

“Technologically challenged languages”

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Joint COCOSDA & ICCWLRE Workshop

LREC 2004

Lisbon

- In principle: All languages are `technologically challenged`
- Some languages are more `technologically challenged` than others
- Matter of scale and environment

- Number of factors determining whether a language can be regarded as `technologically challenged`:
 - Current phase of development
 - Some languages have a longer `technological history` than others
 - Availability of resources & expertise

– Degrees of development

- Some languages may still be regarded as technologically challenged if they do not have full-fledged Speech-to-Speech translation capabilities – others if they do not have electronic dictionaries etc

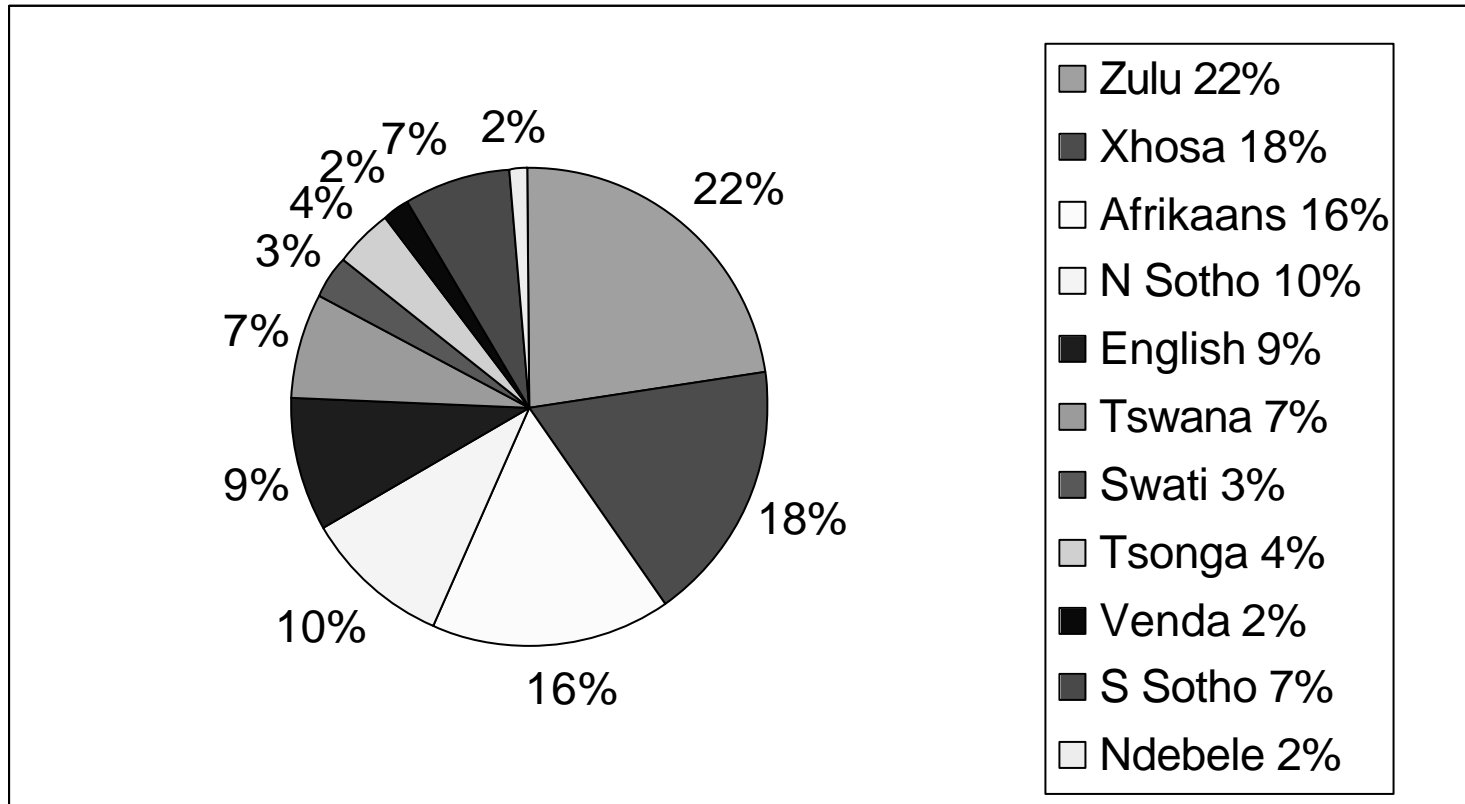
- The need for being `developed`
 - Ideal (academic)
 - Reality
 - Can we really expect all languages to be `technologically developed`?
 - Cost factor
 - Level of available expertise (linguistic and technological) in a particular context
 - » Roadmap implies availability of expertise – not necessarily the case
 - » Question: Human capacity building as a goal in the roadmap strategy? (Integrated training programmes)

- Cut off point for development of “technologically challenged languages”?

Example: Case of SA English

Language Situation

Mother tongue division (n=40,5 mil speakers)



- What priorities should be set in developing languages at technological level?
 - Economic factors?
 - Commercial viability?
 - Socio-political factors?
 - Access to information
 - Eg. Language specific speech based systems empowering pre-literate communities? (Given the growth of mobile communications in Africa.)