

Inconsistencies in the Training of Indigenous Languages Teachers by Primary Teacher Education Institutions: Towards A Better Model Of Training Language Teachers In Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This paper analyses the state and nature of teacher training by Primary Teacher Training Institutions tertiary institutions. It takes a deep analysis of the way indigenous languages primary school teachers have been produced at Teachers' Colleges and Universities in Zimbabwe. The indigenous languages that have been looked at are ChiShona and IsiNdebele, the two languages that are presently being taught from Grade Four through to Secondary and tertiary levels according to the Education Act of 1987 (amended in 1996, 2006). The paper highlights the inconsistencies and inadequacies of the present training programmes as a training model for Zimbabwe's Teacher Education institutions today. It points out some of the weaknesses in the current teachers' training model in Zimbabwe that include poor linkages of language teachers' policy implementers, poor syllabus development strategies, poor methods of training, weak supervision during training and during post-training periods. As Hafner and Jolly (1987) would say the prowess of the teacher during teaching is a factor of the knowledge the teachers themselves have. Thus, the paper argues that even though the present languages teachers' training situation in Zimbabwe has still produced reasonably good language teachers by regional and international standards, there is still a lot of room to improve the way these teachers are trained and produced in Zimbabwe in order to have a more versatile, efficient and most effective indigenous languages teacher for Zimbabwe and the international community. The paper examines the various scenarios in schools, Teachers' Colleges, universities, examining boards as well as curriculum development units to reach its conclusions. It uses documentary analysis of syllabi documents in the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), in Teachers' Colleges and universities. It also analyses the timetables for lectures for indigenous languages and other relevant documentation to the study. It uses documentary analysis of syllabi documents in the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), in Teachers' Colleges and universities. It also analyses the timetables for lectures for indigenous languages and other relevant documentation to the study. The paper attempts to proffer suggestions of what could be done to overhaul the present indigenous languages training situation in Zimbabwe.

Key words: Indigenous languages, ChiShona, IsiNdebele, Curriculum Development Unit, Syllabus development.

Introduction

This paper explores and discusses the nature, extent and impact of the teachers' training models being used for the production of indigenous languages in Zimbabwe, focusing mostly on ChiShona and IsiNdebele, two indigenous languages which are widely spoken and taught in Zimbabwe. They are also referred to as national languages. Currently, the two languages are two of the three languages taught and nationally examined at Grade Seven, "O" Level, "A" Level, College and university levels. English is the other language spoken and taught in Zimbabwe. While it is reasonable to accept the present indigenous languages teachers' training models as having produced reasonably good teachers, it seeks to highlight some of the areas where there are weaknesses that may need to be strengthened in order to produce robust, highly effective and efficient indigenous languages teachers that are in line with modern trends in languages teaching. The paper sees the present problems in indigenous languages teachers' training models in Zimbabwe as linked to poor policy implementation, inadequately thought out methods of training, uncoordinated syllabus development and weak subject supervision of indigenous languages in schools and tertiary institutions. All these issues suggest the existence of weak teachers' training models for ChiShona and IsiNdebele as the two indigenous languages taught at all levels of education. It suggests the need for a major policy shift in indigenous languages teachers' training in Zimbabwe.

Methodology

This study analyses the present indigenous languages teachers' training models in Zimbabwe using documentary studies of syllabi documents in the schools, colleges and universities, together with timetables, policy

documents and other materials. The researchers visited six Primary Teachers' Training Colleges and two universities in Zimbabwe. The institutions used in the study include Masvingo Teachers' College, Morgenster Teachers' College, Bondolfi Teachers' College, Joshua Mqabuko Polytechnic, Seke Teachers' College, Marymount Teachers' College, Great Zimbabwe University and University of Zimbabwe. It interviewed 23 lecturers teaching indigenous languages and 17 other lecturers in various positions of leadership in the said institutions. Two of the colleges are privately run while 4 are government Teachers' Colleges. The study did not tabulate the responses but chose to describe the overall views that came from the study.

The Nature of Teacher Training Institutions in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has 14 teachers' colleges, 7 polytechnic colleges and 12 universities. Of these institutions, 11 teachers' colleges and 2 universities are involved in the training of primary school teachers, using a system where all trainee teachers are trained to teach one of the two or both of the national indigenous languages (ChiShona or IsiNdebele) among the other subjects that are taught. Among the 14 Teachers' Colleges, 3 are private and church-run, whilst the rest are government institutions. Only two Teachers' Colleges train secondary school teachers while ten are primary school Teachers' Colleges. However, all Teachers' Colleges in Zimbabwe are affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education (D.T.E.) through a scheme of association. It is the Department of Teacher Education that supervises the training of teachers in Teachers' Colleges, so that all primary school teachers who are trained by Teachers' Colleges in Zimbabwe receive their certificates or diplomas from the University of Zimbabwe.

