



UNESCO Institute for Education



TOWARDS
A MULTILINGUAL
CULTURE
OF EDUCATION

Edited by Adama Ouane

Towards a Multilingual Culture of Education

Edited by
Adama Ouane

With the contributions of:
Mohamed H. Abdulaziz, Efurosibina Adegbija, Dipta Bhog,
Boubacar Diarra, Arame Diop Fal, Clifford N. Fyle, Malini
Ghose, Utta von Gleich, Wolfgang Küper, Heike Niedrig,
Pai Obanya, D.P. Pattanayak,
Ekkehard Wolff

The UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg, is a legally independent entity. While the Institute's programmes are established along the lines laid down by the General Conference of UNESCO, the publications of the Institute are issued under its sole responsibility; UNESCO is not responsible for their contents.

The points of view, selection of facts, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily coincide with official positions of the UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the UNESCO Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country or territory, or its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of the frontiers of any country or territory.

© UNESCO Institute for Education, 2003

ISBN 92 820 1131-3

translation into English: Colin Shearmur

UNESCO Institute for Education
Feldbrunnenstr. 58 \$ 20148 Hamburg, Germany
Tel.: (+49 40) 44 80 41-0 \$ Fax: (+49 40) 410 77 23
uie@unesco.org \$ www.unesco.org/education/uie

CONTENTS

PART ONE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUES

Preface - <i>Adama Ouane</i>	-i
1. Introduction: the view from inside the linguistic jail <i>Adama Ouane</i>	1
2. Contributions to and its structure of the book <i>Adama Ouane</i>	15
3. Mother tongues: the problem of definition and the educational challenge - <i>D.P. Pattanayak</i>	23
4. Multilingual contexts and their ethos <i>D.P. Pattanayak</i>	29
5. The discourse on mother tongues and national languages - <i>Adama Ouane</i>	35
6. The impossible debate about the use of mother tongues in education - <i>Adama Ouane</i>	51
PART TWO: CASE STUDIES	87

7. The necessity of introducing mother tongues in education systems of developing countries <i>Wolfgang Küper</i>	89
8. The history of language policy in Africa with reference to language choice in education <i>Mohamed H. Abdulaziz</i>	103
9. Language policy and planning for basic education in Africa - <i>Clifford N. Fyle</i>	113
10. The place of languages in literacy and basic education programmes: an overview - <i>Pai Obanya</i>	121
11. Language issues in literacy and basic education: the case of India - <i>D. P. Pattanayak</i>	129
12. Language, orality and literacy: an experience of making the transition from orality to writing <i>Malini Ghose and Dipta Bhog</i>	139
13. Multilingualism and multiculturalism in Latin America: Matters of identity or obstacles to modernization - <i>Utta von Gleich</i>	147
14. Central language issues in literacy and basic education: three mother tongue education experiments in Nigeria <i>Efurosibina Adegbija</i>	167

15. Choice and description of national languages with regard to their utility in literacy and education in Angola - <i>Boubacar Diarra</i>	183
16. The issue of language in democratization: the Niger experience in literacy and basic education <i>Ekkehard Wolf</i>	191
17. The language question in literacy teaching and basic education: The experience of Senegal - <i>Arame Diop Fal</i>	215
18. Multilingualism and school language policy in post-Apartheid South Africa - <i>Heike Niedrig</i>	229
19. By way of conclusion: the normality of multilingualism and its political and educational implications <i>Adama Ouane</i>	249
APPENDICES	259
1. The language of Sub-Saharan Africa	-i-
2. The languages of Africa: an annotated map Classification of African languages	-v- -vi-
3. African community languages and their use in teaching	-x-
4. Universal declaration of linguistic rights	-xiii-
List of contributors	-xiv-

PREFACE

That the world of today is pluralistic, diverse and multi-faceted is an obvious fact that nobody would dispute. At the same time it is increasingly recognised that, alongside biodiversity, we need to preserve and value the diversity of our immaterial and intangible human heritage.

There is here a certain contradiction. On the one hand we strive for simplicity and generality, looking assiduously for ways to reduce diversity and complexity. This striving for simple and general solutions is often based on genuine pragmatic considerations, and it is easy to perceive it as a freely chosen path. Despite legitimate questions and concerns, the search goes on for quick recipes and "one-size-fits-all" formulae that are supposedly context-free and non-culture-specific. But behind these apparently genuine and justifiable endeavours are hidden subtle attempts to control and maintain unequal power relations and a comfortable status quo.

This book argues clearly against the failure to acknowledge the diversity of languages as normality. It sheds much light on the various discourses on language policy and the reality that they paint or fail to paint. It examines the carefully worded and subtle justifications, often backed up by sophisticated arguments and explanations that reduce complex situations to universal formulae, and it shows how the resulting policies deny and shy away from complexity and diversity in preference for so-called universal, affordable, conflict-free solutions that are also said to be merit- and value-based. Cohesion, simplicity and affordability are given priority, when what is really called for is an approach that takes complexity and diversity into account.

Diversity is seen by UNESCO as a cornerstone of social, cultural and political well-being. In the linguistic realm it is of special importance, given that languages are an integral part of humanity's intangible heritage. As forcefully expressed by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, in his message on the occasion of the celebration of International Mother Language Day (21 February 2003): "Languages constitute an irreducible expression of human creativity in all its diversity. Tools of communication, perception and reflection, they also shape the way we view the world and provide a link between past, present and future."

Living diversity means much more than simply managing it, and the present book does not simply deal with language preservation. It is not merely another appeal to protect all languages, especially the endangered ones. Rather, it addresses the practical questions and real situations that arise when different languages are in contact or in conflict. It exposes certain covert arguments and fallacies without shying away from addressing the underlying political, linguistic, psycho-social, relational and communicative dimensions of the issue.

The essential question raised in this book is: if multilingualism is normal, why are language policies constructed on the basis of monolingualism? Exploring multilingual contexts in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, the book addresses multilingualism as an existing construct, which is mutually enriching but also fraught with power-related, socio-cultural, ethnic, techno-linguistic and educational problems. Education is perceived as the terrain *par excellence* where language-related inequalities and discrimination are manifested.

This book is an attempt to show how multilingualism is lived and practised. It also explains how, under severe circumstances and oppressive conditions, individuals, communities, societies and nations are inventing new ways of reconciling their communication needs and requirements with their ethnic and linguistic loyalties and identities. On the one hand, it argues and warns against the trap posed by oversimplistic universalist approaches, and rejects the tendency to view monolingualism as the ideal, unifying and integrating modality. On the other hand, it finds no comfort in ghettos founded on particularism. It sees a more positive future in the naturally structured communicative sphere and the naturally acquired multilingualism found in many African societies. This modality is analysed, its pros and cons examined, and various ways of building on it are explored. Many concrete experiences are described, illustrating a wide range of innovative and culturally sensitive approaches.

Many scholars and experienced activists have contributed to this publication. Besides the contributors themselves and those mentioned in the various chapters, many, many others have offered their deep insights and knowledge as well as their creative efforts to promote local languages and support educational and cultural policies that respect linguistic pluralism.

We wish to thank the large team of researchers, policy-makers and activists who contributed with ideas, arguments and feelings into this programme. This project would not have been possible without the collaboration of the authors of the 12 case studies, some of which have been updated and expanded since the earlier French edition of this book. This English edition has been enriched by two additional articles, from Heike Niedrig and Wolfgang Küper, both of whom I would like to thank for their contributions. My thanks are also due to Colin Shearmur, former Head of the English translation department of UNESCO, who translated part of this work into English, and to Wenda McNevin, Senior Editor at UNESCO, for her painstaking and meticulous work of re-reading and editing. The work of formatting and preparing the text for printing was carried out by my colleague Cendrine Sebastiani of the Publications Department at UIE. Through her patience and perseverance the manuscript was brought out of the dormant state in which it had lain for some time. To her also I express my warmest thanks.

Adama Ouane
Director, UNESCO Institute for Education

PART ONE

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION: THE VIEW FROM INSIDE THE LINGUISTIC JAIL

Adama Ouane

We have taken the title of this introduction from an article by the well-known and talented Kenyan writer, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, entitled 'Africa from inside the Linguistic Jail', which appeared in *The Guardian* (1 October 1989). In this overview of the literature that has emerged from the African continent during the past forty years, Ngugi described the sociolinguistic situation in terms as realistic as they were full of imagery. As he forcefully put it:

Y the state of exile in the literary landscape reflects a larger state of alienation in the society as a whole, a clear case of colonial legacy which has left scars on the body, heart and mind of the continent. *The Man Died; Things Fall Apart; No Longer at Ease; The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born; From a Crooked Rib*; the titles of many novels in Africa speak clearly of this alienation, or this dismemberment of parts that could have made a whole.

This point of view is echoed by Bamgbose (1991), one of the most senior and best known African linguists, who constantly stresses the fact that most African countries are prisoners of the past when it comes to taking decisions about language policies, since in working out their lines of action they are constrained by what history has created and re-created, done and undone. Confronted by this situation, political decision-makers are perpetually torn between nationalist ambition and the demands for efficiency made by 'nationalism', or the establishment of the nation.¹ How did this situation come about? One explanation is offered by an equally well-known writer, the poet and politician from Martinique, Aimé Césaire, who wrote in a letter to Maurice Thorez:

There are two ways of losing oneself: by fragmentation in the particular or by dilution in the "universal".

At the root of this universal conflict **B** and also acting as a mirror to it **B** lies the language question. The choice of language and the use made of it are decisive in the view people have of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment and to the universe. The alienation that this conflict produces is settled in two ways. Chinua Achebe, for example, in *Things Fall Apart*, resolves it through the suicide of Okonkwo, one of his heroes, the stubborn and fierce defender of the old order. The same fate of destruction is decreed by the gods for the high priest Ezuelu, the hero of another novel by the same author, *Arrow of God*. From these endings, several critics have concluded that Achebe sees tradition only in terms of failure and suicide in the face of modernity. The author answered this in an interview given to Okoye (1987, p.194), cited by Huber (1989, p. 341), saying that the ideal and the vision of the world for which those heroes fought did not die with them or with the onset of their madness.

¹ Fishman has dealt with this distinction in several books; see in particular Fishman 1991.

A positive approach to diversity

In this respect, Africa serves as a backdrop for a situation that all peoples, communities, groups or individuals experience when their identity wavers and their culture is fragmented owing to the exclusion from those higher and more prestigious forms beyond the mere transmission from one generation to another. But this, too, is affected in the end, representing a threat to the survival of the languages concerned. Fragmentation of this sort obviously occurs in a multilingual context, when several languages are in contact and often, not to say always, in conflict with each other.

The core of this book is made up of the conclusions of an international research project conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) into the question of mother tongues in literacy work and basic education in a multilingual and multicultural setting. The research was based essentially, but not exclusively, on a body of data derived chiefly from experiments and practices in Africa. Africa, the select area to which modern sorcerers apply all their formulae or which they treat as guinea-pigs, but which is also the seat of many hopes arising out of the struggle by the peoples of the continent, lies at the heart of the transnational dialogue that has grown up around this problem.

The cases² identified and examined by a group of African specialists (linguists, sociolinguists, educationalists, practising ethnologists, researchers and decision-makers) were ‘compared and contrasted’ with situations and experiences elsewhere, in Asia and particularly in Latin America, that are analysed and presented by specialists and colleagues mostly from those regions and with almost identical professional backgrounds. This book contains their studies, thoughts and observations. This is the group referred to when we speak of the authors or the team of researchers. A number of studies appear under their authors’ names while others, and the summaries of many talks and discussions, are included in the substance of the book in the form of arguments and examples. The conclusions are based on material much more extensive than the contributions made by this group. We have drawn deeply on the literature to support our point of view.

It is widely recognized that monolingual countries are more the exception than the rule. Fostering a positive approach to multilingualism remains the task allotted to language policies, whose configurations ought to stem from the existing dynamics and inter-relationships but which in reality are dictated by a combination of factors justifying the maintenance or the transformation of established balances. What does this linguistic diversity consist of? The countries concerned by this study present the following characteristics: Papua-New Guinea (between 800 and 856 languages), Indonesia (428 and 670), Nigeria (400 and 410), India (250 and 380), Cameroon (258 and 270), the United Republic of Tanzania (110 and 120), Peru (123, of which 60 are in the Andes and 50 in Amazonia), Ethiopia (87 and 95), Kenya (39 and 47), Bolivia (32/33), Angola (29), Senegal (20), Mali (12) and Niger (10). A number of case studies will speak of attempts to manage this diversity and the discussions that took place, provided interesting information about the paths that have been followed. Box 1 shows that this diversity extends far beyond our sample:

² In addition to the general studies, to some regional approaches and to transnational experiences, the specific experiences described and discussed here concern the following countries: Angola, Benin, Bolivia, Cameroon, Ecuador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Papua-New Guinea, Peru, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Box 1.

For a population of some 800 million, India has between 250 and 380 languages, depending on which way the 1,600 dialects and ten writing systems are classified. In Indonesia, some 180 million people, very unequally distributed among some of the country's 13,000 islands, speak about 418 languages, of which 128 are to be found on the island of Irian Jaya alone. The number of speakers varies between a few hundred and 60 million. The 3 million inhabitants of Papua-New Guinea use between 760 and 850 languages.

In Africa south of the Sahara, there are between 1,250 and 2,100 languages concentrated in an area bounded by Senegal in the west, Ethiopia in the east and the east African plateaux around what David Dalby called the 'fragmentation belt' (Dalby 1979). Some countries such as Lesotho, Madagascar, Somalia and Swaziland have only 1 language; others such as Burundi and Rwanda are almost monolingual, whereas in Cameroon, where there are 8 million people, 185 languages are spoken. In sub-Saharan Africa 3 languages are each spoken by over 30 million people: Hausa (30 million), Swahili (40 million) and Arabic (70 million).

In Latin America, the facade of Spanish masks great linguistic diversity, despite the decline of many Indian languages that have fallen into disuse. In Central America, some 70 languages are spoken by 6 million people. Around 100 other Indian languages are spoken by 11 million people in the remainder of the continent. The number of languages that used to be spoken in this region is estimated at 2000, but evidence has been provided for fewer than 600 of them. At present, the number of linguistic families is put at between 100 and 250. Over 1,000 tribes ceased to exist before their languages could be recorded. The greatest concentration of Indian language communities is to be found in the Andes. Among these are the Quechua speakers, estimated to number 6 million, stretching from Colombia to Chile. The Aymara language community used to be very extensive but its speakers today number 600,000. In the south of the continent, mention should be made of Guarani, with majority status in Paraguay and used by over 3 million speakers, most of whom are not Indian.

Sources

Meeting of Experts to examine the International Review of Activities concerning Mother Tongues considered as Vehicles of Education. 30 November - 4 December 1981. *Final Report*. Paris, UNESCO; Training Seminar on the Problems of Programming Language Teaching in a Bi- or Multilingual Environment. Lomé, 2-11 September 1980. *Final Report*. Paris, UNESCO, 1980. pp. 8-9; David Crystal. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge Mass./New York. Cambridge University Press, 1987. pp. 284 and 322 .

Summary One: 'Languages: Conflict or Coexistence?'

The UNESCO Courier, April 2000, pp. 17-36

This issue of the UNESCO Courier contains a series of articles, reports and interviews, raising a number of important issues about the challenges facing the languages of the world. The contributions are divided into two major topics and there are twelve sub-titles:

The focus begins with the metaphor 'language wars' and deals with the anticipated disappearance of the majority of the 6,000 languages spoken in the world today due to historical, political, attitudinal and socio-economic factors. The internationalisation of financial markets, the dissemination of information technology and electronic media, urbanisation, modernisation and other aspects of globalization have intensified the threat to minority languages, and the rate of language death has now reached 10 every year world-wide. However, at various levels, major activities and strategies have been designed, such as fostering harmonious co-existence between languages, promoting international co-operation on bilingual or multilingual education, encouraging national language policies, protecting linguistic diversity, mobilising and empowering grassroots initiatives. All of these endeavours are part of the struggle to preserve cultural identities and linguistic heritages and to slow down the extinction of minority or endangered languages, which are directly linked with the bio-diversity of the planet. Several projects have been launched and implemented by UNESCO, such as the Linguapax project, the Report on World Languages and the International Mother Language day; Other important efforts include national language policies, like that of India, and NGO programmes for linguistic pluralism, such as Terralingua, the Linguasphere Observatory, SIL International, FIPLV and Language Rights. There are also important local initiatives by groups like the Shuar and the Zaparo in Ecuador, who are struggling to survive and preserve their language and traditional knowledge, supported by indigenous organisations. The contributions of individuals are also significant. Those mentioned include a Gikuyu novelist in Kenya, a Berber singer in Algeria and a Basque writer and translator in Spain, all of whom are attempting to preserve and safeguard their mother tongues and promote them in the modern world. There is ample evidence to show that minority languages in danger of extinction can be saved and play a full role in education and development, resisting the encroachment of major languages like English, French and Spanish, which gained their position as a result of colonisation and the exercise of political power. At the same time, these dominant languages are themselves subject to change through geographical spread, contact with other cultures and adaptation to changing needs.

Table 1: The world's top 10 languages by population

Rank	Language	Population
1	English, Mandarin, Chinese	1 000 000 000
2	Hindi (with Urdu)	900 000 000
3	Spanish	540 000 000
4	Russian	320 000 000
5	Arabic, Bengali	250 000 000
6	Portuguese	200 000 000
7	Malay and Indonesian	160 000 000
8	Japanese	130 000 000
9	French, German	125 000 000
10	Punjabi, Yue Chinese	85 000 000

Source: *The UNESCO Courier*, April 2000, pp. 20-1 and *Ethnologue*, 1999, 14th ed.

Table 2: geographical distribution of the world's languages and estimated number of living and endangered languages

Continent	Geographical Distribution	Number of living languages	Estimate Number of Endangered languages
Americas	15%	1000	700
Africa	30%	2 011	200
Europe	3%	225	74
Asia	32%	2 165	41
The Pacific	19%	1 302	?

Source: *The UNESCO Courier*, April 2000, pp. 20-1; *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 1999, 14th ed.

Table 3: most widespread languages of the world

Rank	Language	Number of Speakers
1	Chinese	1.2 billion
2	English	478 million
3	Hindi	437 million
4	Spanish	392 million
5	Russian	284 million
6	Arabic	225 million
7	Portuguese	184 million
8	French	125 million

Source: The *UNESCO Courier*, April 2000, pp. 20-1

Table 4: top 10 African languages by population

Rank	Language	Primary Country	Population
1	Arabic (Egyptian spoken)	Egypt	42 500 000
2	Hausa	Nigeria	24 200 000
3	Araic (Algerian spoken)	Algeria	22 400 000
4	Yoruba	Nigeria	20 000 000
5	Arabic (Moroccan spoken)	Morocco	19 542 000
6	Arabic (Saidi spoken)	Egypt	18 900 000
7	Amharic	Ethiopia	17 413 000
8	Igbo	Nigeria	17 000 000
9	Arabic (Sudanese spoken)	Sudan	16 000 000
10	Somali	Somalia	9 472 000

Source: *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 1999, 14th ed.

Table 5: Major languages, their corresponding international bodies and data on the member countries

Language	Name of International body	No. of Member States	Population
French	Intl. Org. of French-Speaking Countries	50	500 million
Spanish	Ibero-American Summits	over 20	350 million
English	Commonwealth Countries	over 51	322 million
Arabic	The Arab League	22	250 million
Portuguese	Association of Portuguese-Speaking Countries	7	200 million
Turkish	Turkish-Speaking Summits	6	120 million
Dutch	Dutch-Speakers Summits	8	40 million

Source: *The UNESCO Courier*, April 2000, pp. 23-4

The team that assisted UIE in setting up the project examined in this publication set itself the task of looking into ways of making people aware of the normality of multilingualism. One might be tempted to say that this was a rather ordinary task, and indeed what merit could there be in making normal what was normal already? This apparent tautology is nevertheless central to the debate in which the participants confront each other, sometimes placidly, sometimes openly and fiercely. The nature of multilingualism in fact differs not only on account of the number of languages present but also, and most importantly, on account of the socio-political influence of their respective speakers and the prestige that results from this and on account of the quality of the relationships built up among the different languages. While questions of quantity relate to the number of speakers and the geographical coverage, quality is defined by a series of relational indicators, objective as well as subjective, with historical, cultural, psychological and socio-ethnological determinants, on the one hand forming the ecology of the languages, and on the other shaped by social conflicts and especially the quest for power and domination among the people who champion those languages. Use of modes and forms of expression over a period of time is one of these relational indicators. The proximity of power and the prestige which stems from it are another. The plurality that exists is in fact not always a diversity of equals, meaning equity of difference, nor does it always represent the full range of a single culture (Kalantzis et al., 1989, p. 8).

The tasks that the authors of this study set themselves were to present the main points of view, to reconcile them if possible and, above all, to strike a blow for the normality of difference and diversity and for the normality of the underlying multilingualism. There is a great deal at stake. A critical look at the distance covered since the conference on mother tongues organized by UNESCO in 1951, where the use of these languages in education was advocated,³ a literature review on the topic and a quick look at

³ A bibliography of the important decisions, meetings and documents relating to UNESCO's activities concerning mother tongue and language teaching was published in 1981. It gives an impressive idea of the distance then covered but it was circulated on a limited scale only. Jacques Champion, in *Langage et pédagogie en France et en Afrique*, reviews what UNESCO has said about mother tongues in education (Champion, 1986, pp. 98-107).

a number of experiments undertaken here and there with varying degrees of success, and sometimes also with disastrous results,⁴ show what a gap there is between what is said and what is done, between what is possible and desirable and what is actually achieved.

This book does not set out to avoid the problem, still less to provide definitive and immutable answers to the questions raised. The discussion is thus going to be far from closed, since the complexity of the situation, the subtlety of the arguments and the stubborn nature of the interests present make it impossible to arrive at a settled and definitive view, acceptable to all the protagonists. What is at stake is power, and the relationship with power is perpetually shifting, the people concerned being in perpetual negotiation or in constant struggle in their search for an equilibrium that has always to be renewed, or discovered. Since the aim is not to sell one idea but to offer a variety of prospects, disagreements play an important part in this strategy.

The ivory Tower of Babel

Masking differences, advocating levelling, defending monolingualism, and stigmatizing the scourge of multilingualism on the one hand, but also speaking in praise of difference and celebrating diversity on the other are all approaches that have been employed ever since people in society have attempted to solve the problems raised by the ambient situation with regard to language. Some people even go back to the story of the Tower of Babel where, according to the Bible, men experienced 'confusion of language' for the first time for having wanted to raise themselves to heaven. Babel was the marvellous tower of peace that human beings tried to build through mutual understanding. Getting on with the Other who does not sing the same tune, and getting on together in order to reach heaven, symbolizes people's desire for the infinite and his responsibility for the Other (Tastayre, 1990, p. 42). The Tower of Babel has also been invoked as the common source of all existing languages by the defenders and speakers of non-State languages in order to avoid the subordination of those languages to the language (and reason) of State and hence to avoid their exclusion and marginalization (Calvet, 1987; Williams, 1992, p. 22).

The guiding thread followed by those working on this project can be summed up as follows: there have been forty years or so of words, arguments, good intentions and bad faith, and fierce determination to prove by experiment, one way or the other, the truth of the arguments being employed. **B** everything seems to have been done to throw light on the question. The problem nevertheless remains entire, positions are still as far from each other as ever and the results of using mother tongues in education, government and the prestige areas of communication are rather disappointing. Where pilot experiments have been carried out, the move from trial to general application, if it has been tried at all, has not gone entirely smoothly. According to Fafunwa (1990) and Poth (1988), between thirty-two and thirty-seven African States have, over the last thirty years, conducted experiments with literacy work and/or basic education in mother tongues. The experiments nevertheless concerned only 70 of the estimated 1,250 to 2,150 languages, depending on the classifications and criteria for definition that are used.

⁴ One example is provided by Guinea under the regime of Sékou Touré, which hastily and in a rather demagogic way introduced local languages into education without any prior preparation, while still maintaining the supremacy of French in the higher spheres of communication. This policy came to be identified with the whole of that regime's repressive policies and led to the languages being rejected. The baby was thrown out with the bathwater.

Christine MacNab, on the other hand is categorical in the introduction to her study on the policy underlying, and the machinery for carrying out, language planning for education in Ethiopia, saying that there is no reason at all for thinking that the language situation in education has improved in Africa over the last five years (MacNab, 1987, p.1). This assessment was made as part of the survey carried out on the main theme of the Conference of African Ministers of Education (Harare, 1981), which led to the well-known Harare Declaration, held to be an important step in the reform and formulation of education policies on the African continent. Among other things, the Declaration reiterates the cultural and educational arguments in favour of using mother tongues in education and also draws attention to the political aspect, which is the crucial argument, although this is still left to the discretion of States. In this connection, it should be mentioned that the 1976 Lagos Conference made a more forceful appeal to authenticity and identity, implying a return to traditional sources and values. Where education was concerned, this suggested greater use of local languages and limits to the role of the European languages as a strategy for self-defence. It nevertheless has to be acknowledged that in practice, the superficially exotic aspect of the operation proved stronger than the political basis. In actual fact, the greatest effects were on names, with a number of changes to catholic names in Chad, Togo and, above all, The Democratic Republic of the Congo.

What must be done to make things move? This question, at times expressing confusion and at others anger with the *status quo*, often comes up in discussions and never fails to make them blaze, like oil thrown on a fire. Not only is the issue complex, the diversity of those involved calls for a differentiated approach to framing replies. One has to know who those involved are if one wants to go beyond argument and have some control over action and practice. Three things are generally found to be the case:

1. decision-makers, scholars and those professionally involved rarely communicate about the question, each group remaining inside its ivory tower;
2. each turns its ivory tower into a church inside which the same gospel is preached to the converted; they give the impression that language is their exclusive concern and do not see that no-one is interested in languages for their own sake;
3. emotion is dominant in discussions and dichotomy tends to become the rule, although excellent minds are to be found in both camps.

The very fact that there are many people concerned with spreading their gospel while others denigrate it and reject it with equal ferocity reminds us that, as Haugen says, language planning is a human attempt to control the future. For some, it is a matter of placing instrumental and functional necessities above sentimental concerns (the return to the use of English that appears likely in Ethiopia and, above all, in the United Republic of Tanzania, and the return of French in Guinea and Madagascar). For others, the question is how to reach a negotiated compromise between these two positions. Others again insist on rejecting the apparently innocent ideological assumptions predominant in what is written on the question and in turning to the real machinery of struggle, power and domination, that leads to the standardization of certain languages and the rejection of the rest.

One must therefore learn to speak to others, and this means that it is important to know them better, to listen to them and also, and most importantly, to hear what they have to say. Linearity and dichotomy only aggravate the problems, and the siege mentality reigning in each camp does not predispose them to dialogue. Worse still, as Joshua Fishman says in his excellent book *Reversing Language Shift*, as a frequently embattled and sometimes besieged minority, they are so accustomed to speaking only to each

other that they forget how to speak effectively to others. They no longer know how to explain to others what they no longer need to explain to each other (Fishman, 1991, p. 18). He also says that a perspective and a dynamic are needed to halt language change and loss, and that to achieve this, we need, while keeping to our fundamental values on the matter, to distinguish carefully among those we are speaking to and realize that between those who are decidedly pro- and those who are implacably anti-, there are the 'don't knows' whose attitude is indeed passive but not definitively negative.

Salutary disillusionment

It is not the aim of the authors of this study to add to the already existing evidence and certainties but to throw light on certainties that are ill-founded and evidence that is false, and above all to make the reader clearly aware of diversity, its fullness, its contours and its permanence. If nothing else, they will try to bring about a salutary disillusionment because, as has already been noted, even if the most burning issues and the questions raised about the subject still have no answers, they nevertheless deserve to be considered.

Given the problems that access to culture and the written language is raising today, the book unambiguously opts for a polycentric and polyphonic world and for the promotion of all mother tongues, but also for a natural bi- and multilingualism, graduated and cumulative taking account of freely experienced and expressed needs relating to communication, cultural freedom and freedom for one's identity, improvement of the quality of life, the assumption of responsibility and participation in public affairs.

The message being put across, which sets out to be argument rather than dogma, is intended for everyone concerned by the framing and application of literacy policies and actions, as well as for the people whose interests are at stake and whose point of view and participation are at the heart of all the measures being advocated. All the same, a choice of this kind does not lose sight of the particular dangers for scholars and the various other people concerned that are inherent in their own value judgements, since those judgements are naturally favourable to the experiments or multilingual and multicultural situations that have been studied. Indeed, the facts observed or the methods of evaluation and analysis employed are often implicitly selected to reinforce their preferences. Ayo Bamgbose draws our attention to the probable bias attributable to researchers' assumptions in the analysis of experimental arguments concerning use of local mother tongues and the feasibility of basing education in them (Bamgbose, 1984, pp. 89-90). For Wagner, those engaged in social action must distinguish between argument and scientific proof, and must above all avoid giving the impression that their arguments represent science. In fact, most of the time, problems of method cast doubt on proof of success and motivation. Most of the encouraging effects that have been noted are underpinned by the great enthusiasm and the prejudice of those involved in this type of education (Wagner et al., 1989). The importance of and need for empirical research on the matter cannot mean such research is an absolute condition for every choice that has to be made. Seeing this misguided recourse to scientific proof, and particularly the role of political filter that is sometimes assigned to it, Fishman observes that the establishment authorities often use 'studies', 'research' and experiment precisely for the purpose of delaying the promotion of languages and the extension of their use. The defenders of a contrary policy need not therefore feel awkward about using such methods, nor become defensive or unsure of themselves for engaging in or advocating such efforts (Fishman 1991, pp. 33 and 43). In addition, the differences between these two points of view are profoundly philosophical/ideological and value-related

since they are differences vis-à-vis ends and are not as bridgeable via empirical analysis and rational discussion as are differences with respect to means and methods. The maintenance and promotion of disadvantaged languages therefore do not need to be justified *any more* than does their straightforward assimilation; but of course, the maintenance and advancement of disadvantaged languages requires *no less* justification than does its opposite (Fishman, 1991, p. 14).

Another important part of this project is to examine the question from different angles which are not simply technical but also sociocultural, political, economic and so on (Coulmas, 1989; Bourdieu, 1991). Language is too important to be left to linguists alone or to specialists in neighbouring disciplines such as ethnology, anthropology, history and philology.

While existing situations with all their frequently dissimulated complexity must be taken into account, the central question also needs to be raised, namely, should the different dynamisms be maintained where they exist and promoted where they are being stifled or, on the contrary, should one subscribe to the *status quo*, i.e. the discourse of the dominant groups who refuse to see that a completely homogeneous language or speech community does not exist in reality? What in fact needs to be done is to speak out against the idealization of a particular set of set of linguistic practices that have emerged historically and have certain social conditions of existence, what Bourdieu metaphorically and ironically calls 'linguistic communism' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 5). The dynamic nature of a language is accentuated still further the more numerous and the more varied the situations of multiculturalism become, since these raise questions and lead to queries at the political, social and, above all, educational levels.

The consequences for education are of many kinds and of vital importance. They concern questions of educational policy, the medium or media of instruction, the choice and relevance of subject-matter, methods and evaluation. Homogeneity prevailed for a long time, and still does, as the guiding principle for the organization of education systems. The methods and techniques of evaluation are still very much coloured by it. This principle is not, today, standing up to the heterogeneity that is dominant in language and culture.

Countries can be compared to people in that they have their own combinations of linguistic sources (Clay, 1993, p. 31). Nevertheless, the current models of educational and linguistic reasoning stubbornly propagate approaches based on homogeneity, standardization, and so on. This is the conclusion that Edwards and Redfern come to in their examination of multiculturalism in school and the language question in education in the United Kingdom and Canada, noting that both countries have nurtured the myth of cultural and linguistic homogeneity as a means of ensuring that power stays with the dominant group, although multiculturalism and multilingualism have always been a fact of life. In addition, linguistic and cultural diversity have, wherever possible, been made invisible (Edwards and Redfern, 1992, p. 6). This observation applies generally to all dominant groups, which tend to adopt similar attitudes in drawing up a language policy that, according to Mackey, is nothing but a way of accommodating society to linguistic diversity (Mackey, 1993, p. 12). Williams (1992), in his sociological critique of sociolinguistics, sees in this attitude a deeply-rooted epistemological legacy going back to Durkheim and the Age of Enlightenment and stemming from their moderate conception of the State and its inexorable and reasonable march towards progress, harmony and the universal values embodied in modernity.

The studies carried out to date deal with these questions and concern experiences with language management, a multi-disciplinary field the main aim of which is to first analyse the particular features inherent in the language situations in a given territory, then to put forward, within a legal framework, a

political position regarding language, and finally to see what all its practical applications will be in people's daily lives, whether these involve the functions of the language, education, the world of work, government, trade or communications (Proceedings of the International Symposium on Language Management, Ottawa, 1986). From the examples presented, it emerges that language planning may lead either to unification (Indonesia, the United Republic of Tanzania) or to a pluralist situation (India, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, etc.). Here one sees the permanent, constant conflict between the unitary and the pluralist ideals that makes language management interesting and significant. In addition, reading the contributions shows that all aspects of a language can be managed, from phonology, morphology, grammar and the lexicon through to semantics. (Diarra's study on Angola and Diop Fal's study on Senegal review the attempts currently being made and the problems encountered in those countries).

The colonial past, even if it is now distant for some, left indelible marks and the language question still bears them, as can be seen from the problem of choosing languages and dialect forms for various functions to be fulfilled. The arguments put forward to justify, for example, the maintenance of exoglossia, are based on the status that was acquired under regimes of inequality and linguistic oppression which rubbed off on the local élites. Fafunwa and Sanou each independently asks: who is afraid of the use of African languages in education?, with the implied questions: Who is afraid of the people who speak these languages? Who is hiding behind the promotion of these languages in order to keep their speakers silent? Despite the subtleties wrapped up in the discourse, the answer, as will be seen later, resides in the assimilating attitude of the élites and in the disapproving but passive silence of the language communities concerned. The endogenous approach is inescapable because the quest for linguistic parity with the international languages, also called 'developed' languages, is a wild and endless chase in pursuit of a mirage. According to the usual criteria and canons, the struggle being made by local languages to acquire the credibility of the developed languages is never-ending. In fact, just when the local languages had drawn close to the international languages, these had already taken off for other heights, backed up by honours and privileges like mastery of the computer world, satellites, space and so on.

References

- Bamgbose, A. 1984. Mother-tongue Medium and Scholastic Attainment in Nigeria. *Prospects*, Vol. 14, No 1.
- Bamgbose, A. 1991. *Language and the Nation*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Harvard, Harvard University Press.
- Calvet, L.J. 1987. *La guerre des langues et les politiques linguistiques*. Paris, Payot.
- Champion, J. 1986. *Langage et pédagogie en France et en Afrique*. Paris, Anthropos.
- Clay, M. 1993. Politique linguistique et alphabétisation. In: *Politique linguistique, alphabétisation et culture*. Paris, UNESCO.
- Coulmas, F. 1989. *The Writing Systems of the World*. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Edwards, J. and Redfern, V. 1992. *The World in a Classroom*. Clevedon Philadelphia Adelaide, Multilingual Matters.

- Fafunwa, A. B. 1990. Who is Afraid of the Use of African Languages in Education? Contribution to: *Propos africains sur l'éducation pour tous*. Selection of articles presented on the occasion of the regional consultation on Education for All. Dakar. UNESCO-UNICEF.
- Fishman, J. A. 1991. *Reversing Language Shift, Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Clevedon Philadelphia Adelaide, Multilingual Matters.
- Huber, H. 1989. L'Afrique de l'Ouest : réflexion sur le patrimoine culturel. In: Séminaire: *Présence et cultures africaines*. Fribourg, 19-23 October 1988. *Final Report*. Berne. Swiss National Commission for UNESCO.
- Kalantzis, M., Cope, B.; Slade, D. 1989. *Minority Languages and Dominant Culture*. London New York Philadelphia, The Falmer Press.
- Mackey, W.F. 1993. Language Policies, Literacy and Culture: Contexts, Content and Constraints. In: *Language Policies, Literacy and Culture*. Paris, UNESCO.
- MacNab, C. 1987. *Language Planning for Education in Ethiopia. Policy Development and Implementation*. Stockholm, University of Stockholm, Institute of International Education.
- Okoye, E. M. 1987. *The Traditional Religion and its Encounter with Christianity in Achebe's Novels*. (Publications Universitaires Européennes). Berne, Publications Langage.
- Poth, J. 1988. *L'enseignement des langues maternelles africaines à l'école Y Comment?* Dakar, UNESCO-BREDA.
- Proceedings of the International Symposium on Language Management. Presentation by Lorne Laforge. International Center for Research on Bilingualism. 25-29 May 1986. Ottawa, Les Presses de l'Université de Laval.
- Sanou, F. 1990. Qui a peur des langues africaines comme véhicule d'enseignement ? In: *Propos africains sur l'éducation pour tous*. Selection of articles presented on the occasion of the regional consultation on Education for All. Dakar, UNESCO-UNICEF.
- Tastayre, R. 1990. Le sujet et la lettre. In: *Les actes du colloque, cultures et subcultures orales, cultures et subcultures de l'écrit dans les pays de la francophonie*. Paris, Université de Paris-Nord-UNESCO.
- Wagner, D. A., Spratt, J. E.; Ezzaki, A. 1989. Does Learning to Read in a Second Language Always Put the Child at a Disadvantage? Some Counterevidence from Morocco. In: *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 10.
- Williams, G. 1992. *Sociolinguistics: A Sociological Critique*. London/ New York, Routledge.

