The Critical Analysis of the Lesotho Language Planning and Policy and Its Implications on Education

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ABSTRACT: The paper aimed at analysing the Lesotho language policy to unmask how power is assumed to be exercised by the Lesotho policy-makers through linguistic elements and structure .The main analytical tool of this paper was critical sociolinguistics, using IGMs in Systemic Functional Linguistics, rhetorical strategies and the CDA model in which the paper analysed the relationship between discourse and society. The paper unveiled performativity (mode, censorship and interpellation and the grammatical aspects from the point of functions of co-ordination, modality and nominalisation as effective and dominant principles and tropes used by the Lesotho language policy makers to convince the citizens to acknowledge the language policy irrespective of how it overshadows the minority languages in Lesotho.

KEYWORDS: critical discourse analysis, critical language policy study

1.0 INTRODUCTION
The paper is structured into five sections of which section one explains the aim of the paper, and outlines its structure. Section two provides the background of the Lesotho language situation. Section three discusses the theoretical underpinnings of this paper drawing from the diachronic development of the critical language policy uses in society. Section four analyses the Lesotho national language policy with respect to the following linguistic power markers: Modality, interpellation, censorship, co-ordination and nominalisation. Section five presents the findings drawn from the analysis.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW
Definition of critical language policy
Tollefson (2006) points out three interrelated meanings of 'critical' language policies: firstly, it refers to work that is critical of traditional, mainstream approaches to language policy research; secondly, it includes research that is aimed at social change, such as fighting against discrimination and marginalisation of the minority language users; lastly, it refers to research that is influenced by critical theory, and the researchers also need to be critical of their existence and position in the study.

Uses of critical language policy
Critical language policy determines to fulfill several purposes: it eschews apolitical LPP approaches and acknowledges that policies often create and sustain various forms of social inequality, and that policy-makers usually promote the interests of dominant social groups. Furthermore, it seeks to develop more democratic policies that reduce inequality and promote the maintenance of minority languages. CLP is used to examine indigenous and minority language maintenance and education (Butler, 1997). Pennycook (2006) asserts that the focus of CLP is on how power circulates across various contexts. The CLP in language policy studies also focuses on issues of power as it is enacted, reproduced, reinforced, and challenged in policy discourses (Mahboob & Paltridege 2013).
It is worth noting that the powerful might not be aware of their use of language and their abuse of discourse (van Dijk, 2000, in Flowerdew 2013). Therefore, it is CDA's job to reveal such naturalization. In most cases, the embodying taken-for-granted discrimination and marginalisation in naturalised discourse is more subtle but severe, since it might easily control people's mind (van Dijk, 2000). Typically, the Lesotho Constitution of 1993 prohibits any form of discrimination against members of the society. Section 18 (3) states that:
citizens shall not be discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disability or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages which are not accorded to persons of another such description.
According to this section, the state might be expected to strive for the adoption and implementation of policies which enable children of different linguistic minority groups to receive education in their first languages and use them in other official domains of the

country. This provision is intended to inform, amongst other things, the country's language legislation, language policy, language-in-education policy and language practice (Matlosa, 2009). However, what is inferred from the Lesotho language policy contradicts the section as the constitution declares that *the official languages of Lesotho shall be Sesotho and English, and, accordingly no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by the reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages.*

2.1 Empirical Studies

Many studies have revealed an outcry of most of the Lesotho citizens about the current language situation which is against the linguistic rights of the Basotho, particularly the ethnic groups of the indigenous languages such as Baphuthi and Bathepu, and against their right to be educated in their mother tongue (Matsoso, 2001; Matlosa, 2009 ; Kolobe & Matsoso, 2020). Kolobe and Matsoso (2020) have revealed that the Lesotho language policy is silent about the minority languages in Lesotho. Their study suggested the revision of the current policy in order to meet not only the linguistic rights but also the educational rights of all Basotho living in Lesotho.

