

**UCLA**

**Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies**

**Title**

Bilingual Education and Segregation in South Africa

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5hr3p40h>

**Journal**

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 11(3)

**ISSN**

0041-5715

**Author**

Buthelezi, Qedusizi

**Publication Date**

1982

**DOI**

10.5070/F7113017212

**Copyright Information**

Copyright 1982 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND SEGREGATION  
IN SOUTH AFRICA: WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO BLACK EDUCATION

By

Qedusizi Buthelezi

*Introduction*

The concept of bilingual education in South Africa is a mysterious one because bilingual education is deeply entrenched in the apartheid policy. In this paper an attempt will be made to present bilingual education as it is in South Africa against the universally acknowledged bilingual typologies.

South Africa is a highly industrialised country that lies at the southern tip of Africa and is bounded by both the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. Covering an area of 472,359 square miles, the population figures stood at the following as of 1979 (*South-ern Africa Magazine*, Janaury 1980):

Whites	4,557,000
Coloureds	2,549,000
Asians	870,000
Blacks	19,817,000
TOTAL	27,880,000

A quick glance at the foregoing figures will reveal that much as the White Nationalist government is in power, Blacks are in the majority.

South Africa has been termed a multiracial and multilingual country. The linguistic situation among the White population can be broken down into the following (Angogo, 1978):

Afrikaans	53%
English	37%
Other	10%

"Other" refers to immigrants of recent origin who speak mainly German, Italian, Greek, and Portuguese.

An estimated 90% of the Coloureds speak Afrikaans, depending on the predominant language used where they live. Eighty percent (80%) of the Indian community speak English, although a few still speak their native languages, such as Hindu, Urdu, Gujerati, and Tamil. There is a small Chinese community, about which very little is known. Since most of them have been granted "Honorary White" status and live among the White communities it

can be assumed that they speak either English or Afrikaans, depending on the areas in which they live, as is the case with Coloureds and Indians.

Blacks speak Bantu languages (here used in a linguistic sense) of the South-Eastern Bantu zone. The following are the languages spoken with the percentage of speakers for each (Qotso, 1975):

<i>Zulu</i>	34%
<i>Xhosa</i>	19%
<i>Tswana</i>	17%
<i>Sotho</i>	15%
<i>Pedi</i>	7%
<i>Tsonga</i>	4%
<i>Venda</i>	1%
<i>Other</i>	3%

"Other" refers to a small community of Swazi speakers that is originally from Swaziland, and some migrant workers who come from neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia. These migrant workers speak mostly "Fanagalo," a lingua franca based on English, Afrikaans, and some Bantu languages used to facilitate communication between the workers and the supervisors. Some linguists claim that there is a "language" called Tsotsi-taal spoken in South Africa. Tsotsi-taal is nothing else but a jargon used mostly by the Black underworld in large cities such as Johannesburg for group cohesion and to "fence out" the authorities who almost invariably speak Afrikaans.

The basic tenet of apartheid as expounded by the government is the "preservation of cultural heritage" along separate lines. The Group Areas Act has been a major vehicle in making this a reality with some groups. For example, all four racial groups live in distinct, segregated areas. Whites further group themselves into separate English and Afrikaans-speaking neighbourhoods. In Johannesburg, for example, the English tend to live in the affluent northern suburbs, while the Afrikaners tend to prefer the southern suburbs.

Looking at the number of languages spoken by Blacks, one would assume that there would be cultural diversity paralleling linguistic diversity. But the Group Areas Act specifically prohibits the coexistence of racial groups and lumps Black together in their own townships. This fact, and the advent of the Black Consciousness Movement, have served to further strengthen the bonds among Black people. Black people share a common culture that transcends all linguistic boundaries. They resent being divided ethnically into Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa, etc., because they believe that the government is using this tool to divide them

as a marked society. Proof of this can be seen when parents insist on sending their children to schools in the neighbourhood, irrespective of whether the school has been classified Zulu or Sotho. Moreover, Blacks intermarry among the linguistic groups. If there are any cultural differences, they are as subtle as allophones and allomorphs are to a native speaker of a language.

