English as a Form of Neo-colonialism in Botswana

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Abstract

English is by practice an official language in Botswana. This role means that it takes all significant functional roles in the economy, administration, politics, and education. Since this practice is not based on a language policy, it is difficult to understand the rational of favouring English in Botswana, where Setswana is spoken by 75% of the population and it is understood by even a higher percentage. There are also other languages that have an important regional communication role. The arguments made in this article are that the English language hegemony is tantamount to linguistic imperialism and is a permutation of apolitical colonialism in a sovereign country such as Botswana. The arguments raised here seek to contribute to fresh debates of linguistic decolonialization in Africa. It is the view of this article that promoting Setswana and other local languages will make sense in the educational domain and in the construction of a national linguistic and cultural identity.

Keywords: English; Botswana; Setswana; linguistic colonialism; linguistic hegemony; linguistic delabialisation.

Introduction

Botswana, the land of Batswana, has 80% of speakers of Setswana, and the rest is apportioned among the 30 other local languages (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020; Chebanne and Nyati-Ramahobo, 2003:396). This linguistic reality goes against the perception that Botswana is an Anglophone country. The account of this socio-political situation is historical and started when Botswana, then Bechuanaland became a British Protectorate (Bennett 2000; Mgadla 1986; Tlou and Campbell 1984). Historically, therefore, the colonial standpoint is that a "British Colony" uses English as language of record and administration (Bagwasi 2016). From the autonomy of a self-governing country in 1965, Botswana attained full independence in 1966, and opted not to change anything from the colonial linguistic history heritage. Even with independence, there is no legal basis laid down that states Botswana is Anglophone, except for equivocal mention in the Constitution for the qualification of the Members of Parliament (Janson and Tsonope 1991). Language use traditions or practices rather than reference to specific stipulations of the Law is the current order of how languages are used in Botswana whereby English is taken as official language (Janson and Tsonope, 1991; Nyati-Ramahobo 1999). This attitude towards language also is reflected in lack of texts which state how many national languages or their possible areas of use.

Further, there is no documented attempt by independent Botswana to even present any specific policy on language use within the territory (Janson and Tsonope 1991:76). However, the wide-ranging and pervading use of English gives the impression (or misperception) that the language use practice has a legal basis. As time passed, the language practice of English, with Setswana trailing far behind, became the norm in educational and administrative and general service domain practices (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020). That is how at independence the mere mention of the qualification for a member of parliament as being fluent in English and Setswana was construed as arising from a legal provision (Janson and Tsonope 1991:75). These impressions (or misperceptions) of a codified language use practice where misguided. is Language policies world-wide are implemented to manage

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language use for various national communication purposes and not to mark a colonial legacy. Batibo (2015:43) decries the lack of language capacitation planning even for Setswana that various state documents, except the constitution, refer to as national language. As Nyati-Ramahobo (2000) made in her interrogation of Botswana language policy, it is quintessential that there be a language use planning policy for Botswana or any country (Grin 2005). This compulsion for a language policy for Botswana has also been pursued by Batibo (2015:42) who maintained an argument that the national language should be viewed as a symbol of nationhood, unity and mass mobilization as well as for national communication and integration.

The aim of this chapter is to contribute to the debate on post-colonial language policies in Africa. Prominently, the paper argues against the unchallenged hegemony of English which eclipses national languages in Botswana. The ultimate aim is to refute persistence in linguistic imperialism and argue for the decolonisation of the African mind and intellectual space that is perpetuated by excessive and indulgent use of English language (Oelofsen 2015).The submission that the chapter seeks to make is that no nation can achieve authentic cultural and linguistic identity through borrowed languages. The problem of English is also that it exacerbates the class struggle in the African milieux (Canagarajah 1999 andAmin 1969).

The Problem of English Neo-colonialism in Botswana

The concerns of English imperialism are not new and many states outside Africa have been seized with these concerns (Canagarajah 1999). Conversely, when Botswana is assessed on the basis of the foregoing arguments it is no wonder that fifty-four years (and counting forward) since independence the country has pursued a neo-colonial model that has entrenched English virtually in all spheres of communication domains. This is what opens the floodgates of exotic occidental cultural influences and the influence of foreign religions which have become the determinants and definers of identity, and moral and social values (Chebanne 2020). There is now a misguided belief that to be educated one has to be English-speaking. English is taken to be the sign of education and social mobility (Nyati-Ramahobo 2000). This is the root of the problem in Botswana; and this has a bearing on the reticent recognition of Setswana as the main identifier and definer of the nation in the post-colonial era (Chebanne and Monaka 2019). This linguistic situation in Botswana compares with the cultural domination of English by Latin and French in Britain during the Medieval up to the Early Modern Period of English. English pull itself out of the cultural bind by anglicising institutions of learning and English became a language of science, technology, and philosophy (Hilmarsson-Dunn 2006). And this gives Botswana a clue as to how an African country can fix the problem with or without legislation.

