

**Paper Title: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE MANIFESTATIONS OF ENGLISH LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES: THE CASE OF THE NEW DRAFT LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES**

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**Abstract**

*This study explores some of the reasons why, in spite of the recently introduced new draft SAPS Language Policy, the SAPS training programme is not producing police officers with adequate English competency that is relevant to the SAPS workplace. It is argued that the current SAPS Language Policy is not adequately developed as far as the SAPS training programme is concerned. We argue that language policy does not articulate language matters in the SAPS Training Academies and this contributes directly or indirectly to the produce of police officers who are inadequately prepared as far as English competency is concerned. The study argues that language planning agencies in the SAPS have inadvertently or deliberately omitted to include clauses that articulate issues of language as they pertain to the training programme and this is a serious flaw in the whole language policy. Furthermore, we argue that Language policy is a crucial integral part of the SAPS training programme, which without it training will be seriously and dangerously affected. Data were elicited through an analysis of the specifically selected clauses contained in the SAPS draft Language Policy with specific reference to a selected SAPS training Academy in Gauteng province. Discriminant Function Analysis indicated ten interrelated flaws within the SAPS Language policy which has the potential to affect training as far as English competency is concerned. These flaws included the following: the silence of the policy on Assessment, Teaching and Learning in the academy, and the absence of a Teaching and Learning policy to complement the Language policy. Principles from Discourse Analysis and Sentiment Analysis were used as a linchpin in developing the framework for this study. An analysis of the data revealed the following key findings: The study found that the SAPS draft Language police is silent on many fronts for example on the Language of Teaching and Learning, no liaison with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), exclusion of Language Policy in Higher Education Policy (LPHE) as one of the policies forming the legal framework. Lack of pronouncements on issues of pedagogy. The absence of the Teaching and Learning Policy as well as the absence of an Assessment Policy. The findings may help policy makers, SAPS trainers or instructors and curriculum developers for SAPS training academies. The data can also help the Language Management unit of the SAPS.*

**Keywords:** Pedagogy; Higher Education, Learning; Language Policy in Higher Education, SAPS; Police Trainees, SAPS Training Academy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION

Educational practices in South Africa that privilege English throughout the educational journey of the learner disadvantage the majority who do not speak English as a home language. To try and counter that, tertiary institutions in South Africa like all over the world have crafted Language Policies (LPs) that appear to be attempts to redress this imbalance by pledging improved learning opportunities. In SAPS, the following were uttered by the Police spokesperson Mr Traut in an online newspaper called Politicsweb (2023):

“The language policy of the SAPS stipulates that English is used for official documents and for preparing case docketts that are required for judicial purposes in a court of law, the SAPS language policy by no means prevents a complainant from deposing a statement in his or her mother tongue, if a police officer is not conversant with the language of choice by the complainant, arrangements to accommodate the complainant will be made, and no person will be turned away on this basis,”

Recent online newspaper headlines in papers such as Politicsweb reflect some of the current issues surrounding Language Policy issues in SAPS and the above statement is a testimony to that effect. Despite the above words, it can still be seen that these policies have not been implemented, perhaps indicating a lack of will to do so. Some of these policies are plagued with a plethora of ineffective clauses or flaws. These weaknesses allow for inaction. Thus, it is questionable whether post-secondary school institutions such as the SAPS Training Academies acting unilaterally rather than as part of a coordinated status, corpus and acquisition planning can achieve the transformation that is so much desired. It is observed that the development of language policy for transformation and social inclusion in South African higher education has significantly failed to achieve the ideal order of social redress... (DHET, 2017). SAPS Training Academies as part of the post-secondary education landscape are also not immune to the problem. The future role of language policy in the political development of South Africa will be critical and various studies have shown that there is a steady shift away from African languages towards English, and it has been argued that the language policy of the Constitution was never going to work (Bostock, 2018, p. 29).