Because of a number of factors deeply rooted in the apartheid policy, bilingualism carries two shades of meaning in South Africa: a) "National" or official bilingualism means being able to function in both languages. Malherbe feels that there are differing levels "which are functional in terms of the South African situation" (Malherbe, 1977). In summary these are:

(i) "being" able to understand an ordinary conversation or speech in the second language, both in its written and in its spoken form; e.g., with waiters, shopkeepers, etc.;

(ii) ability to speak the second language intelligibly and with a fair amount of fluency;

(iii) ability to write the second language correctly in a position of clerk, secretary, or in the civil service;

(iv) the minimum requirements of the bilingual teacher -- "correctness on paper . . . and correctness of speech in which both accent and idiom are such that the teacher can serve as a fit model for children to imitate."

(Note that nowhere else are bilingualism and biculturalism ever mentioned.)

b) Bilingualism in the ideological sense applies specifically to Blacks whose native languages are neither English nor Afrikaans. This means being able to function in both the mother tongue and in either English or Afrikaans specifically to earn a living. In other words, Blacks need the official languages to be able to function adequately in the job situation. This aspect of bilingualism is not taken into account when census results are processed. For example, according to the 1970 Census, only 20.3% of the Blacks were "bilingual." This does not take into consideration the fact that the average Black person in large cities like Johannesburg and Durban speaks at least one other Bantu language. Thus a good number of Blacks are bilingual.

#### *Historical Perspective of Bilingual Education in South Africa*

There is no bilingual education act per se in South Africa. Legal declarations on this can be gleaned from clauses in a

few acts.

Before the passage of the Bantu Education Act in 1953 the medium of instruction was the choice of each province. On the whole, all Blacks received their education through the medium of English and apparently no harm--linguistically, culturally, or psychologically--was done (Lanham, 1963). When the Nationalist party took over in 1948 it appointed the Eiselen Commission to look into the educational situation of Blacks. The Bantu Education Act was based largely on the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission.

In a statement, which has since become a classic quote in South Africa, the then Minister of Native Affairs (and later Prime Minister) Dr. H. F. Verwoerd made this remark while introducing the bill in the Senate:

*It is the policy of my Department that Bantu education should have its roots entirely in the Native areas and in the Native environment and in the Native community. There Bantu education must be able to give itself complete expression, and there it will have to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training that has as its aim absorption into the European community, while he cannot and will not be absorbed there. Up till now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and practically misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European but still did not allow him to graze there. This attitude is not only uneconomic because money is spent on education which has no specific aim but it is even dishonest to continue with it. The effect on the Bantu community we find in the much discussed frustration of educated Natives who can find no employment which is acceptable to them (Malherbe, 1977).*

Bilingual education, then, was rooted on such a segregationist and discriminatory ideology. From then onwards the government took over from provincial administration and education was to be administered in terms of this act.

African languages would be used as the media of instruction from Grade A to Standard VI (8 years of schooling), with English and Afrikaans as subjects. It was only from junior high school onward that either English or Afrikaans could be used as the medium of instruction on a 50:50 basis.

It will be noted that during this period Mackey's Type SIT (single-medium irredental transfer) was used to enable the child to switch over to English or Afrikaans (usually English) at high school level. This model is also in keeping with Fishman's typology of language maintenance (Fishman, 1972), although it should be remembered that this model does not take societal perspectives into account as it was imposed on Blacks in terms of Dr. Verwoerd's speech mentioned earlier.

There is such vagueness on the role of culture in Bantu Education that one member of Parliament was forced to make the following statement to the Assembly when the act was in the making:

*The Education Departments themselves have not helped to dissipate this uncertainty as to the value of Bantu culture. It is true that they have, in the face of the most open opposition of Bantu parents, insisted on the retention of Bantu handicrafts in the school syllabi. Nevertheless, reference to the syllabi of the primary school shows that the development of Bantu culture as a whole is not held up as an ideal. . . . The same vagueness about Bantu culture is to be noted in the aims of Bantu education. . . .*  
(Rose and Tunmer, 1975).

Indeed, Black parents strongly resented the idea of teaching subjects like arts, crafts, sewing, and carpentry, as they regarded this as part of the government campaign to educate the Black person to suit "certain forms of labour." This, however, did not deter the innovators of Bantu Education from their aims. Up to the present day, such subjects are still taught under the guise of preserving "cultural heritage."

Another vagueness in the concept of culture in the curriculum is evidenced in the type of content taught in social studies. History is supposed to be a cultural subject, but the kind of history taught in Black schools is unpalatable. Certain racial stereotypes are perpetuated in the history textbooks; e.g., that Blacks were thieves, savages, and heathens before the White man came to "save" them from all the savagery.

