PROCEEDINGS

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS
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CONFERENCE

"PRESERVING AFRICAN
LANGUAGES"

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DR. CHESTER M. HEDGEPETH, DIRECTOR
AFRICAN LANGUAGE RESEARCH PROJECT
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ALRP Staff and Support Team
FOREWORD

THE AFRICAN LANGUAGE RESEARCH PROJECT IS PLEASED TO PUBLISH THIS UNEDITED COLLECTION OF SELECTED PRESENTATIONS PROVIDED BY SCHOLARS AT THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN LANGUAGES. THE CONFERENCE WAS CONVENED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE AND AT THE CLARION FOUNTAINEBLEAU HOTEL IN OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND. THIS UNEDITED VERSION MEETS THE NEEDS OF ATTENDEES WHO DESIRED COPIES OF THE PAPERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE CONFERENCE. A MORE COMPREHENSIVE EDITED VERSION OF PAPERS GIVEN AT MORE RECENT SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES, INCLUDING THE NOVEMBER EVENT, IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEAR FUTURE. MEANWHILE, THESE DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT THE ALRP WEB-SITE: WWW.UMES.EDU./ALRP.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION.

THE ALRP STAFF
AFRICAN LANGUAGE PROJECT
2004
AFRICAN CRIMINOLOGY: IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE AND STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING TERRORISM

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ABSTRACT

Terrorism, human trafficking, narco trafficking, and money laundering are examples of unique international tribulations that have precariously affected humans worldwide. This new wave of societal direction, aptly termed "globalization, transnationalization, postnationalization, or denationalization," and aided by technology of knowledge, has made it possible for national issues to have international character by the resolute actions of non-state actors to be full participants in dealings across national borders. In deed, innovations in technology of knowledge, transportation systems, and communication advancement, have made it virtually impossible for sovereign nations to have control of their national boundaries. The world, therefore, operates in a borderless economy and violence. The African continent is not immune from this new world trend, in which commodities of violence are more and more intercontinental in nature.

African criminology, with a focus on language and terrorism, will help to underscore this global trend in human horror and processes of combating terrorism as it relates to Africans in Africa and the Diaspora. Furthermore, it is argued that the global commitment to counter the spate of terrorism that is being forcefully led by the linked states and their allies must not exclude the economically depressed nations in Africa, which can, very likely serve as the future hotspots of terrorism. After all, Africa witnessed its major terrorist events in the East African nations of Kenya and Tanzania. Many Africans, as well as many Americans, lost their lives there. Those tragedies necessitate a need to study African languages and to assist the intelligent apparatus in the recruitment of qualified African linguists. Subsequently, this will allow for a translation of intercepted messages in the global war against terrorism. Additionally, this paper discusses global terrorism in the African context by examining the definition of terrorism, placing emphasis on low intensity warfare as a form of terrorism in Africa.

DEFINING GLOCAL TERRORISM

Africa was shocked by the dual bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that claimed many lives. These attacks illustrated that Africa is no longer immune from the havoc of international terrorism. Generally, African leaders became conscious about terrorism with almost a unanimous condemnation of the attacks on African land. There was also nearly universal condemnation of the September 11 attacks on the United States among Sub-Saharan African states. The incidents in Kenya and Tanzania coupled with the attacks on the twin towers, which claimed not only American lives but also African lives, demonstrates the glocal (local) nature of terrorism. I coin the term glocal to demonstrate that the world is like a small village today.
The term "terrorist group" means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism. U.S.C. 2656f(d).

Southern and Southeast Asia are continuously faced with terrorism and violence exacerbated by ethnic conflict, nationalism, religion and economic inequality. Some Islamic extremists from around the world, particularly Egypt, Algeria, Palestine and Saudi Arabia, congregated in Afghanistan to use it as a training base to foment acts of terrorism in 1977 (Simonsen and Spindlove, 2000). For example, the Taliban facilitated the operation of training and indoctrination facilities for non-Afghans in the territories they controlled in the erstwhile Afghan civil war. The existing animosity between India and Pakistan, two Third World nations with nuclear weapons, complicates the whole situation. As in Africa, these nations have resolved to aid the U.S. in fighting against international terrorism. The African Union (AU), for example, has a plan of action developed after the September 11, 2001 events in the U.S., which underscores that:

...terrorism is a violent form of transnational crime that exploits the limits of the territorial jurisdiction of States, differences in governance systems and judicial procedures, porous borders, and the existence of informal and illegal trade and financing networks. (Sturman, 2002, p. 104)

The AU's strategy against terrorism, which focuses on state building and intergovernmental cooperation to close African borders to terrorist activities, is important; terrorism, as it is generally conceived, has usually not been seen in its distinctive uniqueness of political violence in Africa, as terrorism in Africa has been marked by insurgencies, civil wars, communal conflict or government repression, and struggles against colonial operations. Such past African leaders as Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame
Spindlove, 2000). What needs to be done is to determine if patterns of terrorism prior to the twentieth century, in relation to political assassination, anarchism, religious zealots, narcotic murderers, and avid revolutionaries, were dramatically different from twentieth century terrorism. A review of these differences is crucial with the understanding of modern forms of terrorism.

The modern era of terrorism can be linked to the Russian revolutionary anarchism, the leaders of which proposed individual and collective violence as a means of destroying the government and its social institutions (Vetter and Perlstein, 1991). While others have argued that the old terrorism was associated with the anarchist tradition (Fraser and Fulton, 1984; White, 1991), these revolutionaries were motivated to end the czarist regime of the late nineteenth century and advocated the use of “selective and discriminate terror.” The anarchists took special measures to avoid the killing of innocent pedestrians, while they committed themselves to assassinate leaders, police spies and traitors, and to avenge against the brutal treatment of political prisoners (White, 1991; Vetter and Perlstein, 1991). Today, terrorist acts are indiscriminate, without regard to the lives of innocent citizens and beyond the parameters set under the doctrine of tyrannicide.

During the Middle Ages, as evidenced in the early antecedents of terrorism in the Middle East, religious assassins were rewarded with drugs for successfully accomplishing the murders of religious opponents. Rappoport (1988) noted that the Sicarri, a religious sect active within the zealot struggle in Palestine, preferred the holiest days to assassinate Jewish religious leaders accused of succumbing to Hellenistic principles.
The method of assault represented the dual methods of aircraft hijacking and suicide bombings that began in the 1980s. According to Crenshaw (2001), the devastation caused by the September 11 attacks required strategic planning and a rigid organization than has never been witnessed in past pirate or terrorist actions. This view has been echoed by Stohl who maintains, “What was sophisticated about this attack was the organization and coordination, not the techniques” (Stohl, 2003, p. 84). Stohl noted that the terrorist perpetrators of September 11 hijacked four planes within less than forty-five minutes, which implies long planning and careful training and execution. The perpetrators were mature, middle-class university graduates trained to fly planes. In the past, they would have been profiled as uneducated, psychologically deranged, young, male, and poor. In Stohl’s analysis, the victims of September 11 were the “instrument of the terrorist.” In other words, the victims were not the targets of the planners of the September 11 assaults; the real targets were the government of the United States and the rest of the world who watched the outcome of the horrible destruction of lives and property.

Related to these differences between historical and modern terrorism are important developments in global society. Like terrorism in the past, contemporary terrorism stems from multiple causes and is globalized and aided by modernity. Modern terrorism is made possible due to modern communication systems in terms of travel as well as information. Societies are made borderless when an incident of terrorism in one part of the world is instantly transmitted to other parts in a matter of hours, or even minutes. Modern communications have created “global villages,” i.e., glocal or smaller worlds. Such communications systems have permitted the theater of terrorism and enlarged the
In addition, old terrorism was associated with the philosophy of dynamite while new terrorism employs the technology of weapons of mass destruction (Onwudiwe, 2001; Kegley, 2003; White, 1991). Combs (2003, p. 60) indicates that terrorists of the twenty-first century appear more willing to use weapons of mass destruction than those of preceding decades, perhaps because more states have used these weapons in internal wars…” Combs states that Iraq’s utilization of cyanide gas on the Kurdish population in 1988 demonstrates the desire of states to use these weapons of mass obliteration. The sarin toxin attack in Japan’s subway system in 1995 by the Aum Shinrikyo also dramatizes the dangers and willingness of terrorists to use an arsenal of biological and chemical weapons against civilian populations.

As Laqueur (1987) pointed out, modern terrorists are more ruthless and lethal than their counterparts in the past. They have improved their targets and are more willing to strike at governments by killing civilians. This means that modern terrorists are more brutal than their predecessors. For example, the killing of innocent children and other civilians by the destruction of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995 shows that fertilizer bombs could wreak havoc with buildings, bridges, tunnels and other similar structures. The ultimate nightmare would be for terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons, although it may be unlikely for them to perfect the technology and deploy such weapons (Time, 2001). The point remains that Africa must be aware of the historical patterns of terrorism, its nature, and characteristics in order to be able to combat it effectively.
monarchs with the devastating policies of grand apartheid realities. The efforts of these clandestine groups in their low intensity warfare or guerilla attacks were labeled terrorism. While the actions of the illegitimate governments were given a sanitized name, these clandestine groups became the outsiders. It is this type of analysis that makes it difficult to have a universal definition of terrorism, which has maintained and sustained urban warfare in Africa and other regions of the world.

LOW INTENSITY WARFARE

According to the U.S. military, low intensity warfare constitutes:

A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held, enemy-controlled, or politically sensitive territory. Unconventional warfare includes, but is not limited to, the interrelated fields of guerilla warfare, evasion and escape, subversion, sabotage, and other operations of a low visibility, covert or clandestine nature. These interrelated aspects of unconventional warfare may be prosecuted singly or collectively by predominately indigenous personnel, usually supported and directed by (an) external source(s) during all conditions of war or peace (U.S. Department of Defense 1984:164).

While the actions of guerilla movements have been linked to terrorism in Latin America and Africa in the later part of the 20th century, some experts have argued that guerillas are not terrorists. Others have argued that since they have attacked government establishments, engaged in the burning of villages, wholesale massacre as in Rwanda, assassination of political leaders, they may equally fit the terrorism label. Any act that resulted in killing of human beings through the exercise of violence that is rooted in an ideology of destruction constitutes terrorist acts of violence. In this sense, depending on who is doing the defining, guerillas are terrorists. But a popular scholar asserts as follows:

To claim that guerilla [warfare] is necessarily coupled with terrorism is certainly grossly inaccurate. A number of important guerilla movements steadfastly refused to resort to terrorism . . . And yet . . . The fact is that most of the contemporary guerilla movements
has been in the past. An understanding of the criminology of the natives certainly would be necessary to recognize the tidal beckon of terrorism in Africa.

**THE NEXUS BETWEEN TERRORISM AND AFRICAN CRIMINOLOGY**

African Criminology will explain the phenomenon of terrorism by examining its origins, theoretical dilemma, the nature of contemporary crime problems, methodology, major justice systems, victims of terrorism, human rights violations, and the nexus between democracy and crime in Africa. In addition, the connection between a variety of state crimes and its control will be examined such as the latest wave of transnational crimes in the continent (Onwudiwe 2004). This innovative attempt to develop African own theories of crime is significant since colonial criminology served only the interests of the metropolis (Agozino 2004). It is a well-known reality in criminology that the criminology of the natives was abandoned and rejected by colonial intelligentsias. Therefore, the tribulations faced by African societies today need to be addressed in criminological contexts so as to formulate workable criminological strategies for effective crime prevention in African societies and beyond.

**Language, Terrorism, and Implications for the Third-World**

The threat of new forms of terrorism has dramatically changed from its old patterns and has, as a result, been exacerbated by the explosions of new terrorism technologies. American counterterrorism commitment to Africa is important today, more than ever before, because threats of terrorism are interdependent (Jentleson, 1987), which recognizes no boundaries. Some vivid images such as the mob action in Iran against the Shah of Iran and the subsequent taking as hostage of sixty-three Americans; the current killings of U.S. personnel in Iraq; the killing of 241 U.S. Marines in Beirut; the bombing
Nigerian states, an unbending devotion to sharia in Somalia, and a resurgence of radical Muslims in South Africa. Mair also underscores that the aggressive missionary efforts by Saudi Wahabis in the northern part of Nigeria, for example, have played a significant role in encouraging and maintaining conflict and violence between Christians and Muslims in that country (conflict and violence which flared up again during the aborted Miss World competition in 2002). Some American analysts and politicians have also pointed fingers at the Saudi sponsors of international terrorism and at evidence that the majority of the September 11, 2001 suicide bombers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were of Saudi origin (U.S. Department of State, 2004).

The problem is also apparent in Asian countries. The global war against terrorism has brought the United States government closer to several Asian nations such as China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, India, and Pakistan, which are fighting their own mêlées against Islamic separatists in their different regions. Pakistan is playing a pivotal role in helping the United States to catch leaders of the al Qaeda network. In fact, it has been noted that the Asian Pacific region, with a population of about 1.2 billion Muslims, has a propensity for participating in Islamic terrorism (Armed Forces Journal International, 2002). The region sent fighters to help Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan to fight against the U.S. Indeed, the majority of terrorist attacks in Asia are conducted by Islamic separatists (Henderson, 2001). Just as the U.S. has improved relations with Asian countries such as Pakistan and the Philippines, it needs to strengthen its relationships with African countries in order to purge the tidal wave of international terrorism. There are ways international terrorism may be curbed in Africa and Asia.
Conclusion

I must point out again that Africa plays a pivotal role in the United States strategy to combat global terrorism in the future. Terrorists find refuge and safe heavens in depressed areas of the world. Osama bin Laden once used Sudan as his terrorism base. The U.S. must focus on strategic policies of equal partnerships with Africa in order to curb the incursion of terrorism in that region of the world. To achieve this goal, we propose that American people be in major African languages. To win the war on terrorism, a unilateralist measure is not the answer. There must be an emphasis on multilateral approaches. Multilateralism has a special value in that it can offer a means of forming the basis for a durable new bipartisan consensus at domestically, underpinning the U.S. vigorous and dynamic engagement in the global society.

In addition, the U.S. must improve its aviation security treaties with the African Union (AU) and be willing to provide antiterrorism financial assistance to the AU member countries in order to enable them provide law enforcement training to their sub-national forces for the solitary purpose of fighting terrorism. It is important to establish an interior system that is similar to the Trevis system in Europe that will enable the sharing of information, improvement in communications among police forces, new methods of coordinating visa arrangements and reviewing of extradition procedures, airport security, embassy security, and abuses of diplomatic immunity. Finally, debts owed by depressed economies in Africa ought to be forgiven to pave the way for redirection of resources in the war against terrorism. The U.S. must demand accountability from these countries, backed with draconic measures such as sanctions that will not permit nation’s airlines from landing on the U.S. soil if they
African Language Research Project

Diagramming Swahili Sentences

Frederick Keter
c. They can be a relative clause for example:
Walimu watakao safari kesho ni wawili
The teachers who will travel tomorrow are two.

In Swahili predicates have the following features:
a. It is either represented either by a main verb alone or by its co-occurrence at the same time with an auxiliary e.g.
John ni mfupi.
John is short.
b. It is usually in number concord with the subject. For example:
Ugonjwa umetapakaa nchini
The disease has spread in the country
c. It usually follows a subject. For instance
Meli itawasili kesho.
The ship will arrive tomorrow.

A subject and a predicate is the largest unit which a sentence can easily be divided. This simple binary structure is the basic template from which all sentences are generated. Swahili, like English and all other languages can provide a potentially infinite number of sentences. A subject serves as the topic and a predicate serves as a comment. The subject is composed of a Determiner (Articles) and a noun sequence (=DP) which states the topic of the sentence. In addition to this essential SUBJECT/TOPIC of the discourse, must be ensued which allows the use to comment on the topic by use of rich description. In other words it is not enough to provide a noun material by saying… “Samson”. A question would follow as … “So what about Samson?”
Hence we would have Subject/Noun: “[Samson] + Predicate/Verb [alilala]
The full sentence would be Samson a-li-lai-a. It is this natural inclination to secure additional information about the topic that is termed as predicate/comment. The most important part of the predicate is where the initial position which is filled by a subject index and the final vowel –a. Between this two positions is the main verb stem which comes in the form [+tense] verb. Consider the subject + predicate structure of the basic SV (Subject + verb) sentences below.

\[
S \Rightarrow \text{Sentence} \quad \text{Rule} \Rightarrow \text{Noun/DP + Verb/VP}
\]

- Noun material
- Main verb
- Tense
- DP
- Verb Phrase
**Transitive sentence (copular)**

Transitive sentence do require additional adverbial information in the shape of either prepositional or adverbial/adjectival phrase in order to keep some meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Auxiliary/ copula be (kuwa)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Alikuwa amechoka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sherehe</td>
<td>Itakuwa kwa bustani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A look at this sentence show that they not only contain a main (=copular “kuwa”) but must also contain some kind of an obligatory adjectival phrase. This phrase will supply essential additional information to the verb. This adjectival compliment include choka, kwa bustani or bustanini. Copular verbs are seen to have little independent meaning. Their main function is to relate other elements of clause structure especially subject and complement. In Swahili examples of copular verbs are N.I.SI,NDI-,SI,-LI,-PO,-KO etc.