2. CONTRIBUTIONS TO AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Adama Ouane

Central to the contributions is a group of fourteen specialists, who include Mohamed Abdulaziz (Kenya), Efurosibina Adegbija (Nigeria), Boubacar Diarra (Mali/Angola), Ekkehard Wolff (University of Hamburg/Niger), Arame Diop Fal (Senegal), Clifford Fyle and Pai Obanya (BREDA, Dakar), A. Khamisi (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mamo Kebedde Shenkut (Ethiopia), who are African or are working on the subject of languages in Africa. Professor Pattanayak in India, Professor Emilia Ferreiro in Mexico, Dr Utta von Gleich from the Institute of Ibero-American Studies in Hamburg, Ms Heike Niedrig from the University of Hamburg and Mr Wolfgang Küper from the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) also contributed to the groundwork of this study. The other contributions are from a group of specialists who expressed their reactions to the basic thoughts and added numerous ideas and practical suggestions to them. Of these specialists, Professor Ruth Lozano (Peru) and Professor José Mendoza (Bolivia) particularly promoted transnational exchanges with the teams from Papua-New Guinea and Indonesia. Malini Ghose and Dipta Bhog drew on their experience of work with a community of village women in the north of India in their examination of the transition from oral to written communication.

The contributions of the second group were the outcome of a two-week seminar-cum-workshop that was also attended by the members of the core group. These contributions form the framework and provide most of the content of the discussion about multilingualism that constitutes the first part of this book. The chapter on languages in education, and in particular the controversy over whether or not to use mother tongues in education in a multilingual context, are based on the discussions held in plenary meetings or in groups during the above-mentioned seminar, at which appropriate recommendations, the structure of the book and questions of networking on the problem of languages were also considered. The seminar laid down four objectives for this book:

- (1) to generate awareness about the role of languages, and particularly of mother tongues, and to promote them in education and in economic and social development;
- (2) to stress the normality and the beneficial aspects of multilingualism and multiculturalism;
- (3) to bring what is known up to date and to make experience available by means of selected case-studies and through international and inter-cultural discussions and the expression of international and inter-cultural viewpoints;
- (4) to encourage international communication and co-operation.

General message - The normality of multilingualism: typology

Six major themes are discussed and illustrated, which can be summed up as follows:

- (a) the normality of multilingualism, its forms and its dynamics;
- (b) the problems affecting peoples, their languages and cultures;
- (c) experience with language management, with emphasis on language planning, standardization and 'modernization';
- (d) mother tongues and their use in education: the choice of languages;
- (e) strategies for bi- and multilingualism;
- (f) the allocation of resources, the setting up of support systems, the establishment of a literate environment, the production of materials and the role of the mass media as regards education in mother tongues and in other languages.

It would have been logical to take the points outlined above one by one as a basis for an account of the debates and of the specific trends and aspects that were discussed, but this summary does not follow that order since several of the themes overlap. To avoid repetition, it was decided to arrange material in the following way after the introduction and the summary of contributions. First come two exploratory essays by Pattanayak on the search for, and learning **of** and **in**, MTs on the one hand, and on the multilingual context and its ethos on the other, open the first real debate in part one of this book. There then follows a more wide-ranging summary of views about MTs and national languages and of the intractable debate about the use of MTs in education. Part two presents the specific studies that provided the material for the discussions, the crucial moments of which were a series of consultations and meetings held with the research teams and others. By way of conclusion, there is a summary of the arguments about the normality of multilingualism, despite the opposition encountered from, and the veiled attitudes and the practices inspired and dictated by, the dominant monolingual set-up.

Normality is seen as the only solution to the question of multilingualism since it alone makes it possible to pass from multilingualism that is merely observed and experienced to multilingualism that is deliberate and wanted, and takes account of the problems that affect people, their cultures and their languages. Most language planning strategies are influenced by the dominant thinking, which considers monolingualism to be the ideal situation and bi- or multilingualism as a distortion and therefore as an unfavourable context, even where efforts are made to take advantage of it. The objective is to reverse this trend, which is based on an epistemological presupposition. These questions, like those of identity and ethnic characteristics, have to be examined in the historical and socio-economic contexts that gave rise to them. Social demand, the functions that languages are required to fulfil, their complementary distribution in different uses, the status attaching to them, the status claimed and the status obtained or due, are all factors that are in a state of perpetual flux and influence the position of any given language on the multilingual scene. Social mobility and economic trends as opposed to educational and cultural factors are features that have repercussions on the expression and management of multilingualism. The thorny and decisive issue of status and choice and their interaction in the implementation of the policies that have been drawn up are matters about which the most varied interpretations are put forward. The three factors of function, status and choice come into play in countless scenarios and give rise to the most varied typologies, frequently within one and the same country.

Most of these typologies show dichotomies since they stem from the distinction made by Kloss (1969) between corpus planning and status planning, the aim being to reconcile political action and its technical execution on the one hand and action within a particular language and action between the languages present, on the other. Corpus planning presupposes planning changes to the linguistic code, i.e. to the structure, lexicon, alphabet and spelling. Status planning, on the other hand, concerns the functions to be carried out by a linguistic variant within the community. Both fields remain closely connected as any change in status nearly always requires changes in the corpus. Several scholars have fallen in with these ideas and have drawn up binary typologies, e.g. allocation/planning (Gorman, 1973), policy/culture (Neustupny, 1970), or culture/language policy (Paulston, 1974). Haugen (1966; 1983) was the person who attempted a systematic analysis of the central process of corpus planning, which is standardization. It is still relevant to reproduce his scheme, which has become accepted in language planning of which he laid the foundations. The other components of language planning were listed by Fishman (1974) as graphization (the submission of a language to a system of writing) and modernization (the planned extension of the lexical foundation of a language in order to respond to additional acquired functions). The four pillars on which this model rests are: norm selection, its codification, its spread, and its further refinement. The first two relate to the norm and involve society but the other two are linguistic in nature and relate to the functions of the norm.

Applying these concepts elaborated in Europe to the multilingual contexts of developing countries calls for occasionally substantial readjustments. Bamgbose was one of the first to express reservations about these schemes, which he considered as definite patterns but ones which, in order to reflect the situation actually encountered in highly multilingual countries, had to be revised if account were to be taken of the unofficial planning that occurred there (Bamgbose, 1987; 1989). Others are even more critical, believing that these typologies are not only of limited analytical value but that, in working inductively, they can lead to explanatory misconceptions unless great care is taken with the assumptions that are built into the basis of the typological differentiation (Williams, 1992, p. 94).

It will not be possible to get this normality accepted except by admitting that behind these languages are social groups and individuals who are concerned and affected by the State's linguistic practices, which are, in fact, those of the dominant social groups. The language has to return to its source, i.e. to the speakers, and to the ethnic, social, cultural and other groups. The central role played by language in the definition of society, culture and ethnic group and its relationship to them and to the formation and development of thought is the subject of a debate which goes back a long way and appears in a variety of forms. Language has been variously seen as an entity that conditions and imposes limits on thought; as a tool that is the form and content of thought; as the expression of the human spirit; as an instrument for representing the world; and as the reflection of the collective memory of the speakers and of their identity. Language plays an important role in cultural accumulation and culture is present in a linguistic form. The use and structure of a language can provide pointers to a social situation or may reflect it without necessarily being its cause. We shall see further on, in the discussion about the choice of languages in education and government, that the frequently mentioned factors of status, prestige and function are linked to an attitude that considers language as a system that may be autonomous, complete and complex in varying degrees. Language is an integral part of society. It follows that neither should be thought of in isolation from the other.

Two very closely connected topics that were considered by our working group and are reflected in the contributions to this book touch on education: bilingualism and the role of the mother tongue in education. The central theme relates on the one hand to the nature and forms of bilingualism and, on the

other, to the role of the mother tongue and the choice of languages and linguistic forms at the different levels of education.

For or against the use of mother tongues in education?

If multilingualism is a normal state of affairs, it follows that bilingualism is an unavoidable stage in its establishment. The question is: what is the relationship of the natural bilingualism existing between and within groups, and experienced and observed within communities to the established institutional bilingualism found in the education system and consolidated in the world of government and politics? It is important, in particular, to study the repercussions of the national language policy and, above all, of the education policy, on the practices of natural bilingualism, on the relationships between the speakers concerned, on their loyalty to their languages and on their attitudes to the different means of linguistic communication available to them.

These questions are at the heart of several of the contributions to this study. Nevertheless, before considering them, the spotlight should be turned on one question that dominated the discussions at the seminar, namely the difficulties of applying a language policy based on the use of mother tongues and local languages in education. Should one single mother tongue, or some mother tongues or all mother tongues be used in education and in the higher realms of communication? While opting to support, almost unconditionally, the use of all languages, the group, from a practical point of view, stressed the questions where?, when?, how?, and at what level? and also gave careful consideration to the repetitive and sophisticated counter-arguments, although examining them more from the point of view of their nature as arguments and their dissuasive or persuasive value. Although couched in the most varied terms, these arguments can be summarized as follows.

Firstly, the use of several mother tongues in education is an obstacle to national unity. In other words, national unity calls for official monolingualism, and the use of several mother tongues accentuates inter-ethnic conflict. To prevent or stifle such conflict, use must be made of a trans-ethnic and a-tribal language. Secondly, universal and dominant use of the mother tongue carries with it the danger of isolation. This can be an obstacle to the promotion of international languages, leading to inadequate proficiency in them and to linguistic wastefulness since any time devoted to learning mother tongues is to the detriment of the 'widely spoken' languages. Bilingualism as a linking stage is even occasionally seen as a hindrance and a burden. Thirdly, the psychological and linguistic advantages put forward in favour of learning **in** mother tongues are advanced by multicultural minority lobbies and do not really relate to any empirically observed facts. They can be countered as much from the social as from the cognitive point of view. The fourth argument is that mother tongues cannot modernize themselves or develop or be developed and are in any case inferior to the colonial languages. Local languages are therefore not equipped to serve as the medium of instruction at tertiary level. They must consequently not hinder the transfer and transition to the internationally used languages. Finally, it is argued that becoming irreversibly literate in these mother tongues is therefore a mistake from the economic point of view. The arguments put forward to support this were that an increase in the number of languages used in education leads to an almost exponential rise in costs; there is a chronic lack of books and teaching materials, with which are associated problems of creative work, translation, publication and circulation in these languages; there is a severe

shortage of teachers proficient in the MTs; and, lastly, if there are a large number of languages, it is difficult to organize fair and comparable examinations.

These questions were discussed in plenary meetings and working groups, and the opinions expressed in favour of MTs provided the foundation for the section on this topic. These arguments are augmented and illustrated by individual contributions from some members of the research group.

Beyond the common effort, the individual contribution

Mohamed H. Abdulaziz, for example, provides a panoramic view of the way in which the question of mother tongues in education in Africa has developed, tracing its origins back to colonial policies and practices that were continued by élites whose alienated condition is the stuff of African literature. As many of the language policies are motivated by political expediencies, very few, if any, of them appear to work on the African continent. Apart from the colonial legacy, the problems to be solved relate to the maintenance and development of the many mother tongues. This includes choosing the languages to be promoted as national and/or official languages and the languages to be used as the medium of education or as subjects to be taught. By showing what current practice is, this study has sparked off criticism, arguments in support of which have been sought in the abundant literature existing on this topic.

Taking the Indian context as a basis, Pattanayak discusses mother tongues on the one hand and the problems of multilingualism on the other. He seeks support in fields outside language in order to put forward his strategy, the background to which includes politics, culture, history, demography and so on, but from the one point of view of collective identity and the close and inevitable relationship between language and society. After examining this context, Pattanayak describes an innovative project which was run by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) and in which he participated, the aim of which was to provide a model for bilingual transfer. The innovation lay in the need to make use of oral forms and dialect varieties and to organize learning and teaching based on diversity. The elaboration of written forms was undertaken following a linguistic analysis in which learners, facilitators, parents and communities played a part. The advantage of this approach is that the true form of the mother tongue is maintained, the community makes a contribution and the motivation of the learners is increased.

The study by Ghose and Bhog considers the problems caused by the transition from oral to written language. It is based on the progress made in creative work by a group of young women from the Banda district of the State of Uttar Pradesh in northern India in their endeavour to achieve emancipation. The written matter had to contain information that was beneficial to these women, and the programme got them to use writing as a means of personal and creative expression and so to transpose traditionally oral tales into the written language. A two-monthly newspaper was published as a team effort, and this served as a means both of producing written work collectively and of making it public. It provided an opportunity to introduce technical terms into the language and in particular gave the women a chance to use their language in its dialect form without having recourse to the official language.

On the basis of her practical field experience and the discussions that arose out of the participation and contributions of a Bolivian researcher and a Peruvian specialist, Utta von Gleich compares the experience of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Latin America and Africa. The vigour and vitality seen in Africa are the result of transmission from one generation to another and of a colonial policy that was more a matter of orders passed on from a distance by administrators through local officials than a matter of population settlement, as was the case in Latin America. The cultural resistance embodied by

the Inca and Maya civilizations and the increasingly active resistance of the other Amerindians showed itself in dogged demands for cultural and educational policies that would go beyond biculturalism aiming at assimilation, and would be based instead on interculturalism and multiculturalism aiming to preserve and promote the languages and cultures of the ethnic minorities. The example of Ecuador, studied by the author over many years, is given as an illustration.

As directors of UNESCO's Regional Office for Africa (BREDA), Fyle and Obanya adopt a regional point of view in their contributions. Clifford Fyle approaches the question from three angles. He deals first of all with language categorization for purposes of development and describes five categories of languages identified for continental Africa. These are: (a) mother tongues; (b) community languages; (c) a national language or languages; (d) a language of African intercommunication; and (e) international languages. This configuration is then examined in the practice of formal and non-formal education, together with the implications arising from it. Fyle also lays stress on the fact that multilingualism is the root of the problems of language education in Africa. In short, the existence of from 100 to 300 or more languages within the same country and their right not only to survival but also to development represent a matter of importance that has to be considered over and above the categories into which they fall. This leads to the necessity of adopting a country-by-country approach. Lastly, Fyle deals with the problem of the choice of a national language and comes to the conclusion that the question is not one of choosing some languages at the expense of others but of taking all the languages of a country into account in drawing up and applying an overall policy for their use. The language policy applied in education should correspond to the way in which the languages are used in the sphere of national communication, which is rarely the case at present.

Pai Obanya considers the significance of language and its use in daily living (seeking, using and giving information, communication at all levels of social life, and so on), also turning his attention to the paralinguistic possibilities for communication (sign language, body language, gestures) in order to construct a typology of languages in education and to work out the linguistic configuration of Africa. The pattern thus developed covers official, non-indigenous languages, their creole and pidgin derivatives, indigenous *linguae francae*, languages that have become national and minor languages used in language pockets. Even if the choice of language for education ought to be focused on the learner before being focused on society, it is nevertheless impossible to ignore the pull of the colonial language when a language policy is being decided on.

Efurosibina Adegbija examines three experimental projects for the use of mother tongues in education in Nigeria. These have covered almost all aspects of the crucial problems raised by this question. Adegbija tackles this issue from the point of view of the language of literacy in a multilingual context, laying stress on the attitude towards languages and how it is formed, while at the same time drawing attention to the implications of the choices that have to be made, to the strategies for using languages as a medium or as a subject to be learned, and especially to the difficult question of the linguo-pragmatic environment intended to foster the use of the skills already learned and to promote their stimulation and furtherance.

Diarra Boubacar, Ekkehard Wolff and Arame Diop Fal describe their experience of language management in Angola, Niger and Senegal, respectively. The legacy of the colonial policy of assimilation and the multilingual nature of these countries provide the background for the language policy that has to be devised in order to move beyond the *status quo* which, in the opinion of the authors and of every analyst, can no longer be tolerated. The framing of a new policy is coming up against the inertia left over

from the colonial period. The authors give an account of the situations in which local mother tongues are used and lay stress on the requirements of an overall linguistic system, the preconditions for it and the auxiliary measures that are needed. They examine current practices in literacy work, adult education and non-formal education and consider the infrequent examples of entry to formal education by way of experimental projects, where such a thing is allowed.

They arrive almost unanimously at the same conclusion, with just a few small differences of vocabulary. Diarra holds that a clearly defined education policy as part of an equally clear cultural and language policy is the precondition for any furtherance and use of the national languages of Angola. Wolff says virtually the same thing when he maintains that experimental schools and the practices of literacy work have provided the soil in which national languages have flourished, giving proof of their ability to overcome the problems facing the education system in Niger. They have, however, not been given a political framework for their development. Diop Fal, for her part, feels that the solution to Senegal's prevailing linguistic log jam lies in the devising and application of a new language policy that would bridge the gap between the national languages and the country's official language, French, but would also foster the use of the national languages in all areas of communication and all fields of development, including education and training.

References

- Bamgbose, A. 1987. *A Guide to Terminology for African Language Education. Its Reflexion and Harmonization*. Dakar, UNESCO-BREDA.
- Bamgbose, A. 1989. Issues for a Model of Language Planning. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, Vol. 13, No 1.
- Fishman, J. A. (ed.). 1974. *Advances in Language Planning*. The Hague, Mouton.
- Gorman, T. 1973. Language Allocation and Language Planning. In: Rubin and Shuy (eds.). *Language Planning: Current Issues and Research*. Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press.
- Haugen, E. 1966. Linguistics and Language Planning. *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford, Stanford University Press. Reprinted 1972.
- Haugen, E. 1983. The Implementation of Corpus Planning: Theory and Practice. In: Cobarrubia J. & Fishman, J. A. (ed.), *Progress in Language Planning*. Berlin, Mouton.
- Kloss, H. 1969. *Research Possibilities on Group Bilingualism: A Report*. Quebec City: International Center for Research on Bilingualism
- Neustupny, J.V. 1970. Basic Types of Treatment of Language Problems. In: Fishman, J. A. (ed.), 1974. *Advances in Language Planning*. The Hague, Mouton.
- Paulston, C. B. 1974. Implications of Language Learning Theory for Language Planning: Concerns in Bilingual Education. In: *Applied Linguistics: Bilingual Education Series 1*. Arlington, Va., Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Williams, G. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.

3. MOTHER TONGUES: THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION AND THE EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

D.P. Pattanayak

With 5,000 languages (Ruhlen, 1991), the world *is* multilingual. About 100 languages account for 95 per cent of the world population (Coulmas, 1983), each of these languages consisting of thousands of dialects, sociolects, styles and registers. But the viability and effectiveness of mother tongues are still questioned by the monolingual orientation of dominant parts of the world.

Searching for a definition of mother tongues

The mother tongue is the basic ingredient of intercultural or multicultural education. It is the integral component of any culture. Yet there is very little clear understanding of the concept even in educated circles.

The word *matrubhasha* in India is relatively new. It found a place in the lexica of Indian languages in the eighteenth century as a literal translation of the English words 'mother tongue'. In English, the term is also not very old. In the religious discourse of the Church Father of Gorz in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, one comes across the word for the first time.

Mother tongue or father tongue

When Europe was first taking shape, the language of the scholars and priests was called *lingua vulgaris*, to differentiate it from Latin. At the time of the Romans, a person's first language was called *patrius sermo*, or the language of the male head of the household.

Immediately after Luther, the words 'mother tongue' gained a threefold meaning: the language created by Luther to translate the Bible; the language used by teachers in school to understand and explain this translation; and the language that gave meaning to the creation, development and sustenance of the Nation-State.

Today, many people interpret mother tongue as the mother's language. But in most Indian societies, where the mother adopts the language and culture of the father, it is only natural that this meaning of mother tongue is the first language that the child learns. If a child learns more than one language to begin with, then one can assume that he or she can have more than one mother tongue.

Another meaning of mother tongue is the language so designated by the school and the government. Once, when we were at Poona, my son came back from school and reported that he had studied mother tongue English that day. On enquiry, I found out that English was taught at two levels in that school and that the higher level was named mother tongue English. In the 1961 census, smaller languages were

merged under the labels of bigger languages and, since that time, the government has determined which languages should become the mother tongues of the people.

In this context, the word 'vernacular' comes to mind. The word originated from an Indo-German root meaning 'rottenness' or 'abode'. In Latin, the word means home-grown, homespun, a home-made thing that has not been obtained in exchange for something else. In the opinion of Vara, the librarian of Caesar Augustus, vernacular language is made up of a native vocabulary and structure with no borrowings from any external source. In this sense, a mother tongue is not only different from a vernacular, but it is its opposite. The mother tongue has always been the institutional language.

The language of the environment and the society

From the postulate that the mother tongue is the native language, the idea of a language of nature and the environment has evolved. From this has followed the idea that the language of the deaf and dumb is the sign language that is the beginning of all language. It is also believed that the language from which modern languages have emerged is the mother of those languages. In this sense, Latin is considered the mother of all European languages, as Sanskrit is considered the mother of all Indian languages. Once, when Ravindranath was asked about Sanskrit being the mother of modern Indian languages, he replied that Sanskrit is the mother of modern languages in the same way that the earth is the mother of worms. Comparative linguistic has proved that the modern European languages were not born of Latin, but of a spoken sister language of Latin, just as the modern Indic languages evolved out of a spoken sister language of the available written Sanskrit.

The concept of mother tongue is subject to some surprising interpretations in successive census operations in India, as well as in the West. Questions relating to mother tongue were asked in the census of 1881 for the first time in India. Many changes have taken place since then. The following tables, giving the changing perceptions of the mother tongue, will speak for themselves.

1881 -	The language spoken by the child from the cradle
1891 -	The language spoken by the parents
1901 -	The language of general use
1921 -	The language spoken by the parents
1961 -	The language spoken by the mother. If the mother is dead, then write the name of the language generally used in the household

A European view can be gained from the following table, giving census categories of the Carinthians in Slovenia:

1923 -	The language of thought
1934 -	The language of the cultural circle
1951 -	The language of day-to-day use
1961 -	The language of the household

The 1961 Indian census returned 1,652 mother tongues. Since they were defined by the people themselves, what the people stated to be their mother tongue might be tokens of identity, but not necessarily languages. They include caste names such as Teli, sect names such as Haridasi and place names such as Bilaspuria. They also included designations such as Pardesi/Bahargaon, meaning that the person comes from an area outside the linguistic zone in which he or she is currently living. These labels have relevance in the discussion of identity, but not in the discussion of language.

The French linguist André Martinet once said that the language through which one comes to know the world is the mother tongue. Wallace Lambert, the Canadian psychologist, told me that at the age of 22, he married a French girl, and that his real cognizance of the world began from that day. From these two opposite points of view, the delimitation of these concepts can be discussed.

D. L. Roy, the scholar of Bengali literature and music has written a poem about the motherland, which can be paraphrased thus:

This world of ours is full of riches, grains and flowers. In the midst of this abundance there is a country that is the best of all. This country is made up of dreams and shrouded in memories. Such a country is to be found nowhere. The queen of all lands, that country is my motherland.

The mother land and the mother tongue are abstract notions. The language to which the emotional attachment is strongest is the mother tongue. This is the language that ensures all the cultural riches and its destruction results in the destruction of creativity and innovativeness. Every child, irrespective of caste, class and sex, has to move from the home language to the school language. When there are many different cultures, to say that some children are thus culturally advantaged and some disadvantaged is to recognize and accept social inequality.

Research about the development of the mother tongue tells us that the prosodic development of a language precedes the segmental development. The development of prosodic features takes place before the development of syllables, words or sentences. Many must have noticed a child's pre-articulatory clapping, humming and beating time. It is established by brain research that music is processed by the right side of the brain and language primarily by the left. It is a difficult process to isolate meaningful units from flowing language. To master the complexity of moving from letter to syllable to word to sentence and context, the child takes about four years. It becomes easier for the child to segment the language appropriately when it is acquired through prosodic flow. There is no doubt that lullabies and children's songs make a significant contribution to the growing-up process of the child and it is a pity that children's songs are dying out among educated mothers. No songs are written to make the child laugh, to create interest in the unknown, strange things of life, or to develop creativity.

In discussing mother tongues, it is necessary to know about the creation of social meaning, which happens only when one goes outside the individual identity. For communication, one needs a collaborator. Scholars who have studied children from birth have established that the mother is the 'other' for the child and the first collaborator in communication. The child comprehends this 'other' from birth. Much energy and effort is spent in making this 'other' one's own. From mother to family, extended family, kin group and village community, communication is extended to make *vasudheiva kutumbakam*, or the world family. The mother tongue is thus the foundation of the relationship between the self and the other.

The mother tongue is the expression of one's own identity as well as of one's primary group identity. Knowledge and experience are shared among the primary group members through this language.

The language through which the first thoughts germinate, through which an intimate environment is created and the first communications are made possible, is the mother tongue. Naming is one of the primary functions of language. The child becomes acquainted with the external world through naming, developing intimacy with the environment by naming the trees and plants, the birds and beasts, the flowers and fruits, and the changing faces of nature. The child seeks to link individual identity with social identity through different relationships established by naming them.

Mother tongue language learning and mother tongue education

The first act of language is to acquaint the child with the environment into which he or she has been born. That is why the first function of a language is the nominal function. The names of green things such as *koala, neutia, bathua, khada, puruni, anabana, jhumpudi, kanisiri, ambilipiti, madaranga, sunusunia*, etc., I learnt in my childhood, but these are lost to the present generation. Not only the names of green things, but of flowers and fruits, birds and beasts, soil, rain and wind do not come to the lips of today's English-educated children. Instead of rhythmic Oriya songs, the meaningless rhyme of 'Baa, baa, black sheep' leaves an impression of rote mimicry and pointless repetition.

Through mother tongue language, accumulated knowledge, skills and myths are transmitted from one generation to another. Feasts and fasts, festivals and celebrations, Gods and demons, spirits of ancestors, sacred and profane, good and evil, cooked and uncooked, touched and untouched, etc., are words and names known and experienced through the mother tongue. Roots go deep into tradition, and a close relationship grows between tradition and modernity through this language.

The standardised version of the spoken language receives social acceptance and is used as the medium of education, administration and communication. Gradually this standardised language is separated from the spoken mother tongue and becomes the idiom of a minority.

It is possible to distinguish different layers of mother tongue in our country: Marwari, Rajasthaní and Hindi are the mother tongues of the same person. Received Pronunciation is the institutional identity of an English-speaking person and Cheshire, Devonshire, etc., are the first mother tongues. An example will clarify the difference between the common spoken language and the socially accepted standard. Once a researcher went to a Bombay slum with some students to study language use among the inhabitants. He asked a boy, *aply vadil kay katat*, which in Oriya would be *apananka pita kaana keranti*: What does your father (hon.) do (hon.)? The boy did not reply. There was a discussion and analysis of the boy's silence. Some opined that this was the 'culture of silence' propounded by Paulo Freire. As they were leaving, a smart girl turned round and asked the boy, *tujha bap kay kartos* (Oriya *to bapa kaana kare*): What does your father (fam.) do (fam.)? The boy promptly replied, *daru pito ani aila marto* (Oriya *daru pie au maaku mare*): Drinks liquor and beats the mother. The honorific use of the standard language was responsible for the boy's silence, about this nobody had any doubt. In the socialization process, as the standard language becomes the property of a limited elite, the mother tongue frees knowledge from the clutches of the few. Powerful writers such as Rabindranath Tagore have succeeded in creating a single style by merging the spoken and the standard. But few languages have the good fortune of having a Tagore in their ranks.

The mother tongue is the majority language of the community. And it is therefore the best defence of democracy. By providing greater participation for a greater number of people in the political process, by freeing communication from the grip of the few, by giving people a chance to participate in national

reconstruction, mother tongues should be counted among the best resources of a country. It is most unfortunate that in our multi-layered social system the place of the colonial language or the standard language is considered high, but the place of the mother tongue low.

Because of the pressure from a different language, or through volition, a mother tongue dies when it accepts another language as a model. Loosening of family bonds is one of its consequences. The distance between mother-tongue-speaking parents and children speaking another language increases, as intimate experiences cannot be shared. As a result, the family breaks up. What is true of a family is true of a society; society breaks down as the social bonds are loosened.

If we compare the childhood of today's children with that of our generation, then the difference in social structure can be seen. In my childhood, I grew up with the affection of Mama, Mousimama, Bohumama, Gorimama, Nuama, Katakamama and many other such grandmothers, besides my mother and my aunts. Today my mind fills with joy thinking of those days. Along with them I remember Kuntama, Kokila Bou, Basantama and Musama. Of these some came for household work, others to sell rice cakes. Besides, from the Tigiria palace there were Suna and Puama. There were my father's sisters, Chandra apa, Nirmala apa, Sudha apa, Nailini apa and Charu apa. I had brothers and sisters such as Khokana, Tuna, Budha, Prema apa, Tukuna apa, Chuni, Mani, growing up with stories, songs, riddles, reading *puranas*, observing feasts and fasts, and filling the mind with great joy. Ghagia (*keuta*), Viswanath Sahu (oil man), Basanta and Braja (cultivators) became brothers and enriched my life in many ways. Today, children grow up in the nuclear family. If both parents work, then the children are left alone at home. At most, the school teacher and the peer children are companions. The folk tales, puranic tales and tales on the occasion of specific celebrations that my mother knew are no longer available to my daughter's generation. How can the minds of today's children be enriched by drawing from cultural traditions?

In my childhood, the bearded teacher brought together all the children from our street and them recognition and writing of letters, tables, arithmetic, observation of nature, etc. But today, from a desire to push knowledge into the heads of children, the number of books has increased so much that childhood has quite disappeared under their weight. Today, the attraction of English has so blinded the parents that nobody has had time to notice the damage done by substituting English for the mother tongue. The store of knowledge left by scholars such as Piaget and Bettelheim, we have kept under lock and key. They recognized that every level of childhood is self-contained and that unscientific beliefs, fairy tales, and stories of birds and beasts have an important bearing on the growing-up process. We have thrown it overboard. To piece together unconnected memory through another tongue is bound to end in failure. We see but refuse to recognize it.

Piaget, following the growing-up of children, reached the conclusion that the child learn what he or she is prepared to learn. In terms of language use, this means that the language in which the child is prepared to learn, the language through which he or she apprehends meaning, must be the medium of his or her primary education. The unknown language of their elders may contain their dreams and aspirations, but it is indigestible for children. The language which the child knows well, in which he or she can form sentences and express meanings, and that is his or her own, is the best medium of education. In later stages, if a child's peers speak English or Hindi, then he or she will learn English or Hindi. Once the mother tongue is established for the child, he or she may learn English or Hindi as a subject and prepare to move over to using those languages as a medium. But English as the medium of primary education is harmful for the child; there is no doubt about it. The language that brings joy to the child is

good for learning, reading and writing. Rootless simplification may be dazzling, but that is not the world of the child. The translation of other people's experience, with no expression of one's own, is bound to remain strange.

To move from the known to the unknown, from the recognized to the unrecognized, is the mark of a living education. The growing child seeks momentary mental shelter in the known environment and among known characters. The small child ready to bloom, ready to learn, wants to grow up accumulating and assimilating newer experiences. But where there is nobody to answer a question, where there is a word but no meaning, where there are people without identity, where there is a message but nobody to share it, how frightening it is to grow up in such a situation.

Reading is not merely recognizing the symbols written in a book. It is establishing a relationship with the mind of the author. If the subject and structure of writing are completely different from those of the reader, if the nature, style and discipline of the author are different from those of the reader, then the subject appears to be difficult. Then we read by recognizing letters and words in a sentence. But that is not reading in the true sense.

Whether one begins reading with a sentence as unit or the meaning as unit, both meet at a point where the known indicates the direction of the unknown. On one side of this road is acceptance of what our elders have left for us and on the other side of the road is the creation of new models on the basis of the known or the given. The fundamental thing is knowing the environment, which is preparatory to the stage of reading and writing. Its root is in one's own language and in one's own experience. Those who ignore this and plead for primary education in English are responsible for stealing the children's childhood from them.

References

- Coulmas, F. (ed). 1983. Linguistic Problems of Literacy. *Journal of Pragmatics*, Vol. 7, No. 5. Special Issue.
- Ruhlen, M. 1991. *A Guide to the World's Languages: Classification*. Vol. 1. London.

4. MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS AND THEIR ETHOS

D.P. Pattanayak

In most nations of the world, little attention is given to culturally and linguistically diverse pre-school children, and they remain unseen and unaddressed. Having talked about child development, emphasizing development of individuals, scholars in the West have begun to talk about 'inclusion', which according to Williams, is sociocentric in approach and is understood as the representation of various dimensions of diversity in the educational experience of children.

A personal account

One of my students, an Oriya boy, married to a Tamil, speaking English at home, lives in Calcutta in Bengali surroundings, where the children are brought up by a Hindustani *ayah* and a Nepali Gurkha security man. They grow up with six mother tongues: Oriya, Tamil, English, Bengali, Hindi and Gorkhali, each of these languages representing an individual culture and each contributing to a common Indian culture. We do not have to study the opinion of Molefi Asante to recognize the effect of culture on the individual. We have before us the egocentric development of the child as stated by Piaget, and the sociocentric development, as stated by Vigotsky. Both views represent different perspectives, as in the story of the blind man seeing the elephant. Culture plays a significant role in taming the ego in the ways of a social group and bridging the gulf between the self and the other. Traditional Indian wisdom says that. *Ayam nya paro vetti ganana laghu cetasam. Udara caritanantu vasudheiva kutumbakam* [The distinction between the self and the other is a feature of the narrow-minded. The broad-minded treat the whole world as an extended family]. If teachers are sensitized to this broad definition of culture, then school can be an extension of multilingual pre-school home socialization.

The home became an extension of school for my children. As I started my teaching career at Santiniketan, my children began their schooling in Bengali. Later, when I moved to Poona, in Western India, they studied English, Kannada and Hindi. At each place our effort to cope with the new language environment gave added impetus to the children to learn new languages. There was no doubt transgression of norms. Oriya and Bengali have no grammatical gender, Hindi has two, Marathi three, and the genders in English do not match Marathi. But this was great fun. That the same message could be coded differently by different languages generated tolerance towards the difference and became a source of strength to them in later life.

In the United States, which I visited for the first time in 1959, I was struck by the vision of the world in which the American child was socialized. In the morning, on the radio, World News reported news from America. In the morning newspaper, the *New York Times*, World Sports referred to New York playing against Los Angeles, or Boston against Chicago. The world was co-terminous with North America. In spite of all the knowledge available in the United States about the world, the attitude to the

outside was defined by the limited world view and the attitude to the internal was defined by the melting pot theory. As Americans accepted the view that those of different ancestry would melt and fuse their identity to assume a single American identity, there was no need to distinguish between the self and the other, and to negotiate a bridge between the two. It was only when it was realized that the pot had melted, leaving the identities intact, and that more non-Western people were being absorbed, and that multicultural education came to be a growing concern of American educators. And yet there is a great reluctance to recognize multilingualism. A 1991 section of the *Harvard Education Review* is entitled 'Bilingual/Multilingual Education', as though a limit had been set and multilingualism were out of bounds. Lip service only is paid to bilingual education and even this is not favoured in the United States. That the Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act was 'sunsetting' in California in 1987, that Texas led the way in providing pre-school education to make minority-language children proficient in English by age 5, or that Congress augmented its funding for the Head Start project by \$ 500,000,000 in 1990, are only expressions of monolingual commitment in the midst of calls for multicultural education.

The multilingual pressures created by such policies are leading to a loss of the primary language for many cultural groups. This situation affects in turn the social, emotional, cognitive and educative development of minority-language children. If parents are not able to transmit easily their values, their beliefs, their views or their philosophy about the meaning of work, personal responsibility or the significance of ethics and individual morality, then the integrity of families and of the societies in which they live will disintegrate. The disappearance of the only language in which parents can communicate with their children leads gradually to the erosion of intimacy between the generations.

Growing up in monolingual or multilingual cultures

In a monolingual context, the children have access to what the adults do with a language. They learn how to accord respect to their grandparents' generation. They learn how to deal with respectful affection with their parents' generation. They learn how to deal with people in the intimate, proximate and external domains through the various uses of the same language. In a multilingual context, the children have varying degrees of access to the specific domains of exposure to the languages of different groups. Thus it will be seen that while the entire universe of discourse of a monolingual child is managed by a single language, very often the domains of discourse of a multilingual child are distributed among many languages. The multilingual child uses the many languages at his or her disposal in the same way as a monolingual child uses the dialects, sociolects, styles and registers of the one and only language at his or her command.

There is, however, a basic difference between how children pick up variations in style and register, and how they grow up with many languages. In the first case, the social acceptability of the variations as a single language, the principle of conventionality within the overall framework of a grammar, makes them more aware of themselves as members of a culture. In the latter case, an acceptance of the transgression of cultural norms resulting from a respect for the different becomes ingrained. The system-building in which the children extend or restrict categories in the course of their maturation is the result of consistent exposure to norms and deviations within a single language, in the first case. In the second, these categories are constantly and systematically extended and relocated. This provides a creative and innovative edge to the languages in use. As the poet and author Alexander Meena says (1992),

There is always the constant crossing of borders. For me, finding meaning comes very much through a sense of identification with what is struggling rather than what is fully formed.

In a monolingual community, the child is an individual. A linear and orderly progression of learning is assumed by the biological parents, who have the responsibility of nurturing and educating the young in the knowledge and skills of their cultural elders. In a multilingual community, the biological parents do not entirely control the spatial and temporal concerns of the young. These are constantly being reinforced and modified by the many cultures interacting on children, who have the option of choosing the best form among the different cultures to which these are exposed.

The sociocultural notions of childhood, social control, knowledge, effect, task accomplishment, social activities and social status are different in monolingual and multilingual societies. Consequently, the growing-up processes are different. How linguistic structures relate to such a range of notions and how they encode sociocultural information concerning the layered social identity of the speaker, the relative formality of a situation and the variations in intensity over particular matters in the multilingual, multicultural situation, both assume importance.

Experiencing linguistic pluralism

Each language is heteroglossic in the sense that it has complex stratification into genres, registers, styles, sociolects, dialects and mutual interaction between these categories. In a multilingual situation, not only are different languages used in defined domains, but selected variations of each language may be used for specific purposes. One variant of the same language or another language may be used as a marker of institutional identity. In India, for example, Marwari and Mewati are used as a first language, and Hindi to express institutional identity. In such cases, the functional language often rules, whereas the institutional language governs:

When the 'Governors' of the outer space and the 'Rulers' of the inner space are truly integrated, linguistic wholeness will be achieved. The integration does not come only by the replacement of one or the other, but as much by the acceptance of linguistic pluralism rooted in mutual respect for the legitimacy, inner logic, and consistency of each. (Nettlesford 1991, p. 618).