Many studies have discovered that in post-colonial countries like Lesotho, language policies are both the outcome and arena of power struggle (Tollesfon, 1995; Butler, 1997 & PennyCook, 1999). Based on such discoveries, Butler (1997) suggested that linguists should engage in critical language policy studies in order to unravel the hidden agenda in language policies. However, there is still dearth of literature on how the noted legitimate or authoritative power and language discrimination are portrayed linguistically. Therefore, to fill this gap, this paper aimed at analyzing the Lesotho language policy to unmask how power and discrimination are exercised by the Lesotho policy-makers through linguistic elements and structures in the light of the following questions:

2.1.1 What type of policy does Lesotho use?

2.1.2 Which interpersonal mode is used to declare the Lesotho language legislation?

2.1.3 How are the linguistic elements and performativity used by the Lesotho policy makers to denaturalise power differentials and language discrimination?

3.0 Theoretical framework

Analytical theories concerning this paper are ideological grammatical metaphors IGM within SFL proposed by Halliday (1994) and Fairclough's the Critical Discourse Analysis to reveal how language is used and abused in the exercise of power and the suppression of human rights. The rationale behind is that other models such as accommodation theory, the classical language planning model, rational choice theory do not explain explicitly how the relationship between dominant and subordinate groups involves the question of power and inequality (Tollefson, 1991, PennyCook, 1999).

The selected theories complement one another. Using ideological grammatical metaphors like nominalization, SFL mainly concerns itself in how people use language together to achieve everyday social life and how social worlds are transformed and established through language (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004). With critical discourse analysis approach, Critical sociolinguists focus on how language is used to exercise and preserve power and privilege in society, how it buttresses social institutions, and how even those who suffer as a consequence fail to realize how many things that appear to be 'natural' and 'normal' are not at all so. Fairclough (2015) claims that language planning, amongst others, can only be understood within critical discourse analysis. In simple terms, through CDA, language planning and policy can be viewed as a system that maintains an unequal distribution of status, group membership, education, and so on. Fairclough (2015) maintains that language use is ideological as are all investigations; thus, there is little hope for an 'objective' or 'neutral' sociolinguistics.

Bourdieu (1991) asserts that through language policies, language has turned into a symbolic market place in which some people have more control of the goods than others because certain languages or varieties have been endowed with more symbolic power than others and have therefore been given a greater value such as standard languages. This paper claims that Lesotho is a typical example in which the language policy is silent about the minority languages. The paper uses Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework paired with Hallidayan perspective to depict the orator's deft and clever use of these strategies embedded in policy which are bound up with the overall political purposes.

Critical sociolinguists argue that the discourses of language policies can hegemonically normalise and legitimise what is acceptable and thinkable, while concomitantly delimiting others (Fairclough, 1989). Pennycook (2006) also argues that LP study should reveal how policies create inequality that takes the focus off 'the state as an intentional actor that seeks to impose its will on the people, and instead draws our attention to much more localised and often contradictory operations of power. The power of local or micro level practices and discourses is what intrigues the critical sociolinguists in LPP study. Therefore, with the lenses of the principles of CDA, the paper attempted to contribute to an understanding of the ways in which the Lesotho language policy linguistically overshadows the minority languages in Lesotho.

4.0 DATA COLLECTION

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The paper adopted content analysis as a method of data collection which concerns excerpts from documents. The Lesotho national constitution (1993) was used as a primary source of data because it is the genre in which the Lesotho language legislation is written.

5.0 DATA ANALYSIS
The critical analysis of the Lesotho language policy is based on the naturalism and positivism schools of jurisprudence in law and policy making. The jurisprudence is the systematic and scientific investigation into law. It is the knowledge of *law* as opposed to knowledge of *the* law (which is specific law or specific legal systems). The Jurisprudence is therefore an analysis of the structure and concept of law or policy. On the one hand, the positivism sees no place for the theories of morality and religion since such theories, and posits that a law acquires the status of law if it is so declared by a sovereign. In instances where the law is rejected by events such as protests and revolts, the law is then not valid since social rejection invalidates the law-making procedures. On the other hand, naturalism is more accommodative of morals, human rights and linguistic rights. It believes that there are inherent laws that are common to all societies and a representation of the morals of society forms such natural laws (Murphy & Coleman, 1990).