Hence Rule: \[
S \rightarrow [DP + COPULAR ADJ]
\]

```
  S
   |
  /\  
 DP  VP
   /\  
 D   N  MVP adjP
       /\  
   #   John A-li-kuwa N  ADJ
       /\  
     #   a- me-choka
```
Phrases

1. Determiners (DP)
Determiners includes articles, Demonstratives, hiki, kile,hivi, hivyo, genitives like -angu, -etu. When we look at the following examples: *hiki kitabu* (This book), *hii kalamu* (this pen) they qualify to be determiner phrases since the determiner (the first word of the phrase) heads and projects the phrase.

2. Adjectives (AdjP)
Adjectives are seen as modifiers of nouns e.g. –zuri, *haraka, sana*. They precede and generally describe nouns. For instance if we have .... *hii shati nyeupe* (This white shirt) [(Det) + N + Adj]. It is important to note here that adjectives in swahili follow the noun they modify and at the same time agree with same noun they modify.

   - Wa-toto Wa-zuri Nice children
   - Ki-tabu Ki-zuri Nice book.
   - M-ti M-zuri Nice tree

3. Auxiliary/Modals(AuxP)
   They serve to introduce the main Verbs. In Swahili, auxiliary verbs accompany the main verbs to express a special aspect of an action denoted by the latter.
   Examples:
   a. *Alikuwa anakunywa Maziwa*
      He was drinking milk
   b. *Otieno ataweza kucheza mpiira.*
      Otieno will be able to play soccer.

In the above example the presence of –li- in the auxiliary *kuwa* (to be) in a. indicates that the activity started in the past. In b. the presence of the particle –ta- in the auxiliary *wez-a* (can) shows that the activity will take place in future.

4. Verb phrase (VP)
The verb phrase tend to project after an already positioned MVP. This phrase include all three infinitive types/forms e.g. I like to cook – *Napenda kupiga.*

5. Adverb Phrase (AdvP)
   Like adjectives for nouns, the verbs. Kimbia haraka – quickly run, hence we will have (Adv + V).
<Simba m-zito na mw-eusi>
This are twin NP expressions each with an embedded adjective phrases. The two will be joined by simple conjunction element <na> and diagrammed in isolation as below:

```
NP
  | D   | AdjP |
  |     | < na > |
  # simba mzito

NP
  | D   | Adj P |
  |     | #    |
  | (simba) | mw-eusi |
```

<a-ki-tembea> This verb takes on the role of some action. Looking at it critically it seem to have no clear tense indicated on the verb. We know alrighty that there should be be at all time one grammatical tense per clause or sentence. While in most cases verbs can be modulated by tense markers –na-, -li-, -me- and -ta-, the verbal marker –ki- basically indicates the action is going on at a time specified in the context. Since the a-, which is occupying the initial position of the verb is a subject prefix, the whole clause forms a phrase which takes the form as below.

```
S
  | NP | VP |
  |    |    |
  |     | tense |
  | N | V |
  |   | A- | -ki- | tembe-a |
```

-ki- is translated differently in english either by averb ending “ing’- (present participle) or by an infinitive. Example of an infinitive form is Nilimwona a-ki-ilia - I saw her cry.
Ngbugu digital wordlist: Archival and accessible documentation

Kenneth S. Olson
SIL International and the University of North Dakota

Gary F. Simons
SIL International

1. The problem

Significant strides have been made recently in the documentation of African languages, but along with this have arisen certain challenges. Much of this documentation remains unpublished and is therefore inaccessible to others. Some of that documentation, e.g. audio tape recordings, will eventually be lost due to physical deterioration. Materials can be easily converted into electronic form to increase accessibility, but as Bird & Simons (2003, p. 557) observe, unless steps are taken to ensure its longevity, “much digital language documentation and description becomes inaccessible within a decade of its creation.”

These challenges point to the need for principled approaches to making language documentation long lasting, accessible, and re-usable. In responding to this need, linguists have begun to concern themselves with the development of best practices for digital language documentation. The Open Languages Archives Community (OLAC)\(^1\) exists for this purpose, and the concern is also a driving force behind the E-MELD project (Electronic Metastructure for Endangered Language Data).\(^2\)

This paper discusses the digital archiving of a 204-item wordlist in Ngbugu, an Ubangian language spoken in Central African Republic by approximately 95,000 people (Grimes, 2000). The process employed was a test case for various best practice recommendations concerning archival documentation of language resources, especially those of Bird & Simons (2003), Plichta & Kornbluh (2002), and MATRIX (2001), and builds on the process laid out in Frank & Simons (2003). We report the results of our project to prepare these materials for long-term archiving and to provide access to a digital version of them via the Internet.

Following Simons (2004), we distinguish three forms of data in this project:
- Working form: the form in which information is stored as it is created and edited.
- Archival form: the form in which information is stored for access long into the future.
- Presentation form: the form in which information is presented to the public.

We give an overview of our approach in section 2, enumerate the best practice recommendations we followed in section 3, give an overview of the processes we followed to convert the original materials into archival and presentation forms in section 4, and offer concluding remarks in section 5.

2. Proposed solution

In sum, our approach for archiving and presenting the Ngbugu digital wordlist involves the following major aspects:
- TIFF (Tagged Image File Format) digital imaging of the original handwritten transcription.\(^3\)
- WAV digital recordings of each word.
- Descriptive markup encoding of the wordlist in XML (Extensible Markup Language), employing Unicode transcription.
- Viewing and playback via an XSLT (Extensible Stylesheet Language) style sheet that renders the information in HTML (HyperText Markup Language).
- Preparing metadata for resource discovery with OLAC.
• Publish the presentation form of these materials on SIL’s website\textsuperscript{4} to enable linguists to inspect them over the Internet.
• Make these materials known through OLAC using their metadata standards.

3. Best practice guidelines

In this project, we were guided by best practice recommendations for digitizing the audio recordings (Plichta & Kornbluh, 2002), for digitizing the images of the transcription (MATRIX, 2001), and for creating digital language documentation and description in general (Bird & Simons, 2003). The following tables summarize relevant aspects of these recommendations and indicate the degree to which this project was able to adhere to these recommendations.

Figure 1 addresses the guidelines for digitizing audio recordings. Plichta & Kornbluh (2002) propose a sample rate of 96,000 Hz and a bit depth of 24 bit as a standard for archive-quality digital audio, but also note that 44,100 Hz, 16-bit is adequate for technical purposes. Nearly all acoustic information pertinent to language is below 11,000 Hz, and the upper limit of hearing for most people is 22,000 Hz (Ladefoged, 2003, pp. 18, 26). Since the highest frequency that can be reconstructed from a digital recording is half the sampling rate (Nyquist, 1928, Shannon, 1949), the 44,100 Hz rate is sufficient for speech and hearing. We used this standard as our digitizing equipment was not adequate for the higher sampling rate and bit depth.

We avoided the use of minidisc recorders and MP3 files, because these involve compression techniques that result in loss of sound quality. This is of particular concern for those wishing to perform acoustic analysis of the recordings, who would want the data to be as unprocessed as possible.

**Figure 1**: Recommendations regarding digital audio (Plichta & Kornbluh, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Recommended Best Practice</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ngbugu Wordlist Project</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended for archival purposes</td>
<td>Lack of appropriate hardware prevented us from following this recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sample rate: 96,000 Hz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• bit depth: 24-bit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient for technical purposes</td>
<td>This is the standard that we followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sample rate: 44,100 Hz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• bit depth: 16-bit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversampling delta-sigma A/D converter with dither added prior to sampling</td>
<td>Lack of appropriate hardware prevented us from following this recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAV file format</td>
<td>This is the format that we used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 addresses guidelines for digitizing images of textual materials. MATRIX (2001) distinguishes between recommendations for master images and for access images. We followed the former recommendations for generating the archival form and the latter for the presentation form.

**Figure 2**: Recommendations regarding digital images (MATRIX, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Recommended Best Practice</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ngbugu Wordlist Project</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bit-depth: 8-bit grayscale or 24-bit color</td>
<td>8-bit grayscale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scanning resolution: 300 dpi for original documents if smaller than 11&quot; × 17&quot;, 200 dpi if larger than 11&quot; × 17&quot;</td>
<td>300 dpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Image size: size of original document at scan resolution</td>
<td>Original image size of 8.5&quot; × 11&quot; is preserved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>format.</td>
<td>Discovery:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Describe the resource using the metadata standard of the Open Language Archives Community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make the resource known to the world at large by publishing the metadata description with an OLAC data provider.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An OLAC-conformant resource description is supplied.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The metadata are published via the OLAC data provider for SIL’s Language and Culture Archive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access:</td>
<td>Presentation form is published on the Web.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make resources accessible to all interested users.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Publish in such a way that users can access the original materials to manipulate them in novel ways.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Archival form of full resources is available by ordering a CD-ROM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights:</td>
<td>The resource description states the materials are copyrighted and available to all under standard terms of Fair Use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make a clear statement of terms of use so that users know what they may do with the material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and protect any sensitivities inherent in the material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are no known sensitivities and this is stated in the resource materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Results and process

Part of the design of this project is to distinguish archival and presentational formats for the information. In this section we describe these two forms of the data and certain aspects of the process followed.

4.1 Archival form

Following the various best practice recommendations, the archival form for the electronic files are in open formats—XML for the textual data (using the UTF-8 encoding for the Unicode character set), WAV for the audio data, and uncompressed TIFF for the graphic images of the original written documents. Open formats have greater longevity and can be transformed into presentation formats that are more “reader friendly.”

The XML files are derived from the XML output of the TableTrans software that was used to organize the French and English glosses, Ngbugu orthographic and IPA transcription, and time-alignment data to the WAV file. The following is a sample of entries 14–16 in the XML file, showing the item number, French and English glosses, start and stop times for the Ngbugu utterance in the master sound file, and the transcription of the utterance. Where there are two alternate Ngbugu words or pronunciations for a given prompt, these are recorded in separate “response” blocks of XML data within a single XML “item”, as seen in item 15.

**Figure 4:** Entries 14–16 in the XML archive file for the Ngbugu data

```xml
<item n = "14">
  <gloss xml:lang = "fr">bouche</gloss>
  <gloss xml:lang = "en">mouth</gloss>
  <response>
    <audio start = "51.775000" end = "52.325000" />
    <orth> ma </orth>
    <form> mà </form>
```
is true to the original transcription, even if the rendering on some systems may be less than ideal at present.

4.2 Presentation form

Clearly, a presentation form of this data set is also needed, and we have chosen to prepare a form of these data for web presentation. For this purpose, an XSLT style sheet is used to render the XML file in HTML, individual WAV files for each of the utterances are linked to the data for playback, and GIF versions of the scanned images of the original transcription are provided. The rationale for creating individual WAV files and employing GIF rather than TIFF files for the presentation form is that they are much smaller in size than the archival WAV and TIFF files. This is necessitated by present-day limitations of storage for computers and bandwidth for Internet access. In the future, these limitations will likely cease to exist, in which case the archival standards could be employed for the presentation form. A sample of the HTML presentation form of the first 10 words in the wordlist is given in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Presentation form of the first 10 words in the N'gbugu wordlist

N’gbugu wordlist

See complete resource description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>abeille</th>
<th>bee</th>
<th>wîtò</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>acide (vb)</td>
<td>tart</td>
<td>kpî (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>aile</td>
<td>wing</td>
<td>mbkò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>aller</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>?è</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>amer (vb)</td>
<td>be bitter</td>
<td>jû (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>animal</td>
<td>animal</td>
<td>già</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>année</td>
<td>year</td>
<td>ngú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>appeler</td>
<td>call</td>
<td>?è tjó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>arbre</td>
<td>tree</td>
<td>jô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>attacher; lier</td>
<td>attach</td>
<td>?ì</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 The process

Linking the transcription to the audio material was one of the more challenging aspects of the project. It would have been possible, but laborious, to find each utterance and note its start and stop times in the master audio file using conventional audio software. The TableTrans program from the


1 http://www.language-archives.org
2 http://www.emeld.org
3 Definitions of TIFF, WAV, XML, Unicode, XSL, HTML, and other pertinent terms employed here are available at http://cf.linguisitlist.org/cfdocs/emeld/school/glossary.html.
4 The online Ngbugu wordlist is available at http://www.sil.org/~olsonk/ngbugu/.
5 SIL Language and Culture Archives, 7500 West Camp Wisdom Road, Dallas, TX 75236, USA.
6 http://scripts.sil.org/DoulosSIL.font
7 http://scripts.sil.org/RenderingGraphite
8 Kazuaki Maeda, part of the TableTrans development team, generously gave us programming assistance.
9 http://www.ldc.upenn.edu
Documenting and Teaching Languages through Web-based translation
Martha O’Kennon, Professor Emerita, Albion College

Fourth Conference on Preserving African Languages,
University of Maryland – Eastern Shore, Salisbury, MD
November 5, 2004

We all observe a need for resources for learning, documenting and disseminating of less commonly taught and/or endangered languages. Web-based applications allow for wide distribution and feedback, as well as opportunities for collaboration.

Over the course of the past eleven years, working with native speakers and fluent second language speakers/educators, we have been developing web-based sentence translators for Xhosa, Pulaar/Fulfulde, and Ojibwe, and a new program for Akan Twi is in its early stages. In the past three years, we have started to unify the translators, using a common paradigm and format, to make it easier for us to add structures, and for others to adapt the programs to their own language. We also have been studying how to exploit similarities between structures to create modules that can be swapped among programs for languages that are otherwise unrelated.

The translators are based on a straightforward three-step technique: First we parse the source language into a sentence diagram format, consulting a lexicon with both syntactic and a small number of semantic fields, but aiming to make the sentence diagram as independent as possible of the eventual target language. This remedies an old defect (actually a necessity when DOS executable and database together had to fit into 640 KB) in our early translators, which used extensively the special relationship between the source and target languages, and meant that any other projects would have to be rebuilt from scratch. The next pass translates the source diagram into a comparable target language diagram. In this stage, words are looked up, tenses and aspects are altered as appropriate, and verbal extensions are incorporated as appropriate. Finally the target diagram is formatted into a sentence in the target language.

In the latest version of each program, each stage is displayed so the user can compare what happens to the source sentence as it is reformatted into the target sentence, giving a graphic picture of the overall grammatical structure of both languages. This also makes debugging much easier since it will be obvious at which stage the program is misbehaving, whether from a failure to parse the English (for example) input correctly, from a failure to translate from the English structure to the corresponding target structure, or from a failure to implement the output. In fact, when I make the first draft for a new language, we start with the first two modules of one that is fairly well worked out, and then make the third stage “come true” gradually.

One big advantage of this process is that once a parser is written for one language, and an output module is written for another, these modules may be “mixed and matched” with parsers and output modules for other languages to create multiple translators more efficiently.

In the examples that follow, we use the following names for what are functionally cases, or more to the point, slots for holding the various noun components of the sentence: “nominative” for the subject; “dative” for an indirect object, “accusative” for a direct object, “agent” for the person actually performing the verb of a passive sentence. In English, as in Xhosa, nouns are not in general marked for case, but these terms may still help the reader of a diagram to understand the relationship of the sentence input or output to the underlying semantics of the sentence.
Examples.

Example 1. English to Xhosa. Note how the English diagram is translated into a very similar Xhosa diagram, and then into a purely Xhosa sentence.

**I love you**

```
s(nps([p("I"],[,"1","singular","I","nom"]),"1","singular","")),
v(["love"]),"pres","ind","active","1","singular",nps(["","","")),
nps([p(["YOU"],[,"2","singular","you","acc"]),"2","singular","")),nps(["","","")),
adve(places([]),times([]),manners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([])),"1","pos")
```

**Ndiyakuthanda**

This is a very simple sentence, with hardly any difference in the sentence diagrams. Since this positive verb phrase is constructed from

Subject Concord + Aspect Marker + Object Concord + Verb Stem + Tense/Aspect Ending, the output is only a question of coalescing the constituent parts.

Example 2. Here we have a compound subject, with resultant subject 1 plural we. Of course, in Pulaar, like many other languages, the resultant would be inclusive we (inclusive you).