Many studies on LP analysis have focused on tertiary institutions like universities (e.g. Drummond, 2016, Cele, 2021; Van Der Merwe, 2016). This paper looks at the SAPS language policy in order to explore and critique the weaknesses that have a bearing on the teaching of English language in the SAPS Training Academies. This is done because it is our firm belief that data from this study can contribute to clarity on whether the current draft SAPS LP (2016) is sufficient as is to effect the relevant teaching of English language in

the SAPS Training Academies.

Furthermore, research at the nexus between language and discourses of state security is limited (Makoni, 2017, p. 49). In an attempt to achieve this aim, the study formulated two research objectives, namely:

- To explore and identify the weaknesses in the current SAPS Language Policy with a specific reference to the teaching of English language in the SAPS Training Academies
- To critique these weaknesses with the aim of helping the SAPS Language Policy developers to improve the Language Policy

To achieve the above mentioned aims, the researchers formulated the following two research questions:

- Are the weaknesses in the current SAPS Language Policy that have the potential to hamper effective teaching of the English language in the SAPS training academies?
- If so, what are they and what are their manifestations?

The researchers strongly believe that data in this study will assist not only the SAPS Training Academies but also other SOE's who are at the same level as the SAPS such as the Metro Police departments in SA to enhance their training. This investigation will also help SAPS Language policy developers to relook into the current LP with the aim of improving it.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Various perspective on Language Planning**

The LPHE (Ministry of Education, 2002: 4-5) states:

“Language has been and continues to be a barrier to access and success in higher education...”

If the above statements are anything to buy, what about the situation in SAPS Training Academies where not much attention is given and this is due to the nature of secrecy or privacy about certain SAPS training programmes and of course this is understandable. Thus, if language planning at SAPS is not properly and carefully looked at, challenges will always occur. As it has been mentioned earlier, SAPS for a very long time did not have a language policy. Now, according to Wissink and Cloete (2000) literature on policy identifies three commonly known categories of policy and they are:

- public policy

- non-governmental type policy
- and private sector policy

Wissink and Cloete (ibid) write that policy can also be distinguished on a

geographical level, for example, local policy, regional policy, national policy, and international policy. Thus, policy can include broad provisions that apply to a country, or more specific provisions that apply to a given institution, for example, a training academy like SAPS Training Academy.

Language planning can be approached in a variety of ways in order to influence the norms of language use in society (Drummond, 2016, p. 72). However, if the approach is not strictly looked into, flaws might creep in which will impact the overall aim of the Language Policy (LP). The flaws in any LP might manifest into many challenges when it comes to delivery and implementation. However, the flaws can only be established or identified if an intensive scrutiny of the clauses contained in the policy is done. Thus, Cele (2021, p. 26) maintains that 'policy analysis is a form of policy evaluation that seeks to determine policy effectiveness to establish whether a policy should be upheld, prolonged or reviewed'. Taylor et al. (1997) write that when evaluating policy, the purpose for the development of the policy and reflection on its espoused ideals have to be understood by asking various important key questions such as:

- What is the policy responding to? Understanding the purpose of policy helps evaluate whether or not the policy has achieved the desired effect.
- What effect does the policy have on the targeted problem?
- What are the suggested intentions behind the introduction of the legislation or policy?
- What are the unintended consequences of policy interventions?
- Who are the intended beneficiaries of the legislation or policy framework?
- What are the intended consequences for policy enactment?
- What effects does policy have on different groups?
- Is policy as a transformation tool feasible beyond its text and rhetoric?

The above questions are very crucial when one looks at the draft LP of SAPS given the fact that SAPS for a very long time operated without an LP police but through other measures.

Lo Bianco (2009) asseverates that language policy consists of three dimensions and they are:

1. Language policy as discourse
2. Language policy as text
3. Language policy as practice.

Lo Bianco (ibid) explains that 'Language policy as discourse' refers to

the contestations and debates that precede, and form part of, the language policy development process while 'Language policy as text' represents the actual document. 'Language policy as practice' deals with how the policy is performed.