In terms of the Bantu Education Act religious instruction had to take such a prominent role that it would occupy most of

the time in the curriculum after subjects like languages and arithmetic. Although a non-examination subject, the government made it a point that students receive Bibles free, although parents had to pay for everything else. This would be in keeping with the "Christian character" of education in South Africa. (Note that all children were expected to subscribe to the Christian faith, irrespective of the religious background of the home.)

The National Education Policy Act of 1967 has been misnamed, because the act applies only to White education. Malherbe feels it ought to have been named "The White Persons' Education Act" (Malherbe, 1977). When asked in the 1967 parliamentary debate what the term "national" referred to, the then Minister of White Education Senator de Klerk said that it applied to all citizens of South Africa. When asked further to define "citizen" the Minister replied, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less. . . . The question is who is to be master--that's all" (Malherbe, 1977).

The basic tenet of this act is that education in South Africa must preserve the "national and Christian character of the country." Attempts at defining "national" have failed. "Christian" is also vaguely defined except that religious instruction as a compulsory, non-examination subject will be taught in keeping with the "broad Christian character" of the country. Under this act, however, "the religious convictions of the parents and the pupils shall be respected in regard to religious instruction and religious ceremonies" (Malherbe, 1977).

Prior to the passage of the National Education Policy Act in 1967 White children either went to monolingual (either English or Afrikaans) or bilingual schools. Much depended on the area in which the parents lived. For example, in Natal, which is a predominantly English-speaking province, parents preferred sending their children to bilingual schools where they could receive their instruction in both English and Afrikaans. Four models were followed in these schools:

- (i) The concurrent approach--English and Afrikaans alternately in the same lesson.
- (ii) The preview-review approach--lessons in English on one day and in Afrikaans on another.
- (iii) The partial approach--some subjects in English and others in Afrikaans.
- (iv) The compensatory approach--monolingual teacher gives all the lessons in the native language with only one lesson conducted through the medium of the second language.

The National Education Policy Act took a different turn. Not only was bilingual education "abolished" but children had to be physically removed from bilingual schools to monolingual schools. Up to and including Standard VIII (junior high school) the medium of instruction had to be in the mother tongue. If parents wanted their children to go to a bilingual school the students could only do so at the beginning of high school.

Commenting on the futility of this condition, Malherbe says:

*That there would be any change of medium at this stage was obviously most unlikely, because it would involve also a change of school . . . . Of paramount importance was that the children had to be in separate schools. The mother-tongue medium principle was the means to the end: Divide and Rule. The attainment of POWER became the dominating motive (Malherbe, 1977).*

It should be noted here that there is a long history of linguistic animosity between the English and the Afrikaners. According to a survey conducted by the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research in 1938:

*There was a time when in English-medium schools Afrikaans was referred to as a "Kitchen language" . . . . Then again in Afrikaans schools, where English as a second language was regarded as "the language of the conqueror," one found a hypersensitiveness which acted as a psychological block against the learning of English . . . . When during this survey a teacher was asked to give an English lesson in a rural school situated in a dominantly Afrikaans-speaking community, he began by saying in Afrikaans: "Come children, let us now again wrestle for an hour with the enemy's language" (Malherbe, 1977).*

The Education and Training Act of 1979 came as a result of massive student agitation in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto unrest. In 1976 the minister of Bantu Education decreed that not only was English going to be the medium of instruction from junior high school onward, but so would Afrikaans be. Because of a number of pedagogical reasons (few Black teachers are trained in Afrikaans, both as a subject and as a medium of instruction) and the long history of oppression associated with Afrikaans, Black students boycotted classes and staged a protest march against the imposition of the language. It is history that thousands of students and ordinary working-class Blacks



were killed. In the wave of security trials that swept the country it became clear that Bantu Education had to be overhauled.

This act carries with it a few amendments. Whereas second language medium of instruction was introduced after eight years of schooling in the mother tongue, according to this act the mother tongue shall be used as a medium of instruction up to and including Standard II (4 years of schooling). "Thereafter pupils are to be instructed in an official language of the parents' choice" (Gordon, 1979). However, Black parents are still dissatisfied:

*Most African parents apparently wish their children to be instructed in English. While welcoming the lowering of the standard when instruction in an official language would commence, various educationists argued against stipulating a time before which such instruction could not begin (Gordon, 1979).*

No mention or amendments are made to this act regarding the cultural component of bilingualism. It can be assumed that the same subjects such as arts and crafts, history and music (which is always Western--Handel and Bach, among others) are still taught to "preserve the cultural heritage of the Bantu."