The University of Zimbabwe approves all syllabi documents and examines the candidates, albeit on a semi-autonomous scheme of association where the course content is not exactly the same in all colleges. Thus, the content and approaches in the syllabi documents can differ from one college to the other. The University of Zimbabwe and Great Zimbabwe University are the only two universities training primary school teachers. Great Zimbabwe University is not affiliated to the University of Zimbabwe and runs its own undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes in primary education. It offers both in-service and pre-service programmes with a bias in one curriculum subject as an area of specialization for the primary school teacher.

The teacher-training model in Zimbabwe is linked to the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education whose role is to oversee all teacher training manpower requirements for this country. This Ministry also oversees the implementation of overall government policy implementation in all colleges and universities and mobilizes requisite resources that are needed to ensure that the Teacher Training programme remains the best that it can be. However, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), which oversee curriculum implementation and examinations in the schools at both primary and secondary school, are both not linked in any way to the Teacher Training colleges and universities as they belong to a different Ministry, Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture. This makes the whole teacher training process in Zimbabwe uncoordinated, since it does not link up all the stakeholders who eventually have something to do with the teacher produced by the various institutions.

All Primary School teachers' training institutions in Zimbabwe basically prepare teachers in all the primary school curriculum subjects such as ChiShona or IsiNdebele, Art, Music, Home Economics, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Environmental Science, Religious Studies Education, Physical Education and Aids Education. Above all these subjects, all students take courses in a number of theoretical and foundational courses Professional Studies, Educational Psychology and Educational Philosophy and Educational Sociology, Teaching Practice and other such courses. The curriculum allows students to choose one area of in-depth study or specialized learning from the list of all curriculum subjects. While all trainee students are supposed to do a course in English and either ChiShona or IsiNdebele, all the other indigenous languages like Sotho, Nambya, Kalanga, Tonga, Nyanja, Chewa, Barwe, Hwesa, Venda and Shangani (Hachipola, 1996) are not offered, even when the Education Act of 1987 (amended again in 2005) makes it compulsory to teach all local languages and the other subjects using local languages dominant in the area where the school is found for the first three grades of primary school education. This is a very remarkable omission by teachers' training institutions when one considers that these languages are supposed to be taught in the schools.

It is not clear why teachers' training institutions have chosen to ignore the need to correctly prepare our primary school teachers for the role to teach the other languages of Zimbabwe as subjects as well as prepare them to teach other primary school subjects using those indigenous languages. It becomes a major weakness of the teacher training models in Zimbabwe. However, it is also important to point out that the weaknesses in the teachers' training models in Zimbabwe have far-reaching implications on general preparedness of the teachers and their teaching abilities on completion of the training. There is no doubt that the model being used to train indigenous language teachers in Zimbabwe is inadequate, inappropriate and inconsistent with international trends and thinking as outlined in the United Nations Charter of 1953, 1996 and 2005, as also outlined in the African Union and Southern African Development Community Language and Culture Declarations, which recognize the importance of all mother-tongue languages in educational learning. This is also against the

recommendations of the Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training (1999) which found out that the majority of people in Zimbabwe prefer to use indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in learning. There seems to be some hesitation in fully recognizing indigenous languages and in fully implementing the international demands for the preservation, promotion and development of all languages spoken in Zimbabwe. Ironically, even the indigenous languages themselves are mostly taught in another language, English.

Policy Development And Implementation On Indigenous Languages

Generally speaking, Zimbabweans believe that there is no comprehensive policy on all the languages of this country. What is there is an enunciation of how one language, English, should be used in education as given by the Education Act of 1987 (revised in 1996 and 2005). The Education Act says that all subjects must be taught in the local languages in the first three grades at primary school level, and thereafter be taught in English. We do not have a comprehensive policy on the use of all other languages in the different spheres of life as one would have it in the South African constitution. In fact, language should be one of the pillars of our constitution, explaining language use in all spheres of life as a constitutional and human rights issue. All language issues in Zimbabwe are generated and implemented by two ministries namely: Ministry of Education, Sports, Art and Culture and Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. The Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture is responsible for the policies that are directed at all primary and secondary schools while Higher and Tertiary Education is responsible for policies related to all tertiary institutions like Teachers' Colleges, Polytechnic colleges and universities. However there is no neat enunciation of how the two ministries should work with regard to formulation and implementation of language policies. This tends to have an impact on the training of teachers in Zimbabwe.