**You and I ate**

```
s(nps([p(["you"],[,"2","singular","you","nom"]),p(["I"],[,"1","singular","I","nom"]),"1","plural","")),
v(["eat"]),"past","ind","active","1","plural",nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),adve(places([]),times([]),manners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([])),"1","pos")
```

```
s(nps([p(["U"],[,"2","singular","u","nom"]),"1","singular","u")),
p(["ndi"],[,"1","singular","ndi","nom"]),
"1","plural","St"),v(["you"]),"past","ind","active","1","plural",nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),nps(["","","")),adve(places([]),times([]),manners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([])),"1","pos")
```

**Wena nam StStylele**

he taught a story by the teacher

\[
\text{s(nps([p("he"],[],"3","singular","he","nom")],"3","singular",""),v(["teach"]),"past","ind","","","3","s
}\]

\[
\text{ingular",nps([],"","",""),nps([n(det1("a"),[]),["story"]),["3","singular","i","acc")],"3","singular","").}
\]

\[
\text{nps([n(det1("the"),[]),["teacher"]],["3","singular","u","agent"],["3","singular",""],adve(places([]),times([]),ma
}\n
\[
\text{nners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([])),"t","pos")}
\]

ufundis e ibali ngutitshala

Note that the same sentence can be re-analyzed as a combination of passive and causative, since in Xhosa the verb to "teach" is the same as the verb "to cause to learn".

Example 5. Passive and causative.

(he taught a story by the teacher)

he made to learn a story by the teacher

\[
\text{s(nps([p("he"],[],"3","singular","he","nom")],"3","singular",""),c(["make"],"past","ind","","","3","s
}\n
\[
\text{ingular",nps([n(det1("the"),[]),["teacher"]],["3","singular","u","agent"],["3","singular",""],adve(places([]),times([]),ma
}\n
\[
\text{nners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([])),"t","pos")}
\]

ufundis e ibali ngutitshala
Example 7. English to Pulaar. Here the meaning of “with” affects the very verb structure, since in Pulaar, the idea of “comitative” or “instrumental” cause the verb to acquire different extensions.

Example 7a. i ate with a fork

s(nps(["i"],["1","singular","i","nom"]),"1","singular",""),v(["eat"],"past","ind","","active","1","singular",nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],adve(places([]),times([]),manners([])),using(["using"],nps([det1("a"),[]],"fork"),"3","singular","i","acc")),"3","singular",""),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([]),"i","pos")

s(nps(["mi"],["1","singular","mi","nom"]),"1","singular"),v(["fn~aamri"]","perf","ind","","active","1","singular",nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],adve(places([]),times([]),manners([])),using([""],nps([epsilon,[]],"salndu"),"3","singular","ndu","acc")),"3","singular")),howmuch([]),with1(epsilon),advs1([]),"i","pos")

mi ñaamrii salndu

Example 7b. i ate with John

s(nps(["i"],["1","singular","i","nom"]),"1","singular",""),v(["eat"],"past","ind","","active","1","singular",nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],adve(places([]),times([]),manners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(["with"],nps([epsilon,[]],"John"),"3","singular","u","acc")),"3","singular","")),advs1([]),"i","pos")

s(nps(["mi"],["1","singular","mi","nom"]),"1","singular"),v(["fn~aamd"]","perf","ind","","active","1","singular",nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],nps(["","",""],adve(places([]),times([]),manners([]),using([]),howmuch([]),with1(["e"],nps([epsilon,[]],"John "),"3","singular","o","acc")),"3","singular")),advs1([]),"i","pos")

mi ñaamdii e John
Voodoo of West African Culture

African Language Research Project

November 5, 2004  Andrew E. Mitchell
The word "voodoo" comes from the West African word "vodun," meaning spirit.

This Afro-Caribbean religion mixed practices from many African ethnic groups such as the Fon, the Nago, the Ibos, Dahomeans, Congos, Senegalese, Haussars, Caplaous, Mondungues, Mandinge, Angolese, Libyans, Ethiopians, and the Malgaches.
Voodoo is an ancient religion practiced by more than 30 million people in the West African nations of Benin, Togo and Ghana. Due to its numerous deities, animal sacrifice and spirit possession, voodoo is one of the most misunderstood religions on the globe.

Voodoo has been sensationalized by the cinema, demonized by Christian missionaries and spoofed in New Orleans tourist shops.
African slaves brought voodoo with them to plantations in Brazil, Haiti, Cuba and Louisiana. But 400 years later, the religion still remains a central part of spiritual life for millions living in West Africa. Voodoo is a derivative of the world’s oldest known religions, which have been around in Africa since the beginning of human civilization.
Practitioners believe that nothing and no event has a life of its own and that the universe is all one. God is believed to be manifested through the spirits of ancestors who can bring good or harm and must be honored in ceremonies.
Customs...

Rituals include prayers, drumming, dancing, singing and animal sacrifice.
The serpent is a heavy figure in the Voodoo faith. The high priest and/or priestess of the faith (often called Papa or Maman) are the mouthpiece for the expression of the serpent's power. The supreme deity is Bon Dieu. There are hundreds of spirits called Loa who control nature, health, wealth and happiness of mortals. During Voodoo ceremonies these Loa can possess the bodies of the ceremony participants. Loa appear by "possessing" the faithful, who in turn become the Loa, relaying advice, warnings and desires.

Music and dance are key elements to Voodoo ceremonies. Ceremonies were often termed "Night Dancing" or "Voodoo Dancing". The dance is an expression of spirituality, of connection with divinity and the spirit world.
Modern day’s perception of voodoo rites and rituals often concentrate on the evil or malicious side although there are healing spells, nature spells, love spells, purification spells, joyous celebration spells. Spirits may be invoked to bring harmony and peace, birth and rebirth, increased abundance of luck, material happiness, renewed health. Sorcerers called botono can be summoned to put a hex on an enemy, or bo, using the wicked power of a voodoo spirit. Human sacrifices in West Africa ended more than a century ago.
Voodoo Today...

Voodoo remains a legitimate religion in a number of areas of the world. The Ewe people of southern Togo and southeastern Ghana, two countries in West Africa, are devout believers.

The Voodoo religion developed further among slaves in the Caribbean who incorporated elements of Catholicism. Voodoo is an inseparable part of Haitian art, literature, music and film. Hymns are played on the radio and voodoo ceremonies are broadcast on television along with Christian services. Voodoo is today the national religion of more than 7 million people.
African Languages and Information and Communication Technology (ICT):  
Key Elements for the Future

Paper to be presented at the  
Fourth Conference on Preserving African Languages,  
University of Maryland – Eastern Shore, Salisbury, MD  
Nov. 4-7, 2004

Donald Z. Osborn, Ph.D.  
Director, Bisharat, Ltd.  
and  
Instructor, Chengdu University of Technology, Chengdu, China
3) Lack of multilingual capacities on computers and the internet in Africa effectively limits many people’s access to full use of the technology. This is a broader definition of access than that commonly used in discussions of the digital divide.  
4) Reliance almost exclusively on English, French, and Portuguese for the transmission of information and new knowledge (see Enguehard and Mboj 2003) puts people who are not skilled in these languages, and arguably the societies of which they are a part, at a disadvantage.  
5) The issue certainly goes further, as it is legitimate to ask what sort of future there is for languages that are not used actively in ICT.

In the following, the current state of African languages and ICT is briefly surveyed and reasons for their not being more used are examined.

B. Brief Overview of the Current State of African Languages and ICT

The relative level of use of African languages in computing and on the internet is hard to quantify but important to at least characterize. To begin with, it is clear that African languages are not yet widely used in the content of computing applications or on the internet. We can deduce this for instance from the very small amount of software localized even for major African languages and the infrequency and character of such web content as one does find in African languages.

This situation obviously arises from the underlying sociolinguistic, language policy, and educational contexts, though in this paper these will not be explored in depth. However, it is worth noting that computers and the internet, like formal educational systems a century earlier, have been introduced and disseminated as more or less monolingual media using one or another European language. This is a reflection of both the dominance of the languages inherited from colonization in ICT and the use of these languages by those people in Africa most likely to have access to the technology.

A quick overview of web content, use in e-mail, and use in other aspects of computing (including in non-internet applications and in localization of software), helps to elucidate the situation.

1) The Web

African languages are represented on the web, but not prominently as media of communication. There are few surveys that document this. A study by Diki-Kidiri and Edema (2003) did find a significant number of sites that treat African languages in one way or another, but these generally have minimal content in the languages themselves. A large

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3 There are some sources that describe multiple definitions of access. For instance, Telecommons (2000) discusses “physical access” to ICT infrastructure and applications, and “soft access,” which we define as software and applications which are designed to enable rural African users to utilize ICTs for their own needs and uses once the physical access has been established.” The organization Bridges.org goes further to define twelve dimensions of what it calls “real access,” of which “relevant content” mentions language (see http://www.bridges.org/digitaldivide/realaccess.html).
computer training (including basic literacy) in national languages. Beyond such anecdotal evidence however, there are apparently no surveys of such non-internet use.

4) Software and web-interface localization

Localization of software and web-interfaces for African languages is an area that has been getting increasing attention. The recent announcement from Microsoft Corporation (2004) concerning its increased work on localizing its software, including for Africa, simply gives this issue a higher profile. There have been other efforts for localizing software on smaller scales for several years.7 One open-source software localization project for South African languages, Translate.org.za, has received a fair amount of attention, recently announcing completion of software in Zulu, Sepedi, and Afrikaans. Another open source localization project, in Uganda, released a web browser in Luganda. There are also some African projects that have produced software for composition in African languages but without language localized commands, including several based in Nigeria - Konyin,8 Afarà,9 and ALT-I.10

As for web-interfaces, the popular search engine Google has a program for localized versions that already have several African language versions translated by volunteers. A “V-webmail” e-mail interface was recently localized for Swahili.11 There may be more of this sort of language localization going on than is apparent.12

C. Reasons for Current Low of Use of African Languages in ICT

Despite the examples cited in the previous section, African language use in ICT appears to be marginal in Africa. Why is that? First of all, the factors that define the digital divide also tend to minimize the potential for African language use in ICT. Connectivity is centered on cities and towns where official languages – the same languages that are dominant on the internet – may be more widely spoken. In addition, only people with means and education, who are also more likely to have facility in use of the official languages, can access computers and internet connections. The digital divide therefore is arguably more localized than bridged, being replicated on national and local levels along the lines of deeper social, economic, and linguistic divides.13 In effect there are a number

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7 For example, a Somali language word processor, “Hikaadiye,” is at least five years old – http://www.somitek.com/
8 See http://www.konyin.com/
9 See http://www.pin.itgo.com/afara/
11 See http://webmail.variimedia.de . One needs to have an account to fully access the service, but it is possible to see Swahili among the language options.
12 Localization extends to other ICTs as well. For instance, one project is localizing mobile telephone technology in Afrikaans, Sesotho, Swahili, Xhosa and Zulu (Shanglee 2004).
13 Another perspective is offered by Keniston (in press) who writes in terms of four digital divides of which one is linguistic and cultural. The other three are socioeconomic within countries, digital between North and South, and the gap between the technical elite and everyone else. A roundtable on the digital divide at UCLA considered “a whole range of digital disparity gaps” among which language issues figure prominently (Afnan-Manns and Dorr 2003).
reasons including the multiplicity of languages, complexities in handling their scripts, and lack of literacy in them. He further offered the opinion that African language use in ICT is fifteen years off, if it ever happens.

Such argumentation in the end resembles the vicious circle of rationalization that hobbles foreign assistance to literacy efforts: it is sometimes argued on the one hand that printing materials in African languages is pointless since few people know how to read these languages, and on the other hand that it makes little sense to conduct literacy training in these languages since there is so little to read in them.\textsuperscript{16}

However, even where foreign-funded initiatives would be more favorably inclined to multilingual ICT there is little incentive to initiate efforts for African languages. This author’s communication with the BusyInternet center in Accra, for instance, yielded generally positive but ultimately unenthusiastic appraisals of the potential for providing basic Ghanaian language computing capacities to their systems.

2) \textit{Structural factors}

There are several structural factors limiting African language use. Some of these relate to standardization of orthography, which in some cases is subject to change or individual experimentation,\textsuperscript{17} and in more than a few cases varies for the same language across borders.\textsuperscript{18} A significant number of less widely spoken languages apparently do not have any established orthographies.

Another factor is that of special characters or non-Latin scripts used in many orthographies that required specialized fonts but now can use Unicode fonts.\textsuperscript{19} However, there is still some debate on the Unicode standard’s provisions for certain diacritical characters used in some languages which currently pose some inconveniences (see Tassé 2003). On the whole, though, the problem is that the use of Unicode is still not widely understood among technicians and systems administrators on the continent.

This in turn relates to a lack of intersection between language policies and ICT policies in most African countries. In fact, it appears that there is little collaboration between linguists and ICT technicians in Africa. Similarly, in development agencies there is generally a lack of knowledge about African languages and linguistics or about basic technical options to facilitate computing in multiple languages (especially in the case where characters or scripts beyond standard ASCII are used). The opinion of the individual with DFI

\textsuperscript{16} The author has encountered such arguments in Niger.

\textsuperscript{17} In Niger, for instance, the most recent revision of orthographies dates to 1999. In the case of the Igbo language of southeastern Nigeria, a recent dictionary (Echuede 1998) departed from established practice by substituting a diacritical mark on vowels and /c/ for /ch/, a decision that aroused some controversy.

\textsuperscript{18} Significant effort has gone into trying to harmonize transcriptions of cross-border languages, including international expert meetings facilitated by UNESCO several decades ago (see http://www.bisharat.net/Documents/). Nevertheless there are frequently small differences.

\textsuperscript{19} The various issues of African orthographies and ICT are surveyed by the author elsewhere (Osborn 2001).
Beyond supporting existing web content creation efforts there is a need to consider other creative approaches to increasing the amount of material on the web accessible in African languages. These could include for instance:

3) Seeking to put extant African language texts on the web
4) Leveraging cutting-edge technology to create content that does not rely primarily on text, to render text into speech and vice-versa, and translate text in other languages into African tongues

These issues are discussed below.

1) Supporting existing efforts

Support for efforts to develop mono- or multilingual web content in Africa languages first needs to take account of who is developing the content for whom, perhaps using Ballantyne’s schema mentioned above. The support itself can take various forms such as means to finance or encourage such work in Africa, and ways to facilitate communication among people doing it wherever they are.

A workshop on African languages and the internet at the 2002 African preparatory conference in Bamako for the World Summit on the Information Society in Bamako, for instance, proposed establishment of a “Highway of African Multilingual Information” fund to support creation and maintenance of African language web content.\(^\text{20}\) Although this proposal does not appear to have been acted on, the idea of donor support for African language content is one that should be seriously considered in any long-term digital divide strategy on the continent. The mechanics of such a program could involve something as simple as annual prizes for websites developed in Africa with African language content, something more complicated to run like trainings, or other approaches.

Any effort to support African language content creation also needs ways to facilitate communication among people working on separate projects, including Africans and others in Africa, Africans in the diaspora,\(^\text{21}\) and others abroad who are motivated to help. There are already several electronic fora for discussion of issues related to African language in ICT which seem to have demonstrated the potential of this medium for fostering exchange of information and even collaboration on small projects.\(^\text{22}\) The possibility of organizing conferences or meetings should also be considered.


\(^\text{21}\) The African diaspora’s role in African language web content production seems to be a significant if overlooked factor (this author has touched on it elsewhere – Osborn 2004). Use of internet among diaspora communities in other ways is already a noted factor (Ajibewa and Akinrinade 2005).

technologies could also be important. Could ICT in Africa thus evolve in a way that is both "neo-oral" and written?

In addition, ways could be sought to better utilize images to communicate with various audiences. This may be done most effectively with audio and supported by text. Several years ago for instance the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Mauritius set up a prototype Agricultural Information System using images and audio files in local languages to communicate with extension agents and farmers in rural areas on crop diseases. The idea was that even an illiterate person could navigate the presentation by listening to the audio and clicking on the appropriate images. Such presentations could be multiplied in templates for adaptation to the local situations and languages. It is possible to use this approach to significantly multiply web-based content that can be targeted for many varied audiences in Africa.

B. Tools

Tools that facilitate the use of African languages in ICT and the production of material such as web content in them should also be a focus in a strategy to enhance use of these languages. Several specific elements are important, including fonts, keyboard layouts, software localization, and machine translation

1) Fonts

Although many African languages do not have special script or character requirements and thus can be typed in a range of readily available fonts, others require fonts with modified Latin letters (extended characters) or non-Latin alphabets. There is a basic need for more quality Unicode fonts to facilitate use of these languages. This is both to be able to view text on the web and to be able to compose text.

2) Keyboard layouts

Along with fonts there is a need both for means to input the necessary characters and for standardization of layouts. When extended Latin characters or diacritics (sometimes used to mark tone) are needed to compose text in a language, alternative keyboard layouts can be designed to facilitate input. This can be done in a number of ways using programs like Tavultesoft’s Keyman program, Microsoft’s keyboard layout utility, or simply by assigning keys within a wordprocessor program. These are not particularly hard and in fact there is an increasing number of these available for various languages and countries or regions.

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23 See http://www.uom.ac.mu/Faculties/foa/AIS/Cdpetis/Default.htm
24 These include: key combinations (with the Alt or Ctrl keys), deadkeys (where one key typed before another yields a certain character or diacritic), or substitution (simply reassigning a key to another character).
25 See for instance the Tavultesoft site http://www.tavultesoft.com or the page at http://www.bisharat.net/A12N/Projects.
challenges. At this time, a strategy to facilitate use of the continent’s maternal languages with ICT should focus on facilitating creation of web content and development of software tools, and such a strategy should address several elements as outlined above. In the longer run there are other issues to be addressed and probably new dynamics that will come into play.