"Is it possible to differentiate between true and false robbery reports based exclusively on the wording of the report? Filing a false police report is a crime that

has dire consequences on both the individual and the system, in fact, it may be charged as a misdemeanour or a felony" (Quijano-Sánchez, Liberatorea, Camacho-Collados and Camacho-Collados, 2017). The above statement articulates to how a text can be understood based on the analysis regarding what it means. Thus, Critical Discourse Analysis will play a central role. This applies to even how sentiments in Language Policies are phrased.

Thus, in this study, the researchers focused primarily on 'Policy as text' simply because we wanted to analyse the content (using Discourse Analysis principles) as contained in the text with the aim of exploring if there are weaknesses as expressed by some of the clauses. This was done for among other things if this policy is not being manipulated. According to Van Der Merwe (2016, p. 10) 'Language policies should not be taken at face value, it should be acknowledged that language policies have the capacity to perpetuate ideologies and to serve those in positions of power'.

### 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework shapes the outcomes and findings of a research study. It is the roadmap a researcher uses in the expedition of finding patterns in answering research questions and finding solutions to research problems (McBurney, 2001). The study aimed to explore the caveats in the SAPS Language Policy which impede adequate English language teaching in the SAPS Training Academies thus, theoretical orientations from Discourse Analysis (DA) theory were applied. Willig (2015, p. 146) posits that 'what people say tell us something about what they are doing with their words (disclaiming, excusing, justifying, persuading, pleading etc) rather than about the cognitive structures these words represent'. According to Johnstone (2002, p. 04), discourse analysis deals with things such as why a particular text is the way it is, why is it not the other way, why use a particular word and not the other word and lastly why the words are arranged in a particular order. In addition, Mavunga and Kaguda (2016, p. 176) agree with Johnstone when they assert that discourse analysis can be utilised to answer a variety of questions related to language questions such as:

1. What meaning is created by the arrangement of words in a particular way?
2. How are hearers likely to interpret what they hear?

3. How do speakers use their utterances to perform certain functions?
4. What is the influence of language on human relations?

Drawing from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the researchers were thus able to zoom into various caveats and sections in the SAPS Language policy with the aim of gaining insights and in-depth understanding of how the interplay of these problematic caveats (i.e. in the Language Policy) might affect the teaching of English in the training academies.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A research methodology encapsulates what is commonly referred to in research circles as 'research design'. A research design is an action plan for getting from here to there (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorenson, 2010). In other words, the crafting of the research

design should be compatible with the aim of the research project. In accordance with

the aim of this study (i.e. to investigate, identify and critique the weaknesses that might be there in the SAPS Language policy with specific reference to the teaching of the English Language in SAPS Training Academies), several research methodology aspects were embarked upon. This was a pure desk-based research project of textual analysis in nature.

### **4.1. Sampling method and procedure**

According to De Vos (2005, p. 17), a convenience sample is the use of readily accessible persons in a study. Thus, in this study, the online SAPS Language policy was readily available and accessible to the researcher from the internet-connected computer in his office. This was the only primary source of data in this investigation. In other words, the textual analysis that happened in this investigation used principles of Critical Discourse Analysis principles as a guiding lens.

## **4.2 Data Collection**

### **4.2.1 Background Setting**

The setting of the study reported here was in South Africa in one of the governmental departments called the Department of South African Police Services . South Africa is a country with a huge diversity in terms of the population groups and languages. Most of the citizens speak English as a second language. The Census 2022 from STATSA has revealed that there were at least over 18.5 million adults in the in SA who did not complete their secondary school education — or, simply put, they did not have a matric certificate. The researchers in this study are English lecturers at a university. The majority of SA police officers are trained in SA police training colleges and trainers in those colleges are not English language experts (c.f Kekana, 2015).

### **4.2.3 Collection of data**

A draft Language Policy (2016) of SAPS was utilised as a source of data harvesting. The reason for this was that SAPS was not having a Language Policy for quite a long time. This motivated the researchers to critically analyse the recent policy to establish the causes of poor or inadequate English competency in SAPS members.

