RESEARCH

My name is Carol M Ntshabele, a lecturer at Lobatse College of Education. I am on study leave at the University of Cape Town in South Africa reading for a Masters degree in the African Languages & Literatures Section of the Department of Linguistics and Southern African Languages.

As part of my Masters Degree, my study aims at finding out the Setswana Language Variation in the Botswana Speech Community and its Impact on Children's Education.

My success in completing this research is solely dependant upon your cooperation in answering the questionnaire and questions orally asked. Please rest assured that your answers will be treated confidentially.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol M Ntshabele', written over a horizontal line.

Carol M Ntshabele

**Dipotsolotso tsa baithuti ba mophato wa 4-7.**

Araba dipotso tse di latelang ka go tlatsa ditsela kana go dira X mo karabong e e siameng.

1. Ke mo lefelong ND CD KD KwD ND UA RA
2. Leina la sekole same ke \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Leina lame ke \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Ke mo mophatong wa 4 5 6 7
5. Dingwaga tsa me di \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Kwa gae re bua \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Puo e re e dirisang thata kwa gae ke \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A o letlelelwa go dirisa puo ya kwa gae mo tlelaseng? Ee Nnyaa
9. A puo ya kwa ga lona e farologanye le ee dirisiwang mo sekoleng? Ee Nnyaa
10. A o na le mathata go ithuta o dirisa puo ya Setswana? Ee Nnyaa
11. Fa go le jalo mathata ke eng? \_\_\_\_\_.
12. O pasa jang mo Setswaneng? Sentle thata Sentle Ke a palelwa
13. A o rata go tswelala o dirisa puo ya gago mo sekoleng kwa ntle ga sekole
14. Ka go reng? \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Kgotsa o batla go e tlogela gotlhelele mo sekoleng kwa ntle ga sekole
16. Ka go reng? \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Ke tlhaloganya morutintshi wa me sentle fa a ruta ka Setswana Sekgowa kana \_\_\_\_\_



18. Ke rata go rutwa ka loleme lwa Setswana Sekgowa kana \_\_\_\_\_.
19. Ke eng o batla go rutwa ka loleme leo? \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Ke rata go bala dibuka tsa Setswana Sekgowa kana \_\_\_\_\_
21. Fa ke kwala polelo kgotsa lokwalo ke rata go kwala ka Setswana Sekgowa kana \_\_\_\_\_.
22. A o na le mathata mangwe a puo mo sekoleng a o batlang go a  
bua? \_\_\_\_\_.

Teachers interviews

Please answer the following questions by ticking the correct answer or filling in the blank.

1. I am male female.

2. My age group is 18-25 26-30 31-40 41+

3. I am a Motswana Not a Motswana

(If not a Motswana please specify) \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Teaching experience \_\_\_\_\_ years.

5. Qualifications \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Do you experience any problems in teaching Setswana? Yes No.

If yes, what are the problems? (Please state them). \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your attitude towards other variants? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How is your children's performance in Setswana? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. When do you think your children understand you better, when teaching in English or Setswana? \_\_\_\_\_

10. In what language do you think you teach better? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you find children reading better in Setswana or other languages? \_\_\_\_\_

12. In what language do you find your children writing better letters and compositions \_\_\_\_\_

13. In what language do your children express themselves better orally? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you find any problems with teaching children whose home language is other than Setswana? \_\_\_\_\_

14. If yes, what are the problems? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Students sometimes mix Setswana with other languages. True False.

If true, what makes them do that? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Pupils are not allowed to use their home language in class. True False.

If true, why are they allowed to do so? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Other variants/ dialects are treated as of low status in the field of education.

True False

If true, why is it so? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Pupils from rural areas use Setswana better than those from urban areas. True False

If true, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. What are your general comments and suggestions concerning language use in schools? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_