There is another dimension in which the acceptance of linguistic pluralism assumes importance. The plurilingual world is the repository of the highest rates of illiteracy. The gaps in communication between differing oral and literate modes, and between differing socio-cognitive and discourse strategies need bridging. How to move from context-sensitive to context-free language use and how to move from the oral interpretation style to the somewhat decontextualised literate interpretation style are issues to be discussed. Movement from prosodic, intonational cueing to lexical, syntactic cueing marks the progression of a child. For an adult, the progression is from multimodal oral cues to multimodal written ones. If illiteracy and literacy in one or many languages are to co-exist with dignity, without exploitation and domination of the one by the other, it is possible only on the basis of mutual respect for each other's legitimacy. As Fishman says:

The unity of mankind must be built upon a recognition and acceptance of mankind's diversity and not merely upon the diversity of one social group or another; upon the diversity that exists internally in each group itself. It is this diversity of both kinds that creates and recreates societal multilingualism and that makes it part and parcel not merely of society but humanity per se (Fishman, 1978, p. ix).

The teacher plays a significant role in the recognition and acceptance of diversity. As working parents are distanced from their children due to pressure of work, or as they are deprived of intimate contact and communication with them through monolingual pressure, the teacher assumes greater importance in the early socialization of the child. The teacher mediates between the world and the child's

self-understanding. The teacher also mediates between the children's knowledge and attitude on the one hand, and their attitude and behaviour on the other. If the teacher provides linguistic and cultural validation for different languages, then multilingualism will survive. If he or she encourages students of diverse languages and cultural backgrounds to work in co-operation in order to accomplish a single task, then this promotes multilingual harmony. On the other hand, if under authoritarian modes of instruction, the chances to talk are constrained and instruction is organized around discrete skills, multilingualism is bound to be set back. By accepting multilingualism, the teacher can use the languages the children bring to the classroom as resources to build upon, and can give a sense of pride and equality to the diverse language speakers in the class. However, by rejecting multilingualism, the teacher can generate a sense of inferiority in some pupils and create confrontation among languages. Teachers therefore need to be educated if multilingualism and multiculturalism are to succeed as educational goals.

It is necessary to distinguish at this stage the ethos of bilingualism from that of multilingualism. First of all, bilingualism is a matter of excitement in the monolingual West, as it represents a quantum jump in achievement from one to two. In a multilingual setting, it is a restriction in language use, reducing the five or six languages to two, and is consequently a handicap. Secondly, bilingualism is viewed in a variety of ways in the West. Some see it as proficiency in the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, in two languages. Some consider the ability to understand two languages as bilingualism (McNamara, 1966), while others consider speaking a second language as bilingualism (Haugen, 1953). Some others regard literacy acquisition in the second language as bilingualism (Baker, 1985, 1988). Since most bilingual studies relate to the acquisition of a second language in school, they focus on literacy. This does injustice to oral bilingualism. Since similar cognitive development is possible through both orality and literacy, equal attention ought to be given to literacy focusing on both orality and literacy, and the two should be kept separate in the educational context. But unfortunately there is little awareness of the issues involved. In a multilingual context, there may be simultaneous exposure to many languages, or successive bilingualism may result in multilingualism. In this case, as the universe of communication is shared by several languages, different skills in different languages complement one another in different domains of language use. There is no deficiency if all the four skills are not fully developed in all the languages, as the communicational needs of each domain are fully met by the specific skills used for the purpose. The proficiency in one of the languages of a multilingual child or person cannot therefore be deemed deficient in comparison with a monolingual child, or even with a bilingual child.

There has been discussion about national cohesion and nation-building in the context of monolingualism and multilingualism. Education is considered an important parameter of nation-building, so language learning in the school context has received the attention of scholars. Since education in developed countries operates in a monolingual framework, there has been discussion by scholars about the motivation for learning a second language: integrative motivation, for instance (Gardner and Lambert, 1972), and instrumental motivation. In a multilingual context, such a distinction is superfluous, as integrative motivation is instrumental and instrumental motivation can be integrative. Furthermore, the Indian research experience shows the complementary roles of integrative and instrumental motivations, the integrative motivation contributing to the maintenance of mother tongues and instrumental motivation favouring the learning of second languages. In a multilingual context, national cohesion is ensured not by reluctant recognition of a second language but by giving recognition to all the languages and respecting the differences. In a monolingual context, national cohesion is sought through the imposition of a single language, assimilation and homogenization.

A monolingual identity stretches from an idiolect to a language. A multilingual identity extends from the language of intimacy through the language of proximity to languages of regional, national and international identification. As the layers are peeled off, a complex network of relations can be observed. In this scenario, each language is representative of an overarching culture. In this sense, each language can be seen as the medium of more than one culture, as each culture can find expression through more than one language.

It will thus be seen that the context and ethos of the multilingual child is distinctly different from that of a monolingual child. But even in a multilingual society, due to the emulation of developed societies where mono-models hold sway, artificially dominant monolingual settings are created through educational structures, resulting in the disintegration of societies. It is a pity that just when Western societies have been compelled to recognize the emerging multilingualism and multiculturalism of certain groups, multilingual and multicultural developing societies are forgetting their traditions.

References

- Baker, C. 1985. *Aspects of Bilingualism in Wales*. Clevedon Multilingual Matters.
- Baker, C. (ed). 1988. *Key Issues in Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Clevedon Multilingual Matters.
- Fishman, J. A. (ed). 1978. 'Preface'. In *Advances in the Study of Societal Multilingualism*. The Hague, Mouton.
- Gardner; Lambert.1972. *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning*. Rowley, Mass., Newbury House.
- Haugen, E. 1953. *The Norwegian Language in America: A study in Bilingual Behaviour*, 2 vols. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Pres.
- McNamara, J. 1966. *Bilingualism and Primary Education*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
- Meena, A. 1992. Interview in *Literature Alive*. February.
- Nettlesford, Rev. 1991. Inner and Outer Space: A View from the Caribbean. In: K. Vatsyayan (ed.), *Concepts of Space; Ancient and Modern*. Abhiman Prakashan, IGNCA.

5. THE DISCOURSE ON MOTHER TONGUES AND NATIONAL LANGUAGES

Adama Ouane

The studies carried out and, in particular, the discussions and talks that took place reviewed experience and practice relating to language policy, language building and language management in national, regional and subregional contexts. In addition, a transnational viewpoint emerged concerning these questions among those professionally involved and experts from several regions, which was the aim of the dialogue. The harmonious dialogue nearly became a cacophony on occasions; and this musical image expresses in fact the incomprehension engendered by the different discourses, an incomprehension that was quickly reduced to a problem of terminology.

Did you say terminology?

The discourse about reality and the reality of the discourse occasionally make experience opaque and mutual understanding difficult. This is made even worse by the effort to clarify concepts that is frequently made in the hope of arriving at a common understanding of facts and situations. This internal viewpoint does not, however, say anything about the contexts in which those situations actually exist. This activity is characterized by language being treated to some extent as a thing or, as Bourdieu says, by the tendency to consider language as an autonomous and independent object that can be subjected to a strictly linguistic analysis, ignoring the fact that each particular element is the product of a complex interplay of social and historical circumstances and of educational policies. In addition to this detachment from any context, there is a current hypothesis that language should be non-indexical, which is to say that it has no meaning in itself, being only a vehicle for beliefs, thought and social institutions. In the view of Bourdieu, the isolation of linguistic analysis from social circumstances occurs as much in the structural approach as in Chomsky's generative theory (Bourdieu, 1991). These observations have their counterparts in the more general analysis of literacy and of the relationship of written to oral language, a relationship which for a long time was restricted to one of dependence/autonomy. This is now rejected by a growing number of authors who argue rather for an integrative convergent model and are thus opposed to the idea of a great divide or to the idea of a continuum. One consequence of this epistemology is the perception of the fragmented reality of literacy and the discovery of the various 'literacies' (Street 1984) or forms of literacy practice.⁵

⁵ Title of a book by Marcel de Clerck, published by the UNESCO Institute for Education and reflecting the wealth of experience and situations that this veteran had to deal with during the thirty years that he spent with UNESCO engaged in literacy work. To him in particular are due the philosophy and method of the operational seminar.

The discourse about reality

Does the discourse reflect reality or obscure it? In other words, what degree of consistency is there between discourse/intention and act/achievement? Do the words used say anything about the intention do they, consciously or unconsciously, fulfil another function which is not always stated? Examination of the examples discussed shows that there is a gap between declarations and achievements and that there is a tendency, reflected in the discourse, to mask reality.

The uncertainty of national policies is all reflected in the semantics of the discourse, which wavers between several terms that are intended to capture shades of meaning, with the aim of giving a precise idea of the present state of development of language policy. As this is a process that is in perpetual motion or a state of becoming, the terms that describe it are often ambiguous, either deliberately or by default.

Geography, the number of speakers, the place, the relationship to or the distance from the seat of power, the ethnic group, the community round about and its members, the functions and fields of use, and social status are decisive factors in the typology of the terms that are used. The following terms have been encountered: mother tongue(s); national language(s); State language(s); global language(s); international languages; languages adopted by a nation (nationalized languages); languages of national groups; official language(s); semi-official language(s); associate official language(s); official national language(s); official State language(s); associate official national language; working language(s); majority language(s); minority language(s); ethnic language(s); native language(s); vernacular language(s); lingua(e) franca(e); language(s) of general communication; widely spoken language(s); community language(s); language(s) of a group; language(s) of the community round about; language(s) of the immediate community; dialect(s), and so on.

Even if semantics and formal discourse analysis in the purest linguistic tradition can make it possible to find one's way round this list of terms, or words, the use made of them by official experts or individuals is most disconcerting. There is not even unanimity among the various users about the meaning of 'mother tongue'. To avoid family feuds and the splits inherited from patri- or matrilineal traditions, Louis-Jean Calvet (1987, pp. 95-106) suggests keeping to the neutral-looking expression 'first language', taking his cue from the promoters of bi- or multilingual education.

Instead of being defined in 'genetic' or 'biological' terms, the mother tongue is defined with reference to a particular linguistic community and having regard to how and when the language was acquired. It therefore comes down to the first linguistic tool or tools (depending on whether languages were learned simultaneously or at different times) used by an ethnic community to which the person belongs, provided that the person has already acquired it. The mother tongue is thus the language through which the socialization of the individual occurs within the smallest community, usually the family. In any event, this idea avoids socio- and psycho-linguistic phenomena such as language loss and attrition, switching and shifting, dual first language, intelligibility between languages of claimed status and the reflection of status in the claimed mother tongue (Davies, 1986, p. 9). The expression 'vernacular

language' provoked reactions ranging from enthusiasm to indignant rejection.⁶ A discussion of these two questions and a particular view of them are provided by Pattanayak in the preceding section.

There is a similar controversy about the 'national language (NL)'. Some consider that there can be only one national language (Indonesia, the United Republic of Tanzania) or a very limited number (Bolivia, India, Nigeria, Senegal) whereas others feel that all the nation's languages should enjoy this status (Mali, Niger), these languages being called by some 'languages of national groups' (Ethiopia). Pattanayak settles the matter by asserting that all languages are national and, with a touch of irony, saying that no language is anti-national. In short, there is already a shadow over the semantic dualism that arises from the use of the word 'national' to express a geographical meaning (the extent of a nation) and a symbolic power (the unity of the nation). These two aspects appear in the definition that Fasold provides of the mother tongue, which has to meet the following criteria:

- \$ it must serve as a symbol of national unity and identity;
- \$ it must be used in everyday life;
- \$ it must be spoken fluently and with ease by a sizable proportion of the population;
- \$ it must be the chief candidate for such a role because there is no alternative nationalist language in the country;
- \$ it must be acceptable as a symbol of authenticity;
- \$ it must be seen as a link with the glorious past (Fasold, 1984, p. 74).

This definition leans very much in the direction of one single national language since there is no alternative to symbolize the nation and serve it. The reality is nevertheless quite different.

Further confusion is caused by the situation that prevails in Africa on account of the presence and domination of external colonial languages (English, French and Portuguese), since these are often referred to as national languages. Calling them by this name is not in accordance with any of the criteria mentioned. None of the ordinary people in Africa are proficient in the colonial languages. These languages are thus not widespread nationally and cannot therefore claim to embody the national identity and still less promote national unity. This is perhaps the ambiguity that the expression 'nationalized language(s)'⁷ aims to dissipate, these being languages that, for historical reasons, have had national status on account of their presence, their role and their influence in a country. The coexistence of national languages with an international language, sometimes called a widely spoken language to disguise its intrusion on the national scene and the resulting cultural take-over and also to weaken its domination by depoliticizing its name, in every case creates a situation that tends to deprive the expression 'national language' of its symbolic substance, since in contact with the international language a national language loses all its power.

⁶ Vernacular writing, education and language were celebrated and encouraged as they tend to promote a kind of education that corresponds to the people's social life and culture and not to the standards of the educational institutions (Street, 1993). Pattanayak also stresses the authenticity of the vernacular. Nevertheless, many scholars living in dominated societies in developing countries feel that this serious attempt to introduce an endogenous element is suspect. In addition, the etymology of the word, which relates to domestic slaves according to the first editions of many reference dictionaries, makes it quite unacceptable to most African scholars.

⁷ In his article, Obanya uses this expression in a different way to designate languages whose areas of expansion, or isoglosses, roughly coincide with national boundaries. Examples of this are Somali, Malagasy and Kirundi/Kiruwanda.

In Wolff's contribution, the example of Niger, which could equally well be that of Mali, Senegal and other countries with a similar socio-linguistic set-up, is forcefully described. In Wolff's view, in the context of Niger, the status of national language means that:

- (1) a proportion of the speakers of the language live more or less permanently on the territory of Niger and are, generally, citizens of Niger;
- (2) The language is used, within certain time-limits and a restricted range, on radio and television (essentially for news, occasionally for advertisements);
- (3) the language is or might be used in the basic education provided in the secondary sectors of education such as:
 - (a) experimental schools (which represent only 1.6 per cent of all primary schools);
 - (b) non-formal literacy campaigns (covering only between 1 and 2 per cent of the target population);
- (4) the language may be used in post-literacy activities, i.e. in the monthly or bi-monthly newspapers of the village presses (the newspaper *Ganga* is distributed throughout the country, with a circulation of over 1,500 copies in each of the two major languages, Hausa and Zarma);
- (5) or the language is absent from public life and its speakers are expected to make use of the official language, i.e. French (which hardly 10 per cent of the population can use correctly) for matters of public affairs (Wolff, 1993, see Chap. 16 in this volume).

In response to the first version of this summary, Brann objected that the research group simplified the position of the colonial languages in Africa. In his view, the appropriation and adaptation of these languages form a continuum which may transform them into mother tongues or local languages (such as pidgin on the west coast) or into community or national languages (such as Ivorian French). The research group nevertheless holds the view that the unsympathetic attitude shown towards these variants that have resulted from adaptation, and the narrow circle of those who speak the 'pure' forms of these languages make them instruments of discrimination in spite of their monopoly status in education.

The same attitude prevails regarding conferral of the status of 'Official language'. Some people consider that one language alone can enjoy this distinction although, in places, qualifications are introduced through the use of terms such as 'semi-official' or 'associate' language (India, Nigeria), or 'language of official use' (Aymará and Quechua in Peru) so as to express the extent to which the languages are permitted and to show their limits. It should be pointed out that this distinction is found not only at national level but also regionally (Quechua being the official language of fourteen regions in Peru). This example is typical of federal structures such as are found in India and Nigeria where the idea of State language(s) plays a decisive role. It should also be mentioned that other authors still, such as Fyle, completely reject the idea of official language, which they describe as merely a label, and opt for the functional modelling of languages, laying stress on the daily use of a particular language at national level. Abdulaziz draws our attention to the debate about the interesting dichotomy between national languages and official languages. In his opinion,

the national language is normally the language which identifies the State and is the basis of national culture and unity. It may or may not be used or only partly used in the administrative, legal, commercial and educational systems of a country (Y) Official languages are those that are used in the

modern sectors of the State including legislative, judicial, commercial and educational areas (Abdulaziz-Mkilifi, 1972, p. 169).

Similarly, the notions of majority and minority languages are relative. A majority language in one country may be a minority language in another. In absolute terms, any language may be a majority language in one situation and a minority language in another. Even if one were to adopt just the number of speakers as a criterion, the importance of this number in any particular country depends on its proportion to what demographers call 'the mother population' or universe. There is clearly a significant difference between a linguistic minority in relation to the population of a given country and the speakers of a minority language, i.e. a minor language which is not a standard or national language in any country (Coulmas, 1984; Bamgbose, 1984).

Minorities nevertheless generally account for between 40 and 60 per cent of the total population of most African States. Of the 410 languages found in Nigeria, about 390 are minority languages and their speakers number between 20 and 30 million. The attention of the political authorities has been mostly concentrated on the three 'decamillionaire'⁸ languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) and on the large number of 'millionaire' languages. As Pattanayak reminds us in his contribution, India is a country of linguistic minorities. There is therefore no critical numerical threshold. In any event, as Fyle states (see chap. 9) in world terms, a language with even some 200,000 speakers or so is by no means a small language. In Africa, given the high demographic concentration of the speakers, 90 per cent of the total population of any state could be reached by devoting development efforts to languages with more than 50,000 speakers. As for the residue, as Fyle calls them, some groups are so small that they hardly feature in national communication at all. The other, larger, groups must be examined in the light of language trends to determine which should be included in the pattern of national communication.

In its discussions, the research group was of the opinion that the word 'minority' was to be avoided as it had an adverse connotation that was transferred to the groups concerned, highlighting the discrimination shown towards them and the stigmatization and marginalization of their languages and revealing how long this exclusion had lasted. For the same reason, Mackey (Mackey and Siguan, 1987) rejected the use of the technical relationship term 'minority' in speaking about ethnic groups and their languages. In his attempt to map linguistic identity, Peter Sutton supports the use of the word 'code' to designate any language or its variant. Given the inflated use of words such as dialect, sociolect, ethnolect, ergolect, chthonolect mother tongue, demolect (community language), politicolect (official language) or indeed any other sublect or register that is socially, territorially, individually, politically or otherwise distributed, the neutral word 'code' has the advantage of indicating that the use of two and more variants is not limited to bilinguals alone and even occurs within one language (Sutton, 1991, pp. 137-8). In short, having a peripheral status is a complex phenomenon. The status certainly exists but the perception of it by those concerned, both at the centre and at the periphery, may be very ambiguous.

To be convinced of this, it is enough to glance at the conclusions drawn by from the linguistic map of the world. He estimates that there are some 6,200 languages distributed among some 170 sovereign States. More than half of these languages are spoken in Asia, Oceania and the Pacific, a third in Africa, a fifth in America and only a tenth in Europe and the Middle East. Four languages from Europe and the Middle East nevertheless serve as official languages in 125 countries. Only 1 per cent of the world's languages has more than 500,000 speakers. Half of the world's languages are concentrated in only seven

⁸ Term used by C. Brann (1990, p. 4).

sovereign States (Mackey, 1993, pp. 12-3). As has been seen above and as the illustrative studies in this publication confirm, the situation as regards the countries directly concerned by the present study shows the same diversity.

Furthermore, it is clear that, on account of its status and its use, a language may combine several of these attributes, which gives rise to real difficulties in making a clear distinction between the different categories. In addition, every language exists in many different forms, even if, in practice, no speaker employs two codes or registers simultaneously. A multilingual person acts in the same way. In the contexts studied, there were not only a multitude of languages but also a multitude of dialects and characters. In many cases, a social multilingualism comes into being in addition to individual multilingualism. In such a situation, particular attention ought to be devoted to the dynamics of the languages.

In their contributions, Fyle and Obanya draw attention to the surveys carried out in Africa on the determination of community languages. In every multilingual context, whatever its density, one or more languages are used as the dominant and general means of communication within a district, province or other administrative division. These are the languages referred to as community languages. In a 1979 study, the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) listed 159 such languages in 45 African countries, and estimated their total number at about 200. The graduated strategies of bilingualism are based on this concept, which is the cornerstone of linguistic stratification.

To define the means of communication at community level is no easy task, however. Use is made of several notions such as language of the locality or language of the immediate (ambient) community. In Nigeria, the expression occupies a central place in the educational formulae that are officially promulgated. Akinnaso clearly illustrates the ambiguity surrounding it and the difficulty of applying it in practice. He argues that, as the term is left undefined, conventional wisdom and clarifications provided by the authorities indicate that the phrase could refer to the dominant language of a village, town, city or state or simply the dominant language of the community or the neighbourhood in which a school is situated. Thus Kalabari, a minority language spoken in Rivers State, could be used as the medium of instruction in a school located in some part of Ibadan (a predominantly Yoruba-speaking metropolis) in Oyo State if Kalabari speakers are the dominant speakers in the school's neighbourhood. However, these two interpretations are often in conflict, the conflict usually being resolved in favour of the dominant language of the wider community of the village, town, city or state (Akinnaso, 1993, p. 261). Mali had to face the same difficulty in the choice of languages for entry to education in mother tongues, as part of its experiment in the use of mother tongues in education. Social mobility and the mixing of ethnic groups make this exercise more complex still, even in areas that are apparently compact from the linguistic point of view.

However, according to Fyle, the unpopularity of the term 'community language' and its limited acceptance are due not to any uncertainty on the part of African states about the importance of these languages but to the fact that no or almost no African state has really managed to make room for them in its education system or allowed them to make their way into the school curricula, and use has not been made of them in any significant way in literacy work. He further suggests that mother tongue and community language should be combined into one single category in order to cut costs and eliminate languages with only a few thousand speakers. He maintains that even compact and apparently monolingual rural communities would need the community language more than the mother tongue (s). In addition, the adoption of a community language would facilitate class teaching in urban and semi-

urban areas, where the mixture of languages and ethnic groups means that there may be a wide variety of mother tongues represented in any single classroom, to say nothing of the school, where the variety is even greater. This out-and-out pragmatism was tempered, not to say restrained or rejected, by the working groups.

Another concept, that of 'inter-regional language of communication' has been developed by UNESCO in an attempt to reflect the real configuration of isoglosses that stretch beyond state frontiers and above all to take account of the function of communication that these languages assume outside their already considerable zones of influence. The discussion also led on to the study of the languages of communication on the African continent. Does Africa need its own Esperanto? Should there be one single pan-African language? If so, which one should it be Hausa or Swahili? Should both of them be given that status or should other languages be added? Which languages should they be and what criteria should be applied? From this point of view, what place should the present international languages occupy (Arabic, English, French and Portuguese) that serve as the official languages of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)?

Their selection as official languages is based, as is well known, on functional criteria. If these criteria were decisive, the solution to the problem of the selection and choice of the means of African communication would be obvious. In reality, things are quite different and rational or functional formulae, despite their apparent good sense, are far from receiving unanimous support and acceptance. Swahili reigns supreme only in the United Republic of Tanzania.⁹ Its official status in Kenya and Uganda is already less secure. Where Hausa is concerned, even in its heartland, Nigeria, its status is shared with Yoruba and Igbo, both in the shadow of English, although a trend is certainly developing in favour of Hausa. Babs Fafunwa is one of the country's most respected linguists. He was formerly in charge of the Ife project for the furtherance of Yoruba and was, more recently, the Federal Minister of Education. In his view, a *lingua franca* could be envisaged for Nigeria and he suggests a scenario based on promoting Hausa as the national *lingua franca*, with the status of 'official language' at the same time. This would be within a framework from which all hostility would have been banished since all the other major and medium Nigerian languages would be recognized as national languages and schoolchildren whose mother tongue was Hausa would have to learn one of the two other major languages, Igbo or Yoruba (Fafunwa, 1990). In fact, everything seems to point to the fact that, in practice, the function of African language of communication would be assumed by a few languages only. Bamgbose observes that one language comes to the fore in every region: Arabic in the north, Swahili in the centre and east, Hausa in the west, and perhaps a language close to Zulu in the south. He wryly says that no-one has yet suggested that Africa should have only one leader. Why, then, should it use one language (Bamgbose 1991, p. 59)?

When one looks at multilingualism and multiculturalism, the same semantic profusion is to be observed. An attempt to bring some method into the metalanguage of multilingualism has been begun by Conrad Brann. Using a three-part terminological matrix as a basis, he has attempted to place the terms designating the use of more than one language into three watertight categories. These cover individual use, social or institutional use, and political and official use. For each language, he proposes the following suffixes to express the categories

⁹ As will be seen below, this domination causes some agitation and some authors such as Chachage go so far as to challenge it (see Chachage, 1992).

laid down for French: '<linguicism;’ '<lingual;’ and '<lingualism’ (Brann 1990, p. 44).¹⁰ All the same, it is doubtful whether this clear and systematic classification will amount to anything more than an academic exercise, given the reluctance of those whose interests are in conflict in the situations described to be more open and thus risk exposing their subtle game.

In actual fact, socio-political considerations and dogmatic attitudes found in the discourse in multilingual situations have important repercussions on the functions assigned to linguistic communities or conquered by them. The designation of languages and the general perception of their value are mixed up with attempts at differentiation. In other words, the choice of one language in a multilingual situation may already indicate how much or how little attention the government devotes to it, may reflect an effort (or lack of effort), to achieve linguistic development and may indicate what functions are assigned to it or may simply be expressive of an abysmal lack of concern. And if some mark of interest becomes apparent, it is not the result of good will towards a specific language or a certain form of language or even the result of a concern for harmony, but rather the result of a struggle between social groups anxious to defend their linguistic tools. The dynamics of languages cannot flow in one direction only. At the centre of these developments is the question of power. As Williams wryly says (Williams 1992: 107), those who make this point tend, inevitably, to be those actively involved in minority language struggles rather than detached academics. The problem of semantic competition, still a long way from being resolved, sometimes leads to the same terms being used but with different connotations.¹¹

Beyond the discourse, the reality

The real question which arises is how to transcend this social, educational and, above all, political semantic competition and to see, beyond the semantics and the isolated term, the pitfall of discourse in the sense in which the term is used by Louis Marin.¹² To avoid this pitfall, one must, in every case, define the different uses of a term by people, groups, institutions and states, which produce discourses in different contexts and from differing institutional positions, and for precise purposes.

Why, among all the examples submitted for this study, have Indonesia and the United Republic of Tanzania, given the impressively large number of languages spoken in each country, imposed the use of one single language as the national and official language, and why is there no trace in those countries of the other stages and names found elsewhere? The answer lies in their respective political systems, the product of the particular conditions that led to the use of Indonesian Malay (Bahasa Indonesian) and of Swahili as foundations for the unified Nation-State. The decision of the United Republic of Tanzania to opt for Swahili as national language was indeed an act of independence but was also the expression of

¹⁰ Using Brann's classification, Canada would thus be a 'bilingual' state in which the policy of federal 'bilinguicism' (consisting of English and French) is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Official Languages. Switzerland has thus for many years had 'trilingualism', with French, German and Italian as official languages and with acceptance of the 'colingualism' of Romansch as a fourth national (and regional) language. Nigeria recently opted for 'quadrilingual colingualism' by designating three major languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) as 'national' languages and English as the official language (Brann 1990, p. 49).

¹¹ Viv Edwards and Angela Redfern, in a note on terminology in their book cited as a reference, explain the use, in Canada and the United Kingdom, of the terms 'ethnic minority', 'black', 'bilingualism' and others. (Edwards and Redfern, 1992, p. 4).

¹² By 'pitfall of discourse' Louis Marin means the rhetorical processes, arguments and tactics of dialogue, the objective of which is to persuade the other person, to manipulate the hearer, reduce him to silence or lead him astray.

the will of the ruling class to rally the people behind the aims of the party in power for the building of socialism. It was because of the social, historical and cultural context of the United Republic of Tanzania that it was 'necessary' to confer on English the status of associate official language, whereas the particular context of Indonesia led it to abandon Dutch, the language of the former colonial power, completely. The 1980s brought a change of political and economic direction in the United Republic Tanzania, ushered in by the same party but obviously after the ruling class had been replaced. This change was accompanied by a strong revival of English, the effect of which was to isolate Swahili in primary education and block its access to secondary education. In another context, the close link between history, language policies, social interactions, and the functions and uses of languages in the shaping of the socio-linguistic map of Nigeria is, according to Efurosibina Adegbija (1994), discernible in the combined influence of the following principal events:

- (a) contact with Europe;
- (b) the activities of the missionaries and their influence on languages;
- (c) the war to impose Islam conducted by the Peul, and its impact on the spread and use of Arabic, particularly in the north of the continent;
- (d) the administrative and educational policies of the various governments;
- (e) the establishment of educational institutions, and of bodies and professional agencies working on languages;
- (f) the 1966 Jacobs report on the teaching of English in Nigeria;
- (g) the setting up of literacy projects;
- (h) the adoption of constitutional and legal provisions relating to languages;
- (i) the gaining of independence in 1960;
- (j) the fluidity of language policies and the numerous instances of changes in administrative boundaries.

David Laitin, in a sociological study on the jumble of languages in India, says that the linguistic register has become an indirect means of social differentiation, the speakers of modern English being likened to the Brahmans of the India of today. The Indian policy of 3 + 1 languages (English/Hindi, regional state language and mother tongue), which appears natural, can be explained by the particular mix of interests and choices at a crucial period of Indian history. English was kept after a pro-Hindi policy failed on account of the resistance of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), whose proficiency in English **B** and perhaps whose gentlemanly airs, as Laitin wryly stresses **B** gave legitimacy to their role of well-paid servants of the state. Giving up English as the national means of communication would have threatened their 'cultural capital'. IAS pushed Hindi to the sidelines by granting it only a meagre budget and giving it only token importance, without reducing the central role of English in bureaucratic communications (Laitin, 1989, p. 431). This remark by Laitin irritated my colleague Peter Sutton and led him to say something derisive absolving IAS and tending to blame instead the hegemony of Hindi, to which he attributed the reactions of the Dravidians and other non-Indo-Aryan groups during the uprisings of the 1960s. Even if these uprisings were not fomented or sparked off by IAS, they in no way diminished its desire to preserve its main instrument of power **B** English. It was legitimate for the Dravidians to demonstrate against the hegemony of Hindi but this cannot be interpreted as support for the *status quo* and the retention of a foreign language, English in the event, for the honorary functions of communication. Above all, it was a reminder of their wish to exist.

Ruth Lozano in Peru and José Mendoza in Bolivia stress the undivided domination of Spanish in Latin America and especially the fact that the development of local languages was stifled and hindered for 500 years. This is confirmed by David Crystal, who shows in the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* that the façade of Spanish hides an amazing linguistic diversity, despite the decline of many Amerindian languages through lack of use (see Box 1 p. 3).

A variety of situations are therefore found in multilingual countries, depending on their history, socio-economic context, value system, ethnic composition of the population, and so on. In every case, at least two linguistic levels are apparent within the given national entity, corresponding to a person's mother tongue (first language) and the state's main (official) language, or standardized language. There are sometimes several other languages at different levels that it would be desirable to understand. On account of the frequency of these naturally constituted linguistic strata, several African linguists, following on from Abdulaziz-Mkilifi (1972, p. 198), are reinterpreting diglossia on the basis of a more complex stratification and are suggesting triglossia, as in the case of the United Republic of Tanzania, or the pentaglossia of some linguistic communities, or simply multiglossia, in order to refer to the varying nature of the languages' functional manifestations.

Others, such as Casimir Rubagumya, adopt the point of view of the sociolinguistics of the periphery, putting emphasis on the dynamics of diglossia and insisting on the conflictual nature of diglossic situations more on than on the complementary distribution of functions that aims for stability, inherent in the initial concept of diglossia (Rubagumya 1991, p. 72). This critical view developed in Europe by the champions of linguistic and political minorities is even more vividly illustrated in Africa and in similar multilingual countries in Asia and Latin America, where the existing diglossia is slanted in favour of the language that is, in the context, a minority language **B** that of the colonial power. The reaction of linguists to all these phenomena is to fall back on semantics and terminology, whereas stress ought to have been put on the socio-economic circumstances that brought these distinctions about.

It is therefore not a problem of words, nor is it a question of legislation or of a decree to be promulgated to give prestige status to a particular language or chosen number of languages, contrary to what Akinnaso says. One of the main reasons for the unsuccessful implementation of Nigeria's mother tongues policy is attributed by him to the vague language in which it is formulated. This lack of precision leaves the policies far too weak for the federal government to enforce, let alone expect uniformity of implementation from the state and local governments. However, the evasiveness of the policies reflects the government's awareness of the delicacy of language issues in national development planning (Akinnaso, 1993, p. 264).

In fact, legislation codifies and records an existing situation and attempts to anticipate all the situations that could lead to the distribution of power being challenged. In theory, a law could prevent certain languages or forms or types of speech peculiar to particular groups from being used in schools, government business, and so on. Such direct action cannot mean that the furtherance or development of the official language is being made to depend on legal or quasi-legal restrictions. In practice, legislation is most frequently only a concession to minority groups. Williams (1992, p. 134), having studied the 1967 Welsh Language Act, comes to the conclusion that the extent to which this involved a 'concession' on the part of the government was extremely limited and that it gave legitimacy to the minority language, with its existing status, without diminishing the status of the dominant language. In fact, the social reality of a country cannot be changed by a law or by an education policy, even though these can undeniably

open the way for fundamental change in the social structure, which may in turn lead to major transformations.

Having established that, in the nineteenth century, the spread of the standard language to all parts of the sovereign state resulted neither from linguistic policy nor from legislation, Mackey looks for another explanation. It spread chiefly because of the development of road, rail and, more recently, air communication and the spread of radio, television and the telephone which, every day, flood the most remote homes with a profusion of sounds and images (Mackey, 1993, p. 19). An explanation of this sort disguises the fact that these developments are more concomitants than causes. These are things that go hand in hand with the unification of the market and the standardization of the language is one of them, even if it is accelerated and intensified. Bourdieu repeats this observation more forcefully when he says that the specifically linguistic aspect of the state or of the overt intervention of pressure groups is only the most superficial aspect of the domination that is associated with market unification and exercised by specific institutions and systems. It is through the continuous pressure exercised by these different institutions (schools, the labour market and so on) and by social processes that people speaking local dialects and possessing solid linguistic proficiency have been forced to collaborate in the destruction of their instruments of expression (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 49).

As has already been said several times, there is a striking parallel between the situation of the individual in isolation and that of the state as regards the language question. This can be seen in their attitudes and reactions to linguistic practices. The collaboration of individuals in the destruction of their dialects is comparable to the attitude of the African élites towards their own languages when they are in competition with the languages of the former colonial powers. On account of the symbolic power of these languages, those who speak their mother tongues are led to think that they are weak and defective languages, and end up believing that they are also insignificant and limited on the intellectual plane and that to speak them alone could stunt a person's cognitive development. This is perhaps one of the key phenomena that are necessary for an understanding of why these sovereign states are no longer sovereign in matters of language and culture. Similarly, the fact that a state is independent is not enough to guarantee that ethnic linguistic and cultural identities will remain distinct. Glyn Williams goes even further in his critique of the basic dichotomies underlying the studies of diglossia, bilingualism and language planning, as devised by Ferguson and developed by Fishman. The constancy of this attitude derives from a consensus in society about what should be considered standard, despite the numerous attempts to solve the latent conflicts. This has a number of consequences that Williams puts as follows:

when the concept of social change as involving progress is invoked we have the same tendency to create dichotomies which involve norm/deviance within the context of social evolution. Invariably the norm involves the powerful element and the deviant involves the adversary which is placed in time through dichotomies such as modern/tradition which derive from typological constructions which are assumed to reflect new and old forms, despite the fact that they both sit together at the same moment in time (Y) Language is superimposed upon this vision of society by relating different language forms, whether they be languages or varieties, to the dichotomous relations of society (Williams, 1992, p. 233).

Following several studies on the question, we have come to the conclusion that if universal literacy is to be accepted and if the transition from oral to written language is to be effective in countries that, like Mali, have recently adopted a written alphabet, the languages concerned must be used for an ever-growing number of actions and activities involving a growing number of speakers, and the activities must be of a complexity and technical content that are beyond the capacity of memory to deal with and

oblige people to use written communication (Ouane, 1984; 1990; Ouane and Amon-Tanoh, 1990). Having studied several similar experiences, Easton points out that successful programmes in this field have devoted close attention to the social and economic structure of the learning environment and have made judicious efforts to devise strategies enabling programme participants to undertake activities with most potential for renewed learning and for development of their communities. These are chiefly activities that generate and accumulate economic surplus (even in situations where there is a struggle for survival) and then reinvest it locally in new functions, services and enterprises (Easton, 1989, p. 439).

A study of present-day English and French, and of any language with similar status, provides a panorama of the past and of their pre-standardization stage, which can be found in several present-day multilingual contexts and reveals the existence of dialectal continua that show the influence of a variety of languages and traditions. In his monumental *Histoire de la langue française des origines à nos jours*, Ferdinand Brunot traces the progress of the French language. English followed a similar path. It is widely acknowledged that what has been taught for centuries in British schools has been the East Midlands dialect spoken by rich merchants in the triangle enclosed by Oxford, Cambridge and London. This has been to the detriment of all other English dialects, which have been systematically downgraded ever since (Edwards and Redfern, 1992, p. 7).

This historical overview proves that the emergence of a social group and its assumption of power lead to the rise of its culture and language, and consequently to a growth in the status and resulting prestige of that culture and language, to the detriment of the languages and cultures of other groups. The national and official languages of the Nation-States have thus been shaped by the vagaries of history but within specific socio-economic circumstances. Any language or, to be more precise, any linguistic community finding itself in the same circumstances, could develop in the same way. This being so, it is clear that the tool of language cannot therefore serve as the ideal instrument for language management, even if linguists are to right to point out that, intrinsically and other things being equal, every language can follow the same path and develop in an identical way. The universal capacity to speak cannot be identified with the socially conditioned way of realizing this natural capacity, which presents as many variants as there are social conditions of acquisition. According to Bourdieu, people behave in this respect, too, as if social acceptability could be reduced to mere grammaticality whereas, in reality, speakers who lack the legitimate competence are *de facto* excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or else are condemned to silence (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 54-5).