English in Botswana is a colonial legacy and officially dates from 1985, when the Bechuanaland Protectorate was established under the British Crown. A High Commissioner was appointed to look after the colonial affairs of the Protectorate. The colonial government exercised a form of indirect rule; Paramount Chiefs (or tribal polities or Kings) ruled the tribes– collected taxes for social development) and for the colonial administration expenses (Bennett 2002). As earlier alluded to, education was initially a Missionary endeavor, and schools under the missionary societies' ambit taught Setswana and English equitably (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020; Mgadla 1986; Nkomazana 1993). Colonial education started in earnest in 1900 with the establishment of colonial administration in Bechuanaland "towns" (Francistown; Gaborone; Lobatse) outside the Tribal Reserves (Mgadla 1986).

The aim of this paper is to critically evaluate the post-colonial development policies that

were and are still used to construct Botswana and Batswana in the domain of language use practice in education and in general administration and services. The paper argues for critical interrogation of the current national language use practice which prioritises English and the way it is used to define the national cultural policy in the construction of a national identity (cf Volz 2002). The paper further identifies historical, cultural, linguistic, and policy aspects that can help better define Botswana and its people's identity. Recommendations will be made for an effective strengthening and positioning of local linguistic resources that will help construct and maintain a culturally authentic identity (as opposed to English) (Chebanne and Monaka 2019).

English Language within the African Neo-colonial Theories

Language, and in this case English, is important in post-colonial debate (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1982). Post-colonial intellectuals see in language a perpetuation of a colonial condition such as imposing the colonizer's languages onto the peoples even forbidding the use of indigenous or native languages. The licencing and rehabilitation of the English language as an African *lingua franca* has been justified by African governments (Batibo 2015) and criticised by African intellectual and theorists (Ngungi wa Thing'o 1988). It was Prah (2009) who eloquently contributed to the debate of linguistic colonialism in Africa by the African leaders' condition of simply occupying the colonialist chairs and neglecting to pursue a true decolonising agenda. Prah (2009) also makes a refutation of the famed or infamous twentieth-century theories that wanted to suggested differences between modes of thinking in non-literate and literate societies, and how these characterised social organization and development. This social development polarisation in the arguments of Prah (2009) did not however reflect the realities of the world, as societies are continuously in transit. Further, as Prah (2009) pursues his arguments, it is possible to argue that the transit is from orality to literacy, but orality shades into literacy rather than a manifestation of rigid polarity. Additionally, literacy never totally replaces orality. Some symbiosis is found in which complementarity becomes the order of the day, and this is also the inclination of Mandela (1994).

Another way of making this point, in the thinking of Prah (2009), is that things are not always black or white, they are more often grey or shades of grey. These theoretical rejections of Great Divide theories are sometimes called "*Continuity*" *theories* as they stress a "continuum" rather than a radical discontinuity between oral and literate modes, and an on-going dynamic interaction between various media. In Prah (2009) the bottom line in all these debates is that, for Africa to develop, it urgently requires to develop literate cultures in its languages which find social translation in the first instance through the education systems that Africans have and develop. In the pursuance of these arguments Prah (2009) counters the view that African languages orality offers no basis for scientific and technological development (Prah 1995). The point he makes is that the socio-cultural and socio-political condition and transition transfers African societies from colonialism into the post-colony. European legal, linguistic, cultural, religion, and indeed economic systems were wholly retained as development conduits. These post-colonial elements that determine the African condition is what Rodney (1973) argued as part of how Europe underdeveloped and continues to underdevelop Africa. The north-south development funding system also ensures that Africa does not conceptualize development from its perspective using its own ingenuity, indigenous value systems and importantly its own linguistic resources. As Prah (2000) opines, Africa cannot develop on borrowed terms, where the development model is borrowed, the so-called civilized culture is borrowed, the religion is borrowed, the language of communication at national levels is borrowed; everything is borrowed.

