

TOWARDS A LANGUAGE PLANNING MODEL FOR AFRICA

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language planning activities in Africa differ substantially from language planning activities in the developed countries of Europe and America in a number of ways. One is the absence of a recognised, uniform and clearly defined model for the enterprise of language planning in most countries of Africa. This situation contrasts with what obtains elsewhere where there are at least two discernable models of language planning, the most dominant of which is the 'planning model'.

There are many approaches to language planning in Africa, all of which are deficient in any combination of the following:

1. Policy decisions in a majority of cases are taken without the benefit of the sociolinguistic fact-finding that ought to serve as input to policy formulation. Thus fact-finding, where it takes place at all, often follows rather than precedes policy formulation (Bamgboṣe 1982).
2. Language planning activities in many African countries are the result of the personal efforts of individuals and private organisations, often without government support.
3. In many cases, efforts are uncoordinated because of the lack of a recognized central agency empowered to give direction to all efforts of standardization, literacy etc.
4. As a result of lack of coordination and a central agency, language planning activities are sometimes undertaken by amateurs and well-meaning enthusiasts without relevant training and with no sense of orientation, so that the products of their efforts can scarcely qualify as the results of language planning but rather of 'language treatment' defined by Neustupný (1974) as 'efforts to tackle all problems of language planning no matter now, no matter by whom and in what circumstances'.
5. Often projects are abandoned mid-stream because of lack of funds, which in turn is the result of the lack of appropriate cost-benefit analysis of the project and consequent allocation or appropriation of necessary funds.
6. Sometimes projects fail because a policy is adopted and implementation initiated without due consideration of the viability of other relevant policy alternatives.
7. In some cases, implementation of language policy becomes problematic because complications arise in the process of implementation; and such complications arise because the process of implementation was not outlined and envisaged at the level of policy formulation (at which stage potential difficulties could have been identified).

8. Objectives, procedures and methods of planning are not clearly defined and outlined, thus making evaluation of progress at every stage difficult and some times impossible.

Given the importance of language planning in Africa where most countries are characterized by multilingualism and the use of exoglossic or foreign languages as the official language and medium of instruction in the school system; given the growing interest in language planning, resulting from the awareness of the role and function of language in the enterprise of national development, there is a need to evolve a model of language planning that satisfies universal aspects of the theory of language planning, while also considering the peculiar problems of language planning in Africa. This paper proposes the adaptation of the dominant model of language (the planning model) to satisfy this need. Such a model would also serve as a guide to countries intending to embark on language planning.

2.0 THE PLANNING MODEL

The planning model relates language planning to all other forms of planning for national development. It therefore proceeds by defining goals and planning objectives in the direction of national development, and by selecting means and procedures for achieving the goals so that potential results can be predicted in a systematic and straightforward manner (Rubin et al, 1971:218).

2.1 CHARACTERISTICS

Some of the main features of the planning model are as follows:

- (a) The model emphasizes fact-finding in terms of relevant sociolinguistic surveys and profiles, and demographic, cultural and political considerations, as input to policy decisions.
- (b) Policy is arrived at from a judicious choice of the ideal policy from among carefully articulated policy alternatives.
- (c) Cost-benefit analysis is envisaged and undertaken as an integral part of policy formulation. Adoption of a policy means acceptance of financial implications.
- (d) A central agency, such as a government authority, is required to coordinate all planning activities and maximize all efforts directed towards national development.
- (e) It follows from the above that the planning model of language planning is future-oriented in two ways:
 - (i) strategies and policies, as well as procedures, cost, and outcome are specified in advance of action taken to implement the policy.
 - (ii) Planners are prepared to concede the effort, time and resources as an investment in a project whose results lie in a long-term future expectation.

2.2 STAGES IN THE PLANNING MODEL

The stages of language planning within the planning model as proposed in the literature are discussed below, leading to a presentation of the adapted model proposed in this paper.