6.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
From the critical point of view, this article found that the Lesotho national language legislation comes from the positivism school of jurisprudence. This view is based on the fact that Lesotho as a post-colonial country assumed a top-down language policy, and that through linguistic items and structures, policy-makers demonstrate power and control of the entire society because some varieties or languages are considered more prestigious than others (Kaplan & Balduf, 1997; Bourdieu, 2006). This is proved by the below ideological grammatical structure used to declare the language legislation in the constitution.
The official languages of Lesotho shall be Sesotho and English, and, accordingly no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by the reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages.
This declaration has led to the claim that Lesotho is essentially a monolingual in Sesotho (Kamwangamalu, 2013). This paper argues that the Lesotho language situation is vague, and that the structure of the Lesotho language legislation has ideological function which portrays power and control possessed by the Lesotho language planners. The argument is based on the following linguistic features portrayed by the policy: mode, performativity which embodies interpellation and censorship, modality, coordination and nominalisation.

6.1 Mode
Data showed the declarative mode used to declare the Lesotho language legislation as performative and having an element of power. This is substantiated by Fairclough (2015) as he explains that the declarative mode does not represent a neutral object of discourse; rather, it seems performative as it is used to produce ideologically loaded categories of language nationalisation and officialisation through which the people organise their thoughts and their social lives. On the similar vein, Billig (1995) indicates that language planning is not giving out information (constative), but it is doing an action (performative). This is affirmed by a long standing debate against the declaration that Lesotho is a bilingual country disregarding the indigenous languages (Matlosa, 1998; Matsoso, 2001; Matlosa, 2009). Even the verb *declare*, usually used with the word policy express an action (Austin, 1962).

6.2 Interpellation
From the quoted Lesotho language legislation, the present study discovered that the proclamation of both Sesotho and English as official languages of Lesotho is an example of what Bourdieu (1991) calls interpellation. Interpellation is an act of institution or act of authority to hail or name (Bourdieu, 1991). According to Bourdieu (1991), an act of institution is performative through which a language variety or varieties are recognised as legitimate. This paper found that the proclamation is not the description of the Basotho nation, but it enacts both languages as legitimate to be used in Lesotho to meet the political interests of those in power. This finding corroborates Butler (1997) who contends that interpellation is one of the performatives in which languages are called into social being and inaugurated into sociality by a variety of diffuse and powerful interpellation.

Drawing from Althusser's notion of interpellation as Butler , this paper maintains that the Lesotho language planners hailed or inaugurated both English and Sesotho as official languages of Lesotho disregarding indigenous languages like Sephuthi, Sethepu, and Ndebele. Furthermore, based on the assumption that the contexts of an interpellation are not determined in advance, but inaugurated, the present study observed that the Lesotho language policy reproduces and denaturalises the reality of the Lesotho language situation rather than reporting on an existing one. This interpellation is also marked by the use of a copulative verb *be* which marks a transition of the hailed languages from the state of being ordinary languages to an official state. This is affirmed by Kolobe and Matsoso (2020) as they aver that the declaration of both English and Sesotho has discriminated the minority languages that are not officially considered. Noted also is that this ignorance has an ideological element of another performative's concept called censorship which is discussed in the section below.

6.3 Censorship

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The present study noted that the Lesotho language policy is enshrined with censorship which is *prohibitive* and *repressive* resource used by the dominant bloc. Censorship is a specific form of power that generates the discursive regimes through the production of the unspeakable (Butler, 1997). This paper is of the view that the Lesotho language legislation has an element of censorship which is the suppression of all or part of a publication considered offensive or a thread to security or one's interests. Thus, censorship is used as an act of silently suppressing the minority languages from functioning in government-controlled domains. This finding is substantiated by the absence of those indigenous languages from Basotho cultural politics (Matsoso, 2001, Matlosa, 2009).

The silence has denied the minority communities linguistic rights such as freedom to use own language in education, judiciary spheres and in administrative domains (Matsoso, 2017). Behind such a silence, there is power and censorship which are *prohibitive* and *repressive* resources embodied by the Lesotho language policy. In support of this paper, Foucault (1998) highlights the *productive* and *generative* aspect of power and censorship. As Foucault puts it, through censorship, power produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth (Foucault, 1998).