Examining what various people have written as we have just done still does not make it possible to find one's way round this great array of expressions and shades of meaning, since the heart of the matter lies even deeper. The problem in fact is that of discourse, not in the sense of the linguists, even when they refer to it, but in that of ethnologists and, above all, of anthropologists; in other words, a problem of verbalization, openly formulated or not, but always dictated by power. Taken in this way, the discourse expresses a stratification and a wish to mask or to unmask, as situations and needs suggest, the complexity of the relationships based on power and domination that underlie the social fabric. The discourse reflects and codifies the relationships that have been woven while at the same time attempting to mask them in the name of nation-building, community interest or the interest of the child or the adult, depending on the programmes. There are several objective factors which may affect the attitude of groups and act in a cumulative way on the choice of one or more languages, either for a particular situation or for the long term. Studies have shown that these factors include migration, industrialization, urbanization,

proletarianization and government policies concerning which languages can and cannot be used in schools and other institutions (Kulick, 1992, p. 8).

Srivastava, for his part, sees three reasons which explain the proliferation of terms, their lack of clarity and the changing circumstances that lead to this terminological profusion. He sums them up as follows:

- (1) since these terms reflect the process by which we deal cognitively with socio-cultural reality, they tend to differ in meaning across societies;
- (2) defining criteria for these terms drawn under the pressure of monolingual experience show a poor understanding of the multilingual ethos;
- (3) there is resurgence of ethnic-minority nationalism all over the world. This is leading to 'retribalization' in the interests of decentrality in the First World, but in the Third World it is coming into conflict with the process of 'detrribalization' as a prerequisite for national unity (Srivastava, 1984, p. 98).

In conclusion, we are able to establish that, as one might expect, the treatment of the language question follows in the wake of the philosophical discussion of the relationship between individual and society in all its ramifications. This discussion has reverberations and continuations in opposite directions. Some hold that language has been a distinctive mark of the individual and of socialization. Its relationship with society is either one of harmony or one of conflict, depending on the shifts of opinion. Language, and discourse above all, becomes an intermediary between thought and reality. Since Saussure, others hold that language does not only reflect society, but is society. The monolingual canon predominates and becomes a straitjacket from which it is hard to emerge. The multilingual ethos which lies inside the social structures of the countries concerned is not accepted and experienced as a normal state of affairs but is seen as a handicap which must be got rid of at any price. It is too quickly forgotten that handicaps are not the essential and natural properties of individuals, but are social products, meaning that they result from the interaction between persons with definite and specific characteristics, and definite social situations and circumstances. Similarly, the dominant point of view ignores or pretends to ignore social conflicts in the discourse and typologies suggested, but condemns these conflicts as soon as fairer and more divergent approaches are mooted to challenge the *status quo*.

References

- Abdulazia-Mkilifi. 1972. Triglossia and Swahili-English Bilingualism in Tanzania. In: *Language in Society*, Vol. 1
- Adegbija, E. 1994. *Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa. A Sociolinguistic Overview*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Series, 103.
- Akinaso, F. N. 1993. Policy and Experiment in Mother Tongue Literacy In Nigeria. *International Review of Education*, Vol. 39, No. 4.
- Bamgbose, A. 1984. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Bamgbose, A. 1991. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Bourdieu, P. 1991. op. cit. Chap. 1.

- Brann, C. 1990. Pour une métalangue du multilinguisme. In: *La Linguistique*, Vol. 26.
- Calvet, L.J. 1987. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Chachage, C. S. L. 1992. *Literacy and Print Media in Africa: The Tanzanian Experience*. Hamburg. UNESCO Institute for Education (mimeograph).
- de Clerck, M. 1993. Analphabétismes et alphabétisations (au pluriel). *Études de l'IUE*. Hamburg. UNESCO Institute for Education.
- Coulmas, F. 1984. Linguistic Minorities and Literacy: Language Policy Issues in Developing Countries. In: *Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs*, 26. Berlin. Mouton.
- Crystal, D. 1991. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, A. 1986. Language Planning and Educational Change. In: *Language Education in Africa*. Proceedings of a seminar held in the Centre of African Studies. Seminar proceedings N° 26. 29-30 November 1985. Edinburgh. University of Edinburgh.
- Easton, P.A. 1989. Structuring Learning Environments: Lessons from the Organisation of Post-Literacy Programmes. In: *International Review of Education*, Vol.35, N° 4.
- Edwards, J. and Redfern, V. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Fafunwa, A.B. 1990. Is a lingua franca possible in Nigeria? In: *The A.C.P. Courier*, N°119, January-February.
- Fasold, R. 1984. *The Sociolinguistics of Society*. Oxford. Blackwell.
- Jacobs, R. (ed.). 1966. *English Language Teaching in Nigeria*. Lagos. The Ford Foundation.
- Kulick, D. 1992. *Language Shift and Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Laitin, D. D. 1989. Language Policy and Political Strategy. In: *Policy Sciences* 22.
- Mackey, W.F. 1993. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Mackey, W. F.; Siguan, M. 1987. *Education and Bilingualism*. *Educational Sciences*. London, International Bureau of Education, Kogan Page, Ltd.; in association with UNESCO, Paris.
- Marin, L. 1978. Le récit est un piège. Paris. Éditions de Minuit.
- Ouane, A. 1984. La presse rurale et les autres stratégies d'apprentissage de la postalphabétisation. In: Dave, R.H., Perea, D.A. and Ouane, A. (eds.). *Stratégies d'apprentissage pour la postalphabétisation et l'éducation continue au Mali, au Niger, au Sénégal et en Haute-Volta*. Hamburg. UNESCO Institute for Education.
- Ouane, A. 1990. National Languages and Mother Tongues. In: *The UNESCO Courier*, No. 7.
- Ouane, A. and Amon-Tanoh, Y. 1990. Literacy in French-Speaking Africa: A Situation Analysis. In: *African Study Review*, Vol. 33, N° 3.
- Rubagumya, C. N. 1991. Language Promotion for Educational Purposes: The Example of Tanzania. In: *International Review of Education*, Vol. 37, N° 1. Special Number: Language Policy and Education.

- Srivastava, R. N. 1984. Linguistic Minorities and National Languages. In: Coulmas, F. (ed.) 1984. op. cit., p.90.
- Street, B. V. 1984. *Literacy in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Street, B. V. (ed.). 1993. Cross-cultural Approaches to Literacy. In: *Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Sutton, P. 1991. Educational Language Planning and Linguistic Identity. In: *International Review of Education*, Vol. 37, N° 1. Special Number: Language Policy and Education.
- Williams, G. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.

6. THE IMPOSSIBLE DEBATE ABOUT THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUES IN EDUCATION

Adama Ouane

Putting the matter like this takes on an air of irredentism and brings us back to the increasingly decried but still persistent dichotomies to be found in the discussion of this topic. Given the antagonistic nature of the arguments, it is important to understand the motivations of all sides and to assess their value correctly from the point of view of their contexts and their aims. This is, of course, true of any argument but in the very sensitive debate about the language question, the need to hide the real political, social, cultural and other issues is a fact which assumes particular prominence and should therefore be brought out into the open.

From contact to choice: justifying a necessity

It is acknowledged that, from the linguistic point of view, prolonged contact between ethnic groups can lead to three results: the maintenance of the languages; bilingualism; or changes to or the abandonment of languages. These situations depend on the implicit or explicit, open or tacit language policy that generates them, governs them and provides for their management. The world's nation States and States-nations¹³ each experience their multilingualism in their own way and have to face the problem of the choice of languages, a choice that varies according to their structure. The choice involves the questions of national or official language or languages, alphabets, forms of expression and the medium of instruction in the different kinds of education.

As language plays a central role in the reproduction of education and participation in politics, access to education is the most suitable barometer by which to judge the status that a language community has achieved in a multilingual environment. The attraction of mono-lingualism, or at most of bilingualism, is stressed over and over again. Skutnabb-Kangas even claims that one of the most successful means of destroying or retarding languages has been, and is, education. As formal education reinforces the relative importance of different languages and cultures, the choice of languages of instruction and languages to be taught assumes a decisive importance, all the more so as most school systems in the world are both ideologically and through their organization geared towards a norm of monolingualism (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990). Nobody questions the need to choose the language or languages of instruction, whatever the functions for which they are intended, even if Fyle considers, as he states below in his contribution, that the use of a language in education ought to result from all its social functions taken together and should not therefore be seen as an indicator of its promotion (Fyle, chap. 9).

¹³ This useful distinction was introduced by H. Kloss (1988:102) to draw attention to the path followed in Europe, where the formation of the nation was preceded by the establishment of the State, identical to the nation in varying degrees, whereas in Africa, the arbitrarily constructed states have to serve as a framework for the formation of the nation, or more probably nations (in a context that is more confederate than monolithic).

The existence of accurate and trustworthy data about the socio-political contexts mentioned, and especially about the language situation, is an important factor in the preparation of a language policy and of great relevance in its application. Putting a policy of this kind into effect implies devoting attention to a series of factors, such as the historical antecedents of the speakers, the general language situation in which the population of the country find themselves, the attitudes of the different socio-cultural groups within the state, the view of the future and the prospects for social projects. Considerable efforts are being made in most of the countries concerned to study, understand and control the language situation for the purposes of language management. Linguists and those associated with them concluded that by making a thorough and business-like study of the language context, they could provide politicians with formal proof and, by giving them relevant information, could contribute to the decisions they had to make concerning languages. Dialect surveys ought, to begin with, to make it easier to choose which central forms of speech and dialects to standardize; they could then contribute to the preparation of suitable linguistic atlases. Similarly, sociolinguistic surveys and the analysis of language dynamics are not an academic exercise but an attempt to provide evidence for, to justify and to validate choices. Most of the time, these approaches have to date remained without effect. Specialist studies and the sound knowledge that has been acquired have not in fact achieved the hoped-for results with the political authorities and have had no influence whatever on their decisions.

Furthermore, it is generally supposed that the value, prestige and esteem acquired by a language are proportional to the usefulness that it is acknowledged to have in the different areas of life. It therefore follows that the most telling point in the selection of a language for use in the prestige areas of communication is the consideration of *function*. Nevertheless, what governs and shapes the function of a language in a multilingual context is the combined effect of a variety of socio-economic factors and of linguistic ecology. Among these factors are the ambient multilingual and multicultural ecology, the number of speakers (the numerical muscle, according to Adegbija), the historical and political characteristics, the institutional policy, prestige or status and the degree of 'development'.

Diversity and multiplicity are two entities which, where attitudes are concerned, function centrifugally (away from the centre) and centripetally (towards the centre). The direction in which the shaping of attitudes is slanted depends to a large extent on the relationships between the speakers of different languages, on the structural relationships between languages, on the threats that a given language or languages constitute for the rest, on the existence of dialect variants among these languages, on the existence of dominant linguistic groups in the speech community and on the stress laid on ethnic affiliation or ethno-linguistic solidarity.

Such a large spread of criteria provides the ground for wide-ranging and varied argument. Three areas are generally considered to be of vital importance and to require decisions about language: national unity and identity, access to modern technology and international communication. To these are added costs and, of course, communication within groups and between communities. The most commonly mentioned facts nevertheless have to do with costs and the rationalization and modernization of the economy; the language policy is supposed to favour 'management efficiency' and the introduction of technology into **B** and the globalization of **B** the economy. These arguments are a response to criteria which are neither social nor cultural, even though they are often used and attributed to undisclosed social, cultural and political interests. There is a shift towards the language of political and social action, even if responsibility for this action is claimed under an economic and technocratic cover. Mackey clearly expresses this tendency by putting in this way the dilemma confronting the defenders of mother tongues when the difficult choice has to be made between economic development and the desire for cultural

survival: are you wanting the good of your child or the good of your language? The potential conflict between the need to promote personal identity and the needs of economic development is made clear in this question, as if it were possible to renounce one or the other or separate them in this way, as if it were not desirable to reconcile the two and as if such a reconciliation were something for the dominant groups alone. The good in question consists of mobility, access to the standards and values of the dominant culture, and social acceptance by the majority groups. As these privileges do not exist contextually for minority languages, they are considered to be forever out of their reach. This line of thinking sees no salvation for minorities except in assimilation or integration, itself a watered-down form of the first or an intermediate stage leading to it.

Choice, constraint, or dialogue between languages

Is it appropriate to speak about choice? It presupposes definite criteria, reasoned action and opportunities to regularize relationships among languages and the communities speaking them on the basis of objective facts and factors. Fyle finds the word a misnomer since it is not a simple matter of choosing some languages at the expense of others but rather a matter of taking all the languages of a country into account in drawing up and applying a language-use policy for the country. If the word cannot be avoided, is the act of choosing rational? If so, what criteria should apply? Before the matter can be settled, logic would certainly require several contexts to be taken into account, e.g. the historical, the linguistic, the socio-political and economic, the psychological, the administrative and governmental, and the educational contexts. The idea would be to take all these frequently conflicting contexts as a basis for examining the facts relating to language and for throwing light on the decisions underlying any choice, but this is rather unrealistic. Ignoring these contexts is nevertheless unacceptable and dangerous. The proponents and antagonists of a policy for mother tongue use are quite right to look for their arguments in these contexts and draw their arguments from them, but it is very likely that the arguments will often be irreconcilable. Although one claims to have reason on one's side, language problems are rarely settled in a rational way. Reason is nevertheless what justifies and explains most of the points of view put forward. It lies at the heart of the monogenetic concept of language, of the exclusive nature of the national language and the exclusion of other forms that are competing or simply co-existing on the linguistic scene.

The rational approach nevertheless prompts consideration of differentiated functions and different variables in the solution of the language problem, and of anything that would challenge the choices dictated by almost exclusively pragmatic, standardizing and centralizing criteria. As with any policy that is democratic and has the interests of everyone in view, an ideal language policy ought to have a dimension and scope that are both national and local. Efficiency is not necessarily achieved by uniformity, rather by sympathetic understanding of complex demands and dynamic uncertainty (Davies, 1986, p. 8). The uniformity in question presupposes concerted action, accepted by members and groups who are considered to be reasonable and living in harmony, whereas in fact they are distinguished more by difference than by similarity. Choice is thus dictated by socio-linguistic situations. It is clear that any attempt to introduce change into the functions for which languages are used simultaneously introduces changes into the socio-political relationships of the groups using those languages and has repercussions at the level of the symbolic representations attached to that use. The real aim of any attempt of this sort is either to encourage new relationships or to impose new ones. The way in which the language policy of Ethiopia developed provides an instructive example of the importance and influence of these different factors and of the readjustments dictated by the changes in the relationships between them. Imperial

Ethiopia had imposed Amharic on its subjects. Revolutionary Ethiopia, dictatorial and centralizing, kept Amharic but, in response to claims, brought into prominence 15 languages spoken by other nationalities out of the 100 or so languages to be found in the country. Post-revolutionary and fragmented Ethiopia is looking for a new balance. The Fronts which dislodged the Empire are calling for a readjustment in their favour. Tigrinya and Oromo are challenging even the numerical superiority of Amharic, to say nothing of their challenge to its status and prestige. Sharing and a new distribution of roles are being suggested in order to break monopolies and restore fair and active interaction. There is even talk of using English in order to settle the matter once and for all. Some of the present government leaders are not insensitive to the voices trumpeting the benevolent neutrality of English. They think that English could take the sting out of latent political conflicts, reducing them simply to their linguistic dimension, thus substantiating the sterilizing function assigned to international languages in the prevention of inter-ethnic conflicts, which confers on them the status of languages above the common herd, a-tribal and hence trans-ethnic.

Any action on the functions of a given language thus also has an effect on the functions of the other languages of a given community and affects their relationships. In addition, the factors and influences present are combined in such a complex way that, despite a widely held view, it is not clear whether those in charge really have the power attributed to them of being able to act on the functions of the languages. That should not mean that they can sit back and do nothing, nor should it minimize the still important role they play in the preparation and application of the malleable components of the language policy. In brief, it should justify neither the *status quo* nor the passivity that one finds, both of which are to be regretted.

Choice may be an individual or community matter and may be made at the level of institutions or states. An individual or a speech community responds to the verbal needs of heterogeneous situations spontaneously by several 'echo' processes, such as convergence, assimilation, maintenance, creativity **B** known in linguistic parlance as analogy, interference, code-switching and so forth (Khubschandani, 1983, p. 107). A choice has to be made. It has reasons and characteristics. While accepting this basic truth, the research group also went beyond surface common sense in an attempt to discover the questions that are never asked but that explain the choices made and on which those choices in fact depend. One must not lose sight of the fact that the criteria for selection and the implications of the choices made assume a vital importance for those communities whose languages are excluded. As education systems operate like communicating vessels, any choice made at one level has implications for the others. The present trend to use mother tongues as the medium of instruction until the third year of primary schooling and then to abandon them for widely spoken languages (usually international languages) thus puts a permanent question mark over the use of those MTs as media of instruction in secondary and higher education.

At individual level, choice is motivated by the needs of communication. Communication puts on offer a range of instruments that an individual chooses as circumstances dictate and having regard to his or her ability to use and handle them **B** from paralinguistic repertoires to the registers of strictest style, depending on the person's linguistic socialization, skill, control of the language situation, and the anticipated characteristics and performances of the other speaker or speakers. Even at this level, historical or cultural determinants, and sociological and psychological conditions influence the selection made. The sphere of communication is an evolving one and speakers adapt their attitudes and performances accordingly.

The possibilities are even vaster in the case of bilingual or multilingual people. The normality of natural multilingualism is confirmed by a large quantity of research and many observations. On the basis of a survey conducted by questionnaire among 200 Nigerian citizens aged 18 to 50 (belonging to the following language groups: Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Idoma, Ibibio, Edo, Nupe, Efik, Òkò, Epira and Okpe), Adegbija observed that the number of languages spoken varied from two to five in the following proportions: 60 per cent of those questioned spoke two languages; 30 per cent spoke three languages; and 10 per cent four or more languages (Adegbija, 1994). Despite the usual reservations about the use of the questionnaire as a methodological tool, particularly as regards the problem of decontextualization and the difficulty of there being no markers for the situations studied, and although the findings of the questionnaire are based on the replies of those questioned without any measurement of their real skill and performance, it nevertheless confirms the general observation about the normality of multilingualism and its existence as a natural feature in many societies.

The same observation is made by Calvet (1987), who speaks of a tradition of managing plurilingualism¹⁴ in Benin. The complementary functional distribution of this plurilingualism is also clearly illustrated by Claude Croizier, who says in his Master's thesis that:

in the big market of Dantokpa in Cotonou, in the Fon area, trading in cloth is carried on in Yoruba and fish in Tofingbé. This tacit distribution of a number of languages among certain sectors of economic life causes no argument at all. This is also true for other types of activities (traditional festivals, peasant songs, and so on) which may take place in languages other than the mother tongue. There are very few people in Benin, in fact, who do not speak at least two or three languages (Croizier, 1991, p. 17).

Without over-exaggeration, it would be fair to say that a similar linguistic specialization is found in most African community markets. This multilingualism is not merely functional or commercial, but penetrates into and shows through the whole of the social fabric. It is a social fact in the language communities of Africa. It is therefore a socio-political and sociolinguistic factor. A situation of this kind makes the discussion of the nature of bilingualism pointless in countries that tend to be monolingual, where the view is variously that it may be an advantage or a burden (see the section on this controversy, chap. 6).

Communities and their members experience multilingualism without always declaring themselves to be multilingual. For example, the population census carried out in India in 1962 found that only 9.7 per cent of the people said they were bilingual. After a thorough examination of the situation, Khubschandani concluded that among the people there was in fact extensive bilingualism and sometimes even multilingualism, resulting from migrations, the mixture of populations, age-old internal conquests and colonizations, and so on (Khubschandani, 1983, pp. 101-2). An individual will often switch languages depending on whom they are talking to and as the situation demands. This makes it difficult to apply clear-cut linguistic categories and typologies, which more often than not are constructed on the basis of ideal situations or examples.

So far, observation has been concerned with voluntary choice, freely planned and carried out by an individual, in accordance with the bilingualism (or multilingualism) in which he or she has been

¹⁴ Plurilingualism is taken here to be a less complex degree than multilingualism on account of the smaller number of languages in contact. It is an intermediate stage between bilingualism and multilingualism. The word is also occasionally used in the literature, as Fyle reminds us, to designate a form of multilingualism prevalent in a number of countries taken as a whole.

socialized and that is in reality the expression of a community or social process. Unfortunately, there are several examples of cases in which individuals, groups **B** or even a society **B** have been forced to abandon their mother tongue (s) and to turn to another language, generally speaking that of a dominant social group.¹⁵ The end result of this process is that languages are abandoned and even disappear and die out.

This is a question that has been dealt with in several publications and has been the subject of incessant appeals, launched from symposia and round tables, to prevent the abandonment, change, loss and death of languages. Some of these are very moving, such as the one launched by the International Standing Committee of Linguists (ISCL) in the preface to its book on languages in danger. Since there are not enough voluntary workers to slow down the decline of languages, which has social and political origins, one can only suggest field work to collect, preserve and possibly ‘mummify’ the abundant lexical forms, and particularly grammatical and stylistic expressions. The heritage of languages and linguistics itself would be undeniably impoverished if some specimens vanished since the disappearance of languages has a serious effect on the empirical foundations of linguistics, general as well as historical, comparative as well as typological. In the guidelines drawn up by those attending the international seminar organized by the University of Reading (United Kingdom) in March 1993 on Sustaining Local Literacies, People, Language, Power, there is one section on endangered languages. The participants made a recommendation at this point, calling for local differences to be promoted rather than reduced since they were the foundation of democracy and cultural development. In spite of the new qualitative contributions made by the modern media to oral communication and the emergence of a secondary orality, the promotion of any language calls for it to be put in writing and continuously used in texts. This is the point of view that has prompted several organizations and associations over the years to sound the alarm at the United Nations and to ask for the adoption of a Universal Declaration of Language Rights (see annex).

The implications of choice

A considerable amount of research has been done to explain the voluntary or forced adoption of a language and the subsequent loss of the mother tongue. The causes have been traced to the individual or to society or to both, and specialists have thought up and published their arguments in accordance with their particular field of study. Linguists want to save the language *qua* language, as an integral part of human wealth and cultural diversity that it is important to protect like the biogenetic diversity of plants and animals, which forms a substantial portion of our ecosystem. Psycholinguists have laid stress on behaviour and communicative interaction. Sociologists have examined the change and adoption of languages through the prism of migration, assimilation, national identity, ethnic vitality, and so on. Sociolinguists, for their part, focus on social structures and attempt to explain how languages are influenced by group attitudes to them, with these attitudes motivating and determining choices, rejection, changes, and so on.

An original approach is proposed by Don Kulick on the basis of some longitudinal field research carried out in Gapun, a village in Papua New Guinea. The large number of languages in that country is

¹⁵ History also provides examples of victors who have abandoned their languages for those of the subject groups. This is true, for example, of the Lamiibe, the Peul chiefs of Kano, who abandoned their languages for Hausa.

not due to isolation or fragmentation, as a fairly common opinion on the matter has it.¹⁶ Linguistic features there have been purposely and deliberately enlarged as if to exaggerate and mark the identity of the group. Simultaneously with the perpetuation of this diversity, multilingualism is cultivated there as a feature of society that predisposes people to tolerance, and this may lead to a mother tongue being changed or abandoned. While acknowledging the importance of macro-sociological factors in cases of abandonment, Kulick prefers another line of approach since he feels that such factors lack predictive power and offer unconvincing explanations. In his opinion, the decisive causes are to be found in studying the perception that the people concerned have of themselves, both in relation to each other and in relation to the changing social world. The view of all these relationships is coded and reflected by the language (Kulick, 1992: 9).

Fishman goes beyond the noting of facts and after reviewing the situations of a large number of endangered languages, opts for a more vigorous strategy by constructing an analysis matrix, following the pattern of the Richter Scale, called the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), with eight levels. The higher the rating on the scale, the lower the intergenerational continuity and maintenance prospects of a language network or community (Fishman, 1991, p. 87). To use a medical term, a matrix of this kind may make it possible to avoid the exercise of justification or explanation *post mortem*, or during the death throes, that is carried out on account of the danger that is looming over a large number of languages.

At the level of communities or States, the decision itself about whether or not to make a choice is a political act that may sometimes have unsuspected consequences for the future of several language communities. All language communities, even those that are in appearance monolingual, necessarily make implicit choices about the functional use of their language(s). The problems facing national minorities on account of the choices made must weigh in the balance of choice. In fact, on the dangerous ground of languages, even the absence of a policy constitutes a policy and seems to be what is most widespread.

The relation of causality between function and status, and between function, status and the use of a language is a tautological one. A language having several functions inevitably gains in prestige and, with its prestige growing, it beats a path towards new functions. Similarly, current usage has an influence on the status and prestige attaching to the language and the acquisition of prestige broadens its field of application. However, the research group felt that to make usage dependent on prestige represented a step that they termed a persistent sophism. Prestige is in fact acquired through use and prestige facilitates access to new functions, thus broadening the field of use of a given language. To subordinate from the outset the use of a language to qualities that it can only acquire through use is to act in bad faith or to be guilty of a sophism. A logic of this kind inevitably leads to the denigration of language communities and to the stunted development of their languages. This is also why the cautious attitude of gradual change is, in the last resort, an appeal for the continuation of the *status quo* and relationships of inequality. Realists and opportunists come together in their support for the little-by-little approach, the ones considering it as the only way of helping disadvantaged languages to take on those heavy responsibilities without sacrificing to the nationalist ideal, the others wishing to prolong the prevailing situation. The

¹⁶ The very strongly developed dialectalization of the Dogon language in Mali has been attributed by several scholars to the relief, with the scattering of the Dogon among the cliffs. In Jamsay, a variant spoken in the plain, an attempt has even been made to see the standard form of the language. Later dialect studies have nevertheless abandoned this path and have turned towards another cliff dialect (*toro so*), considered to be more representative.

language planner in a multilingual and multicultural context most frequently finds himself in a losing position, action and inaction alike being criticized and any decision being given a hostile interpretation in one camp or the other. This is one of the paradoxes of language planning, which attempts to reconcile potentially conflicting ambitions. The conflict revolves, for example, round the need to take both uniformity and diversity, and both equity and effectiveness, into account.

In addition, the research team violently opposed using the 'development' stage as a criterion for assessing the ability of a language to attain to full educational status at all levels of education. The degree of development is determined by a series of indicators such as mastery of graphic expression, the existence of a suitable terminological base, an abundant and varied literary tradition, access to modern life, and use as a medium of instruction for science and technology. It is through use that a language becomes able to deal with technical matters, and this is the process that is often called 'development'. There are nevertheless few people who express surprise at this criterion for selection being given so much weight and most people resign themselves to constantly putting off to a later date the access of these languages to the preserve of science and technology.

In the survey mentioned above, Adebija reports that the respondents expressed embarrassment at not being able to talk about science, technology or even politics in their mother tongue (Adebija, 1994). This fact serves as a pointer or as an excuse for declaring these languages to be 'out of the running' or incidental whenever such topics are discussed, use being made of another language considered to be more suitable. Quite apart from the fact that, to be able to discuss these topics, one first has to understand them or learn about them, it is too easily forgotten that they are simply not taught in the languages in question. This is one of the many inconsistencies that have to be faced. Even in the so-called developed languages, the teaching of science and technology in many developing countries leaves much to be desired. The question is thus obscured by the simple fact that what is called education was virtually non-existent during the colonial period and was unable to be a means of promoting the endogenous national languages, to say nothing of the fact that these languages would not in any case have gained entry to such education. It should not be forgotten that after a century or more of colonization, countries such as Angola, Mali and Niger had only a few dozen doctors. There were very few engineers, veterinary surgeons or agronomists, and those that there were had all been trained outside those countries. Even in countries better placed from the point of view of education, local languages rarely progressed beyond the stage of primary, not to say elementary, education.

The controversy over bilingual education

One remark needs to be made right at the outset. Tradition and what is written on this topic draw more from practice rooted in the contexts of countries imbued with monolingualism than from facts and ideas inspired and fashioned in immediate contact with situations where multilingualism is experienced and accepted. The dominant models are considerably influenced by the experiences of Australia, Belgium, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Switzerland. Some of these countries have a territorial bilingualism, like Belgium and Switzerland, or a parallel bilingualism, as in Canada and South Africa (Dirven, 1991).

The threat that language conflicts bring to the political scene in Belgium and Canada makes the news and provides the opponents of plurilingualism with unexpected opportunities for sharpening their weapons to oppose bilingualism of any sort, whether territorial or parallel. The explosive nature of this mixture and its imminent detonation are a constant subject of discussion, but no attention is paid to the ability of these countries to arrive at a *modus vivendi* and to renew continually negotiated balances. In

South Africa, the situation is even more absurd. According to Zubeida Desai, 43 per cent of South Africans cannot speak English or Afrikaans, let alone read or write either language. The uprising in Soweto in 1976 was nevertheless sparked off by a government decision to change the medium of instruction in the schools from English to Afrikaans. Worse still, only 7.5 per cent of those who were classified under *apartheid* as White, Coloured or Indian can speak an African language. As Desai remarks, it is difficult to imagine how South Africa can be forged into a unified nation on the basis of language when such large sections of the population cannot communicate with each other. This poses questions about the choice made in the past but also the current choices. Moreover it can mortgage future choices.

One can, of course, mention the example of Switzerland where multilingualism is accepted as part of the country and where it is an indicator of the country's cultural fragmentation. Decentralization and institutional power distribution, the search for consensus and direct participation by the population make domination by a majority impossible. The relative stability of the population and cultural pluralism reduce the potential for linguistic conflict and minimize the dangers of smaller language groups becoming marginalized (Saxer, 1989). The threat of the language barrier to national cohesion is nevertheless mentioned regularly. Roland Brachetto, in an article in the *Baseler Zeitung*, sees the causes of this in the wave of dialects that has swamped German-speaking Switzerland, making communication difficult between the Swiss who live on either side of the Sarine. Switzerland divides into hierarchies according to the languages spoken there by bigger or smaller population groups wielding greater or lesser power. This gives rise to rivalries and resentments, but what causes national unity to crack even more are the pressures of economic and regional self-centredness.

The bilingualism most frequently referred to is the 'imported' bilingualism of the immigrant ethnolinguistic groups. They ought to be included, integrated or even assimilated in the new mainstream which results from the destruction or assimilation of the former native populations. In Canada, for example, almost all Amerindians now speak English and, of the fifty-three indigenous languages, only Inuktitut, Ojibway and Cree are considered likely to survive (Foster, 1982, cited by Edwards and Redfern, 1991, p. 8). In this case, what is examined are the relations of the minority immigrant languages with the dominant culture and the particular way in which school deals with linguistic diversity. In publications, the main topic is the multilingualism imposed during the settlement of new lands by conquest or by immigration. In the United Kingdom, more is said about the Indians, Bengalis, Punjabis and others than about the closer, older and more endogenous problem of the Scots, the Irish or the Welsh. If a comparison were to be made between autochthonous and allophonous multilingualism, it would be seen, on the basis of the examples given above, that stress is laid on the latter.

Policy towards these minorities has developed over time in the following way, as established by Edwards and Redfern through a comparison of the situation in Canada with that in the United Kingdom:

- (1) *laissez-faire*: the assumption that immigrants would be absorbed into what essentially was a tolerant society;
- (2) assimilation of immigrants through tighter controls on the number of new arrivals and fixing a proportion as the maximum for immigrant children in any one school;
- (3) integration through compensation: the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds of immigrant children were seen within a pathological framework; schools and teachers had to help immigrant children conform to British expectations;

- (4) a distinct move from compensation to cultural pluralism;
- (5) anti-racist approaches by identifying examples of racism in school practices and involving all children, irrespective of ethnicity; and
- (6) combining anti-racist policies and multiculturalism (Edwards and Redfern, 1992, pp. 20-1).

These developments are clearly not linear and these approaches coexist with tendencies in favour of the mainstream. There are thus several versions of multiculturalism, among which is 'tokenism', or the granting of a meagre share in order to calm the public conscience and justify action for minorities that is in proportion to their numerical size, their socio-economic influence and their role in the group, community or society concerned. It is like a point of colour in a painting, intended to give harmony to the picture and add that little contrast that attenuates the vividness and unchallenged dominance of the principal colour. This point of colour owes its existence or use to the desire to attenuate the principal colour and to the search for internal harmony. In a similar way, one encounters a form of multilingualism for official events and for language conservation purposes, but this is actually blatant 'tokenism', enlarged under the microscope but in reality superficial.

Should there or should there not be investment in bilingual education?

Several hypotheses have been put forward concerning the need for this kind of education. Common sense arguments have been advanced and attempts made to justify them and prove them right. Attempts have been made to go beyond linguistic and language skills and attributes, and to identify non-linguistic conduct and knowledge (attitudes, view of oneself, cultural values and beliefs). The question or questions which arise concern communication in the home, among groups and with the rest of the world, and the varieties of language that contribute to this, while at the same time encouraging personal expression and the chances of success and increasing the opportunities for social mobility. In fact, as Kelman states, if a language policy aims to satisfy individual, community and national needs, it must attempt to establish and facilitate patterns of communication (both internally and internationally) that would enable its socioeconomic institutions to function most effectively and equitably in meeting the needs and interests of the population. It must also assure equal access to the system and opportunities to participate in it for the different groups within the society, varying in their linguistic repertoires (for either ethnic or social-class reasons) (Kelman, 1971).

Communicating with another social group ought to change the idea and image that one has of oneself. Knowledge of languages implies involvement in two cultures and this may affect the concept that one has of oneself; in the case of additive bilingualism, this concept may be a positive one but it may, in particular, be negative in the case of the more subtractive bilingualism experienced by minority groups who are forced to put aside their ethnic language for a national language (Lambert, 1974). Paulston has added a sociological and political viewpoint to the dominant psychometric tradition in bilingual research. She has studied both generally and in detail the theory and practice of bilingual education, taking as a basis the examination of eight theories of social and educational change relating to the two major paradigms then in vogue **B** the functional or equilibrium paradigm and the conflict paradigm (Baker, 1988, p. 186).

The aims of this bilingual education, imbued with the idea of domination by one language and one culture, translate into the discourse and the metaphorical expressions that are in fashion to describe them. A transition to monolingualism and monoculturalism as against remaining inside a pluralist pattern aiming at a stable bilingualism and biculturalism, subtraction as against addition, immersion as against submersion, élitism as against populism **B** these are the dichotomies through which bilingual educational approaches are expressed in relation to their ultimate purpose. In the literature, there are references to transitional bilingual education during which one language fades out as the majority or mainstream language develops. Mention is also made there of bilingualism to maintain a language or bilingual education that enriches, during which two languages are maintained throughout the whole, or almost the whole, of a child's schooling. In transitional bilingualism, the learner's first language is an intermediate medium for learning. Over against the élitist bilingualism based on free choice and the ambition to achieve a high social status is popular bilingualism brought about by necessity and obligation. A distinction is also made between bilingual education by immersion and by submersion. This aquatic image makes the class a swimming pool where the learners are either thrown into the water of the second language (submersion) and have to learn it like learning to swim, or they are allowed to use their first language to learn the second language gradually (immersion).

Out of these experiences ideas have come into being that have influenced the theory and, above all, the practice of bilingual education. The intelligence quotient (IQ) and other similar factors that may differentiate bilinguals from monolinguals were taken as a guide. This led to the theory of balance, i.e. the way in which an ordinary person intuitively leans with the weight of one language, which increases to the detriment of the other, in order to reach a point of balance. The controversial nature of research into intelligence has led most of these undertakings into tortuous and dangerous paths, most of which have gone nowhere. 'The question is crucial; the answer can only be cautious' (Baker, 1988, p. 21). Studies have also been made of cognitive functioning, particularly divergent thinking and communicative sensitivity, to see whether bilingualism presents any advantages in these fields.

From scales, the image then passed to that of the 'think tank', introduced by Cummins, who sees the bilingual person as an individual whose brain works like a single, well-oiled motor in which the languages involved neither merge nor mix with each other. Cognitive performance is then determined not just by the languages available but also by the thinking motor itself. From this determination of cognitive effects, the path led to the search for the 'threshold' at which it becomes possible to conceive and discern a positive relationship between bilingualism, cognitive attainment and the development of intelligence (Cummins, 1976; Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, 1976; Fishman, 1977). Baker draws the following conclusion from the studies and research carried out on this topic:

While individual pieces of research are sometimes weak and with limitations, cumulatively the verdict seems to be in favour of a bilingualism-cognitive advantages link. There is insufficient evidence to satisfy the sceptic, but what evidence there is leads in the direction of supporting believers in bilingualism (Baker, 1988, p. 44).

These theories are nevertheless the ones that are current in Africa and in many developing countries where, as has been said on several occasions, multilingualism is different in nature. Akinnaso defines the language policy of Nigeria as aiming at a pattern of containment, supporting a medium-term transitional bilingualism with the rapid abandonment of the mother tongue, which is done away with as the language of instruction in the middle of primary education. Current practice and experiments to provide support for the preparation of language policies are all slanted in this direction, considered to be less liable to stir up conflict.

These theories also provide a basis for the methods of teaching and learning a second language, i.e. use of the mother tongue or the direct method. Should one or should one not pass through the mother tongue, the first language? Rubin recounts experiments undertaken by Paulston (1975) and Engle (1975), who studied the influence of the mother tongue on the learning of the second language and discovered contradictory evidence showing on the one hand the beneficial influence of reading in the mother tongue on the acquisition of other subjects, and on the other, of the direct acquisition of the second language without any influence from the mother tongue and without undesirable effects on the native speakers. Rubin draws from this contradictory comparison the only conclusion that he feels to be reasonable, namely, that language is not the most important of the causal variables in learning at school. Other social factors appear to be more decisive (Rubin, 1983, p. 12). The first language is a necessary path through life, the sphere of communication in multilingual countries, where there forms a naturally graduated stratification of the use of the languages in contact with each other. The question raised by this research is: why cannot the educational approach conform to the naturally structured pattern? Pattanayak, Fyle, Adegbija and most of the participants draw attention to the need for choice and the preparation of models for the integration of languages into education, having regard to the prevailing models for language integration, taking the mother tongue as a basis and passing by way of the community language to the national or official languages. According to Bamgbose, for reasons of basic survival, in these spheres of communication, people who do not go to school or follow any form of structured learning have to get along in a multilingual situation by learning the language of the immediate community in order to become integrated into it; learning a border language for trade purposes; or learning a *lingua franca*, or language of wider communication, for instrumental purposes. Their patterns of communication may range from simple non-verbal gestures to perfect co-ordinate bilingualism (Bamgbose, 1991, p. 52).

