

SLIPPING BETWEEN POLICY
AND MANAGEMENT:
(DE)CENTRALISED RESPONSES TO
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN ETHIOPIA AND
SOUTH AFRICA

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Outline

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Brief historiographic account of language in education practices:

6 periods linguistic diverse practices in Africa

Linguistic ecologies of Ethiopia and South Africa

Changes in education policy 1990s

- multilingual education policies
- competing discourses

Contrasting approaches: (de)centralisation

- consequences

Student achievement in Ethiopia & S Africa

Globalisation, information technology revolution & increasing pressure towards English

Ethiopian & South African contributions to international debates on the management of diversity in context of unprecedented changes - migration

- 'sustainable diversity'; 'superdiversity' ...

Introduction

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Ethiopia

- HDI ranking -157
 - ▣ improved by 3 places 2000-2010
- Population 74m
 - ▣ 85% in rural/remote areas
 - ▣ 12-14m pastoralists/nomads
- 80 languages
 - ▣ Minority, local, regional, national
 - ▣ International language of wider com. (ILWC) English 0.3 – 0.5%

South Africa

- HDI ranking -110
 - declined 6 places 1995-2010
- Population 49.99m
 - 42.7% rural/remote
 - 57% urban
- 20 languages (endogenous)
 - Minority, local, regional, national
 - ILWC – English 35%



Comparisons of Ethiopia & South Africa prior to 1990s

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Ethiopia

Ancient Ge'ez – texts since 2nd Century
– Coptic Christianity

Amharic – used as language of vertical control during 20th C, especially in education from 1950s (during Haile Selassie, & Dergue regimes).

Use extended across Eritrea during Ethiopian control 1950s to 1990.

Resentment towards Amharic from speakers of other languages, especially Afan Oromo.

Nevertheless, a regional language spoken by about 37% of population.

Position currently strengthening via education

South Africa

Afrikaans (Dutch) used as language for religious purposes, language of vertical control from 1948, resistance to this language from mid 1970s but continued state emphasis on use in education to 1990s.

Use extended across Namibia during South Africa control after WWI to 1990.

Residual resentment towards Afrikaans from speakers of other languages.

Used as one of several regional languages. Spoken by about 40% of population as a regional lingua franca to late 1980s; now used by 17-22% of population

Position currently weakening

Similar trajectories: political change, globalisation & international frameworks for education in 1990s

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Ethiopia

- Political change in Ethiopia
 - Repressive Dergue regime 1974-1991 ends
 - New constitution and education policy 1994
 - Transitional govt of Ethiopia – Federal system with– ethnolinguistic self-determination
 - decentralisation to 9 regions and 2 city states
- Sensitivity to UNESCO Education for All goals – development aid more obvious in public arena
 - Including gender
- Intersection of information technology & English in 1990s impact from 2000 onwards

South Africa

- Political change in RSA
 - Apartheid ends 1990(4)
 - New constitution 1993/6; education policies 1996/7
- Federal System – national policies
 - Some decentralisation but less autonomy for education policy to 9 provinces
- Limited awareness of UNESCO frameworks in public arena
 - Post-apartheid discourses more dominant
- Impact of information technology & English – 1990s onwards



Percentage Distribution of Major Ethnic Groups and Languages: 2007

(Adapted from: Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, CSA, 2008, Table 2.2, p 16).

Ethnic Group	Language	2007 Population Census	
		Number	%
Oromo	<i>Afan Oromo/Oromifa (Cushitic)</i>	25,488,344	34.5
Amhara	<i>Amharic (Semitic)</i>	19,867,817	26.9
Somali	<i>Somali (Cushitic)</i>	4,581,793	6.2
Tigris*	<i>Tigrinya (Semitic)</i>	4,483,776	6.1
Sidama	<i>Sidama (Cushitic)</i>	2,966,377	4.0
Guragie*	<i>Gurage (Semitic)</i>	1,867,350	2.5
Welaita*	<i>Wolaita (Omotic)</i>	1,707,074	2.3
Hadiya	<i>Hadiya (Cushitic)</i>	1,284,366	1.7
Afar	<i>Afar (Cushitic)</i>	1,276,372	1.7
Gamo	<i>Gamo (Omotic)</i>	1,107,163	1.5