Foucault further affirms that the absence of central, state-driven language planning activities in one of the indigenous languages and the silence of the policy about the indigenous languages is not a plain neutral silence. Rather, it is a new regime of discourses. In Lesotho, this is justified by an outcry that despite the differences that exist amongst the Basotho in terms of language and ethnic backgrounds, Lesotho is generally described as a highly monolingual and homogeneous nation (Matšela, 1990; Bamgbose, 1991; Kamwangamalu, 2003). Congruent to the findings of the present paper, Matsoso (2001) and Adegbiya (1994: 2) outlined the following as side effects of the neglection of minority languages: The relative homogeneity that has resulted in the continual neglect of the minority languages in the country and deprivation of the linguistic rights of their speakers. The confinement of the use of these minority languages only to the home and negative attitudes around them that suggests that these languages are not capable of serving as vehicles for advanced knowledge.

6.4 Co-ordination

Data also revealed the juxtaposition of two conjuncts English and Sesotho linked by a conjunction *and* to show symmetrical relationship.The present article discovered that the coo-ordination of the two official languages of Lesotho implies that there is a symmetrical power relation that holds or should hold between them in terms of function in Lesotho from the co-ordinated structure: *Sesotho and English shall be…*, and the prohibition which states …*no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by the reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages.*

It could be expected that Sesotho and English subsume equal legitimate power in government controlled domains; yet, the opposite is the case. According to Lekhotho (2013), although English and Sesotho are both official languages (Constitution of Lesotho, Chapter 1, Section 3), and are both used in schools, English is widely seen as the language of prestige and economic opportunity. Sesotho features in the education system as the medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school and as an examinable subject through secondary school. Surprisingly, the medium of instruction switches to English in Grade 4 upwards. Yet, the fact is, approximately 75 per cent of the population of Lesotho does not speak English (Lewis, Simons & Fennig, 2014).

The paper argues that power relationship between the two languages is asymmetrical despite the coordinator *and* which seems to also overshadow the reality of multilingualism in Lesotho. This is congruent to what Bamgbose (1991) calls language policy without implementation in which, contextually, English dominates Sesotho not only in Education but also in other government controlled domains like law. However, recently, court proceedings are held in Sesotho predominantly (Kimane, Thuube & Mohale, 2006).

Similarly, Matlosa (2009) purports that the diaglossic relationship that holds between the Sesotho and English denies the minority speakers not only their right to education but also the right to participate in government public discourses. Irrespective of the language in education policy which states that a child should be taught in his/her mother tongue in grade 1-3 (Ministry of Education, 2009), Sesotho is used to a certain extent in primary education while English is mostly used in official domains such as government, administration and law. Therefore, from the critical point of view, this censorship implies that the indigenous languages are obscene and not prestigious hence their suppression from neither officialisation nor nationalisation, and that the policy-makers purposely suppressed the minority speakers in order to delimit public criticism.

6.5 Modality: *shall*

Observed from the corpus used in the present paper is that *shall* is a commodity used to neutralise the power of an obvious order, though archaic it appears. As far as *shall* is a polysemous word in legal writing, as used in the Lesotho language declaration quoted below, *Shall* performs a declarative function and impose a legal duty or obligation.
The official languages of Lesotho shall be Sesotho and English, and accordingly no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by the reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages.
The above statement quoted from the language legislation is a typical example of both the declarative function of *shall*. It is used to declare the so called bilingualism in Lesotho, and has similar declarative function as that of specifications of the International Organisation for Standardisation, International Electro-technical Commission, and American Society for Testing and Materials

where the requirements with *shall* are mandatory (ISO/IEC Directives, 2011). On specifications and standards published by the United States Department of Defense, requirements with *shall* are also the mandatory requirements (Defense and Program-Unique Specifications):

If a language policy is a need, its implementation shall be made by the speech community requiring it.

In support of this paper, Foley (2002) executes that due to the Plain Legal English Movement in the meaning of imposing a duty or obligation, *shall* has been supplemented by *must* because of the ambiguity of *shall.* Interestingly, Foley posits that *must* is not universally accepted despite its advantage in being unambiguously imperative because the dominant bloc members usually do not want to appear imposing. Some argue that *shall* is to be used for stronger obligations than *must* (Downing & Locke, 2006)

Therefore, this paper maintains that the use of *shall* in the Lesotho constitution, obviously the legal document, declares Lesotho as a bilingual society, and imposes an order on the citizens to use the named languages irrespective of their different ethnic groups. The imperative, mandatory and permissive meanings of *shall* have been mentioned in William (2011): As used in statutes and similar instruments, *shall* records what a person is required to do (Williams, 2011). This argument is substantiated by the fact that Lesotho subsumes a top-down policy which is made by the dominant bloc without perhaps the consent of the target audience (Kaplan & Baldau, 1997).