Rukuni (2012) in his reflections, *Being African*, makes compelling arguments for the rethinking

of an African society that adopts and pursues its identity from its indigenous resources, culture and language, and philosophy. Chilisa (2012) makes a determination of indigenous methodologies that can bring about the rethinking of an African thought and the development of authentic identities indigenous values of culture and language. When Fanon (1961) desperately states that "the only destiny for a Black man is to be White", he is reflecting on the colonial condition that led Ngugi *wa* Thiong'o (1992) to rebelliously agitate for the decolonizing of the African mind. The clamour, *Cry Freedom,* is not just freedom from a colonial joke but from the acquiescent mind that was instilled by colonialism and that manifests itself in post-colonial developments in Africa.

It was the post-colonial Kenyan theorist Ngugi wa Thiong'o's (1988) *Decolonising the Mind* that sets a tone for writing against English neo-colonialism in Africa. There is no doubt that English has become an effective and unifying communication tool in Africa and the world. English is a language of globalisation (Vigouroux and Salikoko 2008). It is a language of major international organisation and has established itself as language of technology and science. This linguistic globalisation situation that seems to point to all benefits that can derive from English, has been disconcerting to true Africanists who have desired a truly free African after independence. Literary theoreticians were not at ease however when after colonialism vestiges of imperialism persist (Canagarajah 1999). It was Ngugi wa Thiong'o who opened this discourse of writing against neo-colonialism with this statement:

> It was, in other words, the decade of tremendous anti-imperialist and anti-colonial revolutionary upheavals occasioned by forcible intervention of masses in history. It was a decade of hope, the people looking forward to a bright morrow in a new Africa finally freed from colonialism. Kwame Nkrumah was the single most important theoretician and spokesman of this decade (Ngungi wa Thiog'o 1988:92).

This independent prophetic freedom did not last for a long time as corruption, coups, and exploitation of African people by Africans became pervading and the norm of the new political order. It quickly became clear that new African leaders simply replaced the colonial master and put in vices that would see them consort with their colonial master to fleece their countries of their wealth and natural resources. It also became clear their African elites used the colonial language to lord over the masses and created a language class which alienated Africans in their own land. Colonial languages became rehabilitated and entrenched as national languages. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1988:98) sees in all the Africa socio-political ills as a process of the transition of imperialism to colonialism and after independence to neo-colonialism. No nation can develop on borrowed terms be they linguistic, cultural or technological, and it is a fallacy to believe that English has a role in servicing education and advancement in Africa or else (Prah 2009:1995).

Can English be an African Language?

The question of English as an African language has been raised by Biodun Jeyifo (2018) who titled his response to Ngũgĩ by declaring that "English is an African language – Ka Dupe! [for and against Ngũgĩ], "The central and core thesis of Biodun Jeyifo is based on a rejection of Ngũgĩ and other postcolonial critique of African language policies. By taking a position against postcolonial orthodoxies of African cultural and linguistic nationalism, he argues for the acceptance of English as an African language. And the fundamental argument that he makes is that all languages widely used in Africa ought to be classified as either indigenous or non-indigenous:

> The fundamental basis of my response to Ngũgĩ rests on a critique, indeed a refutation of this principle of absolute autochthony. As indicated in the title of this piece, I declare, against Ngũgĩ, that English (and French and Portuguese) can no longer be described or classified as a foreign language in Africa; it is in fact now an *African* language. However, almost at the same moment and with the same breath with which I say this, I immediately bracket this declaration with all the ambiguities, all the contradictions and indeterminacies of that appropriated Yoruba phrase, 'ka dupe'. English is now an African language, I argue, precisely in the same manner in which it is now an Indian, Irish or Australasian language. In all these nations or regions of the world, English has not only been around for centuries now, it is a leading language in virtually all areas of life – the economy; education; politics; science and technology. If this is the case, there must be a compelling reason, a reason beyond disputation, to continue to label English a foreign language in these countries and regions of the world; and this is absolute autochthony (Jeyifo 2018 https://languagehat.com/english-is-an-african-language-ka-dupe/, accessed August 21 2021).