South Africa	Census 2001 44.8m		National Sociolinguistic Survey (Pan South African Language Board, PANSALB, 2000) (percentages.)				
	Main language used at home		Main language used at home	Language of greatest fluency	Main language used in neighbourhood 100%	2 nd lang. Most often used in neighbourhood 60%	3 rd lang. Most often used in neighbourhood 30%
	Number	%					
isiZulu	10 677 305	23.8	24	22	23	13	12
isiXhosa	7 907 153	17.6	16	16	15	9	11
Afrikaans	5 983 426	13.3	17	17	18	16	12
Sepedi	4 208 980	9.4	8	7	7	6	4
English	3 673 203	8.2	9	10	12	27	15
Setswana	3 677 016	8.2	10	9	9	4	9
Sesotho	3 555 186	7.9	7	6	7	6	12
Xitsonga	1 992 207	4.4	3	4	3	6	4
SiSwati	1 194 430	2.7	3	3	3	3	1
Tshivenda	1 021 757	2.3	2	2	2	1	2
isiNdebele	711 821	1.6	1	1	1	2	2
Other	217 293						

Language Education Policy

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Education and Training Policy 1994, Ethiopia

- Home language medium, grades 1-8
- English (additional language) grades 1-8
- Amharic (national working language), usually from grade 3
- English medium grades 9-12
- English medium – higher education (universities)
- Regional languages – teacher training for primary school
- National curriculum secondary school; regional curriculum development primary school in tandem with language policy

Language education policy and curriculum 1997, RSA

- Language policy – based on home language plus English (additive bilingual ed.)
- Curriculum based on early transition to English by end of grade 3
- National curriculum development for primary and secondary
- Language policy interpreted as separate from rather than integral to curriculum

Reservations /criticisms of emphasis on multilingual education

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Ethiopia – accommodating 80 languages

- Potential for inequality
 - ▣ Larger linguistic communities vs. smaller communities
 - ▣ Limited resources from federal and regional governments
 - ▣ Expertise?

South Africa – 11 languages in ed.

- Explanations offered to delay/ avoid language education policy
 - ▣ Concern that this is ‘too diverse’
 - ▣ Fear of costs/resources
 - ▣ Either/or dichotomies
 - ▣ Anecdotal evidence vs. sociolinguistic evidence
 - ▣ Association of mother tongue education with Bantu education

Implementation & resources

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Ethiopia – fewer resources

- Implementation decentralised to regions, zones, woredas
- 32 languages developed for education by 2009
- Poor/under-resourced but significant community engagement
- Regional/local publishing industry develops
- School books in student hands and taken home
- System-wide assessment

South Africa – well-resourced

- Policy centralised, implementation decentralised to provinces, language policy not implemented
- PANSALB & DAC overly regulated – little language development for education
- Comparatively resource-rich, lack of community engagement
- (Multi)national publishing houses, expensive books do not reach students
- System-wide assessment: literacy, numeracy crisis – gap widens

Ethiopian Region	Years of mother tongue medium	Grade in which there is a switch to English medium
Oromiya* Tigray Somali Amhara (before 2006)	8	9
Amhara (since 2006) Harari	6 for maths and science; 8 for other subjects	7 maths and science; 9 other subjects
Addis Ababa Dire Dawa** SNNPR (until 2004)	6	7
SNNPR (since 2005/6) Gambella	4	5
Afar Benishangul Gumuz***	0 (6 years - L2 Amharic)	7

Evidence from Ethiopia: Year 2004 grade 8 achievement scores by region and years of MTM

<i>Region</i>	<i>MOI</i>	<i>Engl</i>	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Biol</i>	<i>Chem</i>	<i>Phys</i>	<i>Ave</i>
Tigray	MTM 8	39.1	44.4	49.1	43.0	39.5	43.0
Oromiya	MTM 8	41.6	42.8	48.3	43.6	39.3	43.2
Somali	MTM 8	42.4	42.6	36.3	37.8	34.5	38.6
Amhara	MTM 8	39.1	41.4	48.3	44.6	41.8	43.0
Harari	MTM 6+8	46.8	43.4	39.4	42.5	35.1	41.5
Addis Ab	MTM 6	42.3	40.5	33.7	35.9	31.1	36.7
Dire Dawa	MTM 6	42.4	41.0	37.7	38.2	33.5	38.6
SNNPR	MTM 6	41.0	39.7	36.8	37.5	31.3	37.4
Gambella	MTM 4	--	--	--	--	--	--
Afar	MTM 0/ Amharic L2	39.6	36.6	32	33.8	30.7	34.6
Benishangul Gumuz	MTM 0	37.0	33.3	31.2	34.5	28.4	33.7

Impact of globalised discourses on English in Ethiopia

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- Impact of growth of electronic communication in English in 1990s
- Rise of English as the International Language of Wider communication (ILWC)
- Result in:
 - ▣ English Language Improvement Programme
 - 42% teacher education budget
 - ELIP Centre in each teacher training institution
 - In-service teacher education across system 2005-2006
 - 120 hours contact; 80 hours distance
 - Cascade model
 - 'Plasma TV' teaching of secondary school students