### 4.3 Method of Analysis

The researcher applied the principles advocated by Critical Discourse Analysis theorists to develop a conceptual framework to analyse the sample in this study. This is because the nub of this study was to critically analyse the discourse appearing in the SAPS new draft language policy. The justification is that this (i.e. Critical Discourse Analysis Theory) theory is suitable and more relevant when it comes to analysing discourse in whatever form. This was motivated by the words of scholars such as Seliger and Shohamy (1989) who argued that a combination of methods yields a composite picture of a particular phenomenon. According to Philips and Jorgensen (2002, p. 21), the role of discourse analyst is to 'work with what has been said or written, exploring patterns in and across the statements and identifying the social consequence of different discursive representations of reality'. The researchers found this statement to be vital in guiding the analysis of the data in this study particularly when it comes to analysing the caveats contained in the SAPS Language Policy. This strategy was then enhanced by the application of orientations from Discourse Analysis theory wherein the analysis was guided by questions such as the ones below:

1. What meaning is created by the arrangement of words in a particular way?
2. How are hearers likely to interpret what they hear?
3. How do speakers use their utterances to perform certain functions?

The researchers also draw from Inferential Analysis (c.f Kasanga, 1996, p. 05) to understand and analyse some of the statements and caveats sampled in this study. This was done because at times a qualitative analysis seeks to find "all" instances... including subtle instances that require human interpretation of the text (c.f Vaismoradi, Turunen, Bondas, 2013, p. 13). It has to be understood that data in this study was of qualitative nature and it was among other things analysed using principles from both interpretational analyses. This study was a desktop study because it is only on text (the Language Policy of SAPS was analysed).

SAPS

A summary of the policy

SAPS's 2016 language policy document makes pronouncements regarding how the 11 SA official languages will be catered for in terms of use

within itself as a department. Just like with most language policies in various State-owned Enterprises (SOE) the document indicates an equivocal belief in the use of indigenous languages as well as the recognition that language is a human right (See Drummond 2016). The documents predominately focus on the purpose of the policy which is stated as follows: 'This Policy is to establish an acceptable and equitable operational language dispensation that is economically feasible for the Service by-...'

Furthermore the policy, it document states that the policy is guided by functional multilingualism. In this policy document under item 5 (d) functional multilingualism is defined as follows 'functional multilingualism means the use of two or more official languages for specific tasks or target groups in those instances where the use of all 11 official languages or the use of a working language only, will not ensure effective communication or compliance with constitutional obligations with regard to language'

The linchpin or the legal framework on which this policy is guided and developed is also clearly pronounced. Various policies which constituted the legal framework of this policy are stated as follows:

- (a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- (b) Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995);
- (c) Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000);
- (d) Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999);
- (e) South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995);
- (f) Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999); and
- (g) Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012).

The danger here is that, in recognising the most crucial legislative documents in the country, Language Policy in Higher Education (LPHE) is excluded which is very important.

As far as the implementation of this policy, the document sets out the following: 'Language Management. Corporate Communication at the Head Office is responsible for the implementation of this policy in collaboration 'with all Divisions in the Service. It is further stated that the policy will be implemented in four (4) phases which are divided into five (5) financial years (i.e. from 2015 to 2020).

Lastly, Item 8 (i.e. the Description of the Policy) focuses on both internal and external communication guidelines. The document states that 'Plain English is the main working language of the Service and it should be used in all official documents'.

The table below indicates an example of some of the actual caveats analysed of headings/titles of online newspaper analysed in this study.



TABLE 4.2.1 Examples of extracts from the SAPS Language Policy which are problematic

#### 1 Background

(5) Language Management, the national language unit of the Service, is responsible for all matters pertaining to language and language policies. 8.

#### Policy Description

(3) People with language disabilities and barriers

The Service will provide for the needs of people with language disabilities or language barriers, Employees and clients of the Service who are blind and those with hearing impairment must be provided for by using sign language and braille (a written language for blind people, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots) in all major projects.

This may happen where practicable and assistance will be provided for in collaboration with the Component: Employee Health and Wellness, Division: Human Resource Development and Section: Disability Management of the Service.