Unsurprisingly, these African researchers and their foreign counterparts reduce those cultural
groups studied to “tribes” whose “religions” revolve around the axis of witchcraft, ambiguous
ancestors, and cultic deities, and whose general ways of life are one of timeless primitivism anchored
in obsolete values. Given these “facts” reflective of the realities and challenges of research in the
African world, precisely the issues that surround linguistic competence in culture, this paper puts those
issues in the context of a language metaphor and provides some possibilities or paths in the dense
forest of research interactions that affect the African world. Consequently, certain fundamental
questions are raised for us to engage: Do peoples of the African world ask to be studied or even want
to be studied? What is the practical value of the theoretical posture that logically concludes African
researchers are the ones who should be studying and presenting the realities of the African world?
Should ethnographers who believe the object of ethnography is the “discovery” of the “cultural other”
and therefore language and cultural competency are not prerequisites be allowed to study the host?
And, in reality, can these same ethnographers and others be impeded in their quest for research objects
given the historically situated power relations between the non-African and African world? Do or can
those who are studied figure meaningfully into the equation of research and knowledge production,
evaluation, and valuation?

My objective in this brief essay is to use language as a metaphor to talk about research in the
African world given that the structure and function of research parallels that of language as a conduit
in the archiving and transmission of culture. Thus, in working towards an approach to the study of

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1 Two personal instances come to mind. During my graduate studies at Cornell University, I recall a moment where prior to
an interview (for my Masters thesis) with an elder named Mama Kuumba, she asked me, “Who are you doing this
[research] for?” I replied, “I am doing this research for you all (i.e., members of the organization upon which the case study
was based) and to fulfill a requirement for my graduate degree.” I was honest and sincere in my response, a response which
conveyed that I saw the value and meaning of the research for and beyond the members interviewed as well as the reality of
my position, then, as a graduate student and the mandates of that position. The second instance occurred in 2002 while
conducting interviews for my dissertation among indigenous healers in the Bono-Takyiman area of Central Ghana. After
scheduling an appointment and then meeting with Nana Kofi Kyeremeh, he asked what the interview questions were and
upon review decided not to go ahead with the interview, but allowed for an unrecorded conversation. I told him that I had
respect for his decline and appreciated it. For in the conversation, I learned from Nana Kofi Kyeremeh, as the most senior
healer in the Takyiman area, that those who study the medicinal and cultural systems of area receive information by
“healer-informants” who do not understand or uphold the sacredness of your vocation and, therefore, what they provide the
historian or anthropologist is data devoid of substance, particularly among the young indigenous healers. Nana Kofi
Kyeremeh passed in September of 2004.
there is no (non-ideological) evidence to support such a claim. Yet, the “standard” assertion that Wagadu collapsed with the Almoravid invasion in or about 1076 CE remains unquestioned as well as rooted into our thinking as an example of accepted reality.

The noun element refers to the ways in which we name or define people, animals, places, things, events, ideas or concepts. This element is concerned with apprehending the tangible and intangible by way of definitions or the names we create to identify, classify, talk and think about the foregoing categorical facets of reality. Generally, an article is used before a noun to qualify the specific or general nature of the noun itself, and, for our purposes, we assume that articles are a part of the noun element in terms of qualifying the singularity and/or plurality of definitions in the grammar of research language. In our definitions of African reality, we must be mindful of the bio-logic and the conceptual misfit of gender as an interpretative and organizing principle; the multilayered texture of reality apprehended through unambiguous African cultural constructs; the possessive or ownership of African knowledge production, valuation, and evaluation; and that our definitions must be proper or appropriate in its engagement of our collectivity based upon core principles and distinctive values, the abstract and concrete, the remote and the immediate, and the measurable and immeasurable layers of African life and living. Linked to the noun element is the pronoun element, which introduces synonyms (as concepts and phrases) that reflect or mirror the meaning(s) of our definitions so that the sentences or statements about our subject(s) are less cumbersome and repetitive, and that we are clear and accurate in our re-presentation to audiences who are academically intolerant to ineffective scholastic language. The idea here is analogous to offering cow’s milk to the person who is lactose intolerant. The language of our presentation should approximate the day-to-day language of the

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the reduction of Africans to “emotional beings” who were de-linked from the structure of history, civilization, and, of course, rational scientism—the latter being the benchmark of European culturally-structured thought and behavior. For Africans, the interjection element is not concerned with the conveyance of emotion as feelings solely, but e-motion as a reflection of reality being “spirit driven” and structurally linked to the temporal and ideational dimension of life. Though uncommon in formal academic prose, the interjection element is essential as an expression of a simultaneous personal, communal, and cosmic African spirit and, by extension, culture for researchers and writers of African people worldwide.

The Semantics of our Research Language

Semantics refer to the relationship between concepts and meanings, largely, in terms of literal or denotative meaning(s) and figurative or connotative meaning(s). Concepts or terms do not have singular nor simple meanings. Thus, the concepts we employ, the meaning(s) we ascribe to them, and the reality they are used to interpret or make sense of must be consistent with that reality in all its (comprehensible) scope and dimensions. Let us consider the concept of “chronology” as a conceptual misfit or concept that neither fits nor is consistent with the reality of African “history.” Once it was “discovered” that Africans had a “history,” the notion of chronology became the axis around which the evaluation, organization, and re-interpretation of African “history” resolved. The problem is that the concept of chronology derives from a foreign language and culturally-ordered belief system which reduces reality to “objects” that can manipulated and controlled, links chronology as time and movement to the “idea of progress,” and represents, ultimately, the historically situated power relations between the African and the non-African in terms of whose “story” is told, how and by whom it is presented. Most indigenous African societies, and those of the African world, do not organize or represent their narratives in ways that conform to the notion of “chronology” as described above and, as a result, we must investigate and propagate the indigenous modes of telling the African’s story. The recently departed Jeli Djimo Kouyate, so-called oral historian and musician, is the 149th generation of
African Language Translations: “Eureka” for Conflict Resolutions in Africa?

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ABSTRACT

This research reviews the historic role that language has played in unifying diverse peoples across culture, and in fermenting tacit peace in political and diplomatic alliances. By evaluating the progress made by the African Language Research Project (ALRP) in translating and developing readers in several African Languages, it theorizes that it may well become the alchemy for cultural understanding and in effect a Renaissance for conflict resolutions in Africa.

Introduction

Conflict resolution has been defined as the process of resolving a dispute or a conflict by providing each side’s needs, and adequately addressing their interests so that they are satisfied with the outcome (www.bambooweb.com). The goal is to end conflicts before they start and escalate into physical fighting. Conflicts breed tension, and effective intervention is more feasible when a neutral, usually mutually respectable third party initiates mediation or volunteers to act as the mediator. Several identified methods of resolution may include but not limited to conciliation, mediation, arbitration, or litigation.

Arbitration is a form of third party intervention in which the feuding parties agree to voluntarily submit their dispute to a trusted and detached third party to hear
misinterpretation of verbal or nonverbal intents could create other unforeseen problems. Adding these difficulties to the core cause of the conflict, may present an explosive and difficult to manage situation.

**Theoretical Perspective**

Conflict theories developed as an offshoot of labeling, and societal reactions to power relations in a given society (Austin Turk, 1964; Richard Quinney; 1965). Conflict theorists assume that societies are more appropriately characterized by conflict rather than by consensus. By this, they imply that consensus is an aberration – a temporal state of affairs that will either return to conflict or will have to be maintained at great expense (Williams and McShane, 2003). Conflict theory is built on the premise of the behavior of the criminal law rather that of individual behavior. It describes conflict as an inevitable but normal phenomenon in any society of people working together, sharing diverse thoughts, concerns, perspectives, and goals. An acceptable manner of coexistence depends on how the parties resolve their differences.

**Conflicts in Africa**

In pre-colonial Africa, there were nations, not countries. There were people, not boundaries, hence conflicts were minimal because of commonality of cultures and shared norms. Where conflicts arise, there were established ways of resolving them. Very often, conflicts are preempted and prevented through inter-community/tribal marriage and trading alliances, religious ritualism, and cultural adulteration. Good examples of each of these methods of conflict prevention and social integration exist.
intermarriages, and cultural invasion and assimilation. Similar displacements and realignments had earlier shaped the establishment and expansion of the great ancient west Sudanese empires of Ghana, Mali, Songhai. Other cases of cultural reintegration are well illustrated in the glorious days of Benin, Kanem Bornu, and Oyo empires - all in pre-colonial West Africa.

**Colonial Influence**

When Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal sent out his captains to explore the unknown seas from Ceuta in the Cape Verde Islands in 1415, he unknowingly laid the foundation for the worst catastrophe that will occlude Africa in centuries to come. Of course he had intended to discover an alternate sea route to the commercial spices of India that will not pass through the Muslim states of North Africa. He also believed that the route will link him up with the legendary Christian Prester John with whom he would unite to fight the Muslims.

Years after Henry's death, the voyages of discovery resulted in the evil Trans Atlantic slave trade. Led by the British (Anene, 1995), most other European countries like the Dutch, the Danes, the Portuguese, the French, the Germans, the Swedes, and Spaniards took to the spoil. The slave trade devastated and destabilized organized life in Africa. The onset of the industrial Revolution and its attendant need for African raw materials however, forced Britain to champion abolitionist movements. It had concluded that trade in African raw materials can only succeed if the trade in slaves was discouraged. With the slave trade dead or dying out, the Europeans organized another *coup de grace* in the form of 1884 Berlin Conference on Africa (without an African present). The conference fired
a few. We are also not strangers to the dormant but mutating imbroglio in Somalia, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. These are African problems that have defied world solutions. While we cannot with absolute certainty claim that these incidents would have been avoided in the absence of colonialism, it will not be out of place to assume that the source of most of the intractable conflicts in Africa today are rooted in the inconsiderate huddling of diverse peoples into enclaves called countries, with artificial barriers called boundaries.

In the face of all hopelessness, it seems that the translation and study of African languages holds the key to unlocking the secrets to African peaceful coexistence. The African Language Research Project at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore has done a good job in the translation of several African languages. It has completed, or is in the process of completing readers in Swahili, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Wolof, Akan, and a host of other African languages.

The results of the work of ALRP would add multilateral muscle to conflict resolution because the more diverse a third party, the more acceptable and less suspicious the feuding parties would be of their imput in a conflict. A reading knowledge of many African languages may provide the much elusive roadmap toward reconciling differences between African groups by a neutral third party who will be able to engage in direct mediation rather than through an interpreter whose misinterpretation of body language might exacerbate the conflicts. More readers in African languages will help improve literacy in African languages, thereby providing an array of willing foot soldiers of peace that would be willing to engage in direct face-to-face arbitration and mutual resolutions. The rapid hiring
Is there Anything Minor About Minority Languages? Another Look at the Politics of Language in Zimbabwe


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Abstract
The paper provides relevant socio-linguistic evidence, which seeks to demonstrate that there is really nothing inferior about minority languages. The main argument put forward is that Zimbabwe’s minority languages are equally complex in terms of their structures and socio-cultural functions, hence the need to preserve them through a more accommodative and pluralistic national language policy. The article concludes by suggesting recommendations that are worth considering in the quest for improving the use of Zimbabwean minority languages in education, the media as well as in other public spheres.

1.1. Introduction and Background
Both colonial and post-colonial governments have for a long time unfairly treated minority languages in Zimbabwe and in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The undermining of the value of minority languages and cultures has largely been propagated, sustained and legitimized through the formulation of non-pluralistic and unpopular language policies that over-promoted ‘official’ and ‘national’ languages. This kind of a scenario entailed that the statuses, which languages in a multilingual situation enjoy or suffer from, are in the long run, a result of the language policies that obtain in different countries.

The categorization of languages into official, national and minority languages (following Stewart’s (1962) and Ferguson’s (1966) formulaic typologies of language classification) is oftentimes based on non-linguistic factors such as the quest for political stability, national unity and the sometimes irrational fear of ‘tribalism’. Therefore, because language planning and policy issues are mainly influenced by political rather than socio-cultural and linguistic imperatives, languages spoken by politically weaker groups tend to suffer from the statuses imposed upon them. In Zimbabwe, for instance, English enjoys the status of being the only official language, the language of government, business, tertiary education and international communication. SiNdebele and ChiShona follow after English as the only two
preservation and promotion of minority languages and cultures (see for instance, the implications of the 1987 Education Act chapter 55 discussed under 1.3 below). The evidence presented in this article, therefore, seeks to demonstrate that the relegation of Zimbabwe’s minority languages into this category has nothing to do with their presumed substandard linguistic structures and socio-cultural functions. In attempting to dispel this myth about the languages under study, the article critically examines the following:

- The theoretical foundations of traditional approaches to language policy and planning in relation to African multilingualism;
- The population and geographical distribution of minority language speakers in Zimbabwe;
- The inherent socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of minority languages that make them worth preserving for posterity; as well as
- The treatment of minority languages in education, the print and electronic media in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The study concludes by suggesting detailed recommendations, which government planners, policy makers and other interested parties to the language debate in Africa, may want to consider in their policy assessments and evaluations.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

The present day minority status of languages and cultures is a creation of colonial and postcolonial societies. During the pre-colonial era language and culture diversification was abundant and safeguarded by the fact people could live in relative isolation for prolonged periods. This situation promoted processes of unimpeded divergence and socio linguistic pluralism. However, with the accessibility of every part of the world owing to modern and efficient transport and telecommunications systems, the multicultural and multilingual African situation of yesteryears has gradually but surely been threatened. These developments, which are premised on the capitalist philosophy, have generated some kind of forced linguistic “assimilation following the principle of the survival of the fittest, or in a terminology more acceptable to Western ideals of democracy: majority rule” (Kubik, 1989:2).

It suffices to note that, in line with Lomax’s (1973) argument, in the realm of language and culture, majority rule means discouragement of minorities. In this regard, majority rule turns out to be devoid of the basic democratic principles that it purports to champion. This is precisely the case because some sections of society will be denied the right to exercise their cultural and linguistic freedoms.

While the process of forced linguistic and cultural assimilation can be harnessed to promote political and national unity, it is also pertinent to observe that this would be achieved at a superficial level, especially considering that the so-called national unity is normally an abstract entity “purchased at the expense of the identity and even creative potential of smaller groups” (Lomax, 1973:475).

This is article is therefore predicated upon and informed by the conceptual and empirical thinking, which affirms that language is the most important symbol of a people’s identity and cohesion. Communities that are deprived of their languages may become paralyzed, developing a ‘no future’ mentality in the long run. The deliberate destruction of minority languages, or the reluctance to preserve them is counterproductive for it may lead to the demise of minority cultures. Ngugi (1981: 15)
It is important to note that language planning is not an event but a process, which entails making a choice or choices among the various options at the planner’s disposal. The choice of a language and the uses to which it is put is central to a people’s definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, and indeed in relation to the entire universe (Ngugi, 1981). This means that there has to be always a set of criteria to be followed in the language planning process.

In Africa language planning processes have for a long time been motivated by the desire to harmonize the functional rivalry between indigenous African languages and imported languages, which are usually those of the former colonizers. The general trend among most post-colonial African states has been that of giving the high functional status to colonial languages like English, French and Portuguese. This kind of language planning has resulted in exoglossic language policies, which stipulate that the imported languages are the ones to be “used for official purposes of nationwide communication and in formal education” (Ekkehard Wolff, 2000: 299).

Exoglossic language policies, which view the African language problem only in terms colonial versus indigenous language, have tended to ignore some of the salient problems emanating from functional rivalry among the African languages themselves. It would appear that the existing language policies in Africa have been heavily influenced by some western oriented typologies and formulas for language categorization. Chief among these typologies are those propounded by Kloss (1966 and1968), Rustow (1968) and Stewart and Ferguson (1962 and 1966). In the case of Zimbabwe and other postcolonial African states, language planning appears to be part and parcel of the top-down, authoritarian, hegemonic, nationalist nation-building projects intolerant of cultural diversity and linguistic pluralism.

1.3.1. Status Planning
This approach to language planning is also known as ‘social’ or ‘external’ planning. Status planning is geared at establishing and developing the functional usage of a particular language or languages within a state (Ekkehard Wolff 2000: 333). The following imperatives constitute the basic goals of status planning:

- It is part of national language politics which should ideally be based on the research of socio-linguists and educationists;
- It seeks to establish the choice of languages to be used for various socio-cultural purposes such as wider national and international communication (official languages); educational and cultural purposes (national languages) as well as local communal or regional non-formal functions (minority languages).

Thus, for any language to be considered for the acquisition of particular functional roles or status, it must meet certain minimum requirements such as those put forward by Stewart and Ferguson (see 1.3.1 above).