I HAUGEN 1969

1. Selection of Norm
2. Codification of Form
3. Elaboration of Function
4. Propagation

II FISHMAN ET AL 1971

1. Policy Formulation
2. Codification and Elaboration
3. Implementation

III JERNUDD 1973

1. Determination(of Policy)
2. Development(of Norm)
3. Implementation

IV CHUMBOW 1982/1984

1. Policy Formulation
 - a. Sociolinguistic Fact-finding Input
 - b. Policy Decisions
 - c. Outline of Implementation
 - d. Cost -benefit Analysis of planning
 - e. Evaluation
2. Policy Implementation
 - a. Codification
 - b. Elaboration
 - c. Reforms
 - d. Dissemination
 - e. Evaluation

Fishman et al. in II, collapsed Haugen's stage 2 and 3 into one stage which he renamed Codification and Elaboration. He further replaced Haugen's Selection of Norm (1) and Propagation (4) with the term Policy Formulation and Implementation, respectively.

Jernudd in III, maintains Fishman's three-stage language planning model but replaced Fishman's Policy Formulation with Determination (of policy). He also maintains Fishman's consideration that Codification and Elaboration have a fundamental unity and should constitute one stage which he named Development (of Norm).

We have proposed in IV, as alluded to in Chumbow (1982), that there are basically two main stages in language planning: Policy Formulation and Policy Implementation. However each of these stages consists of a number of ordered processes. The first stage (Policy formulation) is the equivalent of the first stage of the proposals by Fishman et al (1971) and Jernudd (1973) except that we have tried to amplify the scope of the activities at this stage (but still within the spirit of the planning model). In particular, sociolinguistic fact-finding is not a pre-policy formulation activity as in previous versions of the model, (e.g. Jernudd, 1973), but is here conceived as an integral part of the policy formulation stage although such fact-finding activity nevertheless precedes policy decisions within the stage of policy formulation.

The second Stage (Implementation) comprises the remaining two stages of Fishman and Jernudd such that codification and elaboration are reduced to aspects of the implementation. It can, in fact, be argued that after policy formulation, once work begins on the codification of norms for selected languages, the policy is already being implemented. Thus codification and elaboration may be seen as processes initiated to give effect to a policy.

We have thus achieved a bifurcation of language planning into two stages; policy formulation and policy implementation, each with a number of ordered processes as in IV. Fishman's term 'Policy Formulation' is preferred to Jernudd's 'Determination' because as observed by Bamgboṣe (1982) 'whereas determination is specifically limited to decisions on language allocations, policy formulation is wider in scope...' However, whereas Fishman et al (1971) limit 'implementation' to the processes that cover 'all efforts to gain acceptance of the policies and products of language planning,' we extend the scope of implementation to cover all post-policy formulation activities i.e. all activities undertaken to give effect to policy decisions, including determining characteristics of the norm, diffusion or dissemination of policy decisions and the evaluation of these activities.

A global and more explicit perspective of the model proposed here is provided in table 1 below. A detailed discussion of what is involved in each process in Table 1 is not undertaken in this paper. Such knowledge is assumed, but may be found in the various cited references in this paper as well as in Chumbow, 1982.