#### 2 Purpose

(d) supporting progressive elimination of language barriers to enhance the participation of its employees in cultural, social and economic life; 10 Other Language Stakeholders

Language Management will work in collaboration with other language structures, such as the National Language Service of the Department of Arts and Culture, other

language units in government, PanSALL3, institutions of higher learning, and the National Foreign Languages Forum and the National Language Forum to monitor the implementation of the language policy and the use of official languages in the Service regarding multilingualism, language research, training and development.

#### 5 Definitions

(d) 'functional multilingualism' means the use of two or more official languages for specific tasks or target groups in those instances where the use of all 11 official languages or the use of a working language only, will not ensure effective communication or compliance with constitutional obligations with regard to language;

#### 8 Policy Description

People with language disabilities and barriers . The Service will provide for the needs of people with language disabilities or language barriers, Employees and clients of the Service who are blind and those with hearing impairment must be provided for by using sign language and braille (a written language for blind people, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots) in all major projects. This may happen where practicable and assistance will be provided for in collaboration with the Component: Employee Health and Wellness, Division: Human Resource Development

and Section: Disability Management of the Service.

#### 5. Legal Framework

The following constitute the legal framework for this Policy:

- (a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- (b) Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995);
- (c) Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000);
- (d) Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999);
- (e) South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995);
- (f) Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999); and
- (g) Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012).

#### 8. Policy Description

(a) Plain English is the main working language of the Service and it should be used in all official documents. In promoting the use of Indigenous languages, the Service will take into consideration a rotation principle and will undertake the following process:

### **4.3. Results: Critique and assessment of the SAPSA language policy**

This is a compressed account of the findings. It is important that in order to understand the bias in a specific title/heading context sometimes is necessary. Thus, in some analysis of certain caveats or weaknesses contained in the SAPS Language policy, context will be provided briefly.

Firstly, many aspects of the policy, if implemented, could improve the teaching of the English language in SAPS training academies. Womack and Finley (1986, p. 14) write that 'When deciding on a language policy for the important issue of communication in the SAPS it should be noted that communication literally fills the day of the typical police officer'. A key weakness in the document, however, pertains to communication as it happens in the SAPS Training Academies. In this policy, nothing is being pronounced in relation to how communication should be handled in the academies, it would seem that the developers of the policy were oblivious to the fact that communication in a Teaching and Learning environment is one of the crucial aspects as it also articulates to the issues of pedagogy. This weakness has a potential to affect the academic aspect of the training programme, particularly with regard to English language competency. Furthermore, the importance of multilingual education is recognised by South Africa's Constitution (1996, s29 (2)) which states: 'Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable'. The SAPS Language Policy is silent regarding the language of training in the SAPS training academies. It has to be remembered that SAPS training

academies are 'public educational institutions'. This is a serious flaw in the policy.

The other important weakness (i.e finding) in the policy documents is found in the 'Purpose Section' of the document. Item (c) in the 'Purpose Section' of the Language Policy articulates as follows:

'Ensuring effective communication in and between the different substructures of the Service, as well as access to services, resources, programmes, information and knowledge for all employees, clients and members of the public'

The other finding from this investigation is that the programmes in this might also refer to the SAPS Training programme and we argue that because the Language Policy is silent on the issue of 'Language of Teaching and Learning' this makes the above mentioned purpose a bit difficult to achieve and this made even worse because the SAPS Training Academies do not have or utilise Teaching and Learning policy in their mist and this is a serious gap that needs to be interrogated. In almost all institutions of higher learning, Teaching and Learning Policy is utilised to compensate for the gaps that might have been left by the Language policy. It should also not be forgotten that Language Policy in a teaching or training institution to some degree guides the Teaching and Learning policy. The two have to articulate to each other.