The goals of bilingual education in Black schools will be evaluated against the background of the following schools of thought, viz.:

- a) Uribe's notion of the relationship between bilingual education and desegregation.
- b) Paulston's rationales for bilingual education programs.
- c) Bull's view of the use of vernacular languages in primary education.
- c) Fishman's conception of societal perspectives on bilingual education.

According to Uribe there is nothing inherently wrong with bilingual education and desegregation. Both address themselves to the issue of providing equal educational opportunities to marked populations. In the U.S. it is usually the minorities, such as Blacks, Chicanos, and others who are affected by this proclamation in terms of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

In the South African situation bilingual education certainly does provide equal educational opportunities to Whites, but not

to Blacks. Except for official purposes, Whites are under no obligation to receive bilingual education because both English and Afrikaans are official languages; i.e., both are unmarked languages in the Fishman sense. When White children go to bilingual schools it is more for linguistic and cultural enrichment than for pedagogical reasons.

With Blacks the situation is different. As a marked people, Blacks have to be bilingual in either of the official languages. The overall aim is not so much to provide equal educational opportunities as it is to be able to function in a superordinate society. By prolonging the use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction, it can be seen that the idea is not so much language maintenance, because Blacks have always had a firm linguistic stronghold.

For a number of reasons, the dropout rate is very high among Black students, especially at the primary school level. A report on the effects of apartheid on education has this to say:

*The problem of the choice of the medium of instruction, at the primary level, does not of course exist only in South Africa. It is a worldwide problem. It should, however, be underlined that it presents itself in completely different terms outside South Africa, because it is viewed from the angle of a discriminatory policy. In South Africa, however, the policy of apartheid has had recourse to the choice of the mother tongue as the main medium of instruction at the primary level (beyond which, it has been shown, the vast majority of African children do not pursue their studies) in order to reinforce the linguistic, social and cultural isolation of the African population within the country as well as from the world at large (UNESCO, 1972).*

Not only is education segregated, but it is also unequal. This is borne out in the state per capita expenditure on education, the overcrowded schools, poor school facilities, poor teacher training facilities, and the inferior quality of education.

In her article on rationales for bilingual education reforms, Paulston refers to an article by R. G. Paulston in which he cites two paradigms that can be used as approaches to bilingual education: the structural-functional approach and the conflict approach. The basic tenet of the structural-functional

approach is to maintain equilibrium in society. Where there are marked and unmarked populations speaking marked and unmarked languages respectively the ideal is to provide equal educational opportunities to maintain "harmonious integration." This equilibrium is maintained by means of two aspects--the instrumental and the expressive. The former means providing salable skills, English proficiency in most cases; while the latter means facilitating assimilation into the dominant, mainstream culture. In sum, the long-term goals are either economic incorporation or cultural assimilation into the larger society by equalizing opportunities.

The conflict approach, on the other hand, is based on "equity but not equality." Having accepted that there can be no equal educational opportunities between marked and unmarked societies, the question is *cui bono?* ("Who stands to gain?") If the unmarked population wields economic and political power, the marked population accepts that but decides to fight for equity--justice and fairness. It strives for an even distribution of economic power. Moreover, the policy of providing equal educational opportunities does not take into account the dropout rates, disparity in teachers' pay, and disparity in government per capita expenditure on education.

Clearly, the goals of bilingual education, according to Black-White perspectives, are in conflict with the government's approach. The government's approach is neither structural-functional in approach nor does it adopt the conflict approach. There are no equal educational opportunities. Allowing people to receive their education through the medium of their mother tongue, to have separate schools here and there (at the whims of the government), and fail to provide decent learning and teaching facilities can hardly be called providing equal educational opportunities.

The goal of bilingual education from the government's point of view is not economic incorporation either, not when the education is so designed that Blacks perform "only certain forms of labour." Cultural pluralism is not a point either because the slogan "cultural heritage" is disseminated to perpetuate cultural separation.