This linguistic practicality about a language is not a new thing in human literary history. Latin persisted for a long time in religious cycles, and before that Greek dominated the literary and the philosophical world. The point that Ngũgĩ makes is that history has changed, and therefore the culture of dependency needs to change. The question not just historical, or cultural, but that of a soul of a people. If as Jeyifo (2018) accepts that there is no language that there is no language which is more of a language than another language, why should English be rehabilitated in Africa? To whose honour is the Anglophone Africa label? Anglophone just as Francophonie and Lusophone are colonial labels that still curve colonial turfs and zones of neo-colonial domination.

It is noteworthy that English has contributed to the growth and internationalisation of African writers' literary development. However, it should be right as Ngũgĩ (1992 and 1986) argues that we should discard the colonial linguistic infrastructure. Borrowing a language should not entail keeping or owning a language and constructing your identity around it. Latin persisted in religion and then it died completely in churches. English as well as French and Portuguese, should meet the same destiny in Africa. This is important for African ingenuity and intellectual capacity to innovated African development on in the next pedestal on authentic indigenous grounds, not on borrowed terms. The agenda for decolonialising the Africa mind is urgent, and African should not feel apologetic. And on this point contrary to Jeyifo, African ethnically, historically, and culturally is not in the same position as Ireland, Cana, and New Zealand on the question of English Those nations are an extension of the English history and identity and culture or identity. Consequently, the issue is not just resisting English imperialism (Canagarajah 1999), but affirming one's identity and self-worth. Without this consciousness, the Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952 [2008]:43) will remain an eternal damnation of a Black man:

> The Negro's behavior makes him akin to an obsessive neurotic type, or, if one prefers, he puts himself into a complete situational neurosis. In the man of color there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence.

Africa does not need to remain in this pitiful situation any longer. Africans can be better educated in their languages, and the Chinese are demonstrating. They can be better civilised in

their own cultures, and the Indians are proving it. Oelofsen (2015) also took this view as the most authentic step to decolonise,

Botswana Languages Without a Language Use Policy

Without a language policy that favors Botswana languages, the Botswana language use practices entrench and perpetuate English neo-colonialism. English, in the absence of a strong local first language English speaking community is learnt only in school and has no family or community support in Botswana.Out of school use of English is in administration characterized by defective and erroneous English speech register. Teachers of English themselves do not master the idiomatic English, and their pronunciation and English grammar use is faulty. Mastery of English is difficult and takes much longer (12 years). Implications for teacher education and professional development should be addressed by a language policy (LP) that will put English at its right place. English in an African child's mind can be a source of trauma and can have an effect of deculturalising the mind. Therefore, English may not always educate; it is prone to alienating the African mind (Oelofson 2015).

Botswana Language Use Practice (LUP) has been studied extensively by Nyati-Ramahobo (2001).A policy is a set of principles or rules that guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s) and is generally employed to designate what is done in reality, and this can either be referred to as either procedure or protocol. A language policy can also be described as "statement of Intent" or a "commitment", that is, on the actions that certain principles or rules are going to be implemented (Grin 2005). A language policy applies to government, private sector organizations and groups, and individuals (Batino 2015).

Language policy is a deliberate attempt to change an individual's or community's use of a language or languages or a variety or varieties. It is what a government does either officially through legislation, court decisions or policy to determine how languages are used, cultivate language skills needed to meet national priorities or to establish the rights of individuals or groups to use and maintain languages (Batibo 2015). A language policy is designed to favor or discourage the use of a particular language or set of languages.[1] In the discussions of Batibo (2015) a LP plans language for effective use of a language or languages, and this planning is a deliberate effort to influence the function, structure, or acquisition of language within a country or speech community (Kaplan and Baldauf 2007). The goal of the language use planning is generally for the benefit of language users to enhance their communication skills and to advance the quality of life of citizens (Nyati-Ramahobo 2004).

Botswana English: A Threat to Local Languages?

The attitude of speakers towards their language depends heavily on the status and prestige of the language (Smieja 2003) which must have an educational and economic value associated with it. The prestige of a language results partly from its symbolic or utilitarian value. The social esteem in which a language is held is often a function of favourablegovernmentpolicies, historical legacy, use of language in education, extensive domains of use, a solid codification, substantial documentation or cultural prestige, among others (Djité 2008). Asian countries that were also colonized by Britain have had a better development of the English language use. Malaysia provides a useful way of

[1] http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Z413%20EDB%20Section02_0.pdf, accessed, 23 August 2021

looking at the different categorization with reference to English language use, especially where that policy involves English. It does not promote the principle that English is essential in socio-economic development.