It apparently appears that status planning is the paradigm that has had so much influence on the language planning processes that gave birth to the Zimbabwe national language policy. However, it is important to observe that status planning seems to lack the socio-linguistic rigor that is needed in any meaningful language policy. For instance, status planning tends to be so much guided by political and numerical muscle at the expense of a rigorous appreciation of the linguistic and cultural dimensions of language. As Ekkehard (2000: 335) has correctly observed:
P.J. Wentzel’s recordings of the histories of the Venda and Kalanga people. C.M. Doke (1931) and G. Fortune (1970s) also collected a great deal of valuable ethno-linguistic information in Zimbabwe. The most recent and illuminating study is J.S. Hachipola’s 1993 - 1997 Survey of the Minority Languages of Zimbabwe, which culminated in a 1998 book publication with the same title.

The exact number of minority languages spoken is Zimbabwe is not clear. Different scholars have given figures that vary from 13 to 16. This is largely the case because socio-linguists are often not agreed on whether certain varieties are fully-fledged languages or they are regional variations (dialects) of some recognized languages. For example, Wentzel (1983) argues that Lilima is an independent language spoken in the Bulilima district of Plumtree and among the Mangwato people of Botswana. On the other hand, Hachipola (1998) is of the opinion that Lilima is actually a dialect of Kalanga. These controversies notwithstanding, it is, however, generally agreed that the number of minority languages spoken in Zimbabwe is certainly more than fourteen.

It suffices to note that due to space and time limitations, I have not been able to collect information on all the minority languages in Zimbabwe. A random selection of five officially recognized minority languages has been made for illustrative purposes. The selected languages are Kalanga, Venda, Sotho, Tonga and Nambya. Each one of these languages is separately dealt with in the subsequent sections of the study, and it is hoped that the findings will certainly be representative enough of the general socio-linguistic nature of all minority languages in Zimbabwe.

2.1.1. Kalanga
This language is mainly spoken in the southwestern part of Zimbabwe. According to Fortune (1959), the Kalanga language has six sub-varieties, which include:

- Nanzwa
- Lilima
- Kalanga
- Rozwi
- Twamamba, and
- Lemba

Kalanga happens to be the dominant language in the Bulilima and Mangwe districts of Matabeleland South province. These two districts have a total of thirty-three wards and Kalanga is the major language in twenty-three of these as shown in Table 2.1 below².

² The statistics in Table 2.1 and subsequent Tables for different languages were adapted from Hachipola (1998).
heritage embedded in, and expressed through language (Mpofu, 2003). This happens to be the case because according to the Zimbabwe National Language Policy enunciated in the 1987 Education Act chapter 55, minority languages (and by implication, minority cultures) should be used as medium of instruction only up to the third Grade of primary school. Beyond that English and Ndebele and/or Shona should be enforced. This means that children from minority groups are forced to acquire ‘foreign’ languages and cultures to the detriment of their own pride and identity.

2.1.2. Sotho

The Sotho language, just like Kalanga, is found in the southwestern part of Zimbabwe. This language is mainly spoken in Gwanda North and Gwanda South districts, that is, in areas that include Ntepe, Manama, Kafusi and the greater part of Chief Nhambwa’s area. Outside the Gwanda district, small pockets of Sotho speakers are found in the following areas: Kezi, Mawaza, Makokoe, Mashaba, Mapate, Vela, Tshongwe, Dendele, Nyambi, Mankonkoni, Shashe and Mpoengs.

Hachipola (1998: 17) states that the Sotho language has four recognized varieties, which he identifies as:

- Kurutsi
- Birwa
- Sotho, and
- Mangwatho

In terms of number of native speakers, close sixty thousand people in Gwanda South and Gwanda North as shown in Table 2.2 below speak the Sotho language.³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward/Communal Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dominant Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Garanyembwa</td>
<td>7,405</td>
<td>Sotho, Ndebele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Silonga</td>
<td>4,613</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Manama</td>
<td>5,948</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nhwal</td>
<td>5,573</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Halisupi</td>
<td>7,497</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kafusi</td>
<td>5,567</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gungwe</td>
<td>5,604</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ntalale</td>
<td>4,822</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Lushangwe</td>
<td>4,987</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Gobadema</td>
<td>3,526</td>
<td>Sotho, Ndebele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Farms</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>Sotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>55,857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the above statistics are not as recent as one would have wanted them to be, they clearly demonstrate that in Gwanda district at least, Sotho is the dominant language. Ndebele is dominant in two wards only, and for that matter this dominance is shared with Sotho. This goes a long way to show that in those areas where it is spoken, Sotho is not a minority language at all. One wonders therefore why this language has been relegated to a vernacular language status with Ndebele being imposed as the language of education in a predominantly Sotho speaking area.

³ There has never been a systematic count of the ethnic groups in Zimbabwe since the 1982 National Census. So the number of Sotho speakers is likely to be much higher than 60,000 as of now.
The Tonga people used to live as big communities along the Zambezi Valley but they were displaced after the construction of the Kariba dam in 1957. The flooding caused by the dam along the banks of the river necessitated the relocation of the Tonga people to much safer ground. This is one of the reasons why the Tonga people are today scattered as small pockets in many districts. It can be argued therefore that the Tonga speaking people and even other minority groups in Zimbabwe have been accorded the minority status precisely because of socio-economic and political developments that have taken place in the history of Zimbabwe – from the colonial period to the present day. Their minority status is not based on any meaningful population figures or socio-linguistic factors.

2.1.5. Nambya
Nambya is mainly spoken in Hwange district and some parts of Tsholotsho, Nyamandlovu and Victoria Falls. According to Wentzel (1983: 25) Nambya is a variety of what calls Western Shona, and is spoken “as far north as the banks of the Zambezi River at the Victoria Falls, including Wankie Game Reserve, Wankie and Nyamandlovu districts.” Wentzel goes on to cite Posselt’s (1935) account, which links the Nambya people to the Karanga of South Eastern Zimbabwe. It is mainly because of these ethno-linguistic accounts that many scholars have described Nambya as a dialect of Shona. However, due to the influence from Ndebele and Tonga, Nambya markedly departs from all other Shona dialects, hence it is today considered as one of Zimbabwe’s numerous minority languages.

In terms of population distribution in Hwange district, the situation of Nambya is as shown in Table 2.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dominant Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chidobe</td>
<td>3 910</td>
<td>Ndebele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kachecheti</td>
<td>4 046</td>
<td>Ndebele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nemananga</td>
<td>3 145</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chikandakubi</td>
<td>3 518</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mbizha</td>
<td>3 305</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Jambezi</td>
<td>3 678</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sidinda</td>
<td>2 127</td>
<td>Dombé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sinamangani</td>
<td>3 305</td>
<td>Dombé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Nekabandama</td>
<td>3 467</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Nekatambe</td>
<td>4 890</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Makwanda</td>
<td>4 211</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Silewu</td>
<td>4 365</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Lupote</td>
<td>5 292</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Mabale</td>
<td>3 505</td>
<td>Nambya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>52 764</strong></td>
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Despite the abundance of indisputable evidence pointing to the dominance of Nambya and other minority languages in Hwange district, Ndebele, which is widely spoken in only two out of fourteen wards, has been imposed as the language to be taught in all schools in the district. The people of Hwange district and others in the so-called minority language areas have reluctantly accepted this situation because it is
cultures, it is depressing to note that up to now; the proposals have not yet been implemented. Actually, minority languages spoken in areas like Binga, Hwange and Kariba are still struggling to be recognized up to Grade three. Furthermore, these proposals are not supported with the requisite human and material resources. For instance, there is not even a single teachers' college in the country that trains minority language teachers. The government has also not made available any form of funding to facilitate the production of teaching and learning materials for minority languages.

The timing of the circular is another glaring inadequacy of the proposal, which shows that the government was just but trying to apply cosmetics to a bullfrog. The document, whose recommendations were supposed to be implemented on the 1st of January 2002, is ironically dated 3rd January 2002. One just wonders as to how education officers and school heads would have retrospectively implemented such a belated directive.

It is in view of the foregoing inconsistencies and inadequacies that would certainly dismiss these proposals as another piece of politically motivated propaganda document designed to lure the votes of minority groups in the March 2002 presidential elections. This is how far the politics of language has gone in post-colonial Zimbabwe, albeit to the detriment of minority languages and cultures.

The problem relating to the teaching of minority languages is also due to the fact that most provinces in Zimbabwe bear names of 'tribes' hence all peoples in the provinces, whether they are Ndebele/Shona or not, are required to identify themselves with the language of the tribe after which the province is named. In the words of Hachipola (1998: 46):

There is a deliberate policy, which seems to run with the following logic: if a school is in a Shona area then everybody is expected to speak Shona and if it is an area where Ndebele is officially considered to be the dominant language, then everybody should speak Ndebele. This is why teachers make pupils learn their language rather than the other way round.

All this is happening inspite of numerous studies done by educationists and sociologists, who show that for better understanding, children should be taught in their mother tongue. Teaching indigenous concepts to indigenous learners using a 'foreign' language is not the best way to the provision relevant quality education.

Finally, it must be noted that any government policy statement, which is not complimented with commensurate human and material resources as well as adequate enforcement measures, is likely to remain at the level of intent. There is therefore the need for political will in the form of unequivocal commitment of politicians to the implementation of government policies.

2.3. Minority Languages in the Media
On 25 January 1985 the then Minister of Information, Posts and Telecommunications, Dr Nathan Shamuyarira, summarized the role of the media in post-independence Zimbabwe in the following terms:

- To be a channel of dialogue between the various strata and interest groups in our society. That dialogue should focus on the real issues rather than on the sensational and the trivial.
Ndebele, for whatever reasons. Thus, while the mission statement of NFM suggests that the station seeks to make it possible for all people to participate in the cultural, social, religious and political life of the country, in practice, this is not the case. Minority groups are always unfairly left out of the national agenda.

On National Television, ZTV, minority languages are also conspicuously left out of the only television service provider in the country. Most ZTV programmes are in English and naturally, followed by Shona and Ndebele, which are given time-slots to read short news bulletins between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm everyday. The two national languages are also allocated time for drama programmes such as Amakorokoza (Ndebele) and Nzungu Muriva (Shona). There are also other current affairs programmes broadcast in Shona and Ndebele, for instance, Murimi waNhansi/Umlimi waNamhla and Toringepi. National events that include Independence Day and Heroes Day celebrations are also normally broadcast in Shona and Ndebele on ZTV.

The print media is no exception when it comes to the undermining of minority languages in Zimbabwe. There is not even a single weekly or daily newspaper that is written in any one of the Zimbabwean minority languages. Most newspapers publish in English with the exception of Umthunywa (Ndebele), Kwayedza (Shona) and the Times (a selection of humorous articles published in Shona and Ndebele).

In the final analysis, it can be noted that as in the case of education, there is a misconception on the part of the authorities that Shona and Ndebele are sufficient for purposes of information dissemination in the African population in Zimbabwe. Because of this misconstrued reasoning, minority groups are losing out on a number of vital programmes that are broadcast in the two national languages. Information on health issues, HIV/Aids, the land reform and other development programmes should be given to people in the languages they understand better and not in the languages that someone assumes they understand.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This article has attempted to marshal relevant socio-linguistic information, which demonstrates that there is really nothing minor about minority languages in Zimbabwe. The depressing and pathetic situation of these languages is actually a result of the ill-informed stereotypical perceptions that are motivated by political rather than valid socio-linguistic factors. This has resulted in minority languages getting a raw deal in the country’s education system, the print and electronic media. Minority language music and cultural programmes have very limited space in the media in Zimbabwe. Denying these groups of people an opportunity to play their own music and to celebrate their own cultures through their own languages is tantamount to depriving them of their basic human rights enshrined in the National Constitution.

Because of the oppression and discrimination that they are subjected to, the so-called minority groups in Zimbabwe have been forced to align themselves with, and assimilate the languages and cultures of more influential groups, which are typically associated with prestige, wealth and progress. It is this over-promotion of selected languages to the total exclusion of the rest from literary and artistic life, which has resulted in a situation where it is becoming difficult today to trace any minority language publications.
Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Higher Education in South Africa, Balmoral Hotel, Durban, 10 – 12 June.
Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB). “PANSALB’s Position on the Promotion of Multilingualism in South Africa”.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Development issues are strongly influenced by the language policy existing in a given community. This paper adopts the following definitions of language policy and language planning given by Bugarski (1982:18):

The term language policy here refers, briefly, to the policy of a society in the area of linguistic communication – that is, the set of positions, principles and decisions reflecting that community’s relationships to its verbal repertoire and communicative potential. Language planning is understood as a set of concrete measures taken within language policy to act on linguistic communication in a community, typically by directing the development of its languages.

It is Schiffman (1996), who perhaps best defines the context within which language policy is formulated. He states that “language policy” - is ultimately grounded in linguistic culture (p.5) ……… it (language policy) is primarily a social construct … whether or not a polity has such explicit text, policy as a cultural construct rests primarily on other conceptual elements – belief systems, attitudes, myths – the whole complex that we are referring to as linguistic culture which is the sum total of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, religions, structures and all other cultural ‘baggage’ that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their backgrounds. (p.276)

Two distinct issues emerge from this perspective: The first is the consideration that language policy can be understood to refer to the overt forms of language organisation – these are the legal, explicit, formalized or codified forms that distinguish language especially in formal set-ups.

Secondly, language policy also refers to the covert aspects – these refer to the implicit, informal, unstated, grassroots reality (Schiffman, ibid;27). Both approaches are products of the existing “social construct”

It is imperative therefore that in defining the role(s) of language in a multilingual set-up, we need to focus on the above stated distinctions so that those roles can be better understood.
many complex aspects of societal multilingualism because such complexity is inconvenient for the workings of the modern post-industrial state. As an instrument of political integration, complexity is inefficient.” Schiffman goes on to state that a conceptual framework that recognizes the complexity of societal multilingualism is essential.

The complexity referred to above should be seen in the contexts of Education, Administration, Economic harmonization and the Socio-cultural Integration paving way for political harmony.

Sewangi (undated;84) observes that:

Much as it is easy to identify the connection between technological know-how and economic development, it has not been easy to appreciate the connectivity between that technological know-how and language which is the basis for creating, developing and extending that knowledge (our translation).

Language therefore should be selected on the basis of appropriateness which “as described by many linguists (see Rubagumya, 1986: Massamba, 1993), should among other things, b e t hat which communicates t he i ntended m essage and is understood by the targeted people” (Sewangi, op.cit.;84) (our translation).

How then, can linguistic differences be best harnessed for effective development? This is the issue we shall focus on next.

3.0 MULTILINGUALISM IN EAST AFRICA

The East African states (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) are all multilingual. The linguistic structure includes Kikswahili, English and a variety of ethnic languages in each state, some spreading across borders in the continuum. The triglossic situation characteristic of the main language acquisition patterns by individuals and speech communities is a reflection of the social structures inherent in the existing language policy – overt or covert.

English has continued to overshadow other languages in Kenya and Uganda in most official communication. The language is indeed now encroaching on Kikswahili in
This commitment to the development of culture was concretized through the promotion and usage of Kiswahili as the appropriate medium for expressing those cultural norms and aspirations. Among the steps taken to consolidate these efforts were:

1. The creation of the post of Promoter of Kiswahili in the Ministry of Community Development and National Culture.

2. The formation of a Swahili Committee in the Ministry of Education to oversee the establishment of teaching materials and syllabuses.


4. The consolidation of the already existing Institute of Kiswahili Research (TUKI) and the Swahili Poets Association (UKUTA).

5. The formation of the “Jumuiya ya Kustawisha Kiswahili.”

These solid steps plus the Arusha declaration of 5/2/1967 saw the emergence of a truly genuine political culture integrated in a unifying language – Kiswahili. The making of Kiswahili the medium of primary instruction was perhaps the linguistic condition that favoured and has continued to favour the growth of Kiswahili in Tanzania most. Kiswahili is accepted in the entire Republic. As Abdulaziz (op.cit.173) goes on to observe:

“Swahili Culture has greatly influenced regional cultures in Tanzania. In turn regional cultures have in many ways enriched Swahili culture. The result of this bi-directional influence is the gradual emergence in Tanzania of a national culture which is a true synthesis of the various cultures of the country.”

The notion of linguistic diversity tamed into a united homogeneous whole is best represented by the Tanzanian policy. This positive change for development calls for concrete steps not only of having a clear-cut policy in place but also of ensuring that the cultural embodiment of the National aspirations is manifested through positive thinking, correct attitudes, respect decorum and identity. The language content should reflect the philosophy aspired
Awareness campaigns, the Constitutional Debate, Civic 
Education, Female Genital cutting, Education Review, 
Affirmative Action among others cannot be understood by 
the rural people, most of whom are to a large degree 
iliterate) in any other language except their own. The 
N.G.O.'s and other stakeholders should use as much as 
possible use the indigenous languages if they are to make 
any effective impact. It is clear therefore that language 
policy should be flexible to accommodate rural/regional, 
local national or international interests and needs. Where a 
common working language intelligible to the majority of the 
people is in place, like in Tanzania, then the role of the 
vernacular is minimized. The language that best fits the 
intended programme then deserves all the promotion it 
deserves.