Viewed from the Black perspective it would seem that their approach is based on the conflict theory. Because there are no equal educational opportunities Blacks want equity because demands for equal educational opportunities seem to have failed. Because the White man is in power, Blacks want the kind of education that will provide them with upward mobility. Hence, the Black's rejection of both the Bantu Education and the Education and Training Acts. It is evident that they want transitional bilingualism to "salvage the child," not to "salvage the

language" (Spolsky, 1972).

In a scathing attack on the UNESCO declaration on the use of vernacular languages in education, Bull's major thrust of argument is that "it is not axiomatic that the mother tongue is the best medium of instruction in education." Bull feels that where there is a multiplicity of languages; e.g., among the Native Americans, it might be difficult to standardize all of them, for economic reasons in particular. He addresses himself to the question of language maintenance versus political domination. He feels that what is good for the individual child may not be in the ultimate interests of the society at large. He therefore feels that where a marked people speaking a marked language are also dominated politically, it might be to their best interests to compromise so that they may join the mainstream as soon as possible (transitional approach). Clearly this approach would not be acceptable to the marked communities of the U.S. In South Africa, however, bilingual education is used under the guise of language maintenance; i.e., the vernacular languages only.<sup>1</sup>

We have hinted at the unequal educational opportunities that exist in the education of Blacks. Whereas South Africa has a very high GNP of 582.2, second only to Libya in the whole of Africa, the per capita expenditure during the 1977-1978 school year was R54.08 (±US\$80) compared to R551 (±US\$850) for Black and White children respectively (Survey, 1979). In a study conducted by Joubert (1976) on the economic contribution of education to economic growth, he found that formal education in South Africa contributed 14.5% to the growth rate of the GNP between 1960 and 1970, while the average private yield on educational investment fluctuated between 10% and 15%. Yet Black labour is a force to reckon with. Consider a statement made by a member of the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (The Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Societies), in 1937:

*If every Kaffir in South Africa spoke Afrikaans, the economic power of Afrikaans would be so strong that we should no longer need an F.A.K. to watch over our cultural interests. The Native will in future be a much bigger factor in the*

<sup>1</sup> There is a nebulous view about cultural maintenance to secure political domination. We have quoted Dr. Verwoerd's indelible speech against the aspirations of the Black community itself. It need also be mentioned that the native languages and the official languages, English in this case, tend to be diglossic. Because of political factors it would seem that according to Ferguson's definition the native languages are seen as a Low with English (the main medium of instruction) as a High.

*development of our country than it is the case at present, and we must shape that factor so that it serves our purpose, assures our victory and perpetuates our language, our culture and our folk (the people) (Malherbe, 1977).*

Although this statement was made in 1937, and despite all the token educational reforms that have been effected, the statement still stands true. Bilingual education is still seen as a means of imposing language maintenance and separation for the sake of economic and political domination.

It has been shown that the educational opportunities provided are separate but unequal. One wonders whether bilingual education is not an extension of the apartheid policy. Apartheid is not mere segregation, as the usual definition is given. It is a way of life that transcends even colour. For one thing, all South Africans--Black and White--are caught within the tentacles of apartheid. Apartheid determines where the individual is born, grows up, goes to school, works, who he marries, how the children will be classified, who they will marry, where the individual dies, and finally, where he is buried.

According to the South African government the overall goals for bilingual education for Blacks can be seen as a means of providing cheap labour to maintain the status quo. It has been demonstrated that because education is neither free nor compulsory for Blacks, the dropout rate is highest at primary school level (UNESCO, 1972). Even with the amendments to the Education and Training Act of 1979, a child who drops out at the end of primary school does so after four years of schooling without English/Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Coupled with the segregated conditions of living, such a child can hardly be termed bilingual. Being ill-equipped for the mainstream, he gets a job as an unskilled labourer (blue-collar worker). In South Africa, Black labour, whether skilled or unskilled, is an asset because there are no minimum wage laws. Even Black professors earn far less than their White counterparts with the same academic and professional training and experience (see Malherbe on university training as an investment, 1977, pp. 644-648).

Echoing Christina Paulston on the paucity of research on non-academic outcomes of bilingual education, such as dropout and suicide rates, Fishman emphasizes that goals and typologies of bilingual education are but academic treatises if we do not take the societal perspectives into account. This applies particularly well in the South African case. The South African government has a different perspective from that of the Black community. As a result, it is difficult to evaluate the goals of bilingual education in South Africa because the two parties

share different perspectives. For example, the White perspective is language maintenance for political and economic domination; the Black perspective is transitional bilingualism for upward mobility and economic incorporation.