All primary school Teacher Training institutions in Zimbabwe have two types of indigenous languages syllabi for the teaching of either ChiShona or IsiNdebele. There is the Professional Studies Syllabus B syllabus for ChiShona and IsiNdebele that is meant to give all primary school trainees an elementary appreciation of aspects of the methodological teaching of the two languages. Students opt to do either ChiShona or IsiNdebele, depending on either the geographical location of the training institution or the language policy of the institution. Some colleges offer both languages while others only offer one of the two. All students in primary Teachers' Colleges or universities cannot avoid doing an applied course in ChiShona or IsiNdebele. Even students without ChiShona or IsiNdebele at "O" and "A" level at school are forced to do it. This is because all primary school teachers in Zimbabwe are forced to teach either ChiShona or IsiNdebele, among other curriculum subjects, and depending on the geographical area of the institution. The language applied language content that is taught in different colleges and universities varies from institution to institution, as selection of the different aspects of the language and literature methodology is not standard. Some institutions cover a lot of language teaching methods more than others. Their justifications are normally that teaching methods are more central to the teaching of languages, that it is actually better to produce a teacher who has the teaching methods knowledge than one with knowledge of the content in the language subject. This is in spite of the fact that some students might not have done any ChiShona or IsiNdebele at all. This leads us to so many questions on the adequacy of the training course units done by the different training institutions. In its present format, the current training models for indigenous language teachers seem to create problems of reaching the right kind of standard of the indigenous language teachers. It becomes very debatable to use a training model that is oblivious of the fact that all teachers need to have done or passed the indigenous languages in order to train in the art of its teaching. They should not be allowed to receive methodological training in the language which they have no content foundation in. How will such student teachers deal with the issue of their content inadequacy?

The second syllabus for all primary school trainees is called the Main Study or (as is found in the Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic) the Curriculum Depth Study. In most colleges, the Curriculum Depth Study (CDS) is the research project that is not necessarily done in the Main Study area. However, at Joshua Mqabuko Polytechnic, all CDS students do the Main Study content and the research project in the area of specialization. The content of this syllabus is not the same in all the teachers' training institutions, as different institutions select what content they want to cover from a long list of ChiShona or IsiNdebele subject content that include *language, oral and written literature and methodology* issues. Most institutions, however, prefer to have the curriculum depth study syllabus as a separate course unit, in which students do the research project only, even in an area not related to the specialization area of study. Thus, there are a lot of variations and inconsistencies in the conception and structure of the teachers' training models for indigenous languages in Zimbabwe. When the level of depth in the subject or the amount of content taught differs so much from institution to institution, one is bound to have questions about the compatibility of the training model being used. It is bound to produce different types of products that are able or unable to do certain things well. These issues become critical when evaluating the effectiveness of the Teacher Training models, against other considerations to produce efficient and effective language teachers for the benefit of our schools.

We find some institutions that want to emphasize content upgrading for the main studies or specialization areas and syllabus B. We also get some institutions who want to deal with mostly the language skills more than linguistic and literary skills. It is obvious that the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education will need to think much more deeply about how it could control the standards and depth of what is given to the trainees. Above all, it needs to reassure the nation whether the autonomy of the institutions does not lead to some programmes being inferior to others. Equally important will be the two Ministries of Education's satisfaction that they are playing their roles more effectively to guide Teacher Training institutions to meet the highest and expected standards of language training. This researcher is not aware of any recent and meaningful attempt to try and evaluate the nature and form of Teacher Training in Zimbabwe, especially on indigenous languages as a way of ascertaining their adequacy and appropriateness. This is quite unfortunate and regrettable; especially when one considers that there are numerous players in the training of teachers in Zimbabwe, from private and church-related institutions to government-funded institutions. It seems necessary to find out whether the different training institutions are approaching Teacher Training or language training in a manner that will satisfy all key stakeholders of education. One question that comes to mind is whether the nation has not assumed too much in believing that the role of the different partners in Teacher Education Trainings eventually produces comparatively similar products that would ensure the production of an effective and efficient teaching practitioner in Zimbabwe.