Malaysia's policy towards English language in its language use domains waswhether English would support a particular development in the learning process and skills development of the nation (Kaplan and Baldauf 2007). While the curriculum has opted for Bahasa Maleyu, English-medium education (as a tool for scientific development), is not imposed on all other sectors (cf Othman and Juliana 2012).Botswana, in its educational use of English, does not make a distinction of first, second, or foreign use of English. Yet Batswana generally do not have a good competence of English. The faulty use of English, or English use with preponderant code switching between Setswana and English develops a type of English that is distinctly local and does not respond to the idiomatic English standards that are obtained elsewhere. The Botswana English is characterized by pronunciation that is erroneous and a grammar that is not standard. The question of standard is neither here or there, as indeed there are world Englishes (Bagwasi 2016).

Planning for English in Botswana

This use of English is well established and is consolidated every time an Education Policy is conceived (Republic of Botswana 1994). It is not in the Constitution of Botswana, which came out at independence where the recourse and solution can be found. Rehabilitation of English as language of technology and globalisation establishes it as a language of knowledge and knowing (Vigouroux and Salikoko 2008). English has by default been used as the language of official record for courts, police, army, and public administration and private service industry. The most impactful role of English is in education where it is the medium of instruction at all levels of education, from reception grade to tertiary institution. English language use situation points to the fact that even with the expiration of colonialism in 1966, English, is held in high esteem and a cherished legacy, and has persisted to control and influence most important functional language use in social, linguistic, economic, and educational domains which entail an impact in all aspects of the lives of Batswana. However, the knowledge economy that is spoken about in the twenty-first century skills (Botswana *Vision 2036*), cannot be based on the English language.The concept of Knowledge economy should mean people mastery the intricacies of the common in the language of their competence, not in English which is foreign to most rural people. People need their languages to authentically develop in their life.

A judicious and conscientious language planning which seeks to contribute to the upliftment of the population through their indigenous linguistic and cultural means is required as a matter of urgency. Nations that value their self-worth and their linguistic and cultural destiny have seriously interrogated the continued use of English, and how it should be planned. The example of such emerging nations which came f=from English imperialism are Malaysia, as reported by Othman (2012), where English language policy changes have been implemented to safe guard the independence o of the nation and its development agenda. Here in Botswana researchers like Chebanne and Kewagamang (2020:16) are of the view that there will be a need for language planning that will help the country value its linguistic and cultural identity as illustrated in Diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1: Language planning for Botswana

- ***English as a language of Globalization***

  Justified for international links and foreign trade and diplomacy

- ***Setswana as a National language***

  Justified for national inter-ethnic communication

  Justified for regional cultural and socio-economic activities

- ***National regional languages***

  Justified for cultural patrimony and indigenous knowledge systems;

  Justified for regional cultural and socio-economic activities

- ***Botswana Minority Ethnic languages***

  Justified for cultural and linguistic patrimony; authenticity of indigenous values, and the expression of human rights.

English in Language Policy and Planning that Impact on Development Issues

In Botswana, LP should reflect the socio-political conditions of the country and should be concerned with the bottom-up realities of the society as other free countries have done (cf. Hilmarsson-Dunn 2006). Imposing English in all sectors of the society in a top-down curve will make English use planning very ineffective development. Botswana LP for English should consider "the macro-micro distinction is that which looks at levels of educational policy and implementation from government to classroom and how agents at the different levels implement the policy which is handed down to them. This approach describes micro implementation of a macro policy and is concerned with linkages between the levels and issues such as decentralization and centralization" (Kennedy 2001 and Hilmarsson-Dunn 2006).

Challenges for LP, language and development of English in Botswana require better understanding at the level of implementation (Djité 2008). English in Botswana has an ambivalent status, and the policy planning seems to miss the reality of the language and the society upon which it is imposed. Evidently this LP complexity impacts English development in Botswana at all levels – political, administrative, and educational. Problems of the use of English in Botswana require that there should be an evaluation of the developmental relevance of English as a second or foreign language (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020; Chebanne and Monaka 2019). As indicated in the LP model, there is need to have priority areas for the use and development of English (science and technology and international business) (cf. Kaplan and Baldauf 2007). Botswana should consider the appropriate and relevant roles of all its languages in development, not solely English. To promote its distinct national and regional character, Setswana must be put at the status of an official and administrative language; and regional languages promoted to preserve distinct local cultures (Chebanne and Monaka 2019).