Because bilingual education is deeply entrenched in the apartheid policy it is hard to draw the line among the models. With White education it would seem that Mackey's DIT (dual-medium irredental transfer) is the model being followed. English is the medium of instruction while Afrikaans is taught as a subject in the English schools. The same applies to Afrikaans schools where Afrikaans is the medium of instruction and English is taught as a subject only. It was mentioned earlier that when the Afrikaners took over the government they introduced this model to compensate for what they went through. It has also been explained that White schools do not offer bilingual education per se because few parents want their children to change schools at senior high school level. To show the social distance between the two groups, each regards the second language as a "foreign language" (Malherbe, 1977).

Being shrouded in political mystery, the situation is even grimmer among Blacks. It would seem that Blacks are demanding a language shift program. Fishman describes this as a model, whereby the aim is developing competence in the second language only, for a community determined to maintain its own language in many or all social domains. So far this is an ideal but not a reality. Clearly, Blacks want to maintain their languages as these are used at home, in church, and within the same communities. By the same token they would like to develop competence and extend the use of the second language. Again, this is a diglossic situation, in Ferguson's terms (Fishman and Lovas, 1972).

If we follow Padilla's typologies, from the government's point of view South Africa might be faced with either cultural separation or assimilation. The cultural separation model is rooted on political grounds. According to Padilla, some of the characteristics are that:

*the ethnic community is charged with the education of its own children. . . . Education should be in the hands of culturally similar teachers. . . . There is the belief that the curriculum should be as highly relevant to the culture of the student as possible. To ensure this, the medium of instruction should be weighted heavily on the side of the home language, rather than English. . . . There is the belief that the students must be instilled with and reinforced for having pride in their cultural membership. This orientation*

*is more than just cultural maintenance. It is a philosophy that espouses a position that is the antithesis of assimilation* (Pandilla, 1976).

Blacks certainly do build their own schools by way of paying taxes, levies, and bringing wood and coal to make the fires at school. Especially in the rural areas, there are a number of the *escualita* type of schools built by Blacks for themselves. Blacks certainly are taught by ethnic teachers to promote "cultural understanding." They are encouraged to have "cultural pride" (no matter how nebulous the term might be).

While the government preaches preservation of "Bantu cultural heritage" when they least understand Black culture (it is not unusual for a minister of Bantu Education to terminate office without even having set his foot in any of the Black areas), there is cause to believe that cultural assimilation might just be one of the subtle goals.

In the Welsh Report dealing with the financing of "native education" in 1945, a member of the commission stated:

*We believe that the mother tongue must be the basis of native education and teaching but that the two official national languages must be taught as subjects because they are official languages, and to the native, the keys to the cultural loans that are necessary to his own cultural progress. On the grounds of the cultural infancy of the native. . . .*

Indeed, the "cultural loans" manifest themselves in strategies like making religious instruction a compulsory non-examination subject regardless of the parents' faith. The "cultural loans" also manifest themselves in the curriculum which abounds not only in cultural stereotypes but also strives to project White middle-class values as the ideal.

### *Conclusion*

Bilingual education for Blacks in South Africa is faced with a grim future. A number of changes have to take place before it becomes a meaningful enterprise.

Certainly, the South African government has to review its policy on education. The basic question here is "what is education?" For as long as education is still regarded as a privilege but not a right, for as long as nebulous laws such as the National Education Policy Act are still in the statute books, Black people will remain dissatisfied. Education should not be viewed as a political tool, but as a means by which the individual acquires

total intellectual, physical, and emotional liberation.

Language should not be used as a vehicle for political or economic domination. This does not just apply to Blacks only. Malherbe gloats that Afrikaans is "here to stay." He mentions the deteriorating standards of English teaching in White schools. However, if South African Whites have a linguistic grudge to settle, Blacks should not be dragged in as scapegoats. Black parents should have a right to choose in what language their children will receive their education, when and where, what they will be taught, and by whom.

The disparity in the funding of Black and White education has been shown. Per capita expenditure figures reflect the situation. School facilities are appalling. The schools are both overcrowded and ill-equipped. In 1979 the teacher-student ratio in Black schools was 1:49.2 at primary and high school levels (Gordon, 1979). Some Black communities build their own schools. Both government and community schools do not have facilities such as lighting and heating. That is why in some communities parents donate fuel in the winter. Teaching facilities are worse. Bare science laboratories are the order of the day. In a large urban area like Soweto there is hardly one school that has a language laboratory. Government funding has to improve.