Washback effect of increasing emphasis on English from 2004 through the system

Entrance requirements in English for TTCs and universities ('Freshman' programme terminated)



National examinations in English at Grades 10 and 12



Plasma TV programming in English only beginning in Grade 9



Pressure to introduce English medium earlier in primary



Improving all teachers' English proficiency in primary



Loss of focus on successful learning of the curriculum or on optimal cognitive development of students



Unrealistic aspiration towards English by all

**MT Policy shifting towards English
English medium at TTCs and universities**

English medium at secondary level

**MT medium at primary level under pressure/reduced
(Unintended consequences)**

**Year 2008 grade 8 achievement scores by region and years of MTM,
after investment in & earlier introduction of English medium**

<i>Region</i>	<i>MOI</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Maths</i>	<i>Biology</i>	<i>Chem</i>	<i>Physics</i>	<i>Ave 2008</i>	<i>Ave 2004</i>
Tigray	MTM 8	38.30	40.40	48.00	44.60	39.40	42.18	43
Oromiya	MTM 8	36.90	32.30	45.50	35.90	34.40	38.62	43.2
Somali	MTM 8	39.90	30.40	38.40	31.60	29.90	34.04	38.6
Amhara	MTM 6+8	40.50	37.20	35.90	36.80	33.40	36.76	43
Harari	MTM 6+8	40.00	34.90	35.30	36.20	31.50	35.58	41.5
Addis Ababa	MTM 6	39.60	33.40	34.20	31.90	30.50	33.92	36.7
Dire Dawa	MTM 6	36.40	35.70	33.70	31.60	29.40	33.36	38.6
SNNPR	MTM 4	40.00	34.70	36.60	34.90	31.60	35.56	37.4
Gambella	MTM 4	37.00	26.00	34.70	29.00	27.50	30.84	-
Benishangul Guz	MTM 0 L2 Amharic 6	35.80	30.60	32.90	31.20	29.40	31.98	33.7
Afar	MTM 0 L2 Amharic 6	38.40	37.90	34.80	31.90	30.50	34.6	34.6

What we knew and what we now know

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Parallel Positions

- 1953 - 1990s belief in most African countries/education officials that
 - ▣ early literacy (*learning to read*) in MT +
 - ▣ switch to L2/FL (*reading to learn*) by years 2/3 = success
- Yet: Second Language Acquisition research 1970s-2009 in Africa indicates that:
 - it takes 6 - 8 years to *learn* enough L2 to be able to *learn through* the L2.
 - Six Year Primary Project in Nigeria (1970s, e.g. Bamgbose 2000) – 6 years under well-resourced conditions
 - Mother tongue education in South Africa and Namibia (1950s-70s, e.g. Heugh 2003) – 8 years under poorly resourced conditions

6th Phase of Multilingual Education

- New data from Ethiopia 2000-2008 and South Africa

Main Findings of a Study of Medium of Instruction in Ethiopian Schools

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- Students learn 2/3 languages; 2 scripts (Ethiopic & Latin)
- Students learning three languages through primary achieve higher scores across the curriculum
- Students with MTM6+8 have highest English language (subject) scores
- Students with MTM6/6+8 achieve highest in mathematics
- Students with MTM8 achieve highest in sciences
- Students with MTM8 have:
 - higher overall achievement
 - best opportunities of retention through end of secondary
 - best opportunity to reach higher education
- Earlier introduction of English medium accompanied by declining achievement in English and across curriculum

In Africa

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- **Extended use of multiple African languages + an International Language of Wider Communication (English / French/Portuguese)**
= possible and more successful
- Higher throughput rates – to secondary school
- Higher levels of achievement
 - ▣ e.g. Ethiopia 2000-2008; S Africa 1930s-1940s;1955-1975
- **Yet:** habituated practices in tandem with globalised discourses (including development agencies) have encouraged decision-makers towards European & N American models of education
 - ▣ ‘international’ standards & outcomes-based, work-place oriented which are not contextually sensitive to the ecologies of communicative practices, economies and social fabrics in Africa
 - ▣ **drive towards homogeneity rather than diversity**

Changes in global thinking: diversification

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- Unprecedented changes in migration
 - ▣ Sustainable diversity, superdiversity – in urban contexts of the ‘north’
 - ▣ Theoretical enquiry directed towards Africa and South Asia – management and mismanagement of diversity
- Impact of China’s entry to WTO, implications for Putonghua/Mandarin
- Impact of new Englishes: China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, India, Pakistan
 - ▣ Increasing diversity – rather than the reverse
 - ▣ Uncharted territory for global communication