From assimilation to the dialogue of languages

With the growing influence of 'minorities' and their fierce fight for their linguistic and cultural rights in addition to their political rights, the educational and political authorities of the host countries are being forced to revise their positions. The Bullock report (1975) was a turning point in the official position of the United Kingdom concerning minority languages. Two passages from this report sum up the call for change. It lays down that: 'no child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he crosses the school threshold' (Y) The curriculum should reflect many elements of that part of his life which a child lives outside school' (§ 20.5). Further on, the author states: 'Certainly the school should adopt a positive attitude to its pupils' bilingualism and wherever possible should help maintain and deepen their knowledge of their mother-tongues' (§ 20.17).

Ten years later, the Swann report, *Education for All*, recommended a pluralist and multiracial society. The same trend can be observed in Australia, where the programme for cultural integration led to the expansion of classes for teaching languages other than English to a total of eighteen languages, with the subject-matter being enlarged to cover geopolitics, traditions and community aspects (Smolicz, 1991, p. 37). Clearly not everyone shares this point of view. Edwards and Redfern (1992, p. 22) lay stress on the hiatus between these new ideas and the slow pace of change in the curriculum and in teacher training, with some of the teachers being a long way from accepting the change of direction.

Those in favour of assimilation are preparing for the battles to come and accuse the minority lobbies of advocating types of bilingual education that are considered to be expensive, disastrous for national cohesion and identity, and destabilizing for the very people for whom the education is provided.

Examining the example of Sweden, Paulston lays stress on the fact that mother tongue classes are partly an excuse, a mechanism for segregation, that happens to coincide with Finnish national demands. They represent a very handsome gesture that any linguist would approve but it is also a very expensive policy since it cost the Swedish Government about 230 million Swedish krona (about \$30 million) for 1983-84. Building a society in which every individual enjoys social equality while maintaining cultural freedom and a choice of identity is comparable to squaring the circle. How, the author concludes, can one encourage cultural freedom of choice without society splitting into numerous groups, all of which compete with each other? The question should be: what is best for Sweden, not for individuals or ethnic groups? (Paulston, 1992, p. 69-70). This is certainly a legitimate question, but no country can exist by ignoring the interests of groups and individuals, even if they are not always in harmony.

Challenging the 'rhetoric of futility'

According to Fishman, the 'rhetoric of futility' is the logic employed in its arguments by the majority establishment that, in the name of public interest, undercuts the minority languages' survival chances and then follows up this injury with the additional insult of projecting its own biases upon minority efforts on behalf of cultural survival (Fishman, 1991, p. 30). It would be fair to say that this rhetoric is an emanation of the monolingual canon which considers any other configuration as an unfavourable system which must be corrected.

This is the situation which prevails and is predominant worldwide. Any action not intended to reinforce the mainstream and to get peripheral groups included in it is pointless. It is artificial and inappropriate to transfer this logic to contexts where cultural diversity and a multiplicity of languages are an intimate part of those contexts and have their origin in the society.

The possibilities of choice and the language combinations are of many kinds and are sociologically motivated to facilitate their use, but that is to ignore the prejudices that have originated in other contexts where bilingualism has been essentially for the élite and from which pluri- and multilingualism have been virtually absent. A base as fertile this offers the person concerned a broader range of possibilities. It is easy to see that bilingual education in these countries cannot be based on experiments (whether successful or not) carried out elsewhere since the starting situations are fundamentally different. It is clear that the clash of cultures cannot be overcome by learning another language, even though Lambert, in research dating from 1967, provided convincing proof that learning a second language was partly dependent on a wish to be identified with the ethnic group speaking that language. Kalantzis et al. stress, for their part, that the demands and significations of culture cannot be simply shared or understood at the symbolic level of language alone but need the living practices for which the language provides the tool. They conclude that: 'The claim that language embodies culture is very vague, and the claim that culture can be taught through language is tendentious at best. Culture and life shape language as much as language reshapes life' (Kalantzis, Cope and Slade, 1989, p.4).

For or against the integration of national languages in education?

This question lies at the heart of any harmonious and consistent language policy. Even if mother tongues are rarely integrated into education systems **B** and this is a far from universal practice **B** there is still nothing unreal or unthinkable about the process. Several arguments are put forward in defence of or in opposition to the use of a learner's mother tongue in basic literacy activities. These arguments have been

summarized above in the introductory section to this book (chap. 2) At this point, it is proposed to categorize them and flesh them out a little in order to understand them better. It has already been said repeatedly that the integration of mother tongues and national languages into education and the choice of these languages are eminently political matters, even though they are masked by a panoply of arguments of different kinds. Some of these arguments are openly acknowledged to be political while others relate to the fields of socio- and psycholinguistics, technology and economics.

Reasons of a political nature

It is obvious that national unity can be promoted by the mutual understanding that sharing the same language establishes. From this observation, some decision-makers' very commonly arrive at the view that to promote several languages would hinder national unity. Fear of exacerbating various forms of national opposition and concern about being left out of the fantastic current of the exchange and circulation of knowledge and information are the reasons put forward to justify and hold to the choice of *one single* or of *a very small number* of national languages, or else the choice of *a foreign language* as official language.

The persistent link between national unity and monolingualism is a transposition of the idea that monolingualism is one of the characteristics of a nation. In reality, what exacerbates opposition is not the plurality of languages but conflicts of interest in conflicting messages. The fact that these interests are not confined to languages and are outside the bounds of any particular language is illustrated daily throughout the world. The bloody events that have occurred in recent times in Somalia, Burundi and Rwanda, three of the few essentially monolingual countries on the African continent, are an illustration of this contradiction.

Clearly, it is not only in Africa that one encounters conflicts of this kind. They arise in many other contexts. Pattanayak mentions the South Asia region, for example, also the scene of linguistic conflict due either to the lack of any language policy or to a language policy that has no understanding at all of the actual situation on the ground. The refusal to recognize that Bengali had a status of its own side by side with Urdu, which had become the only official language, was not unconnected with the break-up of Pakistan. The country is in danger of being torn apart again by the struggle for the recognition of their identity being carried on by the language groups speaking Sindhi, Baluchi and Pachtu. The same situation is to be found in Bangladesh where the languages of the Chittagong region are opposing the omnipotent Bengali. Elsewhere, language groups are having recourse to armed struggle in order to obtain recognition. Examples of uprisings of this kind are to be seen in Myanmar with the Kachin, and in Sri Lanka, where there is a continuing age-old conflict between the Indo-Aryan Singhalese and the Dravidian Tamils. Pattanayak attributes responsibility for this to the governing élites of these countries who, on emerging from the colonial period, were not able to make good use of national sovereignty in order to establish good-neighbourly relations among the different members of their multicultural society. They were unable to understand that these questions of language and ethnic affiliation could not be seen in linear and binary terms and that, from the overall point of view of integration, the larger identities incorporated the smaller ones without danger of assimilation.

In many cases, avoidance of the issue took the place of a proper policy, and running away from the question led in the direction of seeking the incarnation of national unity in the established colonial languages. The leaders then felt themselves free of the obligation to choose among the autochthonous

languages. At independence, Nigeria deliberately opted for English as the national *lingua franca* with the obvious aim of encouraging national unity. It even attempted to establish a network of secondary schools with a varied ethnic composition, the link among which was to be English. The Biafran war caused this experiment to crumble. Another recent example is that of Namibia which, although it did not inherit English, decided to make it its official language, considering it to be a factor of freedom when compared with Afrikaans, the language of oppression. Putting this decision into effect is proving extremely complex and costly, even though the construction of national unity is seen as a requirement of the greatest importance. One wonders if there is not another, more effective way of arriving at the same result.

A plurality of languages ought to be seen as an asset. It is, in fact, the reflection of the plurality of cultures. Languages are considered as different ways of reflecting experience. This is the situation that often prevails in Africa, where language, culture and ethnic affiliation tend to coincide, which in most cases makes it difficult, not to say impossible, to equate cultural identity and national identity. In fact, as Dirven observes, cultural identity and national identity tend to be in competition rather than complementary to each other (Dirven, 1991).

In such a context, how can the needs of the nation be reconciled with those of the cultural community, given that cultural loyalty is often seen as a *linguo-tribal* affiliation? The problem is made worse by the fact that the present boundaries between states simply follow the colonial pattern of arbitrary division. A glance at the language map of Africa shows that even apparently homogeneous linguistic areas conceal a mosaic of small ethno-linguistic regions. In these circumstances, it is impossible to take political and administrative divisions in general, or the State in particular, as a starting point for building up a language. However, where the state is already in existence, its role must in no way be minimized as it acts as a stimulus to the processes of integration and ethno-linguistic consolidation.

Given the arbitrary nature of the frontiers of African states, which take no account of isoglosses or of cultural and ethnic particularities, only large regional groupings covering all ethno-linguistic areas could be of relevance in finding an answer to the question of language management in those regions. In order to get out of the rut, Vinogradov and his team suggest starting with the idea of a *communicative sphere* which could be defined as a historically formed community, characterized by relatively stable and regular internal communicative links and by its distribution over a particular territory (Vinogradov et al., 1984, p. 9). In this communicative sphere, contrary to the notion of ethnic community, there is no limit to ethnic heterogeneity, and this removes the idea of cultural and linguistic unity. The frontiers of the communicative sphere do not coincide either with those of the ethnic community or with those of the area over which a particular language is spread. However, it has to be recognized that in contexts of dense multilingualism and the compartmentation of languages, the notion of a communicative sphere is difficult to handle at the operational level, although it makes it possible to detribalize the language management policy.

The communication situation is strongly influenced by whether or not the qualitative facts concerning the ethnic groups and languages and the actual way in which the ethnic groups are distributed over the territory coincide with the languages themselves. Nevertheless, even where the basic facts do coincide (compact ethnic area regularly using its mother tongue), the interaction of social and socio-psychological factors is such that it can lead to different communication situations. This and other processes of a similar kind demonstrate the close link between the processes of intra-linguistic consolidation and inter-ethnic integration.

Relations based on interdependence rather than domination make a notable contribution to national integration. The coexistence of several mother tongues is able not only to promote widely-spoken languages, which brings individuals closer to each other, but also to make it possible for different cultures to understand each other better. It is thus fundamentally wrong to think that linguistic unity can of itself foster national unity and become its symbol.

Reasons of a socio- and psycholinguistic nature

Reasons of this kind stem from the history and culture of the countries in question, and especially from their colonial legacy. The arguments put forward consist of devaluing some languages in comparison with others and casting doubt on the ability of those languages to cope with the modern world.

True it is that exploring the vast and ever-changing field of science and modern knowledge cannot be easy for languages that are at a stage of transition from a culture dominated by oral communication to one based above all on written communication, with all the consequences that this implies for the original form of those languages.

The other aspect of this argument concerns the use, 'prestige' and functions of the languages. We have already mentioned all the contradictions that flow from this debate and the discrimination which results (see chap. 6). The question is of great topical interest and is being very vigorously discussed in former British and French colonies, where people are wondering about the use of the languages of the former mother countries as official languages, and particularly about their use in literature and creative written work. The weekly newspaper *West Africa* has reported on these matters over the past twenty years and gave considerable space to the topic in one of its issues early in 1993. It is easy to prove that the question is not just a literary matter. The simple fact that the majority of the population is excluded from using the official language, which thus becomes the possession of a minority, poses a very great practical problem for the whole of the country.

What effect does the use of English or other colonial languages have on the people's lives and on national development? What are these languages doing in Africa? The question arose as the colonies attained their independence and lies at the heart of the debate about languages on the African continent. The question has hitherto been considered chiefly from the point of view of education. On the literary scene, the question of the language used is crystallizing the problem even more. In his article in the issue of *West Africa* already mentioned, Chris Dunton provides a glimpse of the range of opinions expressed in what is commonly called English-speaking Africa:

Some writers have produced startling - even outrageous - arguments in defence of English (what is one to make of Es'kia Mphahlele's comment that he must use English because his mother tongue has no terms for concepts like 'freedom' and 'liberation?'). Some - like Mongane Wally Serote - have dismissed the debate as peripheral, arguing that there are more urgent questions to be resolved. Some, like Omotoso, have been inconsistent in their comments over the years; others, like Achebe and Ngugi, have painstakingly worked through the pros and cons - and have ended at different standpoints, Achebe defending the use of English while admitting its limitations, Ngugi demanding the use of indigenous languages (Dunton, 1993, p. 457).

Put in this way, the question of literature may appear unjustified if no attempt is made to understand the role of filter and excluder played by the colonial languages in the context of Africa. In fact, it is surely a luxury to mention the problem of literature in these languages in a situation where the remoteness of government from people's daily concerns is further reinforced by the fact that government shelters

behind a language that is scarcely accessible to the majority and, in addition, is remote from the daily lives of ordinary people.

Is it possible to transmit *in* and *through* another language experiences that are unknown to that language because they belong to other languages and cultures? The language used has undergone its own development and sometimes takes surprising turns to accommodate the adjustments and search for shades of meaning desired by the authors concerned. The other aspect of the problem is whether it is possible to use a language that has been emptied of the culture that it carries with it, that underpins it and gives it life. That would imply that the medium is not the message. Dunton mentions two authors who have tried to find their own solution to this dilemma. Gabriel Okara sought a solution to the first problem by using *translingualism*, i.e. the use of English forms impregnated with or even distinguished by an abundance of syntactical constructions, grammatical twists and idioms taken from his mother tongue, Ijaw, in order to imitate his community's speech patterns but in sentences constructed on an English framework. Njabulo Ndebele, for his part, thinks that it is possible to naturalize English by adopting it and using it without reference to British culture. According to him:

The history, the literature, the cuisine, the sports and pastimes, the sense of landscape, and so on, that constitute that culture, are not necessarily of any relevance to Africa, and the English that Africa uses need not be entangled with reference to these, but freed to do its own job, to articulate the experience, needs and desires of African peoples (Dunton, 1993, p. 459).

It is clear that the perception of the role of the colonial languages is modified by the differences that have arisen through belonging to a privileged group, an élite that links its position of advantage to the medium that accompanies and protects it. Going to the heart of the matter, one has to ask what the real significance of these languages is. Obanya reflects a widely held view when he says in his chapter to this book that in Africa, the banks, the insurance companies, parliamentarians and government officials work in English, French or Portuguese (Obanya, chap. 10). That is an undeniable socio-economic fact. The question now is to know who carries out banking transactions, who goes to university, who sits in parliament and who reads literature. It is a minority of people, significant because powerful, but a minority all the same. We already know that in most of the multilingual societies described here, oral communication has pre-eminence over written communication. We also know that written cultures, by their essence and because of their specific characteristics, produce inequality in dealings with the worlds of politics, law, education, the arts and so on. They in fact contribute to the constitution of systematic, theoretical knowledge, detached from its frame of reference and context, and to the establishment of relationships built up around the acquisition of such knowledge and the language in which it is expressed (Lahire, 1992, p. 68). To make the inequality worse by adding a language barrier, as occurs when a foreign language dominates, is really tantamount to barricading oneself against one's people. The article of faith of the élites is that the acquisition of this knowledge and the accompanying language should be democratized, but even if this is well intentioned it is still no more than a pious wish and is of only slight advantage to disadvantaged groups on account of the handicaps that go with social differentiation.

The arguments in favour of mother tongues and national languages are connected with the different advantages that their use confers. From several points of view, the mother tongue is the most appropriate instrument for an education that is relevant and effective, even if the suggestion that some people claim has been put forward by UNESCO and the minority lobbies, namely, that children should be taught in their mother tongues as of right, is qualified by those same people as a simplistic argument. The advantages that such teaching procures are first of all of a psycholinguistic nature. It is considered important to facilitate a child's emotional and cognitive development by acting to begin with in the first two fields in which the child

functions. There is thus little doubt that it is better to provide primary education, initial learning or basic education, or whatever takes its place, in the mother tongue, the language used at home, whenever that is possible. It lays firm foundations for later learning and should also secure advantages regarding the place in the social order that is occupied by what is learned.

It is undeniable that when the same language is used, this facilitates the establishment of a bond between home and school, between the language of home and heart, and the language of school and all areas and places of learning which occupy a dominant place in the continuum of lifelong education. It is currently observed that very many children all over the world begin school using a second language. It is also beyond doubt, as Davies (1986, p. 9) notes, that at school, all children discover a non-home code, but it is nevertheless true that the proximity of this code, which reflects and expresses the social distance of the pupil/learner from the medium of instruction, is something that facilitates learning. The nature of this distance and whether it is qualitative or quantitative are interpreted in a variety of ways. It is in fact not possible to restrict to a quantitative level the difference between a change of language and a change of dialect or register. In any case, the difference between these last two categories is not entirely quantitative either. As Sutton says (1991, p. 143), the distance between 'high' and 'low' variants of a language can be as great as between two distinct languages. In many cases it begins to appear necessary to teach the standard form of a language almost as a second or foreign language.

The qualities found in a mother tongue are many and weighty. Being the language of intimacy and basic group communication, it allies facility with effectiveness. Pattanayak brings up to date and summarizes as follows the many different properties of mother tongues as defined in a historic UNESCO document that reviewed the very first world-level action concerning vernacular languages (UNESCO, 1953):

Psychologically speaking, the mother tongue is a system of signs, symbols and meanings which provides the first recognition, understanding and expression of facts, events and relationships. **Sociologically speaking**, the mother tongue represents the link with the family, group and community in which citizenship ensures continuity and extension and not substitution. On the **educational level**, the MT provides the substrate and conceptual substance which give sense and direction to thought and action.

Words are the representation of experience and thought, and writing is the representation of words, even though it detaches itself from them and becomes something independent, because the written word is not the spoken word clothed in letters. The fact that words precede writing and that informal learning comes before formal literacy training prepares the ground for the teaching and learning of a second language. According to the theory of developmental interdependence put forward by Cummins, the skill that a child acquires in the second language depends on the level of performance reached in L1. The resulting theory of the transfer of language skills and the theory developed by Gudschinsky (1977) on the superimposition of linguistic forms confirm the hypothesis that learning the mother tongue always facilitates the learning of a second language.

A number of empirical studies have thus been made on this topic and they give support to the view that it is important from the psycholinguistic and educational standpoint to root and consolidate reading skills in a known language before beginning the task of learning a new language with the ultimate aim of becoming literate in it. Among these studies are those by Nancy Modiano on the languages of the Chiapas Highlands, by Nicholas Hawkes in Ghana, the Ife experiment on the teaching of Yoruba and English, and the convergent

method of teaching French and national languages in Mali, to mention only a few.¹⁷ (Modiano, 1973; Hawkes, 1981).

In this respect, the work by Daniel Wagner and his colleagues deserves mention. On the basis of a five-year longitudinal study on the acquisition of literacy, carried out in a village in a rural area of Morocco, they brought an empirical dimension to the cross-language transfer of skills. What is more, they proved that this transfer did not concern similar forms alone but also the level of decoding of the alphabets in the second language on the basis of experiences in the first language. They demonstrated in fact that the skills in Arabic explained over 40 per cent of all the forms in literacy in French. They discovered in this way that the relationship between literacy in the first language and the second language intensified with time.

In a now famous thesis on Hebrew-English bilingualism, published in 1972, the context of which is perhaps slightly different from ours, Ben-Zeev arrives at the conclusion that under certain conditions, bilingual people enjoy cognitive advantages (Ben-Zeev, 1972).

The partitioning of which there is question has more to do with the logic of argument than with actual fact. Integration does not necessarily come about through substitution. It may happen through a process of taking root. The resulting approach is then one that brings about federation, not assimilation.

The idea behind all this discussion and the questions that it raises relate to equality between languages. Is such equality possible, feasible, or necessary? According to Mackey, languages are equal only in the sight of God and the linguist (Mackey, 1984, p. 44). They ought also to be equal in the eyes of political decision-makers in the name of equality of chances and opportunity.

It is nevertheless always the case that the coexistence of two or more languages necessarily raises the problem of 'parity' or 'equality'. Theoretically, all languages are of equal worth and have the intrinsic potential to express all situations, provided that the need makes itself felt and the opportunity arises. They are capable of development. Languages are shaped and perfected by use. To paraphrase a satirical French newspaper, *Le Canard Enchaîné*, one might be tempted to say that languages, like liberties, weaken only if they are not used. Once upon a time, the languages spoken in Latin America were numbered at 2,000 but today only 600 are recorded, the rest having fallen into disuse. It is therefore more a question of access to use than of the innate limitations of certain languages. No language is developed in its essence. Its development and ability to express technical matters come about through usage.

Access to use is at the root of the modernization being carried out by Hebrew, Bahasa Indonesian (Malay), Somali and Swahili. Higher education for the newly literate in Mali, and the regional project for the promotion of Manding and Fulfulde (MAPE) have shown the potential that local languages possess if they have access to scientific communication (Ouane, 1991). These examples also show that creative potential is limitless and that the expression of technical matters and terminological development are feasible. The backward state of terminological development in Arabic means in fact that it cannot cope with a number of subjects at the level of higher education. In France, the Toubon Law of 4 August 1994 on the use of French led to a number of wry remarks being made, provided something for café society to talk about and inspired sketches and anecdotes, but it was an alarm bell triggered off by the sluggish development of French in the field of science.

¹⁷ For the Ife experiment, see Babs Fafunwa (1975) and the contribution by Adegbija in this book. The convergent method, introduced into the experiment on teaching national languages in Mali, was developed by the team from CIAVER (International Audio-visual Centre for Studies and Research) in St. Ghislain, Belgium, under the direction of Michel Wambach.

Although it is possible at the political level to avoid language discrimination by offering the same chances of furtherance and development, it is impossible in actual fact to obtain equality in roles and functions and hence equality of prestige and status. In any event, is equality of this kind necessary? In a multilingual context, the different languages take on different functions and play different roles. What is needed is to work towards a living complementarity between these roles and functions.

The vision of a uniform language is in fact a fiction, a mental construct. Every language is composed of different languages in the sense that it is distinguished by a complex stratification of types, registers, styles, sociolects and dialects, and by interaction between them.

Through these languages run social, occupational and cultural strata, which makes any wish to arrive at equality through language unrealistic. It is therefore unrealistic to think that the social and political problems associated with a language could be avoided or solved by changing something in the language. What must be done, therefore, is to solve the problems that lead to these situations. Not all forms of a language enjoy the same prestige. In a dominant language, class variations have different degrees of prestige. Similarly, when the extension of the areas in which a minority variant is used is associated with increased prestige, it does not necessarily mean that this prestige value rubs off on all the speakers of the minority language. That is an illusion which is deliberately maintained. As Williams says, people are led to believe that raising speech standards will raise social standards. That is, that if people speak like the upper class, they will behave like them. (Some) English teachers even claim that ethics and aesthetics are transmitted through the 'laws of language' and that correct grammar has close connections with correct thinking (Williams, 1992, p. 142).

The research mentioned above confirms the intrinsic advantages of various kinds that are associated with mother tongues, to say nothing of the legitimate claims made by ethno-linguistic groups for the preservation of their cultural identity. Abundant and sufficient reference has been made to this already so it is not necessary to dwell on it further. There is thus enough evidence to motivate the political decision to introduce national languages into education, both formal and non-formal. For this reason, the technical arguments put forward do not hold water.

Reasons of an economic and technological nature

The economy is frequently invoked in order to justify several political decisions, even if everyone knows that political decisions are pre-eminent in actual fact. The economic argument is often invoked to oppose the use of local languages in education. Indeed, to receive funds when decisions are being made about the distribution of national resources, evidence has to be presented of proven performance, effectiveness and use. What advantages are there for society to invest in all its languages?

In societies where the basic infrastructure is often non-existent, it is difficult to shoulder the cost of the different operations needed in connection with educational planning based on the inclusion of mother tongues. The economic problems of education certainly vary from country to country, but action to promote national languages, entailing costs that are out of control and often considered excessive, frequently provides an argument for the promotion of these languages to be restrained. To carry out literacy work in several languages, the languages must first of all be made fit to use in education.

The need to plan and publish a quantity of text-books and syllabaries in several languages that are in the process of formation poses a material problem to which there is frequently added a technological problem. In fact, the phonological principle which often underlies the spelling of languages that have recently introduced a written form means that use has to be made of graphic signs (letters), the manufacture of which implies technological processes that are often not available to the countries concerned. A lack of skilled personnel can cause the undertaking to be abandoned. What is making printing technology increasingly accessible and affordable for more language communities is precisely the fantastic scientific and technical advances of recent years. The question as to whether it is easier and cheaper to produce a large quantity of text-books in one single language or the same number in several small units is superfluous in comparison with the considerable non-economic gains to which the choice of diversity opens the door. In every case, however, the costs and difficulties can be met or reduced by non-formal educational approaches and by the use of simplified printing techniques. To help the African countries that are especially affected by this problem, UNESCO has created AFRALPHA, a new printing software corresponding to the fifty characters of the African Reference Alphabet, which will facilitate the printing of small runs of rural newspapers and materials for literacy work and basic education.

On the subject of the overall costs of education, the World Bank estimates that a literacy campaign and the maintenance of a literate society cost 0.3 per cent of the GNP per head of population in the developing countries.

In Mali, to make an adult literate in his or her mother tongue takes 500 hours of instruction over a period of two years, at a cost of \$ 50 per person made literate, whereas educating a child to the same level in French by way of formal education is estimated to cost \$ 150.

In Ethiopia, the total cost of the literacy campaign and follow-up activities in the fifteen main languages was estimated at \$ 180-200 dollars, with no account taken of the services provided free of charge by the literacy workers.

The economic aspect that has been mentioned primarily concerns performance and productivity for which only profit that can be expressed in money terms is taken into account. Other aspects such as happiness, culture, social or personal adjustment, or growth in responsibility are not put into the balance since their abstract nature makes them difficult to handle. Nevertheless, these ideas that radical economists consider to be rather trivial can also lie at the root of a number of acknowledged economic problems.

In this connection, Adewale Maja-Pearce (1993) thinks that Nigeria's failure is partly due to the inability of its intellectuals to get to grips with the problems and grasp and analyse the Nigerian situation. The dilemma of Nigeria in the modern world begins with language and resides in the attitude of the country's intellectuals to their languages. They are indeed attempting:

to appropriate the language of the former colonial powers of this other world that (is) challenging NigeriaY. They (don't) seem to me to understand the import of what they (are) trying to do, because they (do not) investigate their relationship to this language in the way in which this language represents this whole other world they (are trying) to confront.

The Nigerian context is valid for the whole of the continent. It is also one way of saying that the attitude to language leads to the problems to which the solution is today being sought in the corridors of financial institutions in Washington.

The economic arguments are based on the same logic as the others as regards their implications for mother tongues. The fragmentation, variety and increasing number of centres where action is being taken are all aspects which are thought of as necessarily leading to further difficulties, charges and costs. It has even been occasionally suggested that a high level of political and economic development calls for a limited number of languages in a community and is incompatible with a high degree of linguistic fragmentation. However, as long ago as 1968, Fishman demonstrated that there was no correlation between linguistic heterogeneity and the local economic status, and vice versa. Even in the most radical economic discourse, there is growing recognition of the fact that economic and technological efficiency cannot be divorced from the cultural context. The economic costs, and especially the social, cultural, psychological and personal costs, brought about by the decline of languages are considerable and the time has come for concern to be shown about them. There is also a decline in teaching in mother tongues, but compared to the decline in teaching in foreign languages it is relatively small. Lack of staff and equipment is not an insoluble problem since it is the consequence of persistent discrimination. It can therefore be corrected by removing the discrimination.

The politics and economics of using mother tongues

Local economic systems have been challenged, disregarded and overtaken by the economic reason of the Nation-States, and the economic arguments of the mono-models are preventing recognition of the many different facets of the situation at local level.

The mother tongue, the language of intimacy and basic group communication, allies facility with effectiveness. Generally speaking, though, the value of the mother tongue is misunderstood. It is discriminated against, done away with and reduced to being a practical prop that assists the advent of the mainstream that leads to homogeneity. Questions are always asked about the viability and effectiveness of the mother tongue. People who, for this reason, put obstacles in the way of the development of mother tongues, forget one essential aspect of the human condition, namely that people are the seat of linguistic functions and that the development of language is an aid to human development.

A persuasive discourse constitutes a direct communication to a real audience. Oral discourse enables us to express our common humanity. Before the invention of writing, people co-operated with the aid of words to form societies, to make the move from stone to iron implements, compose sophisticated poetry, hold complex philo-sophical discussions, develop geometry and the techniques for arranging and decorating caves, ornament temples and pyramids with their geometric symmetry, and design and build cities. They showed respect for their environment and traditions. Illiterate they may have been, but they were nevertheless highly

skilled and cultivated. Writing is 10,000 years old. During this brief period, attitudes and ideas have changed in such a way that today, writing is equated with education and orality with a lack of education. Writing is seen as superior and orality as inferior.

About forty years ago, the world began to expect illiterate people to learn to write so that they could be educated. Although the literacy rate has increased proportionately, the total number of illiterates has reached the record figure of 900 million and education has no programme to offer this vast population. Education for All has become Education for Some. As our education system promotes the skill criteria laid down by those who offer work, the illiterate are finding themselves increasingly marginalized. In former times, the illiterate were highly skilled and learned people, whether they were master craftsmen, speakers, composers or instrumentalists and singers. It is regrettable that such a high proportion of the world's population finds itself disregarded and marginalized by a form of education based on writing. It is high time that an educational programme was developed for illiterates, using oral means for the transmission of knowledge. A programme of this sort should not just offer them a chance in life by giving them the necessary skills but should also provide them with the means for taking part in the democratic process, which could give them an incentive to become literate and would bring them closer to the literacy-based education system. If there are suitable socio-political institutions and if encouragement is given to the necessary socio-cultural processes, there will inevitably be a drawing together of primary and secondary orality and of orality and writing.

The governing élite, remote from its own community and its own culture, maintains that the colonial language, which guarantees vertical mobility and success through the acquisition of rank, status and wealth, is the most suitable language for basic literacy and basic education. By forbidding the use of indigenous languages, this élite has prevented their development in the world of work. The most important thing is nevertheless the indestructible link between language and thought. An education system that ignores this alienates the individual from his group, from himself, his past and his traditions. The most immediate horizontal community, that of the neighbourhood within the whole village, becomes lost in the quest for vertical success. The greatest international market values become worthless in regional, local and even national markets. Supporters of the neutral language of wide communication as a medium for literacy not only pay no attention to the suddenness of the transition from the language of the home to that of the school but also disregard the well-known educational principle of going from what is known to what is unknown. The school then becomes a place of one-way communication, from teacher to pupil, since the class has no common language in which to communicate. Using a foreign language does intellectual harm to many mother tongues and is a practical hindrance to mobilizing the nation. Among its consequences are greater remoteness of the environment, cultural and intellectual alienation, under-achievement where a child's creative potential is concerned, a high drop-out rate and, hence, illiteracy.

People who talk about the costs, effectiveness and cost-benefit ratio of mother-tongue education rarely take account of the economic aspect of drop-outs, failures or reformatories in the education system of the dominant language. In addition, the vast majority of children are averse to school and these two factors by themselves are sufficient to justify an early education in the mother tongue. The funds employed to maintain order when certain language groups have demonstrated to assert their cultural identity could have been used for mother-tongue education, thus making these demonstrations pointless.

Having rejected social demands as purely political, economists have adopted models for one reason only: their existence can be quantified in money terms. As Klees says, neo-classical economists are above all in disagreement about whether prices in the real world accurately show the relative effectiveness of different programmes. After discussing the pros and cons of various economic models, Klees concludes that a technical and rational approach

dominates in rich and poor countries alike, taking the form of scientific management in the 1930s and cost-benefit analysis today.

These ideas are no longer held today since decisions are in fact taken so as to reflect the negotiating power of the various groups that bear the cost of, and benefit from, the political decisions or what is being planned. Only by putting cost-benefit to one side and opting for dialogue, participation and negotiation will it be possible to extricate oneself from the social trap created by the cost-benefit debate.

There is in any event a fundamental difference in approach to education between the developing and developed countries, which makes it inappropriate to use a single cost-benefit scale. The developing countries place much more emphasis on improving teaching conditions whereas the developed countries stress success and raising the standard of knowledge. This is because of planning based on human resources in the developing countries and the change-over, in the developed countries, to a system based on knowledge and intelligence. The cost-benefit scale used in one group of countries cannot serve as a measure in the other, particularly as there is no universal standard response to the many and varied problems confronting the different countries.

If politicians were to decide that all languages are human resources and that their development is part of national development, their cost-benefit would no longer be the same as when one or other of the languages is of national importance. Once a political decision has been taken in favour of the resources of language, one can make sure of the cost-benefit by recruiting responsible teachers, training them, making best use of human and physical resources, increasing teaching time and the size of classes, encouraging the use of diversified multimedia methods and programmes at different levels, bringing curricula up to date, producing texts and educational materials locally and by taking other, similar steps.

Through better co-ordination of the primary and higher education sectors, a greater contribution could be made to research, training and the production of materials. To make sure of the cost-benefit, private financing will be needed from industrial groups anxious that workers and their children should be literate and receive basic education. In every case, however, basic education must be seen as a public service and, in planning, priority must be given to actions by the State to ensure equal treatment for the most disadvantaged.

Summary two: Costs and benefits of bilingual education in Guatemala: a partial analysis

This summary is from a working paper published by the World Bank on a cost-analysis of bilingual education **B** as a human capital investment - designed for the poor and underprivileged indigenous people in Guatemala. About 25 languages are spoken in Guatemala, but Spanish is the dominant one. Knowing Spanish is the key for access to jobs, to further schooling and to higher income levels. To facilitate the learning of Spanish the 'compensatory bilingual education' programme was devised, which enabled children to use their mother tongue in primary school as a medium for acquiring the dominant language, i.e. Spanish.

Socio-economic indicators of earning for indigenous and non-indigenous workers, such as basic ability, quality of education and prior work experience, were taken into consideration. The assumption is that the better students perform in bilingual schools, the more chance they will have to receive good schooling, which in turn leads to a higher earning. Bilingual education is considered as an important form of human capital building. By investing time and financial resources, it is argued, a person can be enabled to develop skills that are productive in the labour market.

In Guatemala, 60% of the indigenous and 24% of the non-indigenous people are illiterate, and the highest level achieved by the indigenous people is primary school. Among the indigenous people males attain a higher educational average than females; but half of the males and three-quarters of the females have no education of the males and three-quarters of the females have no education. The illiteracy rate for both indigenous and non-indigenous people in the rural areas is higher than in the urban areas.

Similarly, illiteracy among young people is higher among the indigenous than among the non-indigenous peoples. In addition to the above indicators, the education system in Guatemala is characterized by high rate of failure at all grade levels and a high rate of repetition. This is particularly marked in the rural areas, where indigenous children are more likely to be overaged in primary school enrolments.

To improve the quality of education for indigenous people, the government of Guatemala and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) began to develop a national curriculum for pre-primary school up to the 4th grade in four of the Mayan languages, which led to the launching of a national bilingual education programmed (PRONEBI). The PRONEBI schools were divided into 'complete' and 'partial'. Teachers were trained and bilingual textbooks were prepared for the first and second grade pupils, and the best results were achieved by students in the 'complete' schools. As can be seen in the statistics provided in Tables 6 and 7, this bilingual education project has resulted in higher attendance and promotion and lower repetition and dropout rates compared to the monolingual control group schools. The evaluation of the bilingual education project showed that the performance of both boys and girls in PRONEBI schools has improved over time. Parents supported the bilingual education project and their attitudes to their children's academic performance in PRONEBI school subjects and in Spanish were positive. The enrolment of rural children in the PRONEBI schools increased considerably over time and the 'partial' schools were incorporated into the 'complete' curriculum system.

The cost-benefit analysis, based on repetition and dropout rates in PRONEBI and traditional schools in Guatemala, shows that there is a growing shift to bilingual education and a strong expansion of PRONEBI schools in the rural communities, which will require more secondary schools and more resources. It is argued that an improvement in the quality of education, generating a higher promotion rate, would help students to complete the primary education without dropout and would substantially increase total educational levels at lower costs.

The cost benefit analysis for the PRONEBI and traditional schools shows a considerable saving of over 31 million quetzales (US\$5 million), providing primary education for about 100,000 students annually. The estimates also show that dropouts would have decreased by 3,927 had the traditional school students received a PRONEBI bilingual education for one year. It is interesting to note that in traditional schools dropouts have realized that they face the prospect of lower earnings in the labour market. The authors suggested a further and more in-depth cost-benefit analysis for the whole country.

They also pointed out the need for a comparative study involving more countries on indigenous and non-indigenous graduates from both bilingual and traditional schools in order to investigate the long-term effects to bilingual education and its impact on earnings.

Table 6: Preliminary data on the illiteracy rate in Guatemala

Groups	Illiteracy rate	Total population
Indigenous people	60%	ca. 9 000 000
	24%	
Male	½ of the IP	
Female	¾ of the IP	

(IP = Indigenous Population)

Table 7: Comparison of data between PRONEBI and traditional schools

	PRONEBI Schools	Traditional Schools
No. of students	96 194*	653 413
No. of drop-outs	2 502	20 945
No. of repeaters	24 049	307104
Repetition rates	25%	47%
Cost of repetition	5 916 054	71 464 440 (quetzales)
Cost of savings	?	31 279 540 (quetzales)

NB: PRONEBI schools provide lessons both in mother tongue and bilingual education for all subjects, whereas traditional schools teach in Spanish. Student numbers are based on 1991 figures.

1 quetzales = US\$ 5.6

* This number shows only indigenous children enrolled in PRONEBI schools out of the 653, 413 rural children in the primary school age category (5-14 years).