Gondo (2008) has observed that there is a marked difference in the way ChiShona teachers at primary school conceive the major and minor topics in ChiShona as the key content that needs to be taught in the schools. He has noted that there are very different conceptions and approaches to the teaching of the four major language skills, with some teachers seeing *listening* skills as the same as teaching *speaking* skills. These observations all suggest that we have discrepancies in the way training of language teachers is being done by different institutions, which is inadvertently producing different types of ChiShona teachers. Such gaps in the way language teachers conceive their language content or methodology can be fatal if the nation does not devise a way to continuously correct in the existing training models being used by the different players in the training game. There is the remote chance that some training institutions might not carefully analyze their training needs in the light of national requirements. Gondo (2008) found out that there some ChiShona teachers who derived broad topics and content from textbooks while others merely used past examination papers to produce lesson topics. All this was seen to be contributing to numerous problems of properly understanding what constitutes a teaching lesson in ChiShona. As a result, some teachers end up teaching the language and subject in a very confusing way. This is also the reason why we have teachers who combine different methods of conceiving lessons from skills based, to content based to textbook topic based approaches. Such problems can sometimes arise from the fact that different training institutions conceive the language and subject differently, further producing inconsistencies in the training models in Zimbabwe.

The confusion in conceiving training needs for language teachers can also be seen in what Gondo (2008) has observed, that there are some ChiShona teachers in the schools who cannot separate each lesson's objectives, activities, teaching aids, sources of material and lesson evaluations in their plan of work or scheme of work. These teachers simply combine all these aspects for different lesson topics. If these issues are evident in practitioners, then it is only fair to assume that they are a result of poor training programmes in the Teacher Training institutions themselves. The unavoidable conclusion one eventually makes is that there are some Teacher Training institutions in Zimbabwe whose training methods of indigenous language teachers is so differently that it is actually producing an inferior product. This can only explain Gondo's (2008) observations that some teachers produced as many as 18 topics meant to be taught in one week, where the maximum number of lessons for that week is not more than 12. These observations agree with Nyagura's (1991) and Masukusa's (1995) views, that there are teachers in the schools who do not know how prepare their teaching documents properly and that this ultimately affects their teaching and the learning of their children. This kind of problem would not be there if teacher-training strategies were carefully monitored and standardized to produce quality teachers for indigenous languages. As Hafner and Jolly (1987) would say, the way a teacher approaches his or her teaching of a subject or the content thereof is always dependant on his or her knowledge levels about the subject content. We cannot expect the teachers of indigenous languages to teach the language subjects well if they themselves have not been exposed to good subject grasp and methodological disposition at their institutions of training. ***Gavi rinobva pamasvuuro. (A person's performance level comes from the resultant training he or she has received).*** Let us continuously interrogate the nature of our language Teacher Training institutes to ascertain whether what we are doing is in fact adequate for the language teachers.

This research also noted that while all teacher-training institutes in Zimbabwe compulsorily offer courses in the methodology of teaching either ChiShona or IsiNdebele, just like all the primary school curriculum subjects, almost all Teachers' Colleges and universities in Zimbabwe have a tremendously reduced time-frame in which those courses are to be taught when compared to other courses in the same programme. The so-called Syllabus

B or Applied courses in indigenous languages has one of the least man hours to be found for any course when compared to *Theory, Professional Studies Syllabus A, Main Study or Curriculum Depth Study* and *Teaching Practice*. This is in spite of the fact that there are always some students who will not have studied at all ChiShona or IsiNdebele at Secondary school level. The approach leaves the trainee student with a rather shallow and unsatisfactory content base to base all the methodological theory he or she receives. It gives these trainees in adequate competence to teach the subject well.

The lectures are mostly one two-hour lectures that are conducted once in two weeks for the coverage of all language, literature and methodology aspects of the subject. In one institution, students actually finish these courses a term earlier than all the other courses like *Theory, Professional Studies or Main Study*. Such a training programme model can only be said to be producing inadequately prepared teachers who can never qualify as the best practitioners in the indigenous language subjects. These training strategies have only helped to produce negative attitudes students about applied courses. Many trainees no longer see the courses as very important as what they believe is the case with courses like Theory of Education and Professional Studies Syllabus A. This is what Barko and Niles (1987) have also observed, that in the schools there are still some teachers who cannot prepare their documents well. This can only happen if the teacher trainers themselves are not adequately exposing and preparing their learners to correct and suitable levels of methods and procedures of teaching and learning in these languages and subjects.