Table I: A LANGUAGE PLANNING MODEL FOR AFRICA

<p><u>EVALUATION</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluation of policy alternatives 2. Efficiency of Implementation Process 3. Adequacy of Resources 	<p><u>EVALUATION</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uniformity, Adequacy and Efficiency of Codes and Norms 2. (a) Quality, Quantity and Efficiency of agents (b) Efficiency and Adequacy of networks 	<p><u>EVALUATION</u></p> <p>Level and degree of Adoption</p>						
<p><u>POLICY FORMULATION</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sociolinguistic Fact-Finding. 2. Policy Decisions (a) Formulation of Policy (b) Allocation of functions etc. 3. Outline of Implementation (a) Goals (b) Process 4. Cost Benefit Analysis 5. Financial Allocation and Allocation of Resources 	<p><u>POLICY IMPLEMENTATION</u></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>STANDARDIZATION</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>DISSEMINATION</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of Standard 2. Language Engineering <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Codification a) Orthographic norms b) Grammatical norms c) Norms of Style and Discourse <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Dictionary and lexicon b) Lexical expansion 3. Reforms in codification and elaboration </td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation of policy 2. Promotion of standard 3. Production of materials <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Educational b) General Literature 4. Training of Agents of Diffusion (teachers, etc) 5. Cultivation of Communication Networks </td> </tr> </table>	1	2	<u>STANDARDIZATION</u>	<u>DISSEMINATION</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of Standard 2. Language Engineering <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Codification a) Orthographic norms b) Grammatical norms c) Norms of Style and Discourse <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Dictionary and lexicon b) Lexical expansion 3. Reforms in codification and elaboration 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation of policy 2. Promotion of standard 3. Production of materials <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Educational b) General Literature 4. Training of Agents of Diffusion (teachers, etc) 5. Cultivation of Communication Networks 	<p><u>LANGUAGE COMMUNITY</u></p> <p>Effective Adoption of Policy</p>
1	2							
<u>STANDARDIZATION</u>	<u>DISSEMINATION</u>							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of Standard 2. Language Engineering <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Codification a) Orthographic norms b) Grammatical norms c) Norms of Style and Discourse <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Dictionary and lexicon b) Lexical expansion 3. Reforms in codification and elaboration 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation of policy 2. Promotion of standard 3. Production of materials <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Educational b) General Literature 4. Training of Agents of Diffusion (teachers, etc) 5. Cultivation of Communication Networks 							

Table 1 emphasizes the bifurcation of Language Planning into Policy Formulation and Policy Implementation, thus according the former more importance than it received hitherto, in terms of the enhanced scope of processes envisaged for this stage. This underscores the fact that given the multilingual nature of African nations and the level of linguistic complexity, ideally much more pre-implementation activity is necessary than in the planning models of Europe and America, for instance.

The table also emphasizes evaluation at every stage such that each of the processes can be and has to be evaluated independently and within the context of the overall planning enterprise.

3. THE PLANNING MODEL AND LANGUAGE PLANNING IN AFRICA

From the preceding sections, it is obvious that there is a gap between what the planning model requires as planning and what is actually practiced by African nations.

Three of the most notorious areas of disparity between the provisions or requirements of language planning theory and the actual practice of language planning are as follows:

- (a) Voluntary and involuntary neglect of fact-finding as input to language policy formulation.
- (b) No consideration of policy alternatives before decisions are made.
- (c) No a priori statement of implementation strategies (before the implementation processes start).

Bamgboṣe (1982) observes that one factor responsible for this state of affairs is the general mode of the decision-making process in Africa; more precisely, the fact that most African governments are either one party states or else military dictatorships, favours government by decree and ministerial order. This contrasts with the parliamentary democracies where issues are thoroughly debated before they are passed into law. In view of this fundamental difference in the mode of decision-making between the countries of the West (where the planning model thrives) and Africa, Bamgboṣe (1982) observes that language planning in Africa 'would be stagnant if it remains within the straightjacket of the planning model' for (among other reasons) 'a lot of activities that go on in most developing countries will certainly fall outside the scope of language planning'. This led Bamgboṣe (1982) to make a number of suggestions with respect to what a language planning model in the African context must achieve. These suggestions are presented below (a-d) and then discussed in view of their relevance to the issue under discussion in this paper.

- (a) Language planning in Africa must recognise different modes of decision-making including those not based on prior consideration of alternatives and implementation strategies.

- (b) Accord greater importance to post-decision making fact-finding and implementation strategies.
- (c) Extend the term 'language planning' to cover non-governmental as well as governmental agencies.
- (d) Ensure that whatever model of language planning is adopted is valid for both corpus and status planning.

On the recognition of different modes of decision making, the key word is recognition. If recognition means acceptance of the trend to ignore fact-finding and prior consideration of alternatives and implementation strategies and allowing such anomalous situations to be raised to the status of a norm, then recognition is unacceptable. However, if recognition simply means realizing that such situations are characteristic of the African modes of decision-making, in order to find ways to remedy the situation in the long run, then recognition is necessary. Put differently, such situations should be tolerated temporarily, but ultimately research findings should be made available for a subsequent revision of these decisions where necessary. Furthermore, efforts should be made by language planners themselves (and those who have the government's ear) to make government aware of the short- and long-term economic benefits of proper language planning to the enterprise of national development.