Shall is used to denote a precondition (Martorana, 2012). In the context of Lesotho, the policy does not only channel the minority groups to use the official languages, but it also lays emphasis on the prohibition on the use of any language other than the two officialised. This was deduced from this: *...and, accordingly ,no instrument or transaction shall be invalid by the reason only that it is expressed or conducted in one of those languages.*

6.6 Nominalisation

The language policy is embedded with nominalizations that construct and contribute to abstraction, generalization, impersonality, objectification, information load, and ambiguity of the Lesotho language policy. Nominalisation is a syntactic conversion which transforms whole clauses into a noun or nominal phrases; this enables it to obtain agency by capturing the doer position and also presents an abstract feature to an action/event (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004). The finding is in line with Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) who indicate that most of the traditional participants in language policy have come from what is referred to as top-down language planning situation and in most cases, these are the people with power and authority to make language related decisions for groups, often with little or no consultation with the ultimate language learners or users. The authors contend that who these policy-makers are often put in general terms in the literature. Clarifying the idea of power and authority, Fairclough (2015) posits that the strategies used in back-grounding the agency are nominalization and passivasition.

Similarly, Woods (2006) puts forward that nominalisation helps to avoid expressing definite people in the event described and it can also establish an impersonalizing and remoteness effect through the removal of participants. This is the typical case with the language situation in Lesotho in which the agency is backgrounded in the constitution of Lesotho (1993). The following nominal phrases are extracted: *Section 3 of the constitution states that...* or *the national language policy declares that...*

By using the two nominalisation metaphors (*policy and section 3 of the constitution*) in a row, the citizens' attention is distracted from the process that is actually occurring and managed; instead, the focus is shifted to the products of the process which in this case are the nominal metaphors: *policy, constitution and section*. The force of these expressions distract the audience consideration from such questions as: What is being chosen? Who is choosing? Discourse analysist would say that the process is back grounded and the effects foregrounded (Halliday, 1985; Woods, 2006).

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The discussion of the findings is explicated as follows and in terms of IGM and CDA. The paper reports the findings on nominalization, censorship, interpellation and the analysed grammatical elements.

After analysing the Lesotho language policy based on nominalization, the results display that the most frequently employed types of IGM being process to entities are *the constitution* and *the policy* respectively. The most dominant processes are material based on actions which are humanised. Nominalization of these words: *policy declares...* and *section 3 of the constitution states...* has been observed in many research papers and in the constitution. This excessive use of material processes is quite dramatic in terms of power relations. These nominalizations construct and contribute to abstraction, generalisation, impersonality, objectification, information load, language economy and ambiguity. Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) affirms that if one tends to deploy power, it is more effectual to deploy it within the domain of doing rather than other processes, because it is not easy to affect how people think, as compared with utilizing physical element to influence how they act. Consequently, it is fundamental to specify who gets to be the doer, where material processes are used.

In addition, the paper has found that the Lesotho language policy language is enshrined with performativity. By way of reference to Judith Butler's notion of performativity, it has unveiled two discursive processes (censorship and interpellation) by which the Lesotho language policy reproduces the linguistic identity of the minority language speakers instead of acknowledging multilingualism as a pre-existing language situation in Lesotho. In simple terms, censorship has shown how the grid of multiple and

dispersed power relations regulate and suppresses the minority languages, and thereby the production of the speakable in specific socio-historical contexts rules.

On the other hand, through interpellation, it has been possible to analyse how the Lesotho's dominant bloc through the policy-makers hailed and inaugurated Sesotho and English as the official languages of Lesotho at the expense of minority languages. Also, the paper has analised how power is being denaturalised through the linguistic elements (mode, modality, and co-ordination). In sum, these findings corroborate with Fairclough's (1989; 2015) suggestion that power differentiation should be the main focus in the analysis of language policy which influences the country's language situation. Therefore, this paper suggests that the Lesotho government should adopt complementarity of positivism and naturalism in modifying the current language policy.

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