Stevens (2005, p. 195) mentions the minimum standard model for police officer training developed by the International Association of Directors of Law Standards and Training. This model maintains that minimum curriculum requirements for basic training programmes should identify a set of core competencies required for satisfactory performance of entry-level tasks. These competencies should include both knowledge and skills identified through job task analysis, and additional abilities in areas such as professional orientation, human relations and ethical use of

discretion that the commission deems consistent with the role of police and corrections officers in a free society. The above assertion articulates to the issue of Assessment which resides in the Assessment Policy and as it is known, SAPS Training Academies do not utilise or do not have Assessment Policies as guided by the Teaching and Learning Policy. This is a serious flaw in the whole system and it will have an impact on the realisation of the objectives set out in the Language policy. We argue that if the SAPS Language policy is not going to address or provide guidelines on matters of Teaching and Learning in the SAPS Academies then it should at least have clauses that articulate to issues of Teaching and Learning.

In Item 5 under definitions aspect (h) it is stated that:

'language management" means the section that provides language services, which include editing, translating, interpreting, transcribing, terminology development and language planning'

The argument we put forward is that the 'language management' which is responsible for language planning is not fulfilling its duty and the evidence lies in the fact that the Language policy is silent on very important matters that relate to training. Furthermore, in Item 5 under definitions aspect (I) it is stated that "language units" means units in departments and provinces that deal with specific language issues of that department or province arising from the National Language Policy and liaise with other departments on language matters;

The other finding from this investigation is that of the exclusion of DHET in the Language policy. The argument we put forward is that the SAPS 'Language Management' is not liaising with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in SA which is more relevant and capable of advising on issues of pedagogy and language.

The other important finding which is a weakness is that the 'Legal Framework' upon which the SAPS Language Policy is based, to some degree is flawed because we argue that SAPS Training Academies are part of the Higher Education landscape in SA and therefore exclude Language in Higher Education Policy or LPHE, (2002) as it is known is a serious flaw. It has to be remembered that all police trainees graduate from Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) accredited SAPS training academies. These police graduates obtain a Level Five National Qualifications Framework aligned qualification (Montesh, 2007:14) The SAPS Language Policy only pronounces that the following constitute the legal framework:

- (a) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- (b) Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995);
- (c) Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000);
- (d) Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999);
- (e) South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No. 68 of 1995);
- (f) Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999); and
- (g) Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012).

Surprisingly, the SAPS Language police make pronouncements on issues of braille. In section 8 (i.e Policy Description) in item 3 it is stated as follows:

The Service will provide for the needs of people with language disabilities or language barriers, Employees and clients of the Service who are blind and those with hearing impairment must be provided for by using sign language and braille

The above mention task is given to the 'Disability Management' of the Service. We argue that this is also a Teaching and Learning matter which could be best handled in the Teaching and Learning policy as well as the Assessment policy (which SAPS Training Academies do not have). This finding has to be understood in the context that nothing is being said or pronounced about police recruits who are 'blind'. Thus, this means that SAPS promote and acknowledges that blind cannot be trained to be police officers? The issue of braille also articulates to the issue of language of pedagogy in a training institution and this should be taken care of. However, the current SAPS Language Policy is silent on the matter and this is one of the weaknesses in this policy. It is indeed true that most LP's do not articulate their plans around empowering lecturers/teachers or trainers as far as teaching is concerned. This study also found the same challenge with the current SAPS Language Policy.

## 5. DISCUSSION

After having carefully examined Draft SAPS Language policy, the following were observed:

The glaring grey area as far as this draft SAPS Language policy is its silence regarding Teaching and Learning in the SAPS Training Academies. In other words, the weakness in the draft SAPS LP is that it does not make references or even suggestions to Teaching and Learning policies nor touch on the Language of Teaching and Learning in an academy.

Drummond (2016, p. 72) maintains that Language planning can be approached in a variety of ways in order to influence the norms of language use in society. We argue that the approach SAPS took to leave the most of the work including implementation, enforcement, monitoring and evaluation to 'Language Management' is a bit of a risk. Language Management is part of the SAPS as both a system and a Department therefore we argue that one cannot be a referee and the player at the same time. SAPS Language Management cannot oversee and monitor this process, perhaps a different entity could have been selected to oversee the process. In actual fact, because SAPS Training Academies are part and parcel of the SA higher education landscape, PanSALB (as the Watchdog) and the Department of Higher Education and Training should have been approached.