Poor Government Coordination Of Teachers' Training Programmes

In Zimbabwe, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) both fall under the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture, while the Teachers' Training Colleges have remained under a different Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. The two complementary departments of CDU and ZIMSEC are very essential when thinking of ways to effectively implementing, monitoring and evaluation of full values of education in the schools. They are meant to help implement the best teaching methods and evaluate the teaching and learning in Zimbabwean schools, as a reflection of some of the very high values and standards of training of indigenous language teachers trainee programmes. This helps to ensure that the products that we release into the schools as indigenous language teachers remain some of the best in the business to satisfy the basic requirements and expectations of these Zimbabwean indigenous language teachers. We know that the Curriculum Development Unit is supposed to be in charge of all syllabus development, implementation and monitoring strategies for all the subjects that are taught in all the schools in Zimbabwe. The syllabus documents that they produce and distribute are meant to be vital strategies of setting similar standards in the education sector through clearly set out aims and objectives of each teaching subject, by elaborately giving out the content to be taught, the major approaches and methodologies to be used in teaching the content units, outlines the sources of material for the content, the correct use of media as well as giving the major criteria for the assessment of the content and the quality of the teaching as well as indicating some of the best practices in teaching given content. Sadly, all these aspects are not properly brought out or coordinated in the past and present syllabi of indigenous languages. These poorly coordinated efforts by the key Government Departments are not making things any better for the production of language teachers.

Mhundwa (1998), Peresuh et al (1991), Barker (1988) all say that the role of syllabus development units is to give overall coordination of the teaching of the subject. However, in Zimbabwe, these units have not been able to perform their expected roles well. As a result, there is a common belief among some educationists in Zimbabwe that the indigenous languages syllabi documents have not been properly produced and adequately shared by all stakeholders when being produced, including the stakeholders in Teachers' Training institutions. For some indigenous languages, the documents have serious problems of structural and lack clarity and justification of the content. It is clearly evident that the consultation process and cycle are not any nearer to their expected standards, and therefore, are still major issues before they become acceptable guides by all their end-users in Teachers' Training institutions. These issues end up all impacting badly on the Teachers' Training institutions of indigenous language teachers. One of the major criticism of indigenous languages is the documents fail to delineate the content that needs to be taught according to the different levels of primary school so that it can help the trainers to know how to prepare teachers for the specific grade levels. Without such indicators, the trainers will find it difficult to effectively handle the training of language teachers.

Another evident element about the poor role of the CDU in aiding the proper training of indigenous languages teachers comes from the fact that it is seriously understaffed. To date it only has two members manning the whole unit in terms of all the aspects of the indigenous languages subjects from Grade 1 to Form 6. What is more, the same officers are also responsible for other indigenous languages subjects also meant to be taught for the first three grades at primary school level like Shangani, Venda, Sotho, Kalanga, Hwesa, Barwe, Nambya and Tonga. The same languages are presently being prepared to be introduced as subjects at the primary school level. As a result, work on the proper development and monitoring of ChiShona and IsiNdebele, as the two main indigenous languages that are vastly used in education, has continued to lag behind. Syllabus documents are not

being properly initiated and disseminated in the schools, and there is very limited follow up on their actual teaching and evaluation in all the schools, colleges and universities, leaving all these institutions independently approaching the teaching and training of the ChiShona and IsiNdebele teachers. What is more, CDU presently does not properly coordinate the publication of texts used in the schools. Such efforts are handled by selected individuals without consulting the indigenous languages specialists in tertiary institutions there is no doubt that the present coordination of work in the indigenous languages is still very weak and ineffective. This has the effect of undermining the quality of the training of these teachers in the country.

The Zimbabwe Schools Examining Council (ZIMSEC) is also under the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture. It is supposed to coordinate all indigenous languages examination processes at both primary and secondary school levels, in consultation with the Curriculum Development Unit. In other international countries like Great Britain, such a Board is run under a renowned university which eventually acts as the custodian of the best standards of running an examination process. We still remember how ZIMSEC was run by Cambridge University before the localization process. But what is worrying is the fact that like CDU, the unit is poorly coordinated in terms of its complementary role to schools, Teacher Training institutions, publishers of texts used in schools and other stakeholders. It is also seriously understaffed with two members for each indigenous language subject who monitor all the work from Grade 1 to Form 6. Such a model of supervising very important technical work is regrettably inadequate, and leaves a lot of loopholes in the administration of our education system.