4.3 Language gives people identity. Language embodies culture 
and thought processes. It is a vehicle of acculturation. The 
choice of the language of instruction and interaction is 
therefore paramount in the development of a people. 
Schiffman (ibid, 27) cites the case of France where 
multilingualism is perceived as a “pesky problem that would 
go away if people would only see the beauty of the policy” – 
in this case, the monolingual policy of promoting French as the 
only language of interaction in all spheres of life. On the 
other hand, the situation in Uganda discussed earlier in this 
paper reflects a polarized people without a common accord. 
A people hanging on to a colonial legacy of using English at 
the expense of their own indigenous languages. Even if 
English were to be seen here as “minimizing the complex 
problems of the modern post-industrial state”, it is indeed a 
tragedy because the National Identity of people cannot be 
substituted. As Abdulaziz correctly states, “Education must 
nationalize’ the children and give them a sense of common 
cultural identity compatible with the national ethos. “(Abdulaziz;op.cit;170)

The cultural identity for the East African peoples is 
embedded in their languages, culture and history. From 
these there should emerge a national ethos. The choice of 
the politically neutral Kiswahili language in both Kenya and 
Tanzania should be seen as the beginning of the 
implementation of this ethos. The role of Kiswahili is 
getting better appreciated and the inter-dependence among 
the three East African states is yet another dimension in the 
consolidation of the ethos. Indeed as Schiffman (op.cit;40)
the languages – official or national – by putting in place comprehensive policies.

It is however important to have strong media that supplement and complement such promotion. The vernaculars should be developed further through more aggressive programmes in the print and electronic media. That way their cultural richness will be sustained and developed. The audience(s) will appreciate the positive contributions that our cultures can make through language and performances. Indeed this will puncture the myth that “there are obvious and inherent disadvantages suffered by states which are linguistically heterogeneous" (Cripter and Ladefoged;op.cit 145).

Linguistic diversity can be tamed for the development of a people. However this diversity can and has been exploited by politicians (mainly) and other people to create mistrust, disunity and hatred resulting in enormous bloodshed. The ethnic eruptions Bosnia/Yugoslavia and Somalia Rwanda and Kenya are a stark reminder of this gruesome reality. Ethnic cleansing is the extreme manifestation of this polarity.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Linguistic Diversity can and should be harnessed for National and Regional Development. People need to understand their socio-cultural, economic and political history to appropriately come to terms with the need to exploit available linguistic resources to their advantage.

The role of each language in the state or community should be appreciated. Every language has a positive contribution to make in creating awareness, inculcating values and in promoting the well-being of the people.

Countries need to formulate sound language policies that will engender a cultural identity. Promotive language policy approaches are ideal for this. Official and National Languages are essential for harmony, identity and interdependence not only in the state but Regionally and Internationally.
REFERENCES


1.0 INTRODUCTION

The political scene in Kenya has been characterized by change. The repeal of section 2 A of the Kenyan constitution in 1991 which made it possible for re-introduction of multiparty democracy was in many respects an important milestone in Kenya's post-independence history. Multiparty system alone cannot necessarily guarantee democracy. A genuine multiparty system must be accompanied by regular and fair elections in which all citizens have an unhindered opportunity to make informed choices on how they are governed and who governs them. In order for Kenyans to exercise their democratic right to vote and vote for leaders who would spearhead development for all Kenyans, many Non-Governmental Organizations have abdicated themselves the role to educate the public on their civic rights and the need to choose leaders who would spearhead development for the benefit of all Kenyans. These NGOs include Catholic Justice Peace Commission (CJPC), Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), League of Kenyan Women Voters (LKWV), Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisation (MYWO) among others.

In order for the above NGOs to achieve their goal, the issue of language choice to reach the Kenyans is imperative. As Fishman (1972:15) rightly observes, "Proper usage dictates that only one of the theoretically co-available languages or varieties will be chosen by particular classes of interlocutors on particular kinds of occasions to discuss particular kinds of topics".

This argument is even more critical especially in view that in Kenya, many people are multilingual, Mbaabu (1995). They can speak more than one language with a fair degree of proficiency. However the level of proficiency on any language varies from one speaker to the other depending on the level of education and exposure to the language in question. In choosing a language for civic sensitization, there is need to choose a language, which many people understand.
only to concede later that they cannot understand the two languages and they need to be addressed in their vernaculars. This contradicts the widely held view that 80% of Kenyans understand Kiswahili. Due to budgetary constraints, majority of political education materials are developed in English and later translated into Kiswahili. However, depending on availability of funds, dissemination is conducted either in Kiswahili or the local language of the target audience. In order to achieve this, they recruit people who are conversant in both Kiswahili and English and also those who come from the communities targeted. However, apart from the Kenya League of Women Voters and Ecumenical Centre for Justice and Peace who have developed materials in English, Kiswahili and some of the major ethnic languages, the rest of political educators have largely produced their materials in English and a few have been translated into Kiswahili.

Considering that the Kenyan general public consists of people with basic literacy skills, it is not far fetched to argue that majority of them cannot appreciate or understand materials written or disseminated orally in English. As the Kenya Women Political Caucus (KWPC) (1999) rightly questions, the biggest issue to material developers in the current political education initiatives is,

"Are the political education pamphlets, handbills, posters and booklets accessible to your target group?"

Material developers should consider themselves duty bound to be extremely cautious in making language choice in the development of political education materials.

According to one political educator, when a group of Maasai people were invited to a political education seminar and asked which language they would prefer to be used in developing political education materials in reference to Kiswahili and Kimaasai, they responded that any would do. At first, the political educator thought that the participants were being cynical but on probing them further, they condescended to the fact that they could neither read Kimaasai nor Kiswahili and therefore materials developed in either of
rights through various methods of political education, there is need to reach them through a language which they can access. This should be done without the risk of paternalism for people are not helpless but have the capacity to understand various matters affecting them. It is in view of this that Kiswahili should be used as the language of political education.

3.0 A CASE FOR KISWAHILI FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION

The use of Kiswahili in the liberation struggle dates back to independence. It played a very important role in the struggle for Kenya's independence. This was the only language that a relatively bigger majority could understand and hence political propaganda had to depend on Kiswahili. To the nationalists, Kiwahili was a liberating tool, which was associated with nationalism and patriotism. Due to the role played by Kiswahili during the struggle for independence, Kiswahili was declared a national language in Kenya. This was done by the first president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta who while addressing the National Assembly in 1964 said:

"Bwana sipika mimi ninataka kusema maneno kidogo kwa Kiswahili kwa sababu mimi ninatumaini kwamba wakati si mrefu katika nyumba hii yetu tutaweza kuzungumza Kiswahili ambacho ni lugha yetu ya taifa"
(Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say a few words in Kiswahili because I hope that in the near future in our parliament we will be able to speak in Kiswahili, which is our national language).

The words of the president were echoed by Dr. Munyua Waiyaki when he said that Kiswahili was a National Language of Kenya and that no debate was needed on the subject.
small national elite whose political support would not mean much. Mutahi (1979) claims that:

"When Kenyan leaders face situations that demand national unity, they turn to Kiswahili but when they are comfortable, English or any other language is used."

However, it must be stated that for political education to be effective, appropriate language has to be used and for Kenyans, there is no better language than their national language, which is Kiswahili, or ethnic languages. If Kiswahili or ethnic languages are used, there will be more involvement and participation from the people whom the political educators want to reach. This will also enhance more understanding of the political education messages which makes it easier for people to pass information to others thereby saving time and money because people will need less help and they will know what they must do. This is evident from religious initiatives. Most religions reach their flock through Kiswahili or ethnic languages and this has yielded very positive results. Even in cases where preachers/evangelists especially guest preachers are invited, though they operate in English, the services of interpreters are always enlisted to ensure that they reach their target audience. The same strategies need to be employed in imparting political education if their goals are to be achieved.

While political educators have argued that Kiswahili is not as popular as English and has no appropriate terminology, this can only be seen as an excuse rather than the real reason.

4. GENDERED LANGUAGE IN POLITICAL EDUCATION

The choice of language for political education not withstanding, it has been noted with a lot of concern that political language is exceedingly becoming genderized. It is acceptable that in order to make political education effective, political educators are encouraged to use plain language that is easily understood. This kind of language makes ideas clearer
5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Political educators should put into consideration their target group. This is important as they design and implement political education programmes. This will enable them to choose a language that is appropriate and which will facilitate communication with the target group.

- The problem of political education facilitators not being competent in Kiswahili should not be used as an excuse to address the target group in English. There are many stakeholders who are interested in the development of Kiswahili and other national languages. Language experts can be used to develop terminology for use in political education programmes in both Kiswahili and other Kenyan languages.

- The Kenyans need to be proud of Kiswahili, which is a unifying language for Kenyans, in view of the diverse language backgrounds that they come from.

- Facilitators need to be gender sensitive in imparting political education so as to avoid use of demeaning language to women.


Introduction

Kenya’s over 40 indigenous languages fall into three main language groups: the Bantu 66%, the Nilotes 31%, and the cushion 3% of the Kenyan population (Gorman 1974:398). The development of these languages has been and still is greatly affected by the competition that the Mother Tongues (MTs), Kiswahili, and English have had in the nation, and especially in the education system (Whiteley, 1974; Muthwii, 1994; Mbaabu, 1996A). The two key areas of competition have been: a) what language to use as the medium of instruction; and b) at what level in the educational system this language is to be introduced. In the early days of the colonial period missionaries, who were initially the first and only agency concerned with the education of Africans, favoured the use of the MTs as media of instruction in primary education and embarked on developing orthographies and translating the Bible and other Christian literature into the MTs (Gorman, 1974:104; Mbaabu, 1996A). As the colonial government got more involved in education various committees and commissions were appointed to consider the issue of language of instruction in the schools. One such commission was the Phelps – Stokes Commission of 1922. This commission recommended that education should be introduced to the learner in his or her MT. The commission also recommended that the orthography for smaller language communities was to be developed on the basis of the orthographies of the bigger communities. This was a positive move in as far as language policy is concerned but it was part of the British colonialist policy of derying English to the local people, so that they can continue to provide cheap semi-skilled labour and this created a great hunger for English in the local people.

The changes following the end of the Second World War made it clear that the Africans would be needing more English than was being provided. First, the imperialists needed more Africans to take up clerical and skilled workers’ jobs for which the use of English was a prerequisite. Second, the political awakening during this period made the Africans press for more English at an earlier stage in education because they needed English to participate in the Legislative Council. Thus, English became a political need and this hunger for English continued after political independence. It therefore came as no surprise when the Ominde Commission of 1964 relegated MT to verbal communication in the first three classes in primary schools. It was to be used for story telling sessions which constituted one lesson in a week, while the English medium was to be introduced in the first year of school (Musau, 2004). Although the mistake was soon realised and the “Gachathii Report” of 1976 recommended that MTs (“languages of the catchment areas”) should be used as languages of instruction from class one to class three (Mbaabu, 1996A: 147), the implementation of the policy has not received much support.

This historical survey is important because it gives the background underlying the present political and economic dilemmas that arise when one considers the preservation of indigenous languages in Kenya. The political questions relate to the implications of the promotion of the over 40 indigenous languages to: national unity; national loyalty; national goals of eradicating social evils such as nepotism or tribalism; and the national desire to contribute and benefit from the international world. The economic issues relate to the practicality of: supporting the development of learning and teaching resources in
Literacy retrogression
Despite the pronouncements of the education commissions mentioned in the introduction to this paper, there has been no concerted action to develop learning material in the MTs, train MT teachers, or even set a framework to support the writing and publication in MTs by private bodies. If we consider what Muthwii (2004) calls ‘functional literacy’, we find that the state of literacy in MTs at present is lower than it was at independence, forty years ago. People who went to school before independence have better MT literacy skills than those graduating from schools today. This is because learning MT in the first three years of school does not provide meaningful literacy skills and there is neither motivation nor avenues for individuals to develop their MT literacy skills beyond what is done in the schools. Children are therefore growing up without functional literacy in MT and this in many ways limits the domains in which they can use their MT.

Weakening Transmission
Fishman (1991) notes that one of the signals of a dying language is its loss of ‘intergenerational’ use. It has been observed that increased social mobility, urbanization, inter-ethnic marriages, and formal education have interfered with the transmission of MT from parents to the next generation, in Kenya. Many parents, anxious about their children’s performance in the English medium curriculum, want their children to learn English as early as possible. For this to happen, many such parents will speak to their children in English at home. The unfortunate thing is that, while a child who does not learn English or Kiswahili at home will learn it well enough at school, there is no other social institution that pays attention to the acquisition of MT apart from the home setting.

Young people growing up in urban and semi-urban areas are more attracted to the languages of the wider circles: English and Kiswahili. Thus many of them lack even oral skills in their parents’ MT. If this is not checked, these young people will have no indigenous language to pass to the next generation, and this will keep reducing the number of speakers in the particular languages.

Language Choice
A language will thrive when there are still domains within which it is the primary channel of communication. In the case of the MTs in Kenya, their historical domains of usage have been invaded by Kiswahili, the national language and English the official language. After examining language use patterns in both rural and urban Kenya Kioko and Muthwii (2002:16) found that Kiswahili is encroaching into the home domain even in the rural areas. They observe that:
The general picture is that the ethnic language is predominantly the language of the home with a cumulative score of 85% in the rural areas and 44.87 % in the urban areas. The rural data ranges from 100% use of the ethnic language among the Akamba to 70.8% among the Luhyia while the urban data ranges between 68.75 % use of L1 among the Gikuyu and 18.75 among the Luhyia. The Luhyia
One of the misconceptions held about language and national integration is that multilingualism, if encouraged to the extent of promoting widespread use of MT, is a divisive force, and so national unity is believed to be achieved through the use of one national or official language (Onditi and Ogutu, 2002). Considering the instances in which language has been used as an instrument of ethnic division and discrimination, arguments have been posited in support of the view that the differences between indigenous languages keep the people apart, perpetuate ethnic hostilities, weaken national loyalties and increase the danger of separatist sentiments (Schwatz, 1965). While it is true as Fishman (1968) argues, that language differences are not in and of themselves divisive, and as Le Page puts it “Language is like skin colour in that it is an easily identifiable badge for those who wish to form a gang or fight against another gang; the reasons for the gang warfare lie deeper than either language or colour” (1964, p.16); in a country like Kenya where even the political parties are nearly divided on ethnic grounds, it is and has been very easy to view the promotion of MTs negatively, particularly after the ethnic clashes which accompanied the reintroduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya. Any activity geared towards the preservation of the cultural practices or the social structures within which a particular MT is predominant, is seen as a strengthening of that particular ethnic group to dominate the others. This discourages initiatives in the planning of activities geared towards the development of MTs.

Linguistic Competition

Language use patterns in Kenya are closely related to the social meanings that the official language (English), the national language (Kiswahili), and the indigenous languages have acquired over time (Kioko and Muthwii, 2004). Abdulaziz (1982) identifies the domains associated with the choice of each of the three types of languages: English the language of education, higher government operations and international communication; Kiswahili the language of national integration and inter-ethnic communication; and the MTs as languages of intra-ethnic communication. As we had said above, English and particularly Kiswahili, have been encroaching in the domains which were exclusively MT. These other two languages have advantages over the MTs because their development in all aspects has direct government support. For example, according to Musau (2004) the implementation of the decision to make Kiswahili a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools in Kenya, in 1985, has led to the development of a lot of learning and teaching materials in the language. This has also positively affected the spread of Kiswahili in the rural areas; every one who has had basic education can speak, read and write Kiswahili. The MTs on the other hand are disadvantaged in this aspect, because even though the official language policy requires that MTs be taught and be used to teach other subjects in the first three years of school, the implementation of this policy is confounded with the problems outlined below.

First, there are schools which do not teach MT at all, either because they are located in urban or suburban centres or because of inter-ethnic politics. In a case cited in Mbaabu (1996: 149) several ethnic groups at the Kenyan coast known as the Mijikenda preferred to use materials in Kiswahili rather than use texts in Kigiriama, one of the languages with which their languages are closely related. In other cases there is pressure from parents
and therefore the mother aid is instructed to speak to the child either in Kiswahili or in English.

Inter-ethnic marriages are also more common in urban areas than in the rural areas, and within the patriarchal family structure in Kenya, it is expected that the wife will learn the MT of her husband and then pass it on to their children. Practically, this is an unreasonable expectation because the environment enabling the learning of an MT is very weak in the urban areas. In the majority of such cases, the mothers choose to address their children in Kiswahili or English and leave the fathers, in the limited time they have with children, to pass on their MT. It is understandable if such children, who spend most of their playtime with others from other ethnic languages, develop better skills in the language of inter-ethnic communication.