In the history of colonialism, even post-colonialism, Europe has robbed Africa of its natural resources and played lip service of development with its linguistic and cultural sources as rewards (Rodney 1973), and this is how they have underdeveloped Africa. The Botswana government must be conscious of this historical reality and set a good example by using Setswana as the language

of parliamentary debates and record (Batibo 2015c), and also promote its indigenous languages for social advancement (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020). English in Botswana must be limited to the promotion of international trade and diplomacy.Botswana should endeavour to manage the complexity of issues arising from the decision to continue using English as an official and administrative language. English neo-colonialism is a time cultural and linguistic bomb (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1988:28) for an African country. Masses without their cultures and languages, lost in the limbo of globalization will demand an account from their leaders.[2] For instance as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o notes:

> This is what this book on the politics of language in African literature has really been about: national, democratic and human liberation. The call for rediscovery and the resumption of our language is a call for a regenerative reconnection with the millions of revolutionary tongues in Africa and the world over demanding liberation. It is a call for the rediscovery of the real language of humankind: the language of struggle. It is the universal language underlying all speech and words of our history. Struggle. Struggle makes history. Struggle makes us. In struggle is our history, our language and our being. That struggle beings wherever we are; in whatever we do: then we become part of those millions whom Martin Carter once saw sleeping not to dream but dreaming to change the world (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1988:108).

Linguistic policy changes are possible and in Botswana, very much desirable. Changes that ushered in a new political dispensation in South Africa in 1994 also piloted a new language planning strategy (Webb 1995). The linguistic equality and equitability that the new Constitution of South Africa enshrines cannot be matched with the rather conservative, subjugating and singularising constitution of Botswana which does not recognise language as a developmental issue (Batibo 2015a; Nyati-Ramahobo 2004). This hegemony in a social policy is regrettably backward-looking and defeats democratic ideals found elsewhere in Africa. Incidentally, even the apartheid system which gave to all major Bantu languages a role in the community affairs of the local authorities in the Bantu areas (Republic of South Africa Constitution 1961 cited in Webb 1995) seems admirable in comparative terms to Botswana. In a way therefore, South Africa has historically been progressive with language issues, as also reflected in the liberality of its current constitution. Botswana can only approach this situation if it could make language issues salient aspects of social development and national identity actualisation (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020; Djité 2008; Hilmarsson-Dunn 2006). With the equivocal and vacuous provision for Setswana in the Constitution in Botswana, the language, and indeed other indigenous languages, can only experience grim challenges from English and other effects of globalisation (Batibo 2015a). There is, therefore, a need to rectify the role and position of Setswana and other languages in the constitution of Botswana with the purpose to empower them for functionality, and Setswana to accede to the same level of official language together with English (Chebanne and Kewagamang 2020).

A rigid dedication to the adoption of English as national official language for exclusive use in all significant communication domains can be subjected to Fanon's (1952 [2008]) analysis of a colonised Black person. The condition of a Black man can be viewed as psychological and existential reflections of a recurrent cultural dilemma. A Black man is still in that colonial stupor and lethargy

[2] Ngugi wa THiong'o (1986; 1- 13). Decolonising the Mind. Politics of Language in African Literature. James Currey. London.

as he still believes English is the language of knowledge (science, technology and philosophy). Colonialism imposed a serious complex in the Black man that he now believes that his indigenous language and culture are primitive and savage. Fanon (1952 [2008:25]) reminds us, that, "*To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture".* In the estimation of Fanon,it is through language that we develop a sense of ourselves as well as a sense of social hierarchy. When we maintain English as the language of our thoughts and of our development, we cannot reasonably and realistically extricate ourselves from the colonial slavery that we believed we left at independence. When we do things in English we extend the influence and control of English and this accounts for the perpetuation of neo-colonialism (Oelofsen 2015 andNtombela, 2020).