According to Drummond (2016, p. 71), there is some evidence that the current educational system in South Africa is not operating equitably with regard to all of its citizens. This is also clearly indicated by the current SAPS Language Policy in a section titled Policy Description (item 8) wherein the issue of 'People with language disabilities and barriers is pronounced. In this section it is pronounced that 'the Service will provide for the needs of people with language disabilities or language barriers...'. Nothing is being said about

police recruits who are 'blind'. Thus this means that SAPS promote and acknowledges that the blind cannot be trained to be police officers. The issue of braille also articulates the issue of language of pedagogy in a training institution and this should be taken care of. However, the current SAPS Language Policy is silent on the matter. What this means is that the SAPS training programme is not 'operating equitably with regard to all of its citizens' as Drummond (*ibid*) observed.

The 2002 Policy for Higher Education is a document intended to transform language use in universities (Drummond, 2016, p. 72). However, we argue that this 'transformation in language use' is not exclusive to universities alone. This policy (LPHE, 2002) also applies to academies such as SAPS training academies because they form part of the Higher Education landscape of SA. Thus, for the SAPS Language Policy to exclude it as one of its underpinning frameworks is a serious flaw and by implication, this exclusion indicates mistrust of the LPHE or simply put, the developers simply do not believe in the LPHE 2002.

SA Constitution has been criticised for containing vague statements (See, Webb 1999; Koch and Burkett 2005). Now it looks like this draft SAPS Language Policy also suffers from the same issue and this is so because in Item 8 (Policy Description), statement number (a) under Communication and External Communication states the following: 'Plain English is the main working language of the Service and it should be used in all official documents'.

We further argue that this statement is confusing and vague in the sense that workplace theories and institutional language principles do not agree with the so-called 'plain English' or general English as it is commonly known. SAPS like any other workplace environment has its own language which is taught and used (See Kekana and Mogoboya 2021). Thus, to state that 'Plain Language is the main working language of the Service when police officers were taught English that is specifically meant for the Police environment is very disturbing. It has to be remembered that the SAPS workplace environment is 'tilted towards law environment'.

As it has been said in the findings that in this policy nothing is being pronounced in relation to how communication should be handled in the academies. We see this as a serious predicament to the effective teaching and learning of English SAPS Training Academies because no guideline is provided by the SAPS Language policy. Indeed, it would seem that the developers of the policy were oblivious to the fact that communication in a Teaching and Learning environment is one of the crucial aspects as it also articulates to the issues of pedagogy. This weakness has the potential to affect the academic aspect of the training programme, particularly with regard to English language competency.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Language policies strongly influence public opinion and should be treated and developed with care. Single departments like SAPS acting unilaterally do not have the adequate power to effect the much-needed transformation in their Training Academies (as far as English language teaching is concerned), nor can they transform language practices in other sectors of education. This is an area in which only a broader, cross-sector approach emanating from a national language planning body could succeed (Drummond 2016, p. 78). The researchers believe that this study though small can be used as a thrust in researching SAPS policy effectiveness as far as the Teaching of English in SAPS Academies is concerned. The study has indicated that this gargantuan English teaching challenge in the SAPS Training Academies is not insurmountable. Thus, this study though a drop in the ocean, it is hoped it will trigger further research in this area.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- LPHE (2002) should form part of the framework as far as the SAPS Language policy is concerned
- SAPS training academies like any other post-secondary school institutions should be encouraged to formulate and develop their own Teaching and Learning and Assessment policies so that they can assist the SAPS Language policy
- There should be more interdisciplinary research on Language policy and planning, for example, Language and Law disciplines work together.
- Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) like all other mentioned relevant departments should be consulted when such a policy is developed.
- The role of 'Watchdogs' should be left to Language Management unit of SAPS alone but also organisations such as PanSALB should be involved.
- The SAPS Language policy includes clauses that articulate issues of Teaching and Learning in SAPS Training Academies
- Standing Order Generals (SO(G) that were used before the SAPS LP should be used as a basis for improving the SAPS LP

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