Whilst all the Teacher Training institutions are presently known to be teaching ChiShona and IsiNdebele using two or three syllabi models of applied education, main study and sometimes curriculum depth study, it is not convincing at all that all the intended work that is normally taught to trainee teachers is uniformly and adequately covered. Generally, the content of the indigenous languages given in the tertiary institutions' syllabi documents covers language, literature and methods of teaching and assessment procedures. However, the nature of the content that is taught and the depth of coverage varies greatly from institution to institution. For most Primary School Teachers' Training institutions, students are allowed to specialize in one subject area, including either ChiShona or IsiNdebele. Thus, not all trainees eventually opt to specialize in indigenous languages. A greater number of trainees are released into the teaching profession without having been thoroughly ingratiated into these languages. This includes those trainees who will not have done ChiShona or IsiNdebele at all at secondary school level, making the whole training system suspiciously weak.

In some Teachers' Training Colleges in Zimbabwe, trainees who opt to specialize in indigenous languages at college end up doing some content upgrading courses together with methodology and project work. This is the model for the Joshua Mqabuko Polytechnic College. Other colleges use different models where the trainees only do content upgrading courses and do not necessarily do methodology and project work in the area of specialization. Further-more, the actual content that is covered is different for language, literature, traditional culture, methodology and other aspects, making the training implications also different. In the linguistic skills, there are colleges that scarcely cover morphology, semantics and syntax. This is the same for oral and written literature. In Applied education, the aspects of methodology and the depth of coverage depends on the choice and experiences of the lecturers. The issue that comes back to teacher educators is whether it is right to leave training requirements to individuals or the choice of individual colleges and universities. Should we not be standardizing the training programmes in order to ensure that there is acceptable uniformity that is guaranteed in the programmes? The content that is sometimes given for the applied languages courses is much broader than can be reasonably covered in the period of training. This gives lecturers the freedom to pick what they want and leave out what they choose not to cover.

Use Of Indigenous Languages As A Medium Of Instruction For Language Programmes

For a very long time now, Teachers' Training institutions have only accepted students who have passed English and Mathematics. English has been used as the medium of instruction, even for the teaching of indigenous languages. It is interesting that Zimbabwe has taken it for granted that English is the natural and unchallenged language of instruction in Teacher Training institutions. Although it is seen as unthinkable to see English being taught in indigenous languages, the African language teachers' trainer has been guilty of allowing and perpetuating a situation that relegates to the periphery the very language the very language subject that earns him the daily meal. This has been the case in spite of the fact that we have an education policy in Zimbabwe that forces the teaching of all subjects, including the teaching of indigenous languages, to be taught in indigenous languages up to the third grade of primary school education. Great Zimbabwe University and some colleges have embraced the use of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction. All the other Universities and some Teachers' Colleges are still using English in their teaching of indigenous languages to teachers who are compelled to teach these languages using the same languages. Thus, we find syllabi, policy documents, handouts, departmental minutes, mark schedules and other key documents in training institutions in English, ostensibly for the good of higher offices. It is not surprising that the same teachers end up despising indigenous

languages and subjects. A lot of reference books relevant to indigenous languages is still in the English language medium of writing. Although there have been a lot of pronouncements at political level to recognize fully the indigenous languages and culture, in real terms, Zimbabweans have tended to renounce and relegate these language to unbelievable levels, which help. Thus, the country needs indigenous language teachers who are adequately prepared for all the eventualities of teaching these languages and subjects properly and efficiently teachers.

Conclusions And Recommendations

The already given state of affairs in the training of indigenous languages is far from pleasing. There is need for a complete overhaul of the whole Teachers' Training programme in Zimbabwe. All the stakeholders in the teaching of indigenous languages must be brought together to discuss these issues and come up with a more acceptable model of training for these teachers. Universities, Colleges, schools, publishers and CDU and ZIMSEC must meet to thoroughly look at the meaning of the present teachers' training models in Zimbabwe. There has to be better coordination of all the people and programmes that have something to do with indigenous languages. We need to see CDU and ZIMSEC properly coordinated to the extent that all schools and Teachers' Training institutions will be adequately consulted for them to appreciate and know what exactly they need to do. A national or international conference could be arranged as a starting point at which papers shall be tabled for discussion and language educational issues adequately scrutinized. The whole nation must start to seriously reflect on the various models of indigenous languages training and delineate their strengths and weaknesses in order to come up with a more sustainable programme of training. We just need to arrive at the correct national standards of training teachers for this country and narrow all the differences that are currently evident in this system of training teachers.

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