Another characteristic of the urban areas is that the desire to communicate inter-ethnically surpasses the wish to express oneself in his or her MT. Social networks constitute people from different MT groups and, therefore, in non-formal settings the unmarked choice is Kiswahili. Insistence on using MT in social gatherings in the urban areas is viewed negatively as linguistic arrogance. Some ethnic groups are better at accommodating speakers from other MTs. For example, Kioko and Muthii (2002) found that the use of MT in urban homes among the Gikuyu accounted for 68.75% of language choice in the home while among the Luhyia it was 18.75.

It is important to note that most of the developments in Kenya are located in the urban areas and therefore the urban population is associated with prestige and it is a pace setter for many aspects of life. Thus, what is happening in the urban centres soon spreads to rural areas, the growth of the urban population therefore negatively affects the growth of the population using MT.

Urbanisation and westernisation have also led to the break of the traditional social structures within which the various genres in the MTs were used. Rituals, festivals, ceremonies, and other gatherings in which people expressed themselves in song, dance, poetry, speeches have been in the large, replaced by modern religious ceremonies conducted either in Kiswahili, in English or in both English and Kiswahili.

Economic Factors
The development and modernisation of MTs in Kenya can only be achieved if government allocates funds for the teaching and development of three types of languages, i.e. the more than forty MTs, the language of wider communication (Kiswahili) and the official language (English). The present day money-economy emphasises the economic value of developing a particular language. In this competition, English scores very highly, since it offers economic opportunities internationally. Kiswahili, according to Kishe (2004), is a strong economic tool in the Eastern African Region. Thus, there are economic incentives for learning both Kiswahili and English, and when the government
if one is not aware of it. Thus, this state of unawareness has been a factor in the weakening of MTs in Kenya.

**Way Forward**

Recently, the presence of a few privately owned FM radio stations that broadcast in a number of MTs has availed modern discourse in MTs and this has given MTs a positive image. The initial one *Kameme* FM was greeted with political suspicion and was initially banned, but there has been growing acceptance as more stations have come up. At present a lot of air time in these stations is spent on ‘greetings’ and music programs, thus there is need for these stations to receive support from the government and also from the civil society so that they can diversify the programs and include more documentaries and educational programs, in order to target a wider listening. These FM radio stations provide job opportunities for people with good literacy and oral skills in MT. As Bangbose (2000, p.88) says:

Parents who prefer an English medium sometimes do so because they see products of an English medium education getting rewards in terms of lucrative jobs and upward social mobility. Suppose the knowledge of an African language is required for certain position, it will not be surprising if there is a mad rush to acquire that language, the prestige of the language rises phenomenally.

Fishman (1996b) emphasises the need to provide motivation for learning and maintaining indigenous languages:

> Every infant acquiring the beloved old language at home must have ample out-of-home interlocutors, topics, and places for informal use of the language all through to the time when he or she becomes a parent...every student must have ample out-of-school and after-school informal interlocutors, places and topics to see him or her through his or her own child-bearing stage.

Consequently, the growth of these stations is a positive move in adding not only prestige but also giving reasons for learning and studying MTs. We should, however, hasten to add that these FM stations are still very few and their coverage of the areas where the particular MT is spoken is also quite limited, but it is a move in the right direction in as far as the revitalisation of MTs is concerned.

Another positive move has been in the area of theatre. A group of artists have come together and staged plays in MTs in the city. While this is viewed negatively in some political circles, it does provide the city born and bred youths with opportunities to use their MT in real and exciting interactions.

Studies on the revitalisation of indigenous languages have proposed various intervention strategies, but here we are going to focus on what we consider relevant to the current state of MTs in Kenya. The following are some of the moves that can help begin to reverse the negative growth observed in MTs in Kenya:
To facilitate the production of learning materials, the government ministries need to establish a MT press and motivate writers to write in MT by establishing district, provincial and national prizes for the best literary and scholarly books in MT. Non-governmental organisations and institutions of higher learning can also run literary competitions to encourage youth to use MT in the creation of literature and to develop and analyse literary texts for wider use in schools. One such a project is reported in Finlayson and Slabberts (2004).

Conclusion

In addressing the political and economic dilemmas facing the preservation and development of indigenous languages in Kenya, this paper has examined the indicators of language shift present in these languages; discussed the factors that have and still are contributing to this situation; and finally proposed possible intervention measures to revitalise and develop these languages. The ultimate goal of developing MTs should be to make them translatable with other languages and suitable as vehicles of modern discourse. But before this can happen, these languages will need to be taught not only at the lower levels but also at the upper levels of education including the universities. This calls for changes in the national language policy and for the development of suitable pedagogical materials. All of this will be possible if there is collaborative effort between the government ministries and other agencies that are interested in the teaching and the promotion of MTs. As Fishman (1996b) observes, if an endangered language is going to become self-renewing, the society needs to plan what to do with it before school, in school, out of school and after school.

The foregoing discussion on the teaching of mother tongues makes the whole picture appear very bleak, but as Bamgbose (1976, p.14) says for West African languages, the challenges are formidable but despair should not be allowed to set in. An effort should be made to teach all the mother tongues in Kenya and to develop adequate materials for all. Prah (2002) proposes that the cost of preparing materials for MT instruction can be minimised if an attempt could be made to standardize or to harmonize some of the closely related languages and dialects.

The harmonisation of those African languages with high levels of mutual intelligibility would greatly facilitate their economies of scale in the development of the media and of educational media and cultural materials. This would contribute greatly towards strengthening the basis of society for the cultural and social development of Africa (Prah, 2002, p.11).

This is an argument that in recent years has been frequently heard in conferences that deal with the development of African languages. This is an attractive idea if the speakers of the languages in question are involved in the harmonization process so that there is general acceptability of the developed materials by different users who consider themselves to be members of different ethnic groups with different identities, and if such development of what is common in the languages or dialects will not destroy the sweetness of the diversity the we so labour to preserve! It is a dilemma, both politically and economically.


LANGUAGE AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA:  
THE CASE OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH GEO-POLITICAL ZONE  
OF THE NIGER DELTA REGION  

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1.0. INTRODUCTION  

"The fortunes of minority languages are closely bound up with  
the political aspirations of their speakers and the extent to  
which the government of the day perceives these to be a threat". 
(Crystal 1997:368)  

It is common knowledge that Nigeria, with a population estimated to be well over one  
hundred and twenty million, is the most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa. It is also a  
linguistic paradise with over four hundred indigenous languages. Consequently, it has its fair  
share of both linguistic and cultural diversities, two determinants of national development as  
well as crises the world over. Politically, the country is structured into six geo-political  
zones, namely, North-East, North-West, Middle Belt, South-East, South-West and South-  
South. Nigeria is also the sixth largest exporter of crude oil, with a daily production capacity  
of about two and a half million barrels of crude oil. In fact, recent reports from the oil market  
project that among the OPEC member states, Nigeria is expected to be the third biggest  
earner from the sale of crude oil by the end of this year, surpassed only by Saudi Arabia and  
Iran (Vanguard, Tuesday, September 21, 2004). However, although Nigeria is so blessed  
with human, linguistic and natural/material resources, it is characterized by unequal  
distribution of wealth and political power and the vast majority of the population lives in  
abject poverty, one that subsumes all spheres of life: material, financial, economic; political  
and even linguistic.  

The Niger-Delta region comprises eight states namely: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa,  
Cross River, Delta, Edo, Ondo and Rivers States but our focus in this paper is on the area  
popularly called ‘the Core Niger-Delta’ or the South-South geopolitical zone. It comprises  
the states listed above except Abia and Ondo States. It is multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and  
multi-lingual with pockets of threatened/endangered minority languages. It is the region that  
accounts for most of Nigeria’s oil wealth but is about the most backward in terms of political,  
economic, social and linguistic development. We shall examine the language situation in  
Nigeria and the role politics plays in the marginalisation of the people and languages of the  
South-South geopolitical zone of the Niger Delta region in spite of its major contribution to  
the socio-economic growth of the country and the fact that two of the seven largest languages  
of the country are to be found there.  

2.0. THE LANGUAGE SITUATION IN NIGERIA
In 1914, the British colonial administrators brought the different ethno-linguistic
groups together and made them one nation called Nigeria and, for political reasons, divided
the country into three administrative regions: the North dominated by the Hausa, the West
dominated by the Yoruba and the East dominated by the Igbo. They also opted for the use of
these three languages in addition to English for administrative purposes. Unwittingly, they
had set the stage for an internal colonization of the minority languages by these three. Before
this time, Efik a language of Cross River State in the South-South was given a lot of
prominence and regarded as a fourth major language in the country because it was spoken in
Calabar, the first administrative capital of Southern Nigeria. With the creation of regions and
the movement of the capital from Calabar to Lagos, Efik lost some of its status since Igbo
became the regional language.

At independence, political control was handed over to the ‘big three’ who, because of
their large numbers, refused to share power with the minorities. The Nigerian Civil War
(1967 - 1970) had a major effect on Nigerian languages since it was given an ethnic and
political overtone. Many non-Igbo-speaking Nigerians who could not speak their native
languages were killed in different parts of the country while those who could not speak Igbo
but were living in Igbo-speaking areas were also killed. Before the civil war, the whole of
the North was administered as a single region under a Hausa/Fulani leadership and Hausa
was a major factor in the ‘northernization’ policy of the northern government. Although the
region is highly multilingual, Hausa was the principal medium of communication and
political integration with the political ideology of “one north, one people, one language”. All
the minority languages were virtually swept under the carpet and confined to the home. A
similar situation was found in the West with Yoruba and in the East with Igbo.

From inception, Nigerian political parties have been off-shoots of ethno-linguistic
associations whose major aim was the propagation of their group interests. During the first
republic, the three major political parties that emerged, namely, the Northern People’s
Congress (NPC) in the North, the Action Group (AG) in the West and the National Council
of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the East were based on ethno-linguistic lines. The NPC
emerged from the Jamiiyya Matemu Cultural Association formed for the purpose of
combating ignorance, idleness and injustice in northern Nigeria. AG emerged from Egbe-
Omo-Odudua, a pan-Yoruba cultural group formed to provide leadership for the Western
region. The NCNC was generally regarded as an Igbo party since most of its leadership and
members were Igbo speaking. Since then, major political parties have metamorphosed from
these initial three. For example, in the 1979 elections, the three major political parties were
the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), identified with the North, i.e., Hausa; the Unity Party of
Nigeria (UPN) identified with the West, i.e., Yoruba, and the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP),
identified with the East, i.e., Igbo. In the 1999 elections, the three major political parties
were the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD), and the All
Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) identified with the North, the West and the East respectively
with the three major languages and their people playing major roles.

Since the early days of post-colonial Nigeria, language has always been used as a
political weapon for ethnic oppression. Political party leaders usually reserve sensitive and
juicy positions for party faithfuls and in most cases these are based on ethno-linguistic lines.
A large number of Nigerians participate in elections in order to vote for their tribesmen and
women but not necessarily because the persons are capable of performing well or of keeping
their election promises. Tribalism has led to widespread mismanagement, low capital
utilization, political unrest, a high level of unemployment and a weak and ineffective
leadership.
All secondary pupils are required to study (1) the regional official language (ROL) or the MT, where this is different from ROL; (2) Hindi or where this is L1, any other Indian language; (3) English or any other modern European language. (Bell 1976, cited by Noah 1999)

Since Government is aware that language preserves the people’s identity and culture, and since all Nigerians are supposed to have equal rights, it appears that to the Federal Government, either the ethno-linguistic minorities do not exist or they are not Nigerians.

The emphasis on the three major languages by the Federal Government gives the impression that these languages and their people are superior to all other Nigerians. Today, speakers of Hausa are estimated to be about nineteen million, Yoruba speakers about nineteen million and Igbo speakers about eighteen million, and together, they account for about half of the nation’s population (ethnologue.com). Even if these figures are correct, it means that the minority languages account for the other half. Of the thirty-six states in the country, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are spoken in eighteen (Simire 2003: 59). The question that readily comes to mind is why should the minority languages be so neglected by the Federal Government and their speakers forced to learn at least one of the major languages in order to achieve national unity? The reason is not far fetched: it is because the ‘big three’ dominate the political landscape and they are the decision makers. It is therefore easy for them to use every means and excuse favorable to them to perpetuate their languages since, according to Allan (1978:398), ‘a people whose language is dominant will typically be dominant politically and/or socially, economically, and culturally, and certainly psychologically...’ There is no doubt that language is a powerful tool for national integration but it is also an effective weapon for socio-linguistic and cultural domination. A people’s language, apart from being a means of communication, is what gives them an identity and makes them unique: it binds them together and separates them from people who speak other languages. People usually have very strong emotional and psychological attachment to their languages. Everyone wants his language recognized and respected. The worst thing that can happen to a people is to deprive them of their language or impose another language on them. This is because when a people’s language is neglected and despised, the people themselves also feel neglected and despised. They therefore usually resist the imposition of a more dominant code and resent its native speakers. It is not surprising that Nigeria is having difficulty coming up with a language policy. For as long as the domination of the ‘majors’ over the ‘minors’ continues and the nation’s resources are used to develop a few languages to the detriment of the overwhelming number of minority languages, the political unity of Nigeria will remain threatened. This is the case of the South-South people of the Niger Delta.

4.0 THE EFFECTS OF LINGUISTIC AND POLITICAL DOMINATION ON THE MINORITY LANGUAGES OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH

The effects the linguistic, political and economic crises that afflict Nigeria are manifested in a most concentrated manner in the South-South zone which, paradoxically, provides more than eighty percent of Government’s revenues, the bulk of Nigeria’s biodiversity, two of the seven largest Nigerian languages and some of the country’s most dedicated citizens. According to Douglas, et al (2003:1), “oil revenues (mainly from the South-South) currently provide 80% of government income, 95% of export receipts, and 90% of foreign exchange earnings”. The urban grandeur found in Abuja, Lagos, Kaduna and many other cities across Nigeria are financed mainly with this oil money but the political power to control the resources lies not in the hands of the indigenes of the zone but in those of the three major ethno-linguistic groups who form the political power bloc of the country and who have at various times exploited their ‘superior’ position for their selfish political purposes.
has since acquired 'children' who think, dream and express themselves best in this code. Many children and youths are not fluent in their mother tongues while some cannot even speak any of the local languages. Since language is a natural resource, subject to the principle of use or lose, it is not surprising that many sounds in these languages are being replaced with those of Pidgin while many words and technical terms are going into extinction in the sound patterns of the youths. For example, consonants such as the palatal plosives [c,ɟ], the velar fricatives [x,ɣ], and the labiodental approximant [v], as well as vowels such as [i,u], which can be found in the phonetic inventory of a number of the South–South languages are being replaced with Pidgin equivalents of [ʃ,ʒ, h,ɡ, w, l, u] respectively. Thus, Urhobo names such as [ɔuko] "a helper" [kɛve] "gave me" and [aɡɔɣɔ] "joy" are rendered as [ʊʃuŋo], [kɛwe] and [aɡɔɡɔ] respectively and many of these are completely meaningless. While the Pidgin vocabulary is growing by the day with coinages from the indigenous languages, the latter are shrinking with fewer speakers and with their sounds and vocabulary items becoming lost. A living language expands to accommodate the range of functions that it is saddled with but a language that is not assigned any serious function easily shifts grounds for a more functional language and with time it dies. These signs are manifested in the languages of the South-South.

The low status accorded the minority languages in the constitution and federal policies in spite of the fact that Ijo and Urhobo are among the seven largest ethnic groups in Nigeria have negative social and psychological effects on their native speakers. Many do not see their importance beyond home-use. The Federal Government feeds on the oil-rich South-South but sees no reason why the people and their languages should enjoy the same privileges as do the major ones. The result is that the people see themselves and their languages as despised. Thus, even when, from time to time, some individuals and corporate bodies want to help promote these languages, not much interest is shown. Most ethnic minorities, even the elites among them who should know the importance of language to individual and corporate existence, consider their languages as inferior and not fit for public use or serious academic study at the tertiary level. They feel that their languages cannot give them access to political power and economic advancement and as such, it is mere rhetoric to think of studying them. In fact, recently, the Senate of the Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria, approved the mounting of a combined honors undergraduate degree program in Linguistics and Urhobo in the Department of Languages and Linguistics. The intention was to help develop and carry out research in the Urhobo language. In the first year, none of the twenty candidates offered admission into the program accepted to come. In the second year, eighty students registered into the program but by the end of the session, sixty-five of them wanted to change to other programs. We discovered that most of the students accepted to come in mainly because they failed to gain admission into other preferred departments and so used the opportunity to get into the university with the intention of changing to other programs after the first year. The reasons they gave for not wanting to study Urhobo included their concern that such a study was a mere waste of time as it would not give them access to good jobs, economic or political power; they were even ashamed to admit to their friends that they are studying Urhobo because people would consider them unintelligent. The languages of the South-South therefore lack the social status and prestige necessary to attract learners and researchers to study them.