In citing the success of Rough Rock, Paulston argues that good quality teachers are a *sine qua non* for a successful bilingual program. In another study on bilingual education in Uganda it was found that success of the program rested on the teachers who had been effectively trained in language methodology.

Teacher training facilities for Blacks are a pedagogical shame. The average teacher engaged in bilingual education at the primary school level has eleven years of schooling plus two years of teacher training. Being a non-native speaker of English who "picked it up" from another non-native model, the Black teacher struggles against odds not of his own making. In a phonetics course conducted by Lanham in 1963, he found that the Black primary school teacher has absolutely no training in linguistics. Not only were the teachers in the course appalled when they listened to their taped pronunciation, but they were shocked to learn (some with more than fifteen years of experience) that English has more than the five basic vowels which are a characteristic feature of Bantu languages (Lanham, 1963). Although the high school teacher has a minimum of thirteen years of schooling plus two years of teacher training, he or she is another product of the same school of non-native models. So the vicious cycle goes.

Kjolseth makes a salient point about the ethnicity of the



bilingual teacher. According to Kjolseth the teacher need not always be an ethnic member of the marked community. He cites the example of an aide who confided in him how she "envied" the "more correct" Spanish of the master teacher who did not live in the barrio (Kjolseth, 1972). The problem of some ethnic members sitting on the government-appointed boards and serving their own elitist interests has been mentioned. It would be hoped that in the future teacher training would include ethnolinguistic studies; as Hymes points out, this issue is important to bilingual classroom dynamics (Hymes, 1972).

Of equal importance is the student receiving bilingual education. The St. Lambert and Culver City immersion programs demonstrate that apart from such variables as motivation, attitudes to second language learning, aptitude, and parental support, the socio-economic status of the children in a bilingual program is of crucial importance. Success of these programs depended largely on the self-image held by these children from middle-class socio-economic backgrounds. However, children from working-class homes benefited from the Lambert immersion program (Derevensky and Petrushka, 1978). Stern points to the emotional instability which characterises students in a bilingual program. Such feelings of insecurity can largely be attributed to the usual poverty background of most children from marked societies.

Both Paulston and Fishman feel very strongly about societal perspectives in a bilingual education program. In dealing with her typologies of voluntary assimilation, forced assimilation, forced segregation, and autonomy, Paulston stresses the point that certain types of bilingual education will find support in different types of societies, depending on the structural relationship between ethnic groups and dominant class members (cf. South African White superordinates versus Black subordinates). Fishman, on the other hand, distinguishes between "ideal" and "real" bilingual programs. In other words, if a bilingual program pursues conceived goals (ideal) without taking into account felt societal needs (real) it is bound to fail. He therefore calls for ethnolinguistic studies which should determine the societal needs (Fishman, 1972). So does Hymes, who calls for ethnographic studies which would be more broadly-based by involving the entire population (Hymes, 1972).

It has been shown what kind of bilingual model the Black community of South Africa wants. Perhaps it is time to suspend academic rhetoric and face realities. Whether their "ideal" becomes a "reality" is something no one can tell. However, more Black parents at grassroot levels should be included in the decision-making. Soldier and Foerster cite a slightly different case among the Paiute and Shoshone Indians of Nevada who reject the use of their native bilingual program, preferring to have

their children receive their education in English only because of the deficiency they (the parents) suffered as children (Soldier and Foerster, 1978:235).

The school has a mandate to carry out to the community. Public education cannot be in the hands of administrators and educators only. The community which is being served has as much right to determine the curriculum as do the educators. In South Africa there are few, if any, Black curriculum planners. Those that exist usually have a long history of supporting Bantu education and as such are viewed by the Black communities as "them" but not "us." There is very little cultural component in the subjects. Black people have a rich cultural history and oral literature which could easily be incorporated into the curriculum. For example, it might be more meaningful to incorporate both oral and written African literature in an English course than to let the students grapple with Victorian Jane Eyre in the twentieth century. The imagery and symbolism might be more readily identifiable and meaningful if drawn from a familiar scene.