It is true (as alluded to in (b) above) that in most developing countries, linguists and others involved in the technical aspects of language planning are brought into the picture only after policy decision, but the call to 'accord greater importance to post-decision-making fact-finding and implementation', might, if care is not taken, result in institutionalizing this state of affairs where the cart is put before the horse. Of course, faced with the fait accompli of a decision that has to be implemented, the linguist and other technocrats have to do their best to provide the chosen language with the norms of orthography, grammar, in addition to other implementation activities. However, they may, in their genuine efforts to implement the policy, run into real problems that could have been avoided if careful thought was given to different facts of the problem at the level of policy formulation. As Jernudd has aptly noted (1973:17), 'if procedures for implementation are not formulated, decisions on issues of determination and development (i.e. codification and elaboration) become meaningless'. Also, although the results of post-decision-making fact-finding may be used in subsequent review of a policy decision hastily taken by decree, it may be very difficult to get anyone to look at such facts once the decision is taken. It is therefore desirable that ultimately, while coping with the implementation of policy by decree, efforts should be made to ensure that in the long run, government adopts the ideal procedure for language policy formulation. Most African governments (even dictatorships) understand the importance of economic planning for national development, which is why they all have 'national development plans', well conceived, often based on research, and couched in economic terms. What they fail to see is the relevance

of language planning to the economic development of the nation. This is where they need to be persuaded and be properly informed of the role of language planning in national development (Chumbow, 1985).

The call to extend the term language planning to cover non-governmental as well as governmental agencies is laudable, particularly in the African context where for many countries, private agencies take the lead in language planning activities. I do believe, however, that this is implied in the planning mode. Although some authors (in Rubin and Jernudd, 1971) have referred to the need for 'government control' of language planning activities, what they really mean (if the context is clearly analyzed) is the need for a central agency to oversee and coordinate research activities to ensure a measure of uniformity of form, norm and goals. This is obviously quite desirable. Such a central agency need not be governmental except in the loose sense that its existence is recognized and its activities encouraged and supported (or at least tolerated) by government.

It is definitely desirable that a model of language planning must not only be partially valid but be valid for both corpus and status planning. The model proposed here certainly caters for both corpus and status planning through the various processes of Policy Formulation and Policy Implementation. One can review Bamgbose's suggestions or any suggested modifications of language activity in Africa from the vantage point of the concept of 'model'.

A model, in a sense, is a system or theoretical framework (backed by empirical evidence of its usefulness and relative validity), which is made available as an archetype, a pattern, an example for imitation. A model is therefore an ideal to follow and emulate. Faced with the disparities between the theory of language planning and the practice of language planning in Africa, the crucial question therefore is the following: should the ideal (model) of language planning be mutilated, defaced, beaten and battered to fit the practice of language planning in Africa or should efforts be made to reshape the present practice to fit the ideal mould (read model) of language planning? This is, of course, a rhetorical question. Efforts should be made to implement the ideal planning model since 'model' by definition has empirical validity.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper is an attempt to adopt and adapt the dominant model of language planning (the planning model) to the needs of language planning in Africa. It does so by drawing from various well-known sources to propose a model that can serve as a guide to countries intending to embark on language planning. It seeks to encourage a review or rethinking of policies that were hastily taken, dictated by expediency rather than by a judicious consideration of relevant socio-economic-political variables, a consideration of policy alternatives and viable implementation strategies. The view is taken that the practice of language planning should, wherever

feasible, be made to fit the model and not the model to fit practice. The languages of a nation are its natural resources on the same level as its petroleum, minerals and other natural resources. These languages can therefore be harnessed and developed, if carefully planned, for the overall interest of the nation. However, if care is not taken and appropriate planning undertaken, multilingualism, like its twin sister, multi-ethnicism, can be the source of disunity and strife in the body politic of the nation. Language planning is consequently as important as any other aspect of economic planning and the place of language planning is therefore in the 'National Development Plan,' as a concomitant of all other aspects of economic planning for national development.

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