5.0 PROPOSALS FOR PRESERVING THESE LANGUAGES
found in other regions of the country. This will reduce the influx of people to the South-South in search of ‘oil money’ which is a major factor in the tension noticeable in the area and the growing dominance of Pidgin English and the three major Nigerian languages over the indigenous languages.

(v) The development of the languages of the South-South should not be left to their state governments and native speakers alone. Oil companies, communities and linguists should take up the challenge. The Federal Government should recognize these languages in the constitution and assign roles to them to make them functional. Funds should be made available for workshops to be organized for native speakers, teachers, writers and linguists to enhance the development of orthographies, curricula, texts, readers, etc, in these languages as has been done for the ‘big three’.

(vi) Native speakers of these languages should rise up and take the destiny of their languages in their hands. They must take pride in the use of the languages at home with their children and expose them to their indigenous cultures. The present trend found in Port Harcourt, Sapele and Warri, whereby many youths cannot use their native languages should be reversed so as to ensure generational continuity, a major strategy for language survival. In addition, they should actively and aggressively encourage the development and documentation of their languages as a language that exists only orally cannot stand the test of time. They need to form language associations, e.g., an Urhobo Language Association, Ijo Language Association, Ibo Language Association, etc. These language associations can serve as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which should liaise with their communities, the Linguistic Association of Nigeria (LAN), and Universities/Colleges of Education within their area in order to achieve good results.

(vii). The Departments of Languages and Linguistics in Universities and Colleges of Education sited in the South-South should offer courses in the indigenous languages found within their locations e.g. Izon, Nembe, Mein, Kolokuma, etc, in Bayelsa State; Ikwerre, Kalabari, Ibo, Obolo, etc, in Rivers State; Urhobo, Isoko, Itsekiri, Ijo, etc, in Delta State and so on.

(viii). Employment into oil companies should be by merit and not by who you know or the language you speak. Certain categories and percentages of employment should be reserved for the indigenes of the communities where the companies are in operation. Besides, in the interest of peace and good governance, the administrative head offices of the oil companies should relocate to the states in the South-South where they have the bulk of their operations. Thus, Shell should move to Delta State; Agip and Chevron/Texaco to Bayelsa and Rivers States; and Mobil to Akwa Ibom State, etc, instead of their present locations in Lagos and Abuja. Such a move would not only make the people and their languages acquire some prestige, it would also attract second language learners to these minority languages from among those who come to the communities to work or do business.

6.0 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, language is much more than just a means of communication. It is a very strong instrument of political power, ethnic identity and socio-economic success. Every language needs to be empowered and developed to give it prestige and make it more functionally relevant to its speakers and society and thus ensure its survival. The Federal Government of Nigeria, dominated by the ‘big three’, has used its political might and the nation’s resources to sufficiently empower the major languages to the detriment of the minority languages. The people of the South-South geopolitical zone of the Niger Delta are
INTERNATIONALIZING COMMUNICATION IN
THE WORKFORCE

BY

ROBERT D. HARDY
“Internationalizing Communication in the Labor Force”

The Labor Force has the task of setting standards for labor protection and for spreading the knowledge that will ease human toil. As members of the world community; workers, managers and/or students must equip themselves to discharge the duties, which they either have or are gradually coming to demand a share.

It is now more important than ever for managers, workers and/or students, as well as other social groups; i.e. National, State, and Local governments to have an understanding of the various issues affecting their interests. It is especially important when we understand the diversity of the workforce in which we live is ever increasing. To work towards integrating a perspective/international view into the field of Labor diversity is particularly important for working in any country. To incorporate a multicultural content into the field of the Labor Force is especially important as it pertains to an ever-increasing diversified workforce.

In a more concise form, Labor diversity should awaken the interest of managers, workers and/or students so that more questions are raised by developing discussion groups, an annotated bibliography of cross-cultural resources or a set of case studies which present the entire community with the unique concerns facing peoples from all over the world and especially in the marketplace where both individuals and as members of business and non-profit institutions meet. The effect should be to build a more effective unit of diversity so that positive cross-cultural differences and/or exchanges can occur to better serve our own ever-increasing diversity in the workforce.

One important aspect of this bridge crossing is to build a more cohesive group of people is through the commonality of language. The European Union has a base of some 15 or 16 nations with not only a common language, but also a common currency in the called Euro. A common currency is essential in bridging the gap between those who have and those who have not. Parity is essential in closing this gap. The main objective here is to enable people from different nations to exchange goods and services between each other so that both parties are made better off. The reason this parity is effective is due to the non-existent exchange rate. Now when one buys and/or sells goods and/or services each can purchase and/or sell at the same rate of exchange between each party is dealing with the same currency because the currency rate between the two trading nations is identical.

It would be beneficial to the African Union (AU) previously known as the Organ of African Unity (OAU) to attempt such a parity of exchange rates. The (AU) has approximately 45 nations as members with as much diversity in its currency as it has in its diversity of languages spoken. There are approximately 26 nations who have French as its language of instruction and the remaining 19 or 20 countries use English as its language of instruction. No wonder there exists an ever widening gap between the people who are from Francophone and Anglophone countries. The politics, economics, and basic understanding of the afore mentioned among other only a few of the differences which must be bridged if Africa is to ever unify. Of the 19 or so countries that do not speak French, approximately 13 do speak Kiswahili. The commonality of a language is a first step in building a better understanding between different cultures, traditions, and
The EU joins most of the economic and industrial might of Western Europe and most of its population. The EU is the largest import and export market in the world. It is second only to the United States in the size of its gross domestic product, and it accounts for 20 percent of world trade, compared with 14 percent for the United States and 9 percent for Japan.

A United States of Europe?

The countries involved have made great strides toward unity, and the EU is now a major world force. There is a historic dream among Europeans of a United States of Europe in which the movement of people, money, and goods would be as free as it is in America, but a wall of obstacles stands in the way of the realizing that dream.

There are 15 sovereign nations in the EU-and more want to join- with long, proud histories and loyalties and different cultures and languages, and of course there have been bitter, bloody wars among Europeans. Each country has its own laws, taxes, armed forces, and police. And several of the countries have shown strong and growing reluctance to surrender their national currency, central bank, and other powers to a "distant" authority, particularly an unelected authority.

Will the EU Succeed?

Success to most EU member-countries means meeting "Maastricht criteria," "which state that by 1998 budget deficits must be below 3 percent of GDP and national debt must not be above 60 percent of GDP". It is uncertain that any member-country will meet the criteria with honest accounting. EU directives have superseded 15 sets of national rules; they have harmonized 100,000 national standards, labeling laws, testing procedures, and consumer protection measures covering everything from toys, to food, to stock brokering, to teaching. As many as 60 million customs and tax formalities at frontiers were scrapped.

Thanks to single-market measures, Europe's GDP is now 1 to 1.5 percent higher than it would otherwise have been; 1 to 1.5 percent of Europe's GDP in 1996 amounted to $130 billion. Europe has 300,000 to 900,000 more jobs, and average inflation is 1 to 1.5 points below what it would have been without EU single-market measures. Forces pushing the EU forward. Nevertheless, two forces are pushing the EU forward. The first comes from business leaders who are adapting to globalization by treating Europe as one giant area, a single market. The second force is the single European currency, the euro, together with the European Central Bank.

Most of the world's largest institutional investors believe the European monetary union (EMU) will start as scheduled on January 1, 1999. Ninety-seven percent are confident that will occur, up from 86 percent at the beginning of 1997. The same survey reflects the expectations that EMU will initially proceed with just a small group of countries. Germany, France, and the Netherlands were seen as 100 percent certainties to

Ibid: PP.144-145.
The African Union in a Nutshell

The African Union is made up of approximately (45) different countries where the language, culture, religion, and traditions are as diverse as each country. We don’t really know the number of different languages/dialects that are in existence in all of Africa. This paper attempts to show how other like international organizations deal with these difference. The first step in this unification is the adaptation of a standardized Kiswahili. Out of the (45) countries belonging to the (AU), approximately (26) are French speaking (Francophone). The remaining, approximately (20) countries, are English speaking (Anglophone). Of the (20) countries that use English as their language of instruction, approximately (15) speak some form of Kiswahili and it is the language of trade and has been for quite some time for the entire East Coast of African countries.

The advent of the African Union (AU) can be described as an event of great magnitude in the Institutional evolution of the continent. On 9/9/1999, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity issued a Declaration calling for the establishment of an African Union, with a view, to accelerating the process of integration in the continent to enable it play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalization.

The main objectives of the OAU were, to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonization and promote unity and solidarity among African States; to coordinate and intensify cooperation for development; to a sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and to promote international cooperation within the United Nations.

Indeed, as a continental organization the OAU provided an effective forum that enabled all Member States to have coordinated positions on matters of common concern to the continent in international fora and to defend the international concerns effectively.

African countries, in their quest for unity, economic and social development under the banner of the OAU, have provided initiatives and made substantial progress in many areas which paved the way for the establishment of the African Union (AU). The OAU initiatives paved the way for the birth of AU. In July 1999, the Assembly decided to convene an extraordinary meeting to expedite the process of economic and political integration on the continent.

The Vision of the African Union (AU)

The AU is Africa’s premier institution and principal organization for the promotion of accelerated social integration of the continent, which will lead to greater unity and solidarity between African countries. The AU is based on the common vision of a united and strong Africa and on the need to build a partner governments and all segments of civil society, in particular women, youth and the private sector, in order solidarity and cohesion amongst the peoples of Africa. As a continental organization it focuses on the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent which is a prerequisite for implementation of the development and integration agenda of the Union.
East African coastal strip from well into Somalia and as far as northern Mozambique, there are communities of Swahili speakers. Of less significance are small and declining communities in the Comoro Islands, where local Swahili related vernaculars and French are the rule, and along part of the northwestern coast of Madagascar. In spite of its large number of speakers and the huge area in which language is spoken, Swahili has less than two million native speakers, most of whom live along the East African coast of southern Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, northern Mozambique, and on the offshore islands of Lamu, Zanzibar, and Pemba. Most speakers in Tanzania and Kenya acquire Swahili as second language, being native speakers of other African languages. Many speakers of Swahili, especially those further into the interior of the continent (up country) speak two or more languages, and use Swahili as a lingua franca (dialect). A growing number of first language speakers, however, live in the urban areas of east Africa, where inter-ethnic communities prevail. The origin of Kiswahili and Waswahili is not definitive. One claim is that there existed a Waswahili tribe on the coast between Kilwa and Bagamoyo during the 19th century. These are believed to be the forefathers of the present Wazaramo who it is said, were born merchants. Thus, they rapidly developed into a merchant caste with a purely Bantu language as their medium of communication. This language spread far and wide as it was suitable for trading with the majority of the other Bantu people.

Kiswahili is known to contain many Arabic words in its vocabulary. As a result, there are those who support the notion that is a mixture of Arabic and the native languages of the different coastal Bantu tribes who were later converted to Islam. However, Kiswahili is essentially an African language. It is a Bantu language just like Zulu in South Africa, Kikuyu, in Kenya, Kongo in Congo, and Duala in Cameroun. Although they are not mutually intelligible, they all evolved from the same central pool, sharing much basic vocabulary, word building processes and sentence structure. The word for ‘person’, for example, is very similar from one Bantu language to another: mtu (Kiswahili), umuntu (Zulu), mundu (Kikuyu), muntu (Kongo) and moto(Duala). Presumably the ancestor language had muntu, from which the present day languages derive their particular form of the word. The plural of this word (abantu in Zulu, for example) provides the model for the word ‘Bantu’, the name linguists chose to call this family of languages.

It is evident that the language remained overwhelmingly a coastal phenomenon until some two centuries ago. The beginning of trade into the interior has been marked as a significant factor for the expansion of the language. The Kiswahili language played an important economic role in fostering contacts across ethnic groups at the grassroots level. As a result, as trade grew and expanded, so did the use and spread of Kiswahili. However, there were obstacles to internal trade in some areas, which in turn hampered the furthered spread of Kiswahili. Some tribes of Eastern Africa, for example, the Maasai acquired the reputation of hostility to foreigners and were thus able to keep away many merchants from the Mainland.

Kiswahili is the first language of the Eastern African Coastline people from southern Somalia in the north to northern Mozambique in the south, including the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba, Lamu, the Comoros and the north of Madagascar. There are now also growing communities of first language speakers in the hinterland, especially in urban areas. As Kiswahili is spoken over a wide ethnically and linguistically diverse area, many
Arabic is taught, written in newspapers, journals, and text books, therefore a standard Kiswahili would be beneficial to all countries concerned and hope to be concerned whenever a standard Kiswahili has been adopted.

A common language of communication will ease the path to development and eventually seal the inevitable bridge of unity. The path to African unity must begin with a common language, which will eventually yield a common currency to ease the ills of all African societies by easing the task of a never-ending toil for all Africans. This toil will eventually cease because the commonality of currency will eventually come about as in other societies discussed in previous sections of this paper. Labor forces become more mobile as the time between continents continue to decrease. Why not a United States of Africa?


Software Development for Annotation

A presentation on the ALRP’s automated linguistic annotation process

Automated linguistic annotation

This diagram illustrates the steps and products of automated linguistic annotation.
AUTOMATED LINGUISTIC ANNOTATION

Definition:
- The use of computer hardware and software to break down and study the entities of a given block of text
- In other words we use the computer to break up the parts of speech making up African languages and then we analyze them and gather important information

WHY ANNOTATE?
- The objective of annotation is to assist in obtaining important information about the entities in the text.
- These entities may include locations, facilities, people organizations, and geographical, political entities.
- Verbs, prefixes, Nouns, Noun-phrases, Suffixes, Adjectives, Pronouns...

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Data generated from annotation can be used in a wide array of cross-lingual applications like;

1) Artificial Intelligence
2) Social Network Analysis
3) Electronic translation of Newspapers, Bibles, books and other literary work.
4) Emergency Medical Language Systems,
5) Anti-Criminal and
6) Anti-Terror activities.
B. The Advancements

1. File-type conversion is not required.
2. User friendly
3. Helpful Icons
   a. Touch of Key to “Select”
   b. Filter-enabled Database interface
   c. Use of Mouse to highlight desired entities
3. All data is saved to a cumulative database
4. Tool automatically picks any entities that are all ready in the Lexicon
5. Tool lets you know the last file that was worked on
6. Has a mechanism that rids “over-tagging”
7. Unfussiness: Doesn’t complain about Swahili Grammar and/or Vocabulary.

C. The Present

- The present tool has reduced many technical ambiguities
- The present state of the art software has made Annotation as easy as 1,2,3;
  1. Open tool, open file: No type conversion
  2. Select a tag and <ENTER>
  3. Save selected entities to the database

B. The Future

- Fully automation
- Voice Recognition
- Combined software to handle many language processing tasks simultaneously.
- Rich and expansive database
Overview

- Background
- Components
- Applications
- Foreseeable Issues
- Conclusion
Objective

Develop machine translation tools to facilitate the delivery of health care on the African continent
Background: UMLS

- Increase Access To Biomedical Information
  - computers
  - machine-readable sources

- Methodology
  - interpret user queries
  - identify relevant databases
Components

- Needs
- Resources
- Implementation
Components: Needs

- Type of Term
  - preferred term, abbreviation
- Vocabulary Source
- Lexical Variants
  - heart attacks, myocardial infarct
- Translations
Components: Implementation

- Computer Language (e.g., Java or Prolog)
- Multi-disciplinary Team
  - computer scientists
  - linguists
  - health care professionals
Applications

- Telemedicine
  - transcribe voice into digital text
- Semantic Relationship Extraction
  - e.g., aspirin treats headaches
- Identify Markers of Diseases in Patient Records
  - HIV epidemic
Conclusion

- Construction of Medical Lexicon is a Formidable Task
- Difficulty May Arise Locating Machine-Readable Data
- Generalize Findings to Other African Language Translation Software
staples. Currently, Ghana is the world’s second largest producer and exporter of cocoa (after Ivory Coast).

**International Trade and Its Importance to Ghana**

International trade plays an important role and is critical to Ghana’s trade balance and economy. International trade contributes to economic growth in Ghana by increasing producers’ competitiveness in domestic and export markets. International trade also provides Ghana and other countries with access to a wider variety of foods that may not be produced domestically or are produced cheaper elsewhere.

Continued modification of international agricultural trade should lead to improved access to world markets for agricultural commodities from Ghana. By promoting exports, Ghana seeks to obtain foreign exchange essential to repay debts and to ease the country’s restrictions on agricultural imports. An upswing in agricultural exports benefits Ghana’s entire economy and can create jobs for citizens.

**Economic Growth and Technological Advancement**

With Ghana heavily reliant on agriculture and with almost 60 percent of the population dependent on farm income, increased investment in the agriculture sector will enable it to serve as an engine for economic growth. The further development of the agricultural sector is crucial to Ghana’s trade growth. Growth of agriculture in Ghana has showed steady gains over the past few years, reaching 5.2 percent in 2003 from 2.1 percent in 2000. The promotion of foreign trade has been central to all government plans to revive the economy in Ghana.
African Language Research Project

ALRP 1992-2006

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