For the coexistence of languages in education

If a strict definition were to be applied, there would be virtually no purely monolingual countries, given the internal language and cultural differences characteristic of most countries in the world. Language plans are drawn up and carried out on the basis of the languages actually present, the relationships between them, the functions they fulfil, the additional functions they are required to take on and the educational plans of the society in question. Models for the integration of mother tongues into education systems are influenced by political, economic, cultural and other factors, by the status of the different languages and by the use that is made of them in multilingual communities.

In multilingual countries, there are several situations that may be encountered. In one situation the vast majority of the population uses one single language but there are linguistic minorities who speak different languages, in which case one language advances and manages to impose itself as the sole language, forcing the others to disappear or restricting their use. This is the situation found in Europe, North America and Latin America. In another scenario, the country is populated by a varying number of ethnic groups who speak different languages. In that case, several possibilities arise: (a) a large number of languages, representing almost the whole of the population, are used in comparable proportions (e.g. the former Soviet Union, the

former Yugoslavia, Switzerland and China); (b) one national language has become the official language, the others being used only locally (Swahili, Thai and Malay Indonesian); or (c) an international language has the status of official language, national languages being used in only a limited way (as in the majority of countries in West and Central Africa) (Bijeljac-Babic, 1983, pp. 13-4).

The use of several languages in education in a multilingual setting is permitted, accepted and justified by several factors ranging from enthusiasm to tolerance based on the absence of trouble. Some people see an advantage in this; others, a situation of no particular significance for the learner or what is learned. In either case, choices have to be made and a context created that will optimize those choices, in which a decisive role is played by the nature of the multilingual ecology and the dynamics that are at work.

Taken overall, two typical situations occur. On the one hand, one finds endoglossia, in which indigenous languages form a broadly stable configuration despite the living and changing nature of the relationships between the languages present. On the other hand, one may find exoglossia. Endoglossia appears to raise considerable problems on account of the claims to be authentic and home-based made by the different groups and on account of the fear, justified or not, that partisan solutions will be arrived at that will possibly exacerbate latent conflicts. In Nigeria, for instance, fifty or so Igbo dialects claim to be authentic, and express their ambition and wish to become the standard dialect, thus complicating the process of standardization. The same situation exists, although on a smaller scale, in Mali where there are rivalries in the relationship between dominant dialect forms of Bamana, Dogon, Soninke and Syenara-Mamara.

Exoglossia is rightly considered as the ideal way out of the impasse created by having to choose between indigenous languages that are coloured by ethnocultural considerations and consequently embody the interests of the various groups of speakers. For those who support this solution, the colonial languages, on account of recent shared history, have acquired residence rights, the right of naturalization and the right to claim and obtain a place in the linguistic heritage. To refuse them these rights is thus to display intolerance, not to say racism or tribalism. Undeniably, this is a fair argument which deserves consideration so that they can be allocated a just place in the patterns of language use being worked out. The problem is not whether their role should be acknowledged or whether they should be allotted a place in the linguistic heritage but how to challenge their exclusive and undivided status as national or official language, since none of the colonial languages has managed to any appreciable extent to take the place of the mother tongues.

First discussion: national language versus national language

Should one single language or a limited number of national languages be chosen from the repertoire of indigenous languages? Which one or ones? What criteria are to be applied? The equation is not impossible to solve, and turning to a foreign language is just to run away from the problem and to adopt a solution that looks easy but in reality accentuates the alienation of the affected groups and delays still more the furtherance of local languages and cultures. We should look for a moment at the languages that have been chosen in endoglossic situations. There are not many examples to be found in the world. The former Yugoslavia and the former USSR used to be cited as models of ethnic and linguistic tolerance and institutional multilingualism. The reality that smouldered behind this lie finally smashed these mosaics to pieces. Simmering and stifled conflict often turns to atrocity; specific ethnic characteristics and particularisms supplant the building of the nation. Nevertheless, until quite recently, Yugoslavia in particular was held up as a successful model of tolerance of diversity and of advanced linguistic integration. In India, one finds a regulated tolerance, the well-known 3+1 pattern of choice, evolutive and changing in accordance with the

linguistic victories of the minorities, which lead to a rearrangement of the language map to reflect institutional choices. The same fluidity can be found in Nigeria, with the rearrangement of the map of the federal states leading to the granting to an increasing number of languages of the status of state language, which by the same token confers on them a hegemonic power. Despite their tolerance of differences, India and Nigeria are both, on account of their colonial past, characterized by a dominant exoglossia in their language policies.

Indonesia and the United Republic of Tanzania are examples of dense multilingualism where a solution to their language problems has been sought in the imposition of State monolingualism. Both countries are seen as accidents, or rather as fortunate examples that owe their existence to historical circumstances and exceptional policies. Leaving specific aspects aside, the political act which gave birth to this new linguistic reality arouses undeniable interest.¹⁸ Countries with more favourable linguistic contexts (Burundi, Madagascar, Rwanda and Somalia) did not in fact go so far along the path of language management. There is a temptation to think that this attitude depends on the degree of complexity of the ambient multilingualism and on the intrinsic value of each of its components. To put it briefly, a moderate form of multilingualism that brings four or five languages with great literary and cultural traditions in contact with each other, as in Switzerland, cannot be compared with the same kind of multilingualism but the constituent parts of which are minority languages, as in France (Occitan, Breton, Corsican, Alsatian), or languages without a written tradition, like the five main languages in Niger.

A critical look at State monolingualism in a multilingual context reveals disturbing facts that only reasons of State make it possible to hush up, or, rather, to praise as viable or even advantageous. According to Chachage, very little research has been undertaken into language behaviour and stylistic use in order to provide a foundation and justification for the many claims made about the domination of Swahili in the United Republic of Tanzania. Generalizations about Swahili as a *lingua franca* take no account of the fact that language behaviour in the coastal areas and urban centres (30 per cent of the population) is not necessarily the same as in the hinterland, in rural and in semi-urban areas. A survey carried out in 1974 among university and secondary school students showed that 60 per cent of them used their mother tongues at home, 38 per cent combined them with Swahili and only 21 per cent used Swahili at home (Brauer, Kapinga and Legele, 1978, p. 68, cited in Chachage, 1992, p. 6). In a survey on the media conducted by Chachage in 1988 for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), it emerged that only 4 per cent of those interviewed had Swahili as their mother tongue, 84 per cent had another mother tongue and the remainder were uncertain. Some 46 per cent of people speak Swahili at home, chiefly in urban centres. In rural areas, almost all people use their mother tongues (Chachage, 1992, p. 6).

Multilingual developing countries with no colonial past are few in number and their selection practices are thus insufficient to provide any contribution to the debate. Most of what is written on this topic focuses on examples of exoglossia because in those cases the arguments are vastly exaggerated and over-simplified, and are therefore easy to use in illustrating the issue of choice in a multilingual situation. Why, then, could not one or more national languages be used in the formal education system? The question remains open for lack of illustrative facts, but the facts and arguments that apply to international languages are equally valid for situations of endoglossia.

¹⁸ This interest is not only in the forced introduction of the national/official language but also in the implications for the communities and ethnic and language groups who are far removed from the norm or the language. Unfortunately, enthusiasm for the solution seems to push into the background the effects of this approach on peripheral groups. In any event, the silence that reigns on this aspect of the question is significant.

Second discussion: national language(s) versus international languages

This discussion is the one that occurs most frequently and is abundantly dealt with in the literature. The exoglossic situations already mentioned are brought about by the presence of an international language, usually that of the former colonial power, on the linguistic scene. These contexts are enough to transform languages and language groups into majority and minority ones, and to cause them to be treated as such in their own societies. The considerations on which choices are based and the solutions advocated follow the same pattern, that of integration, not into the local stream of things but into another stream, assumed to be broader and more useful because it is dominant on a world scale. It is therefore an opportunity and a blessing for these countries to have been subject to the domination of a language with international influence and advantage must be taken of this or, at the very worst, a brave face must be put on the situation. Clearly, this is not an opinion shared by everyone. The other point of view is forcefully put by Wolff, who describes the colonial legacy of Niger in these words:

As a former French colony, Niger shares with a number of other African countries one particular blessing or burden - depending on how one looks at this double-edged sword - the use of French as the official language, i.e., *la francophonie*. It may be a blessing in terms of international relations, but it is a heavy burden in terms of internal communication. For basic education it is a disaster (Wolff, chap. 16).

The advantages of this situation are undeniable and any serious language policy ought to take advantage of it. The solutions currently being applied are intended to lead to integration through international languages but they are actually leading to disintegration in the case of local communities, whose languages are affected by exclusion. It is thus impossible by such courses of action to derive any benefit from this context. A new direction is called for. The arguments against international languages are outlined on pages 30-31 and those in favour of local languages have just been summarized above.

Scheme for integrating mother tongues into education

In multilingual countries, the function of the languages in the education system needs to be clearly defined. The actual examples that we have just discussed show that there are countries where the various languages are on an equal footing. There are also many examples where one or more stages may exist, at the level of which indigenous speakers need to be integrated. To guarantee the cultural and linguistic permanence of indigenous peoples, efforts must be made to give them the opportunity to learn these languages within the framework of both formal and non-formal systems of education.

Languages in education: an educational project

Between the extreme of using all languages **B** which is financially and practically an impossibility **B** and the other extreme of the imposed use of one single language (often a foreign language) **B** which is culturally and politically unacceptable **B** there lies an alternative, which is to take account of the development and vitality of the language situation so as to arrive at a modulated and graduated bi-, pluri- or multilingualism in which emphasis is placed on some languages without, however, disregarding the development of the rest.

Within any national entity, it is always possible to distinguish at least two levels of language, corresponding to an individual's mother tongue and the main (official) language of the State, or standardized language. In some instances, it is possible to find three, four or even five strata that are all languages which it is desirable to know.

However, learning the first language, i.e. the mother tongue or, to be more precise, the linguistic variant that takes its place, remains the decisive stage in an individual’s linguistic development.

The form that this teaching should take naturally depends on the local setting and the functions that one would like (or that one is prepared for) the first language or the link language(s) to assume within the framework of a graduated form of multilingualism.

In a multilingual and multicultural context, education in the mother tongue is often an ideal that is difficult, not to say impossible, to achieve and parents frequently have to think about the advantages that widely spoken languages can offer. This dilemma is often mentioned in connection with the knowledge and skills that the international languages of communication accumulate. Too great an emphasis on local languages can indeed reduce the build-up of an economic and scientific capital. On the other hand, if nothing is made of national languages, they are condemned to play a secondary role in communication or even to slip backwards.

It is obvious that there is no dilemma if one adopts the point of view of educational psychology, which aims for the development of a learner’s emotions and identity, or for the future of a community rather than for the acquisition of a socially or functionally dominant language.

Education in national languages in the primary school is based essentially on the reasons that Poth (1988) sums up as follows:

From the educational point of view	Use of the mother tongue guarantees a child’s emotional and psychomotor development. It alone sets free a child’s expressive potential. It offers the child the opportunity to verbalize all his experience.
From the teaching point of view	Use of a mother tongue already spoken by the child enables efforts to be chiefly concentrated on the learning of content. Use of a foreign language causes effort to be expended first of all on learning the medium of instruction and only then on learning the content. Much more time and energy is required.
From the psychological point of view	The things first learned through the medium of the mother tongue must be followed up in the same language in order to avoid the phenomena of interference and confusion due to too sudden a break between two different forms of expression.
From the social and family point of view	Use of mother tongues at school makes it possible for the family and the community to: continue the educational effort already undertaken in the family setting; and play a part in the child’s education by seeing to it that traditional values are taken into account at school
From the cultural point of view	Mother tongues are the first foundation of the personality of an individual and of the nation. Denying mother tongues is to deny oneself.
From the economic point of view	Mother tongues bring education within the reach of a larger number of children by reducing the number of those who have to repeat classes, which is expensive, and by reducing failure at school resulting from having to learn a non-mother tongue with difficulty at an early age

Where literacy work with adults is concerned, the solution to the problem of choice varies from country to country. Some countries, such as Indonesia, Thailand or Kenya, have adopted literacy through monolingual education. Other countries, such as Burkina Faso, Guinea or Mali, have deliberately opted for multilingual literacy. The United Republic of Tanzania began with literacy work in five languages but ended up by imposing Swahili as the only language. Ethiopia, on the other hand, went from a single imposed language to a system with five languages, subsequently extended to the country’s fifteen major languages. As already mentioned, Ethiopia has been looking for alternatives since the change of regime in 1991. In Latin America, Spanish is acknowledged almost everywhere as the language of education, even in some countries where there

is quite a large Indian population. In Peru, for example, Quechua and Aymara have obtained the status of co-official languages alongside Spanish, but their use is subject to quite specific restrictions.

A few examples of bilingualism

The mother tongue can be the medium of education at all levels of the education system. It may have an exclusive status within the system, but one also finds examples of education in two languages.

The mother tongue may have a shared status in the education system. It is then the medium of instruction up to a certain level of schooling and is then replaced by another language. Situations are found in which the mother tongue is used in the teaching of certain subjects, the rest being taught in a non-mother tongue.

The mother tongue is sometimes taught as a subject, but not used as the medium of instruction. The aim of a partial education in the mother tongue is often to make the adult population literate.

The mother tongue may be excluded completely from the education system. In such circumstances, however, there are examples of experimental education in the mother tongue undertaken by the government, or of private action to organize at least partial education in the mother tongue.

In the case of African-European bilingualism, Maurice Houis, in the table below, gives eight alternative solutions among which a choice has to be made regarding the languages' functions as the medium of educational communication and their use as a vehicle for putting across the content of education

This table can be adapted to local bilingualism and to link languages in the case of multilingualism.

Six possible solutions and two cases

	Solution 1	Solution 2	Solution 3	Solution 4	Solution 5	Solution 6	Solution 7	Solution 8
	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F	Lg Lg 1A 2F
Language giving access to writing as a means of communication	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Language as a subject	X X	X X	X X	X X	X X	X X	X	X
Language as the medium of instruction	X	X	X X	X	X	X X	X	X

Source: Maurice Houis, The Problem of Choice of Languages in Africa, *Prospects*, Quarterly Bulletin of Education, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1976. Solutions 1-6: Fig. 1, Six possible solutions, p. 397; solutions 7-8: Fig 2, Two possible cases, p. 398.

Lg. 1A = first language, African - Lg.; Lg. 2F = second language, French

Bamgbose has also gone into the question and has drawn up a list of possible choices. There are, he says, in theory twenty-seven possible combinations for arranging languages that come into contact in exoglossic multilingual contexts, depending on the level of education and the function of the language or languages concerned. With the aim of deciding which language(s) to use and for what purpose, and eliminating possibilities resulting from a large number of functions, he arrives at the nine possibilities given in the table below:

	Literacy	Subject	Medium
Mother tongue	x	x	x
Community/national language	x	x	x
Widely spoken language	x	x	x

Fafunwa, in his suggestion for a national *lingua franca* in Nigeria, constructs a constellation gravitating around Hausa and including Yoruba and Ogbo, the other two widely spoken languages, as well as English. The resulting proposal that he makes for the education system is as follows:

	Primary 1-6	Secondary 1-3	Secondary 4-6	Tertiary 1-4
As medium of education	Mother tongue Yoruba Igbo Nupe Kanuri Edo Efik Fulfulde etc.	Hausa	Hausa	Hausa
As a subject	Hausa English	Mother tongue and English	One Nigerian language and English	One Nigerian language and English

Inclusion in education is a barometer of the progress being made by a language at the same time as being the most suitable way for languages to achieve emancipation. It is nevertheless true that so long as indigenous languages are confined to limited roles and occupy a minimal place in education, progress towards the development of an original indigenous identity and an educational ideology that conforms and is adaptable to multilingual contexts will be hampered. The development of these languages and their transformation into national languages will continue to be affected by the limited extent of their inclusion in education and the insignificant responsibilities and functions that they have there. So long as these languages remain confined to primary education and are not put in a position where they can face the challenges of secondary and higher education, with their large number of subjects and their frenzied quest for sophistication, their ability to cope with technical matters will not become a reality and all other measures will then remain only half measures.

References

- Adegbija, E. 1994. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- Baker, C. 1988. op. cit. Chap. 4.
- Bamgbose, A. 1991. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Ben-Zeev, S. 1972. *The influence of Bilingualism on Cognitive Development and Cognitive Strategy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Chicago. Commission on Human Development, University of Chicago.
- Bijeljac-Babic, R. 1983. *Les langues maternelles et nationales dans les politiques d'alphabétisation*. Paris, UNESCO. (Doc. ED-83/WC).
- Brachetto, R. 1988. Une bouffée d'air de Romandie. Dialecte diviseur. In: *Baseler Zeitung*, 14 May.
- Brauer, S., Kapinga, C. and Legele, K. 1978. Kiswahili and Local Languages in Tanzania: A Sociolinguistic Study. In: *Kiswahili*, Vol. 48, N° 2. Cited by Chachage 1992. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- Bullock, A. 1975. *A Language for Life*. Report of the Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science under the Chairmanship of Sir Alan Bullock. Department of Education and Science, London. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Calvet, L.J. 1987. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Chachage, C.S.L. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 5
- Croizier, C. 1991. *Politique linguistique et développement : approches francophone et anglophone: le cas du Bénin et du Nigeria*. Master's thesis in sociolinguistics. Université des Sciences Humaines, Strasbourg.
- Cummins, J. 1976. *The influence of Bilingualism on Cognitive Growth: A Synthesis of Research Findings and Explanatory Hypotheses*. Working papers on bilingualism, N° 9, pp. 1-43.
- Davies, A. 1986. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- Dirven, R. 1991. *Language, Cultural Community and Nation in Africa*. Duisburg, Linguistic Agency, University of Duisburg.
- Dunton, C. 1993. Africa's Language Problem. In: *West Africa*. 22-28 March. N° 3939.
- Edwards, J. and Redfern, V. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Engle, P.L. 1975. The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education. In: *Applied Linguistics: Bilingual Education Series 3*. Arlington, Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Fafunwa, A.B. 1975. Education in the Mother Tongue: A Nigerian Experiment - The Six-Year (Yoruba Medium) Primary Education Project at the University of Ife, Nigeria. In: *West African Journal of Education*, Vol. 19, N° 2.
- Fishman, J.A. 1977. The Social Science Perspective. In: *Bilingual Education Current Perspectives*. Arlington, Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Fishman, J.A. 1991. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Foster, M. 1982. Indigenous Languages in Canada. In: *Language and Society*, N° 7, pp. 20-24. Cited by Edwards, J. and Redfern, V. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.

- Gudschinsky, S.C. 1977. Techniques for functional Literacy in Indigenous Languages and the National Language. In: Gorman, T.P., *Language and Literacy: Current Issues and Research*. Teheran. International Institute for Adult Literacy Methods.
- Hawkes, N. 1981. Cited in Treffgarde, C. The World Bank on Language and Education: A Lot More Could be Done. In: *Comparative Education*, Vol. 17, N° 2.
- Houis, M. 1976. The Problem of Choice of Languages in Africa. *Prospects, Quarterly Review of Education*, Vol.6, No. 3, pp. 393-405
- Kalantzis, M., Cope, B., Slade, D. 1989. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Kelman, H.C. 1971. Language as an Aid and Barrier to Involvement in the National System. In: Rubin, J. and Jernudd, B. (eds.). 1971. *Can Language be Planned?* Honolulu. University of Hawaii Press.
- Khubschandani, 1983. In: C. Kennedy (ed.). *Language Planning and Language Education*. London. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.
- Kulick, E. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- Lahire, B. 1992. Discours sur l'illettrisme et cultures écrites. In: Besse, J-M., de Gaulmyn, M.M., Ginet, D. and Lahire, B. (eds.). *L'illettrisme en questions*. Les cahiers du PsyEF N° 2. Lyon. PsyEF-Université de Lumière-Lyon 2.
- Lambert, W. 1974. Culture and Language Factors in Learning and Education. In: F.E. Eckman (ed.). *Current Themes in Linguistics. Bilingualism. Experimental Linguistics and Language Typologies*. New York. Wiley.
- Mackey, W.F. 1984. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- Maja-Pearce, A. 1993. In: *West Africa*, N° 3939, 22-28 March.
- Modiano, N. 1973. *Indian Education in the Chiapas Highlands*. New York. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Ouane, A. 1991. L'harmonisation des langues maliennes: entre l'intégration nationale et régionale. In: Ouane, A. and Sutton, P. (eds.). *International Review of Education (IRE)*, Vol. 37, N° 1. Special Number. Language Policy and Education.
- Paulston, C.B. 1975. *Ethnic Relations and Bilingual Education: Accounting for Contradictory Data*. Working Papers on Bilingualism, N° 6. Bilingual Education Projects. Toronto, Ontario. Institute for Studies in Education.
- Paulston, C.B. 1992. Linguistic Minorities and Language Policies: Four Case Studies. In: Fase, W., Jaspaert, K., and Kroon, S., (eds.). *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages*. Amsterdam., Philadelphia. John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- Poth, J. 1988. op. cit. Chap. 1.
- Rubin, J. 1983. Bilingual Education and Language Planning. In: Chris Kennedy (ed.). *Language Planning and Language Education*. London. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.
- Saxer, U. 1989. Kommunikationsprobleme in der mehrsprachigen Schweiz. In: Seminar: *Langues régionales et communications de masse*. 5-10 May 1988. Final report. Berne. Swiss National Commission for UNESCO.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. 1990. *Language, Literacy and Minorities*. London. Minority Right Group Report.

- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. and Toukoma, P. 1976. *Teaching Migrant Children's Mother Tongue and Learning the Language of the Host Country in the Context of the Socio-Cultural Situation of the Migrant Family*. Helsinki. Finnish National Commission for UNESCO.
- Smolicz, J. 1991. Language Core Values in a Multilingual Setting: An Australian Experience. In: *International Review of Education*, Vol. 37, No. 1.
- Sutton, P.J. 1991. op. cit. Chap. 5.
- UNESCO, 1953. *The Use of Vernacular Languages*. Paris, UNESCO.
- Vinogradov, V.A., Koval, A.I. and Porkhomovsky. 1984. *Sotsiolingvisticskaja tipologija. Zapadnaja Afrika*. Moscow. Nauka.
- Williams, G. 1992. op. cit. Chap. 1.

PART TWO

CASE STUDIES

7. THE NECESSITY OF INTRODUCING MOTHER TONGUES IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Wolfgang Küper

In spite of globalization and other unifying forces in the world of today there is still a very broad variety of languages and cultures. According to the Delors Report one of the problems of the future is «the multiplicity of languages, an expression of humanity's cultural diversity. There are an estimated 6,000 languages in the world, of which a dozen are spoken by over 100 million people.»¹

Another important UNESCO Report, namely that of the World Commission on Culture and Development (presided by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar), calculates that «between five and twenty thousand [languages] are spoken today, each of them reflecting a unique view of the world, pattern of thought and culture.» But worldwide pressures to assimilate are having a drastic effect on languages;...some experts suggest that perhaps 90 per cent of the languages spoken today will become extinct in the next century.»²

Particularly difficult is the situation in Africa, which is estimated to have between 1,250 and 2,100 languages (depending on where one draws the line between a language and a dialect).³ However, there are large variations in the distribution of languages between different countries. There are countries where there is a dominant language spoken by up to a third of the national population and a vast number of other languages, and there are many countries in which the dominant language is spoken by at least 90 per cent of the national population.⁴ Annexes I and II illustrate this situation.

Language is very much related to culture and development, as has been emphasized by the Pérez de Cuéllar report. Some of the basic ideas of the report are reproduced or paraphrased below.⁵

Most freedoms refer to the individual. Cultural freedom is a collective freedom. It refers to the right of a group of people to follow or adopt a way of life of their choice. Cultural freedom, properly interpreted, is a guarantee of freedom as a whole. It protects not only the collectivity but also the rights of every individual within it. Cultural freedom, by protecting alternative ways of living, encourages creativity, experimentation and diversity, the very essentials of human development. Freedom is central

¹ Jacques Delors et al., *Learning: The Treasure within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century*, Paris UNESCO Publishing 1996, p. 45.

² Javier Perez de Cuéllar et al, *Our Creative Diversity. Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development*, Paris UNESCO Publishing 1996, p. 179.

³ M. Yao Ydo, *Langue d'enseignement: Les leçons retenues par l'UNESCO dans son expérience avec ses Etats Membres*, séminaire Dar es Salaam (Banque Mondiale), avril 1998, p.6.

⁴ Pérez de Cuéllar, op.cit., p. 180.

⁵ Ibid.

to culture, and in particular the freedom to decide what we have reason to value, and what lives we have reason to seek.

Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. Culture is the fountain of our progress and creativity. Cultural freedom leaves us free to meet one of the most basic needs, the need to define our own basic needs. This need is now threatened by both global pressures and global neglect.

◀One of the most sensitive issues is that of language, for a people's language is perhaps its most fundamental cultural attribute. Indeed the very nature of language is emblematic of the whole pluralist premise - every single language spoken in the world represents a unique way of viewing human experience and the world itself. Language policy, however, like other policies, still is used as an instrument of domination, fragmentation and assimilation. It is hardly surprising that claims of language are among the first rights that minorities have asserted; such claims continue to pose problems ranging from the official and legal status of minority languages, language teaching and use in schools and other institutions, as well as in the mass media.' (p. 59).

◀In a world in which, as has been remarked, 10,000 distinct societies live in roughly 200 states, the question of how to accommodate minorities is not of academic interest only but is a central challenge to any human politics.' (p. 44).

According to James Paul Gee, literacy has to be seen as a set of discourse practices, that is as ways of using language to make sense of the world both in speech and in writing. These discourse practices are tied to the world views (beliefs and values) of particular social or cultural groups. They are integrally connected with the identity or sense of self of the people who practise them. A foreign language cannot be a neutral vehicle in this regard, nor can it be a vehicle of a child's culture.⁶

Komarek, in his study *Mother Tongue Education in sub-Saharan Countries*, describes the relation between language, modernization, culture and knowledge production. Language plays an important role in the introduction of new knowledge and cultural change at a societal level. This is quite obvious in industrialized societies where a more popular language level is often used in order to guarantee wider diffusion of new concepts and research findings. The situation is far more complicated in societies where the everyday language is not the same as the language of instruction and mass media. Scientific concepts are not developed and even not explained in African languages, which are mostly not used for formal schooling and science. Such concepts are superficially and badly learned in foreign languages **B** and then only by a very small minority of the population. Consequently, they do not penetrate the everyday life of people.⁷

It is important to underline that a civil society needs communication, both in oral and written form, on a whole range of social, economic and political issues. There is also need for a dialogue between locally produced knowledge and knowledge from other contexts, as there is much local knowledge that is relevant for production, environment of culture. However, excluded from formal education and de facto devalued by the school, it cannot be discussed in connection with other types of knowledge. This kind of dialogue between different types of knowledge is only possible if people are not marginalised by

⁶ John Hutchison, *Approaching the Question of Language Instruction in African education*, World Bank Language of Instruction Seminar, Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, 20-22 April 1998, pp. 3, 4.

⁷ Kurt Komarek, *Mother Tongue Education in sub-Saharan Countries, Conceptual and Strategic Considerations*, Eschborn, GTZ, 1997, pp. 19 et seq.

lack of education or excluded by the non-use of their language or rejection of their experience and knowledge. Language and literacy are two crucial elements here. In Africa, 90 per cent of the population are able to decode at most 10 per cent of information published. African information systems are not real, they are mostly virtual.⁸

Evidence from research

The Pérez de Cuéllar Report draws the following conclusion on the use of mother tongue in education:

Imparting elementary education in the mother tongue of encysted linguistic minorities is the only way of not just bringing children to school but, more importantly, keeping them there. There are difficulties in the way of making this possible, especially if the minority language has no script. But a multi-pronged approach is then necessary to devise suitable teaching aids and to find trained teachers. Such an approach is necessary if we wish to encourage otherwise vanishing or dying minority languages in many regions of Asia and elsewhere. Language is an essential ingredient of culture. The French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre called languages "our antennae, our spectacles".⁹

There is ample evidence from research in industrialized and developing countries that this conclusion is not only right but can be enlarged considerably.

In several OECD-countries (such as Canada, the United States, Finland and Germany), abundant research has been done on children's achievement at school in bilingual situations. The general conclusion is that children from middle class backgrounds whose language of instruction from the very beginning is a foreign language, do not suffer from any drawbacks in comparison to their comrades in monolingual classrooms. When it comes to children from migrant families or linguistic minorities from lower social strata, where generally the kind of linguistic and cognitive competence required by school is not practised and valued, learning in a language they do not speak at home becomes very difficult, because they cannot establish a link between their home language and linguistic competence and their school language.¹⁰

The American social anthropologist and linguist John Hutchison, from Boston University, has brought together some research results on the question of language instruction in bilingual or multilingual situations¹¹ which will be summarized in the following points:

- (1) The results from North American research on the advantages and benefits of proper bilingual education are extremely convincing. Students who are bilingual have considerable competitive advantage over their monolingual counterparts. Therefore multilingualism should not be seen as an obstacle to development but as a great and not yet exploited resource.

⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

⁹ Pérez de Cuéllar, op. cit., p. 182.

¹⁰ Ingrid Jung, *Towards Literate Societies: Publishing in Local Languages*. Paper to the World Bank Publishing Industry Seminar, September 9-10, 1997.

¹¹ Hutchison, op.cit., various citations.

- (2) The use of the mother tongue during primary education guarantees optimal transmission of the child's social and cultural values, thereby giving the child a sense of self-identity and self-fulfilment, creating a link between the child, the parents, the community, the school and the local environment. This creates the basis for transfer to a foreign language medium later in the cycle.

For Franco-American children who had been denied the chance to learn in French in the State of Maine, the curriculum was changed so that one-third of it was carried out in French. After a five-year study, the children in the partially French classes clearly outperformed those in the control classes in various aspects of English language skills and in academic content, such as mathematics, learned partly in French. Furthermore another aspect of this transformation was the change in the self-image of the French-trained youngsters, who began to feel a deep pride in being French as well as American.

- (3) In order to benefit optimally from bilingual education there must be strong links between a child's home socialization and identity, and those established at school. School must complement the home. The value and importance of academic bilingualism as a resource has to be accepted by society, schools, families and students. Intergenerational literacy programmes or literacy classes for parents could be beneficial in this respect. Parent-teacher co-operative projects allow teachers to learn what and how their students learn at home.
- (4) According to the Massachusetts Reading Association the cognitive advantages of mother tongue instructions are the following:

Children who are bilingual and bi-literate demonstrate enhanced cognitive abilities in some areas. Knowing how to read and write in the first language supports the development of reading and writing in the second language (English). When students are allowed to use their first language, performance in reading and writing in the second language (English) is enhanced, particularly in the development of concept knowledge and critical thinking.

Authentic situations facilitate writing development in both first and second languages. Authentic situations are defined as those that offer students opportunities to use writing in ways that are meaningful and purposeful for them.

- (5) Competence in L1 and L2 (first and second language) are mutually beneficial, enhancing one another. However, to optimize the combination, there are pre-conditions.

\$ The use of the second language should begin orally.

\$ If the second language is not understood well, its introduction should not be too early.

\$ The use of the first language to teach certain subjects must continue throughout the system.

If children are exposed too early to a language they do not understand, this will prevent the development of competencies in reading and writing in both languages. On the other hand, high levels of proficiency in the two languages will facilitate the transfer of content across languages from the first to the second language. However, it takes about two years to master the basic communicative proficiency in a second language and five to seven years to develop adequate academic language proficiency in a second language.

A bilingual curriculum takes advantage of both languages to teach language literacy and content areas. The message is undeniable that success in the second language depends on the depth of

knowledge of the first language. The introduction of a foreign language will thus be most successfully accompanied in the curriculum by continuous use of the native language in various content areas. Therefore bilingual competence does not entail two separate competencies but rather an independent cross-language competence, suggesting a common storehouse of knowledge.

- (6) Studies comparing the performance of bilingual and monolingual children of a variety of meta-linguistic tasks generally reveal an advantage for bilinguals who have an advanced awareness of the arbitrary relationship between words and meanings, and of the analysable relationships between structures and meanings. This means higher academic proficiency versus lower simple communicative proficiency, and higher de-contextualized knowledge versus only knowledge related to contexts.
- (7) Research focussed on Hispanic-American students compared to middle-class white monolingual English-speaking American students found, that the Spanish-English bilinguals generated hypotheses of a much higher quality and complexity than did the monolinguals. This problem-solving quality revealed an important link between problem-solving capacity and linguistic skills.
- (8) It should be added that there is a need for practice in reading both in the maternal and the foreign language in order to build vocabulary and other knowledge. Schools should therefore create a literate environment in which children have access to a variety of reading and writing materials. There should be a range of opportunities for sustained reading practice in a variety of situations: alone, in a choir, with a partner, etc.

In Latin America, programmes for the education of indigenous people using the local language as a medium of instruction have proved to be more successful than the conventional system where Spanish is the language of instruction. The Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) has done research on the effects of this kind of bilingual education in Peru and Ecuador. In Ecuador the Catholic University of Quito showed that in all subjects and practically all classes project schools got better results on average than schools outside the project. The same results were obtained by a study of achievement of students in bilingual schools in Peru.¹²

A year after the introduction of textbooks and teaching manuals for elementary reading and writing classes in the mother tongue, Malagasy, at a number of experimental schools in Madagascar, the TEFBOKY project carried out a comparative test in which first graders from the twenty project schools and their counterparts from twenty regular schools participated. The immediate superiority of the project school students, with a 15 per cent lead, is significant. Repetition of the comparison in the following three years confirmed this result.¹³

In Guatemala the results of an evaluation of the National Bilingual Education Programme, serving approximately one-third of the indigenous primary school students, show that in a programme inputs of teacher training and instructional materials have a significant effect on student achievement and a slight positive effect on promotion, repetition and drop-out rates. The superior performance of boys over girls and a teacher-centred approach to instructional delivery suggested, however, that improvements should

¹² Rockwell et al., *Educación Bilingüe y Realidad Escolar: Un Estudio en Escuelas Primarias Andinas*. Lima, 1989.

¹³ Komarek, op.cit., p. 27.

be made before expansion of the programme.¹⁴ Results of the Criterion Referenced Tests, carried out by USAID in Ghana, indicate that at least 95 per cent of the P6 students are not achieving mastery of the basic skills in mathematics and English. An assessment of the recent Senior Secondary School Examination came to the conclusion that 95 per cent of the candidates who sat for the examination could not qualify for the university entrance examination. According to many Ghanaian experts the low achievement is **B** among other factors **B** also a consequence of deficiencies in teaching the Ghanaian languages and English.¹⁵

In Malawi, Chichewa is the medium of instruction for years 1 to 4, with English as a taught subject, whereas in Zambia, English is the medium of instruction from year 1, with one of seven local languages as a taught subject. An English language reading test and a local language reading test (Chichewa in Malawi and the almost identical Nyanja in Zambia) were administered to the year 5 learners from six schools in each country. The results indicated no significant difference in English language reading ability. These results are consistent with research on minority groups suggesting that instruction of L1 reading leads to improved results in L1 with no retardation in L2 reading. In both countries, however, reading ability in English is unlikely to be at a level to allow learning through the medium of English for most pupils.¹⁶

This result is also backed up by research results reported by Hutchison where it was shown that students reach the 50th percentile on second language standardized tests after four to seven years, whereas it takes students who were not schooled in their first language seven to ten years.¹⁷

The realities of mother tongue education in Africa and Latin America

In order to have some idea of the use of African languages in non-formal education, UNESCO in 1985 asked countries in Africa what percentage of their populations were literate and in what languages they were literate. Only eight of the fifty-one African states reported the number of African languages that were used in their literacy programmes. Twenty-seven states provided practically no information at all.¹⁸ Other sources of information tell us that only twelve to sixteen African states do have a policy of using African languages in education, in the majority of the cases, however, only up to standard 2 or 3 of the primary school.

Within the scope of its project on the promotion of intercultural multilingual education in Africa, GTZ has prepared a study on "Mother-tongue education in African countries south of the Sahara". This study comes to the conclusion, that in twenty-two out of thirty-nine African countries for which data were

¹⁴ Kjell I. Enge and Ray-Chesterfield, Bilingual Education and Student Performance in Guatemala. *International Journal of Educational Development*, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 291-302, 1996.

¹⁵ J. Klausnitzer, IKO-Consult - U. Metzger, GTZ, Ghanaian-German Technical Cooperation in Basic Education. *Pre-Appraisal Report of the Mission, 17th of September 12th of October 1994*, 1994, p. 60.

¹⁶ Eddie Williams, Reading in Two Languages at Year Five in African Primary Schools, *Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1966.

¹⁷ Hutchinson, op.cit., p. 21.

¹⁸ *World Education Report 1991*, Paris, UNESCO, 1991, p. 50.

available, primary education is still continuing in one of the colonial languages. Only three countries base their primary education for the whole duration on African languages: Ethiopia, Eritrea and the United Republic of Tanzania. In fourteen other countries African languages are used as languages of instruction only in some years of primary education, mainly classes 1-3. And worse, the situation hardly has changed since 1982.¹⁹

Unfortunately, in practically every African country, the most prestigious language is that of the former colonial master (English, French or Portuguese). These languages, also called languages of wider communication, are perceived as languages of international communication. (Annex II presents a table of the distribution of official languages in sub-Saharan Africa).

In view of this situation, it is clear that pedagogically and technically excellent measures and projects cannot in themselves achieve the sustainable educational policy effect they hope. The weakness of previous mother tongue measures is primarily a strategic one. African linguistic policy and mother tongue education are very often determined by political interests of the governing power elite and by the constraints that the systems developed or taken over by them from the colonial past exert on the people. The monopoly of power makes it possible for the governments to hinder initiatives favouring mother tongue education, if not to stop them, as soon as it appears politically opportune.²⁰

Whatever has been said and written about the language situation in Africa, the implicit or explicit result is always the same: African language politics are power politics. The relationship between the exercise of power and language cannot be overlooked. Political power and domination are not exercised in the language of those who are dominated. It is therefore quite normal that a change of political power be accompanied by a change of language.²¹

African linguistic policy is therefore an instrument of power. The crucial development policy aspect thus plays no role here, or at least only a demagogic one.