Botswana is caught up in the developmental perception that views Occidentalism as the way to accede to modernity. This trap and its contradictions have been dispelled by many academics and African society developmental specialists. Quijano (2007) views it as tergiversation and vacillation in the way African nations want to situate themselves in relation to coloniality, modernity, and developmental rationality. The point is that any nation can develop and in any language other than European language This argment must be made clear - there is no language that has been created inferior, just as there is no culture that is inferior. Within their contexts, languages and cultures are adequate. Taking English as a developmental and intellectual panacea is to accept some inferiority and dependency. The feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European's feeling of superiority. In the view of Fanon, let us have the courage to say it outright: It is the racist who creates his inferior. (Fanon 1952 [2008:69]). Language and culture are inseparable – they are co-existent; they determine each other's existence and are a source of people's identity. Language expresses culture, and when speakers interact in their language, they are expressing and sharing their culture and knowledge (Rukuni 2012). If ever Batswana have a belief that English is inseparable in their development trajectory, then they would be as Fanon (1965 [2005]) qualified the wretched of the earth as having no belief in their culture and linguistic aptitudes. It is the most reprehensible self-affliction that a nation can perpetrate on itself, and therefore an opprobrium of proportions that have not been attested in human history (Ntombela 2020).

Further, as much as English is favoured for upward mobility in knowledge and development, it cannot express Setswana (and African) culture and knowledge as the arguments of Ngugi wa Thing'o (1992) did demonstrate. Botswana has developed a cultural policy (Republic of Botswana 2001 and 2005) to manage national cultural affairs, both tangible and intangible heritage. For the most part the focus is on artefacts, looking after heritage sites, and documentation of dances and songs. However, culture cannot be limited to collection of artefacts, looking after heritage sites, documentation of dances and songs without consideration for the main vehicle of these knowledge domains. For example, Chebanne (2020) argued that the belief that recording Khoesan songs and dances without an empowerment of the accompanying languages in meaningful domains such as education would be a futile exercise as the languages would die regardless, killing the culture in the process. A similar argument could be made for Setswana which operates in a subservient position to English. Not changing this position will ever confirm the colonial the attitude of considering Africa as a dark continent and their languages, being those of illiteracy and underdevelopment (Pakenham 1991). The intellectual and elite association with English has also the nefarious consequences of exacerbating African social class struggle (Canagarajah 1999 and Oelofsen 2015).

A true cultural preservation policy should carefully investigate the intertwined elements of culture and language and how these knowledge systems present a civilisational tapestry that produces what can be construed as an indigenous cultural authenticity (Rukuni 2012). There is dire need to

put measures in place that would strengthen Setswana with its domain of cultural expression and guard it against erosion from the English language (Oelofsen 2015). Setswana and other Botswana local languages are threatened by the prominence of English because of the following inattentive and inexorable practices in the State language use policies (Nyati-Ramahobo 2004 and Batibo 2015c:1). English is the official language (language of administrative records, courts, parliament, medium of instruction in all tertiary education); 2) English is medium of Instruction from Grade 1 of Primary School; and 3) English is the main language used in national media of communication. Setswana and other local African languages are reserved and relegated to mainly oral roles, as stated by Otlogetswe and Chebanne (2018:211). The reality of using English as the Official and Setswana as National makes English to encroach into domains that should be the preserve of Setswana (cf Ntombela 2020). A wide use of English adopts an elitist outward-looking undercurrent that vitiates the inward-looking people-oriented development of Botswana requires and needs. Botswana, as indeed other African countries, should not be intimidated and made shy when they demand a purposeful activation and promotion of their languages in the intellectual space by putting in place protectionist language policies in the face of the forces of English (Hilmarsson-Dunn 2006).

Conclusion

The English language in Botswana has a great role in development, at a certain level, but Botswana should not continue in the self-satisfaction that the English will remain a remedy for social, political and technological development. Wholly borrowed means are not a panacea for real development. In practical social terms, English is a problem. Admission at tertiary institutions indicates that English is a hurdle and an impediment in access to education and to skills development. Some sectors of the economy can do better by minimising the requirement of English and promoting Setswana. Empowering people with appropriate language use policy will uplift the country economically and socially. English will be better loved and utilized if it betters the life of professionals.

It has become clear in this paper that the post-colonial constitution developed in Botswana in 1966 gave very limited attention to the elements that defined national identity through language. While the labels Setswana and Motswana are aptly associated with Botswana as elements that determined the core identifiers of the State, nothing much is achieved by insisting on the hegemony of English. A change of this attitude should develop positive socio-political values that impact the modernization of the state as it engages sustainable development goals and the country's long-term development vision, *Vision 2036*, which emphasizes knowledge economy; and in Botswana this can be delivered, among others, through the national language(s) that reaches all corners and strata of the society.

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