There is an urgent need to evaluate the bilingual programs in school. While there is no need to determine LES or FLES students at beginning level, because all start as a homogeneous group linguistically, it is very important to evaluate what is taught, by whom, and how. Very few studies have been conducted on bilingual education for all racial groups. Apart from a few studies by Lanham and a few members of the English Academy of South Africa there are practically no studies looking at the bilingual education for Blacks. Census results can hardly be termed academic research studies. Moreover, a number of "illegal" Blacks in urban areas (who do not "qualify" to be in urban areas under the influx control laws) do not take part in the census for fear of victimization. With more Black educators advancing in their field in a climate conducive to scholarly research the mystery of bilingual education in Black schools might be unravelled.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Bantu Education Journal*, December 1954.

Blanco, G. "The Education Perspective." *Bilingual Education: Current Perspectives* 4 (1977):1-62.

Bull, W. E. "The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education." In *Language in Culture and Society*. Edited by D. Hymes. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

Campbell, R. N. "Bilingual Education in Culver City." *Workpapers in TESL* (UCLA) 6 (1972).

- Derevensky, J. F., and Petrushka, T. L. "French Immersion: An Attempt at Total Bilingualism." In *Bilingual Education*. Edited by H. LaFontaine et al. Wayne, N.J.: Avery Publishing Group, 1978.
- Fishman, J. A. "Bilingual Education in a Socio-Linguistic Perspective." In *Language Education of Minority Children*. Edited by Bernard Spolsky. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Bilingual Education in a Societal Perspective." *Bilingual Education: Current Perspectives* 1 (1972):1-48.
- Gordon, L., ed. *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1979*. Johannesburg: South Africa Institute of Race Relations, 1980.
- Horrell, M. *Bantu Education to 1968*. Johannesburg: South Africa Institute of Race Relations, 1968.
- Hymes, D. *Functions of Language in the Classroom*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ethnographic Monitoring." In *Language Development in a Bilingual Setting*. Edited by Eugene Brière. Los Angeles: National Dissemination and Assessment Center, 1979.
- John, V., and Horner, V., co-directors. *Early Childhood Bilingual Education Project*. Edited by J. Socolov. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1971.
- Kjolseth, R. "Bilingual Education Programs in the U.S.: For Assimilation or Pluralism?" In *Language Education of Minority Children*. Edited by Bernard Spolsky. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1972.
- Lambert, W. E., Tucker, R. G., Olton, and Tunstall, K. "A Study of the Roles of Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning." In *Readings in the Sociology of Language*. Edited by Joshua A. Fishman. The Hague: Mouton, 1966, pp. 473-91.
- Lanham, L. W. "Teaching English Pronunciation in Southern Africa." *Language Learning*, 13, Nos. 3 & 4 (1963).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Teaching English in Bantu Primary Schools*. English Academy of South Africa, 1967.
- Malherbe, E. G. *Education in South Africa*, 1977.

- Padilla, M. "Bilingual Education: Gateways to Integration or Separation?" *The Bilingual Review* 4, Nos. 1 & 2 (1977): 52-68.
- Paulston, C. B. "Implications of Language Learning Theory for Language Planning: Concerns in Bilingual Education." *Papers in Applied Linguistics*. 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Rationales for Bilingual Education Reforms: A Comparative Assessment." *Comparative Education Review*, October 1978.
- Quotso, Report prepared by the Markinor Corporation, South Africa, 1975, p. 6.
- Rose, B., and Tunmer, R. *Documents in South African Education*. A. D. Donker, 1975.
- Soldier, D. L., and Foerster, L. "Bilingual Education for Native Americans." In *Bilingual Education*. Edited by H. LaFontaine et al. New Jersey: Avery Publishing Group, 1978.
- Spolsky, B. *Bilingual Education of Minority Children*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1972.
- Stern, H. *Foreign Languages in Primary Education*. Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Toueba, H. T. "Bilingual Education Models: Types and Designs." In *Bilingual Multicultural Education and the Professional*. Edited by Henry T. Trueba and Carol Barnett-Mizrahi. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1979.
- UNESCO. "The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education." Report of the UNESCO Meeting of Specialists, 1951. In *Readings in the Sociology of Language*. Edited by Joshua A. Fishman. The Hague: Mouton, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Apartheid*. Paris, 1972.
- Uribe, J. "Bilingual Education versus School Desegregation." *Agenda* 8, No. 3 (1978):4-7.