The influence of power politics on African linguistic policy is most clearly evident in the retention by the power elite of the colonial languages, of which only they are masters, as official languages. In so doing, the elite ensures its exclusive access to information and prevents self-determination and thus sharing of power by others. Incumbent African governments have normally no willingness **B** beyond the strict minimum demanded by domestic politics **B** to support national languages as the official media or instructional languages.

Profound changes in linguistic policy in Africa are not the consequence of real insight but of political power struggles, K. Mateene, responsible for OAU linguistic policy, agrees:

The history of language policies does not show many examples of policy decisions being conditioned and influenced by the results of experiments, as they might have been reported in case studies. Language imposition and replacement of a language by another have been the consequences of conquests and revolutions. Even in peacetime, mental attitudes, ideologies, traditions and other socio-cultural conditions determine linguistic policies, more often than the recommendations of experts.²²

¹⁹ Komarek, op.cit., p. 21 (footnote 47).

²⁰ Komarek, op. cit., p. 30.

²¹ Ibid., p. 31.

²² Komarek, op. cit., p. 31.

Pros and cons of mother tongue education

Within national and international discussions many arguments for and against the introduction of mother tongue education in primary and secondary educational systems are given prominence.²³ Some of those are listed below:

4.2 Pros

- (1) Pedagogically it is necessary to start in school from where the children are. The starting point of learning how to read and write is the language spoken (and understood) by the children.
- (2) In most of the cases, particularly in view of scarce resources, it is impossible to teach the majority of children how to read and write in a language they do not understand.
- (3) Many national and international declarations have outlined the rights of children (and adults) to be taught in their own languages.
- (4) The results of research overwhelmingly support bilingualism or multilingualism. The evidence shows that children who have not yet mastered a language of wider communication can more easily do so on the basis of a good proficiency in their own language. Both languages mutually support each other in cognitive and academic aspects. Bilingualism or multilingualism is no longer an impediment to the development of children but an important resource for it.
- (5) Children who are educated in a foreign language lose their identity and are deprived of the possibility to express themselves in their proper vocabulary and in their own morpho-syntactical structures.
- (6) Education in local languages can contribute very much at the political level to improving relations between the political leaders and the basis of the population.

4.1 Cons

- (1) The use of several 'national languages' in education or generally in the communication systems of those countries is considered to be against national unity.
- (2) The use of national languages hampers international communication and isolates countries that, in the age of globalization, are striving for competitiveness in international affairs.
- (3) 'National languages' are not really able to be developed or modernized sufficiently in higher education and in the general communication system of their countries.
- (4) Using the languages of minorities in education and wider communications gives them a protection which militates against modernization and only prolongs linguistic systems which are condemned to extinction. It also hampers the introduction of languages of wider communication, whether they be African or European.

²³ Ydo, op. cit., pp. 12-15.

- (5) The use of many local languages in education is very costly because of the development costs of materials for learning and teaching, the preparation of teachers, the heavy linguistic development work and the often very small number of pupils in those languages.
- (6) Pupils who do not master a European language (Spanish in Latin America or English and French in Africa) do not get a job, because in business and industry most jobs require knowledge of those languages.

Much can be said in answer to the cons.

One of the strongest answers to the "national unity" argument is the fact that those three African countries which overwhelmingly have one national language are the ones which face most problems in preserving their national unity: Rwanda, Somalia and Burundi.

In the age of desktop publishing (with computers) the development of materials is far less costly than in the past.

As the Pérez de Cuéllar report has so clearly elaborated, the diversity of cultures and languages is not an impediment to development but leads to a richer development of the patrimony of the whole of humanity.

What has to be done in order to promote mother tongue education

First of all, it has to be underlined that there are no general conclusions and recommendations. The situations of bi- and multilingualism are very different from country to country or even from region to region. It is therefore necessary to find adequate solutions for those different situations.

The Delors Commission and the Pérez de Cuéllar reports opened a new dimension to the long-standing international discussion about mother tongue education, particularly the latter. The Delors Report tackles the problem of bilingual and multilingual education in various contexts, but very cautiously. The Pérez de Cuéllar report, however, takes a very clear and fundamental position in that respect. Its most important aspects have already been reported.

Long before the publication of these international reports, there had been many international conferences in Africa and Latin America that stressed the necessity of an adequate mother tongue education. In the case of Africa these conferences date back to 1966, when at Bamako the first international meeting on the question of languages in Africa took place. UNESCO in particular has always backed up the right of every child to learn how to read and write in its own language. The Council of Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity in July 1987 approved the aims, objectives and principles of a 'Language plan of Action for Africa' for the promotion of African languages in replacement of European languages and the encouragement of an increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all levels of education. These principles were clearly been reconfirmed in the Accra Declaration of Ministers of Education of African States at an Interministerial Council Meeting of the Observatory of the Segou Perspective to discuss the problems and the perspectives of the use of African national languages in education (August 1996) and at an Inter-governmental Conference of Ministers on Language Policies in Africa (Harare, 20-21 March 1997).

Similar reflections and confirmations can be found in Latin America, as in the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Education in Kingston, Jamaica of 1996. The Organisation of the Iberoamerican States, the Convenio Andes Bello of Ministers of Education in the Andean States, UNESCO and its regional representation, and UNICEF, are all supporting programmes of bilingual education in the Latin American subcontinent.

All these declarations and activities are very helpful and encouraging for those active in these fields. On the basis of these national and international declarations, donors should unite more often to support the respective programmes. More and more it can be observed that new donors are entering this field, sometimes without benefiting from experiences already gained by those who have been active in the field for some time. Much more coordination of donor activities is called for in this area.

At the country level there is a necessity for clear and precise objectives and a coherent language policy.

Much more has to be done by way of research and investigation. Universities in Africa should play an important role in the development of the African languages and their transformation into a written culture. They should help education systems at primary and secondary level in developing materials and preparing teachers. They should be involved in the design and implementation of adult literacy programmes and communication campaigns in national languages.

National languages, and of course minority languages, too, need room in the book market and the mass media in their societies.

According to the study by Komarek,²⁴ the analysis of the conceptual aspect of previous mother tongue measures leads to the clear conclusion that they should continue to be school-centred. This means that through transfer of sufficient know-how educational authorities are to be enabled to adjust core curriculum components, such as teacher training, and teaching and learning aids, to the requirements of mother tongue education, and to test them in a number of schools. The strategic purpose of this is to demonstrate the superiority of mother tongue education, while obliging the educational authorities to draw the seemingly inevitable development policy conclusions on the national level.

Improving or creating curricular components is one part of the strategy. The second part will be the improvement or creation of conditions for an environment of literacy.

The impact and sustainability of all mother tongue education measures are conditional on the existence of a literate environment and on the provision of a permanent basis of teaching and learning aids to teachers and students. Shifting the responsibility for the permanent provision written materials in the mother tongue, for use in and outside school, from the education authority to the private sector would ensure the sustainability of this supply by, among other things, removing this area from state control.

²⁴ Komarek, op. cit., p.33.

According to Komarek, unimpeded access to adequate written sources is the main argument and justification for mother tongue education. Such access is a prerequisite for innovative action and for all true development.²⁵

²⁵ Ibid., p. 33.

Linguistic diversity: percentage of national population speaking the same language

Dominant language is spoken by at most 35 per cent of the national population

Dominant language is spoken by at least 90 per cent of the national population

Country	Main language in percentage	Number of languages spoken	Country	Main language in percentage	Number of languages spoken
Democratic Republic of the Congo		17.7			212
Cameroon	18.5	269	Japan	99.2	14
United Republic of Tanzania	18.6	127	Bangladesh	99.1	37
Uganda	19	41	Burundi	98.2	3
Nigeria	21.4	413	Yemen AR	98.1	3
South Africa	21.5	32	Egypt	97.8	11
Côte-d'Ivoire	23.2	72	Saudi Arabia	97.0	6
India	25.4	380	Somalia	96.1	7
Liberia	28.6	34	China	93.9	142
Kenya	29.5	59	Tunisia	93.0	11
Chad	29.8	117	Lebanon	92.9	5
Guinea Bissau	32.9	22	Rwanda	92.7	3
Sierra Leone	33.5	23			
Zambia	33.7	37			

Source: Adapted from H. Müller, University of Zürich. *The World Cultural Atlas: Feasibility Study*, 1995/6 reproduced in Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, *Our Creative Diversity, Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development*, Paris UNESCO Publishing, 1996. p. 180.

Distribution of official languages in sub-Saharan Africa

Language	Number of countries where it is the official language
French	19
English	17
Major African language (e.g., Kiswahili, Hausa, Somali)	8
Portuguese	5
Arabic	4
Spanish	1

Source *Languages of Instruction. Policy Implications for Education in Africa*. Working Group on Educational Research and Policy Analysis. Association for the Development of Education in Africa, International Development Research Centre/International Institute of Educational Planning, 1997, p.15.

8. THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN AFRICA WITH REFERENCE TO LANGUAGE CHOICE IN EDUCATION

Mohamed H. Abdulaziz

In the countries of Africa, most of which are multilingual, the issue of language policy with reference to language choice in education is fundamental to any discussion of the role education plays in all facets of development in this continent.

Before the advent of European colonialism, the history of language policy in Africa started with the introduction of Islam in parts of North, West and East Africa, where Muslim communities emerged with basic literacy and higher education in Arabic. But it was during European colonial rule that definite language policies were enunciated for the first time, with far-reaching, consequences for the educational, literacy, linguistic, economic and cultural development of modern African countries. Various, and often divergent, language policies were introduced by the Portuguese, French, Spanish and British colonial powers. There was also the case of South Africa, where the ruling Afrikaaner nationalist party enforced a language policy that was aimed at developing their language as the lingua franca, language of education and culture, and a strong competitor with English.

Each colonial power had its own cultural and political standpoint that gave rise to its particular brand of language policy. There were often conflicting approaches to language policy, because the European missionaries, government officials and settlers had divergent opinions on how to deal with African colonial subjects.

Factors that have influenced language policies include the attitudes of the colonial administration and the African government after independence, the multilingual (or monolingual) nature of each country, the level of development of its languages as vehicles of modern communication and the desire to acquire a modern technological culture.

This paper attempts to review the development of language policies in sub-Saharan African and their influence on language choice in education.

African multilingualism

Africa is the most complex multilingual part of the world in terms of numbers of languages, the size of the communities speaking them, and the area each language covers (Alexander, 1972). The problem of delineating languages and dialects, and the variation of names of languages, make it difficult to estimate the actual numbers of languages in Africa. Ki-Zerbo (1981) attributes the presence of so many languages to the sparseness of the population. He says:

The very vastness of the African continent, with a diluted and therefore itinerant population living in a nature at once generous with fruits and minerals, but cruel with its endemic and epidemic diseases, prevented it from reaching the threshold of demographic concentration which has always been one of the preconditions of major qualitative changes in the social, political and economic spheres.

Before the partition of Africa in the 1880s and the advent of colonialism, there were no hard and fast borders dividing ethnolinguistic groups in Africa. Rather 'national' divisions were based on

settlements of peoples, often shifting and nomadic, although in many cases such divisions were marked by natural geographical features (Abdulaziz, 1991). Despite the complex nature of this multilingualism, a continuum of communication networks existed through social, economic and military contacts. This facilitated communication and developed individuals with multilingual abilities.

The scramble for Africa and its eventual arbitrary partition created geographical entities that completely ignored ethnolinguistic realities in most cases. At one extreme, for example, are relatively small areas such as Cameroon with more than 100 languages, while at the other extreme there are countries with one predominant mother tongue, such as Botswana, Burundi, Lesotho, Rwanda, Somalia, and Swaziland. However, even in these countries, individuals are likely to be multilingual, often speaking at least one African lingua franca and a European language.

Language policies

Before the advent of colonial rule, there were no apparent language policies except in areas dominated by Islam or, in the case of Ethiopia, by Christianity. In Muslim areas, African followers of this religion were expected to acquire basic literacy in Arabic to enable them to recite the Koran and other important religious texts. Areas of the Sahel in West Africa covering such countries as, Burkina Faso, Mali, Northern Nigeria and Senegal are cases in point, while in East Africa, Islam had spread to the whole coast of East Africa as early as the tenth century A.D. However, the Arabic language did not gain a foothold as there were very few Arabic-speaking settlers. Islam was spread in these countries by the first few African converts who were often chiefs of their areas. Introduction to the Arabic script nonetheless enabled these Muslims to develop literate traditions in their own African languages. We have, therefore, languages such as Fulani, Hausa, Somali, Swahili, Wolof and Yoruba with relatively extensive literatures using the Arabic script. Swahili, for example, developed epic, religious and popular poetry in previous centuries. The language was used as an official language of the court as Swahili letters from the Sultan of Kilwa on the Tanzanian coast to the Portuguese Governor-General in Goa in the seventeenth century attest. Language policy in such Muslim areas then was to learn sufficient Arabic to be able to recite the sacred books and to have adequate mastery of their own African language to be able to understand the translations of Arabic religious texts and Islamic jurisprudence. A few educated scholars would also learn and master the Arabic language, and there are many classical works written by African scholars in the Arabic language. Of course, the broad masses had no working knowledge of this language, even though they might be bilingual or multilingual in African languages.

Colonial administration

It was during colonial rule that we see the emergence of definite language policies. Different colonial powers tended to have their own language policy as part of the ethos of their imperial attitudes. The Germans, the British and the Dutch favoured the use of African vernaculars or *linguae francae* as media of education at the lower levels of education and administration. The missionaries of those countries devised orthographies, and wrote grammars and dictionaries from African languages, as a step towards developing literacy in indigenous languages. The objective was to teach the Bible and other religious texts in the mother tongue, as this was considered the correct way to impart the message of God. We see in the areas ruled by these powers, therefore, a development of a literate tradition in the Roman script.

Brann (1982) has interesting views on language policies in Africa. He noted that the Germanic races, including the Germans, British and Dutch, held a more Protestant view of peoples and their individualistic languages and cultures, while the Romance colonial powers **B** the French, Portuguese, Italians and Spanish **B** had a more 'Catholic' attitude in their outlook, going back to the period of the Roman Empire.

The colonial policy of the French tallied with their own policy at home, where language was developed as a means of nation-building in the reign of François I in the sixteenth century and onwards. In the seventeenth century, the French Academy was inaugurated with the aim of providing a unified language to a country that still spoke many dialects and of encouraging the growth of a high culture through a normative form of standard French. French language policy in Africa was promoted by the Alliance Française (originally called Alliance pour la propagation et la purification de la langue française). The French were concerned that pidginized forms of French should not emerge in their colonies and that in the colonies only metropolitan French as spoken at home must be taught and promoted. The British, for example, recognized the existence of English-based creoles and pidgins, while the French for a long time refused similar recognition.

In the belief that French was the most cultured language, and had a civilizing mission, French colonial language policy discouraged research into or development of African languages. French was to be the only official language of administration, education and culture. As a consequence, African languages in areas governed by the French were the least developed, if developed at all, at independence. Most of these languages had not even acquired orthographical systems, despite the well-known fact that these languages were the true vehicles of communication among Africans. There was a deceptive assumption on the part of the French that all education, from the nursery to the university, was entirely conducted in French, an impossible situation since there were neither adequate teachers nor materials for such a comprehensive policy.

In Madagascar, the French implemented the provisions of the Brazzaville Conference of 1945, which aimed at the assimilation programme of 'education in French only'. Malagasy reappeared in 1955 but was taught as a foreign language, like English.

The Portuguese had an even more intolerant policy towards African languages. On the basis of their political stand that the overseas territories of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde were an inalienable part of metropolitan Portugal, they took stern measures to ensure that no African languages were promoted. They went as far as punishing missionaries who used African languages in education. The direct result was that at independence Portuguese had to be accepted as the official and national language of these countries by African governments, as there was no alternative.

The Germans, in their East African Territories up to the end of the First World War, had a policy of promoting Swahili as the lingua franca. In the then Tanganyika, both German and African civil servants and members of the armed forces had to know Swahili to be employed, a fact which rapidly helped the spread of this language. Also, German missionary scholars such as Rebmann, Krapf and Buttner wrote grammars of Swahili and collected manuscripts in Swahili Arabic script of pre-twentieth century classical literature which are still to be found in the libraries of the Universities of Berlin, Hamburg and Leipzig.

German missionaries opened schools everywhere and worked on the development of orthographies and texts in Tanzanian languages. The same is true in parts of British-ruled Africa such as Zambia (Central Africa), where ChiBemba was developed, Zimbabwe (Shona and Ndebele) and Malawi (Chichewa). It can be said that as a result of the German and British colonial language policies, all major African languages were fairly developed, and widely used in the education system

and administration. There is also a rich tradition of academic research on African languages by German and British scholars in their universities.

The Germans, the Belgians (in Ruanda Burundi) and the British encouraged the growth of multilingualism in African languages and bilingualism in African *linguae francae* and their European languages. Language policies in education differed, depending on the lobbies at work. The general pattern, however, was the use of local languages up to elementary class three as the medium of instruction, and then, if there was a developed *lingua franca* such as Swahili and Hausa, that would take over for another two or three years, after which English would continue as the medium. English would be taught as a subject right from the start. The colonial German Government had also participated in the building of schools, requiring that indigenous people must be taught Swahili and arithmetic in order to produce clerks, craftsmen and skilled manual workers. German colonial officers too were compelled to learn Swahili and other African languages before they were sent to Africa. Facilities for the study of Swahili were created in certain German universities.

The British in Tanganyika continued to encourage the teaching of Swahili and other African languages when that country was mandated to them after the First World War. It was such positive action by the German and British rulers that made Swahili emerge as a candidate to be the national/official language of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The British followed similar policies in West Africa, encouraging the development and use of African languages and *linguae francae*. Thus, we see such languages as Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and many others in Nigeria well developed at independence. In Kenya, with a politically strong settler community, there were three groups influencing language policy. The missionaries wanted to develop the vernacular languages, of which there are over forty, for the purposes of elementary education and catechism. The settlers favoured Swahili and the vernaculars, while British civil servants saw the introduction of English as early as possible in the education system as the best way of ensuring African progress. Eventually, in the 1930s, mother tongues were used in lower primary education. Swahili was introduced in the intermediate levels, and English took over in the upper primary and higher stages. But by the 1950s the policy was to use English right from nursery school as medium of instruction.

Ethiopia and Somalia

Ethiopia is the African country with the shortest period of European colonization. It also has an abundance of indigenous written records of its history, literature and sacred texts using an indigenous script (Bender et al., 1976). The Aksum Kingdom in the fourth century A.D. used Ge'ez, the ancient classical language, as the official language of administration. Ge'ez also became the church language. Ethiopia is multilingual and multiethnic: according to Bender et al. (1976) there are about a dozen Semitic languages, twenty-two Cushitic, eighteen Omotic and eighteen Nilosaharan. English, French and Italian have been the vehicles of introducing Western culture and the media of higher education in this century. Italian and French have been gradually replaced by English, while Arabic serves as a *lingua franca* among Muslim Ethiopians, and is used as the language of religious teaching. Eritrea was federated to Ethiopia in 1952, its official languages having been Arabic and Tigririnya. However, the revised constitution of Ethiopia (Proclamation 149 of 1955, Article 125) declared Amharic as the only national official language of the whole empire (Abdulaziz, 1991). Other Ethiopian languages were completely suppressed, a fact that led to a great deal of resentment. With the overthrow of Haile Selassie and the advent of the Marxist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, language policy was radically changed. The policy now was to recognize the linguistic, cultural and social rights of all nationalities. Article 5 of the 1974 National Democratic Revolution Programme of Socialist Ethiopia

states: <within the environs of nationality, each nationality has the right to determine its political, economic and social life, and use its own language.>

Somalia is one of the most homogenous areas of Africa in terms of ethnicity, language, culture and religion. Throughout this century the Somali language has been in constant contact with Italian, Arabic and English. Contact with Islam and Arabic goes back many centuries. During colonial rule English was used as the official language and language of education in the North while Italian prevailed in the South of the country, including the capital Mogadishu. With the Egyptian revolution of 1952 and the pan-Arab/pan-Islam and pan-African policies of Nasser, Arabic was introduced in a very big way in Somalia. Arabic primary and secondary schools were opened in large numbers. Tertiary education in Arabic was also introduced and there was a major programme of scholarship awards for Somali students to study in Egypt. All this resulted in the Arabic language becoming a strong second language and later the acceptance of Somalia as an Arab country.

During colonial rule, the Italian government completely ignored the Somali language and used Italian for all official and educational purposes. Very few Somalis could enter primary and secondary schools, which were mostly for Italians and Mulattos. During the United Nations trusteeship period of 1950 - 1960, however, the Italian government made a commitment to provide education of good quality that would prepare Somalis for independence in the Southern part. English continued as the official language of education in the North.

At independence, when the two parts were joined, there was a curious linguistic dilemma. The North had English while the South had Italian as the official written languages, and Somali had become the common language of oral communication in all aspects of political, economic and cultural life of the country. Somali, up to this stage, had no official writing system. There was a passionate national debate as to whether Somalia should adopt the Arabic or the Roman, or should devise an indigenous script. This wrangling delayed the introduction of Somali as the national official language. However, in 1972, the Somali Revolutionary Council under Siad Barre declared that henceforth the Roman script would be used as the official orthography (Laitin, 1977). Since then, the Somali Language Academy has done tremendous work to develop Somali as a working national official language. At present, Somali is used as the only medium in primary and secondary schools, making it the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa to provide secondary education in the indigenous language.

South Africa

In South Africa there was strong Afrikaaner linguistic nationalism from about 1875. The policy was to develop Afrikaans into a modern language of literature and technology, and also as the official language of at least the Afrikaaner community. The South African Bantu Act of 1953 created the apartheid policy of separate development, under which the Africans would live in their own specified areas. In the beginning, the policy was to encourage the use of mother tongues as media of instruction for subjects in primary and secondary schools, as a means of consolidating the linguistic and cultural apartheid. This never quite worked, as will be seen below. Later, in the 1950s, there was a deliberate policy of teaching Afrikaans in all African schools. The Bantu homelands were considered as an Afrikaaner backyard, not to be exposed to English or other languages. Later, the Black consciousness movement led by Steve Biko insisted on reversing this policy in favour of English.

The independence period

At independence, African leaders came face to face with the problems of nation-building in multilingual situations. These raised the question of the promotion of African cultural and linguistic

institutions, and the issue of the legitimacy of the Nation-State. What languages were to be promoted as national and official languages? What languages were to be used in the education system as media of instruction and as subjects?

Typology of language situations

1. Countries having one African language spoken by the vast majority of the population:

as a mother tongue:

Botswana (Setswana); Burundi (Kirundi); Lesotho (Sesotho); Rwanda (Kinyarwanda); Somalia (Somali); Swaziland (Seswati);

as a lingua franca:

Central African Republic (Sango); Ethiopia (Amharic); Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania (Kiswahili); Mali (Bambara); Senegal (Wolof - 35% native speakers); Sudan (Arabic - 54% native speakers).

Countries in group 1 would seem to have a very favourable situation for developing an African national official language.

2. Countries having a predominant African language:

Benin (Ge); Burkina Faso (Mosi/More); Ghana (Akan-Twi); Malawi (Chichewa/Cinyanja); Niger (Hausa); Togo (Ewe); Zimbabwe (Shona);

3. Countries having several dominant African languages in competition:

Nigeria (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo - Nigeria has a number of nationally recognized state languages); Sierra Leone (Ternme, Mende); Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kikongo, Lingala, Chiluba, Kiswahili/Kingwana).

Countries in groups 2 and 3 have a good situation for developing one or more indigenous languages as national/official, but there is the problem of rivalry between linguistic groups.

4. Countries having no predominant African language:

Cameroon, (though Bulu and Ewanda are dominant in the South and Fulani in the North); Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique.

Typology of language policies

1. Countries which consciously promote one language:

* *exoglossic:*

French-speaking countries [excluding The Democratic Republic of the Congo] (French); Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, (Portuguese); Liberia (English).

These countries use foreign exoglossic languages such as French, English or Portuguese.

* *endoglossic:*

Central African Republic (Sango), Ethiopia (Amharic); Somalia (Somali); United Republic of Tanzania (Kiswahili);

2. Countries having an exoglossic language, but with developing endoglossic tendencies:

* *exoglossic with the promotion of one African language:*

Kenya (here the endoglossic movement is gaining momentum and the country may become endoglossic with Kiswahili);

Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda. All these countries except Uganda have one African language being promoted at national level.

* *exoglossic with more than one African language promoted:*

Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, The Democratic Republic of the Congo.

3. Countries with an exoglossic language policy, but using indigenous languages in some areas (e.g., first years of primary education, limited vernacular press, use in courts, etc.):

Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The dichotomy between national and official language is interesting. A national language is normally the language that identifies the state and is the basis of national culture and unity. It may or may not be used or only partly used in the administrative, legal, commercial and education systems of a country. National languages are typically African except in the case of Portuguese territories, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.

Official languages are those that are used in the modern sectors of the state, including legislative, judicial, commercial and educational areas. Official languages in African countries are typically the colonial European, metropolitan languages such as English, French and Portuguese.

Every country has its own problems in implementing language policies. In the United Republic of Tanzania, Swahili is fully accepted as the national official language. Nothing is done to promote the other, over 100 languages, yet still there is no animosity or linguistic nationalism. However, English is promoted as a strong language of education from the secondary level upwards. Primary education is imparted in Swahili, a fact that has caused many problems of transition from the Swahili to the English medium. Many people argue that standards of education in the United Republic of Tanzania have fallen as a result of this policy because the country has failed to use Swahili as the medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels. In Kenya the policy is to teach in the mother tongues in the first three years of primary education and then to switch to English up to university level. Swahili is taught as a compulsory language throughout the school system and as a discipline at university. This is the pattern in many so-called English-speaking countries of Africa.

In English-speaking countries of West Africa, including Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone English is the official language. In all but Liberia, English is also the national language. However, at least in Nigeria and Ghana, there has been a long tradition of using African languages in the lower levels of the education system, in the lower courts and in the mass media.

In Nigeria, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo have been declared major languages that are to be used in the Federal Assembly in the future, although this has not happened yet. State languages are recognized, but each state is expected to enunciate its own language policy. We thus have federal policies on the one hand and state policies on the other.

In Ethiopia, Amharic is the de facto national and official language, although English is used widely as the language of education from secondary school upwards.

Somalia is the only African country that uses an indigenous language not only as the only national official language, but also as the language of instruction up to the end of secondary school level. English and Arabic are taught as subjects at the secondary stage. Although Somali is used also at certain tertiary levels, professions and careers in some fields are limited to Italian and English. For example, subjects such as medicine, engineering and law are taught in Italian since it is the Italian Government that provided the buildings, equipment and teachers. Teacher training is conducted in English. In order to facilitate transition from Somali to Italian or English at the university, these European languages are taught for two years prior to the course of study. The first year is used to teach to general English or Italian, and the second for specialized language such as Italian for medicine or for engineering. There is also a separate university for Arabic studies, for those who went to schools that use the Arabic medium.

The choice of a national language is a sensitive political issue in multilingual countries, because nobody wants the language of another ethnic group to be chosen, as this will give a special advantage to the native speakers of that language. Only in cases where the languages have developed naturally as *linguae francae*, especially if they are at the same time languages of politically insignificant communities, the choice becomes simple. Swahili is a case in point.

The question of using the African languages as media of instruction throughout the education system revolves round the level of development of those languages. Ferguson (1968) recognizes three stages of language development:

- \$ graphicization, whereby the language is reduced to writing;
- \$ standardization, meaning the wide acceptance and use of a standard written spoken form;
- \$ inter-translatability, whereby the language is inter-translatable with the most advanced modern languages of art, science and technology such as English, French, German, Russian and Japanese.

Most African languages have not been reduced to writing and only a few have standard forms. Amharic, Hausa, Igbo, Swahili, Somali and Yoruba may be exceptions with respect to the first two stages. But it is unlikely that there is an African language that is as developed, say, as German or English, especially in modern areas of learning and technology. Amharic, Somali and Swahili are being developed very quickly by language institutes and academies which are preparing glossaries and texts in the various fields of study.

The other problem of giving up English or French altogether is the isolation from centres of major research and publication. There is also the need for international communication, and exposure to world literature in the various fields of intellectual endeavour. Finally, there is the question of the availability of finances and highly trained manpower to produce glossaries and texts in all fields, and teachers adequately trained to teach such modern languages. There is also the necessity of a thriving research and publication tradition.

Conclusion

Very few language policies, if any, appear to work in Africa. This is because many of the language policies are not objectively and rationally thought out but rather are motivated by political expediencies. There is a great deal of contradiction involved. Often the rich and politically powerful, who pay lip service to the promotion of African languages, are in most cases the ones who send their children to expensive private schools to acquire European languages, standards of education and culture. When enunciating policy, it is often forgotten that the implementation of language policy

requires great financial sacrifice, very long and expensive human resources training, and the creation of a new culture and tradition of intellectual practice. The problem in Africa is also lack, in most cases, of a long literate tradition and a classical past from which to draw material and spiritual support. Amharic, Hausa and Swahili have had such traditions, to name languages that immediately come to mind and could be developed, given time and adequate resources, into modern languages. But the real basis of development is the people themselves, and their material and intellectual culture. Hebrew, which up to the opening of this century was a classical language used in religious services and other limited areas, has emerged as a modern language. The main reason is that the European intellectual, technical, industrial and artistic cultural basis, finances and determination needed were there in adequate quantities. Under different circumstances, Africans must try to develop their languages through workable policies in order to enrich themselves and the world at large.

Language policies in Africa have resulted in the emergence of, on the one hand, bilingualism with diglossia, and on the other, trilingualism with diglossia (Ferguson, 1959). In the diglossic situation, the European language functions in the public sectors of the country's life. The local language, in a monolingual situation, has the role of day-to-day communication, functions at the lower levels of the education system and sometimes in the administration. In multilingual countries with an indigenous lingua franca as the national language, there is often a triglossic situation, with the mother tongue functioning within the ethnic community, the national language as a language of interaction at the national level and a European language as the language of modern education and culture. This sort of situation has resulted in African mother tongues being, least developed and the national languages developed up to a certain degree only, since they are not used as languages of higher education and modern culture. This complexity has also led to the necessity of language shifting as social contexts of language use change. There is also the problem of language mixing, often occurring at random because the various languages have overlapping functions. One often hears language mixing in which the mother tongue, the national language or lingua franca and the European language all feature in even one sentence. What are the linguistic consequences of this? Do such people ever master any of the languages perfectly? Or have they developed a structural and semantic system which incorporates all these languages together? In many African universities, complaints have been made that students do not have adequate mastery of the European language concerned for academic purposes. Institutes and departments teaching language skills in reading and writing, have been created to help students to acquire skills that would help them in their study. A great deal of research needs to be done as the problem is a crucial one, especially for education. Will African languages develop far enough to replace the European ones? What policies would lead to this? We see, for example, the development of Japanese, Korean, Hebrew, Arabic and others as modern languages of education, science and technology. What steps or policies should be taken to develop at least some African languages to these levels? Are such steps necessary or viable, or should Africans continue to use the highly developed world languages such as French and English, especially in the modernizing process? These are some of the issues and questions that future policy-makers need to address.

References

- Abdulaziz, M. H. 1991. Language in Education: A Comparative Study of the Situation in Tanzania, Ethiopia and Somalia. In: G. Ofella (ed.), *Bilingual Education, Vol. 1*. Amsterdam, John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- Alexander, P. 1972. *An Introduction to Languages and Language in Africa*. London, Heinemann.
- Bender, M. L.; Bowen, J. D.; Cooper, R. L.; Fergusson, C. A. (eds.).1976. *Language in Ethiopia*. London, Oxford University Press.
- Brann, C. 1982. Afro-Saxons and Agro-Romans; *Language Policies in sub-Saharan Africa*. Paper submitted to the Congress of Sociology, Mexico, August.
- Ferguson, C.A. 1959. Diglossia. *Word*, 15, pp. 325-40
- Ferguson, C. A. 1968. Language Development. In: J. A. Fishman, C-. A. Ferguson and J. Das Gupta (eds.), *Language Problems of Developing Countries*. New York, Wiley.
- Ki-Zerbo, J. 1981. Methodology and African Pre-History. In: J. Ki-Zerbo (ed.), *General History of Africa*. Vol. 1, p. 5, London/Paris, James Currey/UNESCO.
- Laitin, D. D. 1977. *Politics, Language and Thought in Africa: The Somali*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

9. LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING FOR BASIC EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Clifford N. Fyle

This chapter focuses on language policy and planning with special reference to Africa. It chiefly concentrates on these aspects in order to stimulate exchange on these crucial dimensions, leaving aside implementation problems and strategies the importance of which is without doubt. It is suggested that simple and adequate solutions to burning issues such as language choice and language use in education could be found if the overall national communication pattern were taken as a starting point. Functionality is the key guiding principle for language categorization for purposes of development: natural communicative patterns should be followed and replicated in the various spheres of language use in a multilingual ecology.

Language categorization for purposes of development

The basic approach to the language problem has been that of functionality **B** which languages are the most useful for promoting overall development, and how can they be most effectively used?

For Africa, five categories of languages have been identified as follows:

- \$ mother tongue languages;
- \$ community languages, defined as the dominant languages over a wide area of a country;
- \$ a national language or national languages, that may be either a lingua franca or one or more languages adopted by decree for nationwide usage throughout a country (in Eastern and Southern Africa, the concept is mostly that of only one national language per country, but in Western and much of Central Africa the concept is that of two or more national languages in any single state.);
- \$ a language of African intercommunication, such as Kiswahili in Eastern/Southern Africa, or Pulaar and Mandinka over much of the Central Equatorial belt from West to East; and
- \$ international languages, particularly English and French.

For the purposes of formal education, the categories are applied as follows:

mother tongue/community languages, for at least the first two, three or four years of basic education, as medium of instruction;

the adopted international language of the country, as medium of instruction in upper primary or secondary level education;

a national language, as subject, in upper primary and/or at secondary level;

a second international language as subject, at secondary level; and

if there is more than one national language decreed for a country, then a second national language, as compulsory subject, either at secondary or university level.

For purposes of literacy and out-of-school education, the categories have been the following:

the community language or the mother tongue, whichever is more effective for functional literacy purposes in a defined area of a country and not necessarily over a wide zone; and

the adopted international language, for those who need it for business and similar purposes, the extent of teaching depending on the level of need.

The points to note about this categorization are described below.

Firstly, the category of languages of wider communication has not been included, in spite of much publicity by the Organisation of African Unity and to some extent by UNESCO and the Member States themselves over the years, not because African countries do not believe in the usefulness or importance of such languages but because no one has yet found a way of fitting them into the school curriculum or using them for any kind of meaningful literacy.

Secondly, the categories of mother tongue and community language have been combined for practical purposes. The guiding principles here are those of cost reduction and effectiveness. Language development is expensive and in a multilingual situation it is therefore impracticable to cater for all the languages and especially those with only a few thousand speakers; and even people in rural communities above the subsistence farming level that are monolingual need the community language more than the mother tongue, if only for running their daily business. The adoption of the community language facilitates class teaching, especially in mixed urban or semi-urban areas where there may be a wide variety of mother tongue languages represented in any single classroom.

Thirdly, this categorization takes into account other language categories that have been noted. For example, an official language or a language of work of any kind, if not the adopted international language, is either a community language or a national language. So are *linguae francae*, languages of the milieu, and so on. The only noted categories that are not taken into account are those of dialects and of minority languages.

Linguistically, a dialect is only a variety of a language, and the dialect problem is taken care of through language standardization. Language standardization, of course, raises its own problems: the application of linguistic research finding a common orthographic and alphabetic system for various languages within the same country and, sometimes, finding common alphabets and forms for the same languages in cross-border situations. The problems of dialects are comparatively easy to solve; that of cross-border commonality is more difficult, because where such exist there may be one or more traditionally English-speaking and one or more traditionally French-speaking countries using them, and in their orthographies these countries tend to adhere to the patterns of English and French respectively. But another, more difficult fact is that cross-border languages as vehicles of communication tend to vary widely in importance and political significance among the countries using them, so that there is never the same degree of enthusiasm for their cross-border standardization. This has been a major impediment over the years to the efforts spearheaded by UNESCO towards the common development of cross-border languages and language materials for use in education. The case of the Ewe language in Benin, Ghana and Togo is a case in point, where the orthographic and similar problems were solved at meetings of experts but the mechanism for the common use of the language could not be set up because of different attitudes to the language in each of the three countries concerned.

The problem of minority languages, or the languages of minority groups as they have more properly been called, is still unsolved.

It is an accepted principle that everyone is best educated in his or her mother tongue, not only because this greatly facilitates learning but because it is even a human right, the right to one's own medium of expression; but how does one ensure this in the heavily multilingual situation which is normal for most African countries? In 1989, UNESCO called a group of experts to a meeting to throw light on the problem, but even with the best available international input, they could only insist on the human rights aspect, and suggest measures for implementation that were worthy in conception but difficult to put into practice, given their cost in a situation where even the basic necessities are hard to afford. One solution, supported by UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) since the end of the 1970s, has been that at least the alphabets of these languages could be taught to their mother speakers so that these speakers could use the languages for purposes of their own communication. However, no African country so far has been known to try even this solution. The best that seems to have happened is that in at least one country, the United Republic of Tanzania, the multifarious national languages have been used as a source of vocabulary enrichment for the national language, Kiswahili. The problem still remains unsolved. There is a wide-open area here for curriculum and methodology research and experimentation.

Fourthly, it should be noted that the categories for formal education and for literacy as given above are an ideal towards which nearly all African countries will admit they are striving. One or two countries have made some progress, but the great majority still have a long way to go. Some have not even started their efforts and are bedevilled by problems of cost and lack of expertise as well as language prestige and diglossia, all of which prevent the formulation and implementation of any effective language policy. As regards cost, some years ago OAU tried to find a way of measuring the cost-effectiveness of African mother tongue/community language teaching. If cost-effectiveness can be proved, it will no doubt arouse the enthusiasm of the nations themselves as well as the funding agencies, thereby securing their support for the use of African languages in education. However, it is extremely difficult to measure with any accuracy the cost-effectiveness of any educational activity at all. It would be very interesting, to see what this line of research may lead to, but certainly no known results have yet been published.

Fifthly, in passing one might mention a category that has been noted but not yet discussed here, that of state languages. However, the category may be regarded as peculiar to Nigeria, the largest country in UNESCO's Africa region and the only one with a federal state structure in any meaningful sense of the term. To have federal states identified by separate languages is a rare situation worldwide, to say the least, so how to fit such languages into a planned structure of formal education or literacy is therefore a problem without many precedents anywhere. This peculiar Nigerian situation is interesting and well worth study because it may throw light on language planning and on curriculum organization and teaching elsewhere. In formal education, however, these state languages may perhaps best be conflated with national languages, one state language and one national language instead of two national languages.

Multilingualism

The root of the problem of language education in Africa is multilingualism, which has necessitated the above categorization for purposes of language planning. There is perhaps no truly monolingual country in Africa, even if one thinks only in terms of indigenous languages. And if one considers the adoption everywhere of at least one international language, then it is quite true to say that there is not one monolingual country.

To define the problem, one may begin by stating what it is not. It is not multi-dialectism, that is to say many varieties of the same language, and it is not multiscrypt. Such problems are solvable by standardization and there are many known examples. Also it is not a question of gender issues, for example the secret languages of male initiation and manhood societies, or the situation that used to exist in some countries where boys' schools taught exclusively Latin and girls' schools exclusively French. It is not even a simple problem of two languages existing side by side, creating bilingualism. It is that so many languages, sometimes over 100 or even up to 300 or more, exist and are in use within the same country, all with a right to development. The phrase 'within the same country', as used in the last sentence, is significant. For any meaningful consideration of multilingualism, one must use the country-by-country approach: this is one of the parameters. To consider multilingualism in a number of countries (this is sometimes referred to as plurilingualism) would cloud the picture quite considerably and make the search for solutions more than doubly difficult.

Another parameter is that, given the categorization for formal education and literacy as stated in the previous section, considerations of multilingualism become significant only in connection with the languages of minority groups. Consider the matter of cultural identity. This can be identified at various levels -the ethnic level (the level of the mother tongue languages), the community level (the level of the community languages); the national level (the level of the national languages); the regional level (i.e. African culture, the level of regional languages such as Kiswahili, Pulaar and Hausa or all of them put together) and even at the international level **B** the term 'world culture' does have meaning, and there is the worldwide use of languages such as English and French. In the categorizations given at the beginning of this paper, all these levels are catered for except for the ethnic level; but this is the primary level of cultural identity and it is precisely at this level that the mass of the languages function.

Still another parameter has to do with the extent of multilingualism. The general principle here is that the human being learns and uses only as many languages as he or she needs. Thus the children of parents who work in international circles tend to know only the international English, or French, and so on of their parents' work and perhaps a smattering of the language of the local community. They may not even know the mother tongue of the parents themselves. The child whose mother tongue is the national language tends to know only that mother tongue and one or two international languages used or taught at school. But children from a minority language group, as is clear from our categorization above, would need their group language, their community language, one or two national languages, and one or two international languages, if they are to become the educated and effective citizens that their education is seeking to make them. And when one considers that the so-called 'minority groups' of an African country put together may account for anything from 40 to 60 per cent of the national population, or even more, one realizes the scale of the problem. In other words, when we talk about the problem of multilingualism, we are really talking about the problem of the minority group languages.

Firstly, how do we use these languages in education so as to preserve the cultural identity of their peoples? In Sierra Leone, for example, a person may be a Vai speaker, before being a Mende speaker, before being a Krio speaker, before being an English speaker, before being a French speaker. What do we do about his or her primary Vai-ness? And there are 15 out of 18 languages covering some 1.5 million speakers in that small country of just about 4 million. Nigeria, black Africa's largest country, is even harder. Some 60 per cent of its 90 or so million people are members of minority language groups. How do we develop the attitude that this cultural diversity is in fact a rich national heritage, and how do we use it as such for the motivation of learning, for curriculum enrichment, or for national enrichment? It is a wide-open field for research and experimentation, and it is also an important one. Such research would include, among other things, a consideration of the nature of

multilingualism. It should be remembered that in Africa the average person is of necessity a multilingual animal, not just a bilingual one. And the consideration of bilingualism is at most only one facet of the much larger consideration of multilingualism. A fourth parameter of the multilingual situation is that of language in use. Languages are living things, and they are subject to constant changes, not only internally as regards their sound systems, their vocabulary and so on, but also in the extent and the importance of their uses, in response to such factors as social change, variation in population density, social mobility patterns, improved communication technologies, political and economic needs, and so on. Such factors are powerful in deciding which languages become more and more dominant in a country, which languages go under and which simply survive. A study of the operation of such factors and trends should therefore be useful in helping to determine which languages to concentrate on for development purposes, and how. In other words, it should be a valuable aid to language policy and planning decisions.

In this connection it is worth noting that the language categorizations as given at the beginning are subject to modification in view of the particular circumstances of each country and practicability in terms of the overall availability of funds. When modifications need to be made, it should be well worth taking such trends of language change into account.

National choice

This title, in some respects, is a misnomer. The question, it would appear, is not a simple matter of choosing some languages at the expense of others. It is rather a matter of taking all the languages of a country into account in an overall policy for the use of a country's languages.

In many of the countries, there has long been a national policy, implicit or explicit, and in some cases dating back even to colonial times, for the use of national languages in education. But over the years it has become evident that in many cases the national acceptance of this policy, at best, has been lukewarm. For example, those who can afford it, including the very proponents and implementers, both public and private, of the national language policy in education themselves, have preferred to send their children to schools which do not use mother tongues or national languages at all, not even as teaching subjects, let alone as media of instruction. Also in some cases the policy has failed outright because at least two countries, Burkina Faso and Guinea formerly strong adherers to this policy, have reverted with government approval to teaching in the adopted international language alone.

There are two major reasons for this failure. The first is that a policy for language use in education cannot really survive unless it is matched by a policy for the use of these same languages in national communication, and the two have to agree. For example, as a community would see it, it is no use educating someone in the mother tongue or community language, even only in the beginning years, when all national communication, all public business and administration, and even all access to meaningful jobs are dependent upon a knowledge of only one language, the official international English, French or other. Such a practice makes nonsense of the efforts at mother tongue education, not only in school education but even in literacy for rural communities. The social demand is then not for the mother tongue or community language but for the official international language.

The second major reason is that existing policies have been geared to the use of a handful of languages for education, literacy and national communication. By and large, these policies have made no mention of the large mass of the minority group languages, and these, as we have seen, are the real crux of the matter. A language policy cannot survive if it confines itself to only a few languages, no matter which or how important these may seem to be. A national policy has to recognize all the

languages of a country and state clearly how they should be used in national life. We attempt a schematic presentation of such a policy in the following section.

Languages in national communication

As a means of communication, language is widely used in many forms of exchange and communication. Choice of language **B** if any **B** and other types of decision related to language, should reflect, promote and conform to the communicative functions of the language. The following configuration should be considered.

\$ *Language(s) for foreign and international business*, at various levels (for example, the level of competence required by the diplomat or top executive is not the same as that needed by an urban hotel worker serving foreign guests or a dock worker handling imports and exports);

\$ *Languages in administration* - for top government administration, parliament, etc., and for provincial, district and rural administration, at various levels. In a multilingual country, quite a number of languages may be required and the policy should indicate how they should be acquired by those who need them;

\$ *Languages in the mass media* - for national newspapers, the rural press, radio, television, etc., and how they should be used. Provided a country is not too heavily multilingual, most of its languages can function in this field;

\$ *Languages of the workplace*, and in particular for middle-level jobs and job training. These do not have to be adopted international language, and indeed it is best if they are not; otherwise the problem of acquiring these languages becomes severe, and a major obstacle to the acquisition of the skills to be learnt and used. One can be as efficient an electrical repairer, for example, in the Ewe of Ghana or the Kikuyu of Kenya as in English.

\$ *Languages to be used in education* - at beginners' levels, both as media and as teaching subjects for both formal education and literacy; at the higher levels of literacy in conformity with job and occupational demands; and at the upper primary, secondary and higher levels of formal education.

The above can be refined, of course, but some scheme such as this needs to be adopted for a national language policy to be made to work. Its formulation is in fact much simpler than it would appear. It is not so much a question of choice as of natural tendencies in usage: one simply has to observe the natural trends of language usage in a country and to follow these. Indeed, this is possibly the only way of avoiding the language prejudices and the political considerations that have been such a hindrance to language development.

We note that the factors of culture and cultural identity are emphasized in the above scheme. Language itself is part of culture and in many respects its highest and most important manifestation; and a scheme such as the above geared towards language use in life, should automatically accommodate the pertinent cultural considerations.

The matter of the official language is omitted altogether. The consideration is not the label **B** whether a language should be called official or non-official. The consideration is rather to what use the language should be put in national life.

We note again that the use of language in education is only one of the five or so aspects of the use of languages in life. And it is placed only at the end of the scheme because, in order to be meaningful, language use in education should be a reflection of language use in life and should follow naturally from it.

For the more multilingual countries with some 100 to 300 hundred or so languages each, the adoption of the kind of scheme outlined above will inevitably exclude many of them. In world terms, a mother tongue or another language, with even some 200,000 or so speakers is by no means a small language, even though the overall population of the country of its usage may be much greater. Where, as in much of Africa, speakers of a certain language are not dispersed but tend to be restricted to well-defined geographical areas, even languages of some 50,000 speakers become significant for the purposes of development and use in national life. By the time one gets down to this level of languages with 50,000 speakers, one has taken into account well over 90 per cent of the population of almost any African country. As regards the residue, some languages are so small that they hardly feature in national communication at all, and their mother-tongue speakers are bilingual in a community language almost from the cradle. For the larger of these residue languages, as discussed earlier, a consideration of language trends becomes significant and will help to determine which of them are viable and therefore need to be included in the national pattern.

Conclusion

This paper has been confined to aspects of language policy and planning, have not discussed implementation, that is to say, strategies for language use in literacy and education. The subject of implementation is a large one and would require a paper much longer than this. The size of the implementation task is so great that it can even work against the adoption of a proper policy and plan. But the questions of policy and planning are of primary importance. If these were solved, it would be much easier to determine the strategies, expertise and resources needed for progress. In other words, if we have determined the *what*, then the *how* becomes a problem of much reduced proportions.

10. THE PLACE OF LANGUAGE IN LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES: AN OVERVIEW

Pai Obanya

This chapter is not a report of an actual experience in language engineering for literacy and basic education programmes. Rather it discusses the place of language in literacy and basic education, along with an examination of the different language configurations in Africa. It then uses these considerations to discuss first the choice of language(s) and, second, curriculum development in language(s) for literacy and basic education, particularly in the African context.

For the purposes of this chapter, 'basic education' covers a continuum ranging from basic to post-functional literacy. 'Literacy' will be taken to mean the period, level and content of formal education considered in each community as laying the foundation for lifelong learning, as well as programmes of *non-formal* education involve the consolidation and assimilation of literacy skills in addition to the acquisition of other skills necessary for meeting life's basic needs, including the ability to lead a life of continuous learning.

The place of language in literacy and basic education

In all situations that involve human learning, language is central. First, education involves the full development of human potentials, particularly the cognitive power. Language is an instrument of thought necessary in any programme that takes the cognitive abilities of the human being into consideration. Seeking, using and giving information are the essential parts of the process of education and are usually carried out through language. For interacting in social settings also part of education, language is the main tool. We communicate information and develop social and working relationships through speech and writing, though 'language' in the generic sense can mean other things as well, such as the graphs and symbols of a science such as mathematics. This form of language is in fact taken into consideration in some modern-day definitions of literacy; some writers have used terms like 'graphicalacy' and 'diteronumeracy' in discussing the domains that should be covered by reading and literacy programmes (Obanya, 1985).

There is also the wide range of paralinguistic possibilities for communication: sign language, body language, smiles, frowns, etc. But it is the use of verbal language that has enabled mankind to think, to create, to record events, to project itself into the future and to seek to reinforce the individual's capacity to perform these functions. This is what makes language the major object and subject of education.

Possible language configurations in Africa

The classification that follows takes into account the source of different languages, their social, geographical and demographic coverage, and their various levels of technical evolution.

'Source' refers to whether or not the language is indigenous to Africa. 'Coverage', as used here, is synonymous with 'geographical coverage' meaning that land mass over which a language is used.

‘Social coverage’ refers to what type(s) of persons use a particular language, while ‘demographic coverage’ refers to the number of persons using the language. ‘Technical evolution’ refers to the extent to which a language has evolved (through borrowings, adaptation to technological changes over time, development of written forms, etc.).

Using these typologies, one can compare various languages to see the extent to which they are indigenous or foreign, their respective geographical, social and demographic coverage, and their level of technical evolution.

In Africa, the terms can be used to define the following groups:

- (a) *Non-indigenous languages*: English, French, Portuguese, Arabic and Spanish **B** all imposed by colonialism, but which have been domesticated within Africa, each one giving rise to distinct African dialectal forms (e.g. ‘Nigerian’ English, ‘Zairean’ French, etc.)
- (b) *Creoles and pidgins*: A further degree in the domestication of non-indigenous languages, with the more evolved Creole languages in use in Mauritius, Seychelles, and Sierra Leone, while the pidgins in places like Nigeria and Cameroon are at different levels of Creolization.
- (c) *Indigenous linguae firancae*: The languages with the widest geographical and/or social coverage and spreading beyond the ‘tribe’ - Kiswahili, Hausa, Bambara, Lingala, Wolof, etc.
- (d) *Nationalized languages* whose geographical boundaries coincide roughly with national boundaries **B** Somali, Malagasy, Kirundi/Kiruwanda, etc.
- (e) *Large languages*, either spreading across national boundaries (Hausa, Kanuri, Chichewa, Ewe, Mandinka/Bambara, Kinkongo, Sesotho, Tswana, etc.) or simply spoken by large numbers of people within the same nation (Igbo, Gikuyu, Doluo, Zulu/Xhosa, etc.).
- (f) *Small languages*, spoken by minorities within larger communities or by smaller language communities, as is the case with a very large number of the languages of Africa.
- (g) *Language pockets*, small migrant populations in large cities speaking a common language (e.g. Malawian workers in South African coal mines and pockets of new settlers in urban centres).

If ‘technical evolution’ is added as a criterion for grouping languages in Africa, the result will be a continuum ranging from languages that have not been highly influenced by others and that have not yet been reduced to writing to those that have expanded by adaptations and borrowings and that have a long tradition of being used in the written form:

1	2	3	4	5
Used exclusively by a small group. No written form. Very little outside influence	Some contact with other languages, some outside influence, but still largely unwritten	Used in religious texts (e.g. Bible, catechisms, hymnals), in basic literacy and more.	Used in written form, with primers and basic education	Used in the media, in schools, in public administration as well as for creative, scientific and technical writing

There seems thus to be a relationship between ‘coverage’ and the degree of technical evolution of specific African languages. Certainly, languages in stage 5 of the evolution process are most likely to belong to category (a) of the above groupings, while stage 4 could cover languages in categories (b), (c), (d), (e). The correspondence is, however, a very approximate one, as languages with the same degree of coverage (e.g. Kiswahili and Bambara) can be at different levels of technical evolution.

Language as the object of literacy and basic education

This refers to the *choice* of language for use in the promotion of literacy and basic education. The primary considerations in making educational decisions of this type are (a) *the learner* and (b) *the society*. It is the learner who is to be educated for his or her own benefit and ultimately for the benefit of society. The choice of language for literacy and basic education should therefore, ideally, take the following points into account:

A	B
<i>Concerning the individual learner</i>	<i>Concerning the society</i>
S age/sex/level of maturity	S existing policy issues concerning major literacy and basic education
S occupational/social group	S The extent of availability of resources
S interests/motivation	S language situation in various social sectors and
S language(s) already known and used for specific purposes	S geographical areas

In all programmes of education, these considerations must be combined in such a way as to meet personal and societal needs. For the purposes of this paper, however, we shall separate the conditions for literacy from those required for formal and non-formal basic education.

For *basic literacy*, the choice of language should be based on the psychological and pedagogical considerations that an individual will normally be mature in his or her mother tongue or first language, and consequently that learning in that same language will be relatively easy. Sociological considerations will, however, determine the extent to which the first language remains the language of basic literacy. If that language is also the lingua franca or 'nationalized' language, or major or dominant language of the immediate environment, then there is no problem. The choice of the language is easy, because it is likely to receive wide acceptance. In cases where large pockets of users of specific languages exist within a larger political/social unit or political entity, it might be feasible to use such 'pocket' languages for basic literacy programmes. Such a choice should, however, be governed by the extent to which the group concerned is prepared to accept its own language for such purposes. Factors such as language pride and the desire for the preservation of cultural identity may lead a group to want to see its own language used in education. On the other hand, for purposes of practical utility a group may opt for a language other than the mother tongue.

Basic literacy is simply the first step in a sustained process; post-literacy is the next. At this early stage, the same language should be used: where the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and perhaps graphicacy have been inculcated in the first language, it is desirable to consolidate the acquisition of these skills in the same one. There would be too much cognitive dissonance if there were a sudden shift from a first language to a second. However, it might be necessary in further literacy programmes to introduce a second language and to switch to it as the language of instruction. This is because in most societies in Africa the pull of the official second language is often strong. It is true that most Africans are strongly attached first to their native dialect (which they tend to classify as a distinct language) and only then to the language of which their native dialect is a variety. At the same time, except where the mother tongue is a strong official language, individuals will often want to become 'more widely literate' by learning in a second language with a stronger pull.

Literacy can therefore be seen as involving at least three phases:

basic (the inculcation of basic learning, and reading and writing;

post-literacy (the consolidation of basic skills, through life activities designed to make literacy permanent and socially useful); and

further and permanent literacy (in the language with the greatest pull in the community).

To illustrate the situation more clearly, let us consider the cases of basic literacy classes conducted in Bambara (Mali), Wolof (Senegal), Hausa (Nigeria), Lingala (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Chichewa (Zambia), Creole (Mauritius and Sierra Leone), and Bamiléké (Cameroon). To consolidate this basic literacy, post-literacy classes should, in each case, be in the same language. At a later level, however, there should be initiation into English, in the case of Nigeria, Zambia, Sierra Leone and Mauritius, and into French in that of Mali, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cameroon. This is because the mass media, the most widely circulating books and official circles all use these two languages of 'greater pull'.

There has been a great deal of controversy about the desirability of literacy in the mother tongue, or even in the largest or most widely-spoken African languages. The point often made against it is that literacy should lead to some form of upward social mobility and that further up the social ladder of most African societies indigenous languages have no place.

No one will deny the psychological fact that people feel more at home in their mother tongue. There is also no denying the sociological fact that social interaction is best carried on in shared, common languages. The pedagogical fact that learning is easiest in the language one knows best is also undeniable, but the socio-economic fact is that in Africa the banks, the insurance companies, parliamentarians and government officials work in English, French or Portuguese.

This is one reason why Senegal, for example, once suggested a programme of literacy in national languages for government officials. When ordinary persons who had become literate in Pulaar, Wolof, Dioula Serrer, etc., tried to tap the benefits of literacy by writing to their local *prefect* in their own languages, they received, at best, a reply in French. This did not encourage those persons who had laboured so hard to become literate.

We take the view that post-literacy and 'further literacy' can be enriched by the appropriate selection of activities to meet the demands of non-formal basic education. In *basic formal education*, existing African practices can be summarized as follows:

- At the policy level, most countries accept that the mother tongue should be the language of instruction in the early years of primary education.
- In practice, there is still controversy in a number of places over the desirability of such policy, but practicing teachers seem to know how to bridge the gap by using a mixture of the first and second languages.
- The language with the 'greater pull' (English, French, Portuguese) is, in principle, expected to be taught from the early years of schooling
- Some countries (e.g., Guinea) attempted to extend the use of the first language, i.e., selected community languages, as the language of instruction in the early years of secondary education, but the experiment did not last.
- A few countries (e.g., the United Republic of Tanzania) have acquired long and rich experience in the use of a national lingua franca for education up to the end of primary education.

- A country such as Nigeria uses the first language for the first three years of primary education, while English is supposed to 'take over' from the fourth year. In the junior secondary school, a second Nigerian language is introduced.
- Everywhere in Africa, there have been experiments and pilot projects on the use of the mother tongue for basic education, but the movement from piloting to full scale implementation has not been smooth.

In summary, it would seem that for basic (formal) education, the problem does not lie in the choice, but in implementing what has been chosen as the first language of instruction. It appears that the greatest hurdle is not (as is always claimed) the lack of appropriate languages, nor is it the shortage of teachers, nor of appropriate materials, and it is not the shortage of technical vocabulary in African languages. The reason seems to be the strong pull of the languages of colonization.

However, in a country such as Ethiopia, where the language of the short period of colonization was Italian, there has been no urge to teach Italian in schools. This is mainly because of the relatively weak pull of Italian, as very few persons use the language outside Italy.

The implication of the strong language pull syndrome is that language policies in basic education should emphasize the need for the first or community language to be taught and learned properly during the early years of schooling. At the same time, English, French or Portuguese should also be emphasized.

Improved learning using the first languages, coupled with a sound foundation in the second, was the philosophy of the Ife Six Year Primary Project in Nigeria. The project provided evidence that the use of the mother tongue for instruction improved teacher-pupil interaction, increased pupil participation in classroom activity, achieved better learning outcomes and facilitated transfer from one language situation to another.

Language as the subject of literacy and basic education

If there have been problems in executing language policies in literacy and basic education, the cause is not simply a question of not making the right choice of language(s). There is also a problem with the language curriculum. This concerns mainly the issues of *what* we teach in language courses, how we teach it and the *materials* with which we teach language.

Mainly because literacy tends to be equated with the ability to read, we all tend to rush into reading at the very beginning of literacy programmes. The learners' major motivation is to read and the teacher is only trying to satisfy a legitimate urge by beginning with reading.

There is, however, a need to develop more participatory approaches that emphasize the use of the learner's accumulated experience. Since most literacy classes are dominated by persons who have already mastered their first language, *discussion groups* that focus on specific issues concerning the lives of learners can be a good way of building team spirit and of taking general education alone, with literacy. When reading instruction actually starts, the discussion sessions that have already taken place can form specific topics for reading. We do not need uniformly artificial primers for learners, to repeat sentences which bear no relation to real life situations.

There have been experiments all over Africa with learners in literacy classes writing for other learners. The University of Ibadan (Adult Education Department) showed in a 1991 report how new literates in rural areas had created reading materials for literacy classes.

A common mistake in literacy programmes is for learning and teaching to become progressively formalized. There is an urge in people who have missed schooling to want to behave like pupils, but care ought to be taken to avoid the rigidity of formal teaching-learning situations. Non-formal situations provide better opportunities for linking education with real life by supplementing literacy primers with other forms of material, possibly of a non-verbal nature, such as charts, pictures and diagrams, as well as holding structured discussions. The advantage is that language can be taken in its totality: listening, speaking, reading and writing, using all the basic language skills in real-life situations.

In the formal system of basic education, the major problem with the African language curriculum is again its near-complete divorce from reality. All over Africa, indigenous languages are evolving rapidly. New terms are being created by people such as musicians, and radio and television presenters. Language is being used for such social interactions as ceremonies, religious worship, political meetings and resolution of inter-personal conflicts, but in the classroom outdated books for English and French are used. Usually, a 'comprehension' passage is read, questions are answered on the passage, transformation exercises (singular/plural, present/past) are done, and sometimes some guided (written) composition ends it all. At the later stages of first-language teaching, we still tend to stick to story reading. There is a need to pay more attention to creative writing, to debates on topical subjects, and to writing and reading on technical issues (the economy, science and technology, etc.). This will show that indigenous African languages are also languages for life, that they can cope with the linguistic demands of modern life and that they are worth learning at all levels of education.

Conclusions

This chapter has attempted an overview of only a few of the main issues concerning language for its own sake, and language as a tool in the process of literacy and basic education, particularly as regards choice of languages and their use, hence the discussion of both the sociolinguistic and the educational aspects of the subject.

Perhaps the main point worth stressing once more is that choice of languages should be based on the needs of both the learner and the society. In this connection, the first language should, as much as possible, be the language of basic literacy and post-literacy. There is, however, a need to take into account the strong pull of the languages of colonization, as public perception of the literate person is not simply that of someone literate only in an indigenous language. In 'further literacy', therefore, English, French or Portuguese can be taught.

In the formal system of basic education, a solid foundation in the first language and its use as a medium of instruction, at least in the early years, is pedagogically sound. At the same time, the second language has to be firmly entrenched so that the individual does not feel that his future development is blocked because of a lack of competence in English, French or Portuguese. The paper has also called for a re-examination of language as the subject of literacy and basic education, where we should avoid the rigidity of formal learning situations and capitalize on individual and societal resources for executing language programmes.

Decisions concerning education are, however, hardly ever taken by educationists; politics and economics will be the more likely deciders. Thus, it is possible for a 'pocket' or a 'small' language to be given the status of a lingua franca, if its original users are politically powerful. Economic considerations will always come into play. Questions will usually be raised about cost-effectiveness, resource allocation, and systematic programming.

In discussing the issues raised in this chapter, we should try to give a good deal of attention to strictly linguistic issues and to matters of educational psychology, and adequate attention to political and economic issues, and to take them all into consideration.

To ensure that scientific (i.e., linguistically and educationally sound) policy is not upset by political and economic considerations, political and economic factors should be involved in every stage of the development of literacy and basic education.

References

Obanya, P. A. 1. 1985. Litero-Numeracy Skills in the NCE English Programme. *Journal of English Studies*, No. 2, pp. 110-17.

11. LANGUAGE ISSUES IN LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION: THE CASE OF INDIA

D.P. Pattanayak

India is a multilingual country with between 200 and 700 languages belonging to 4 language families, and 10 major writing systems including Roman and Perso-Arabic, and a host of minor ones. Hindi is the national official language and English is the associate national official language. Every state has one or more state official languages, the major ones being recognized by the constitution. Each language has multiple dialects, sociolects, styles and registers. Minority languages are formed due to internal migrations. Minor languages are small group languages without power and restricted in use. There are three languages of wider communication, Nagamese, Sadri and Desia - pidgins created due to the contact of one Indian language with others, and there are intermediate standards such as Pahadi and Rajasthani. The three language formula is the prevailing pattern in education, Hindi, English and the state official language being the three. With the introduction of the mother tongue, a child has to study four languages, and with classical Sanskrit five. Foreign languages have to be studied in addition. However, as each language, irrespective of family affiliation, contains a component of Sanskrit, and all languages share semantic and syntactic features, making India a single linguistic and cultural area, moving from one language to another does not pose serious pedagogical problems. Languages are introduced in school at first, second and third languages, and are pedagogically handled as first (mother tongue/L1), second (reinforced by the environment) and foreign (restricted to the classroom).

The policy context

The Programme of Action of the 1986 National Policy on Education, in a section on planning for language development, states that:

the decisions about language policy and development of languages are taken at various levels - Central and State Governments, Universities, Boards of Secondary/School Education, etc. Consequently, there is no uniformity on the language policy followed in education (Government of India, 1986, p. 170).

It may appear strange that the Programme of Action, in its chapters II ('Elementary Education, Non-Formal Education and Operation Blackboard'), XIII ('Education of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Sections'), XIV ('Minorities Education') and XVI ('Adult Education'), makes no reference to languages. In its chapter on language development, it says: 'The National Policy on Education, 1986 has reiterated in respect of languages the policy elaborated in the National Policy on Education 1968'. Briefly, the policy emphasizes:

- the adoption of regional languages as the media of instruction at the university stage;
- vigorous effort at implementation of the three-language formula;
- improvement in the linguistic competencies of students at different stages of education;
- provision of facilities for the study of English and other foreign languages;

- development of Hindi as the link language, as provided for in Article 351 of constitution;
- teaching of Sanskrit at the university stage as a part of certain courses such as Indology, Indian history, archaeology etc.;
- serious effort at translation of books from one language to the other; and
- the preparation of bilingual and multilingual dictionaries.

Article 350A provides for instruction through the mother tongue for the first five years of education of the linguistic minorities. But when it comes to secondary education, it is recommended that, 'for the purpose of providing instruction in the mother tongue of the linguistic minorities at the secondary stage of education, the Modern Indian Languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as well as English should be used as media' (Government of India, 1986, p. 161). What is worse is that, although the constitution provides in Article 350 for mother tongue primary education, the Programme of Action states that:

a number of difficulties are likely to be encountered: administrative and financial feasibility of providing instructional facilities through a variety of mother tongues, difficulty to use some tribal languages as media of education etc. In the context of these difficulties switch over to a modern Indian/regional language has to be ensured as early as possible.

Thus it will be seen that there is no coherent language policy at the national level. Although mother tongue primary education is recognized on academic grounds, there is neither any political, administrative nor educational commitment to implement it. Even at the higher education level, where regional languages are recommended as media, there is little enthusiasm for implementing them. There are some centrally sponsored schemes in the area of language development. Whether it is writing of text books, innovative methods of teaching or giving audio-visual support to classroom instruction, projects are carried out by states to the extent that central funding is available. Even if there is funding, division of authority still obstructs implementation. For example, funds for tribal development are given to states under the tribal sub-plan. This is handled by the Ministry of Welfare, but that Ministry does not consider the development of tribal languages part of tribal welfare. Tribal languages, like tribal education, are handled by the Department of Education, which considers many languages as a handicap and the use of many languages for purposes of literacy and education as an administratively and financially non-viable proposition. Literacy and post-literacy.

Planning the pedagogy of literacy

Post-literacy planning depends on an understanding of literacy. Mustaq Ahmed (1982), in a publication on behalf of the Directorate of Adult Education of the Government of India, sets the minimum standard of literacy to be attained by participants of the initial adult education course as follows:

Reading

- \$ Reading aloud with correct pausation and emphasis, simple literature on topics related to the concerns and interests of learners;
- \$ Reading silently, and without spelling out the words, neo-literate reading material at a speed of approximately 50 words per minute;
- \$ Reading with understanding road signs, posters, simple instructions, newspapers for neo-literates, etc;

- \$ Following a simple written message relating to participants' work or life;
- \$ Reading and writing of numerical symbols from 1 to 100.

Writing

- \$ Copying with understanding at a speed of at least 10 words per minute;
- \$ Taking dictation at a speed of not less than 7 words per minute;
- \$ Writing with proper spacing and alignment;
- \$ Keeping a record of income and expenditure relating to day-to-day affairs;
- \$ Writing short letters, applications, etc., independently, filling out cheques, forms etc.

Numeracy

- \$ Doing simple calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division up to three digits;
- \$ Maintaining savings banks/co-operative societies' pass books and accounts, and learning to calculate simple interest;
- \$ Applying a working knowledge of metric weights and measures; learning to take measurements and weights and recording them;
- \$ Having an idea of proportion and area and their use in different household jobs and occupations' (Ahmed, 1982, pp. 12-3).

The above standards may not be attained by one primer alone, but through several linked teaching materials and approaches, e.g., Primer I and II, work-book, arithmetic book, readers, visual aids, discussions, etc. The primer is thus an essential part of a total package.

From these targets to the reduction of illiteracy, on the one hand, and the expansion of pals incorporating the right to learn, on the other, is a long march. The National Literacy Mission emphasized the need to introduce initial literacy through the local dialects or mother tongues. But its members were not clear as to how acquisition of literacy through local dialects could lead to literacy in the standard language. The apparent failure of the Mahboobnagar experiment in ensuring literacy in standard Telugu (Deshmukh and Durgabai, 1957) haunted the National Literacy Mission planners. However, the expression of allegiance to the mother tongue received academic approbation, and the lack of serious research and the non-implementation of mother tongues were covered up.

Creating a literate environment

According to guidelines issued by the Directorate of Adult Education, material for the newly literate should be written in the standard language of the state, although material could also be developed in the most widely used dialects. In a country where there is so much divergence between the home language and the standard language on the one hand, and between minor, minority and majority languages on the other, this prescription is a reflection of the prevailing confusion. Even when it is admitted that material should also be developed in the more widely used dialects, how and when this would be linked with the standard is not mentioned. Literacy is a language-related activity and yet such casualness towards language permeates the literacy scene.

Another interesting phenomenon is presented by literacy through minority languages. There are two different kinds of programme available in this area. In some cases, the first-level book is in the minority language. At the second level, the standard language is used for 25 per cent of the instruction, while at the third level standard language is used the whole time. In other cases, literacy

is taught through the minority language at the first three levels and a transfer to the state standard language is attempted at the fourth level. At that level, it may be that the teachers do not know the language of the learners and vice versa. In any case, in typical statements about minimum levels of learning there is no effort to express competencies in terms of diverse dialects or languages known to the learner.

It is admitted that the words used in literacy and post-literacy materials are not extensively used in the regions. It is further admitted that whenever localized material is used over a large area, feedback becomes difficult and sometimes contradictory signals are received. A question often asked but seldom answered is how we can deal with folk material, which is often in dialects, if our aim is literacy in the standard language.

There is tension between the production of graded text books and the multiplicity of material presenting contents suited to the interests of different age-groups. Since books on the environment, science, history, fiction and folk literature are written in different styles of the same language, they are ignored by literacy managers who are oblivious to the local realities and for whom a single variety and a single style is the norm. The minimum levels of learning do not therefore take into account the bilingual child, the multilingual classroom and the above-average child. In our aim to universalize education, we pull education down to its lowest rungs.

While talking about competency or ability, experts often get entangled with time and format. In formal education, the curriculum does not differentiate between a child from Bombay, a metropolitan city, and another from Bastar, a tribal majority area. It is presumed that within the same time frame, and with the same textbook teaching method and assessment procedures, both the children would complete the same course with equal proficiency. Literacy programmes are frequently designed as one-off programmes, with a common core of material or a six-month time frame. When people who have no understanding of language acquisition, are out of touch with the classroom and have never soiled their hands with material production take decisions about programmes, nothing better can be expected.

It is true that whenever a spoken language is written down, this involves standardization. What is overlooked is the fact that the standardised version is not uniform. We move from one kind of multiform code in the oral tradition to a different kind of multiform code in the written. So long as we are running after certification and formal equivalence, the recognizable goals of literacy, reading for pleasure and information, and writing for self-development and functional purposes are bound to be lost.

Unless there is clear understanding of the structure and function of language, the nature of language acquisition, the structure of orality, the process of transition from orality to literacy, the implications of such transition and the nature of material in bringing about a behavioural change, there is very little hope of success in literacy.

A brief history of an innovative project

The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) initiated a programme to study and bridge the gap between what the minor- and the minority-language-speaking children 'actually know' and what they are 'expected to know'. From observations and cursory assessment of minority and tribal schools, the conclusion was reached that the average child in these schools hardly knows 10-20 per cent of what he or she is expected to know at that stage. The schools, located amid oceans of illiteracy (in Rajasthan women's literacy is 1 per cent in the areas under study), used a language alien to the community. The content being equally foreign, the distance between the home and the school

appeared unbridgeable. Three factors confronted the researchers simultaneously. Firstly, the code distance between the home language and the school language had to be negotiated. Secondly, the sociolinguistic distance between the tribal and non-tribal varieties of the language had to be synthesized, leading to the creation of a standard. Thirdly, the psycholinguistic problem of attitudes towards the mother tongue and the prestigious school language had to be overcome. What was worse was the re-creation of the patterns of life in the village in the seating plan of the classroom, where backward castes took a back seat on the fringe of the seating arrangement and were spoken to in the mother tongue. The school is often run by a single teacher, with hardly one hour of instruction per class per day. With the permissible absence or non-attendance of teachers and students, it is not at all surprising that by the 5th standard the students have not covered 50 per cent of their 3rd standard material. It is thus clear that the deficiency is not in the so-called backward child, but in the context and in the input.

The CIIL innovation was dictated by the need to use oral forms and dialect varieties, and to organize teaching and learning based on diversity. The phonetic, syntactic and semantic organization of Waaadi and Hindi being somewhat different, one could not take automatic acquisition of Hindi for granted without intervention. Further, the methods and materials used for performing tasks such as the transition from the oral to the written, from the dialect to the standard and from one standard to another, with a view to linking language varieties, presented a challenge to the project team. The bilingual transfer model developed by CIIL was employed to create an environment conducive to involving the community and bridging the gap between the home and the school. A strategy was adopted for transferring the skills of listening and speaking to reading and writing in additive progression. The material was primarily in the majority backward oral dialect, with progressive synthesis with the high class oral and the standard written. While bringing about this synthesis or progressing in the direction of standardization, it was postulated that the standard is a range and not a point. It was further postulated that the wider the range, the greater the possibility of its acceptance of different components recognized by that language. Whether they are recognized or not, the fact remains that each standard contains competing forms. The competing vocabulary and alternative ways of expressing meaning are a reflection of tolerance and lend greater credibility to the standard.

Language engineering

From the engineering perspective, the first step was the linguistic analysis of the spoken mother tongues. A clear understanding of the phonological system was necessary for the graphisation of the mother tongue. The second step was to give the spoken language a written form. The script of the state language was chosen since the state language is the medium of secondary and tertiary education.

The state language script, once it was adopted for the spoken language, was then presented in groups by similarity of shape and contrastive observation. Materials produced in the spoken language and link material in the school language were tried out, modified and finally adopted as curricular material. Linguists, practicing teachers, curriculum designers and parents who were authentic speakers of the unwritten language collaborated in the production of material. A major part was played by transfer exercises that used series of phonological correspondence sets, grammatical paradigm sets and semantic sets. The attempt was made to implement the transfer from oral to written, and from home language to school language.

The transfer was to be effected by a judicious time allocation to both languages. In the first year, 80 per cent of the class time was devoted to the reading and writing of the mother tongue, whereas 20 per cent of the class time was spent on spoken skills in the linking language. By gradual adjustment of time, the time allocation was reversed by the end of the primary stage, when 80 per cent

of the time was devoted to the reading and writing of the linking language, and 20 per cent of the time to the reading and writing of the mother tongue.

A training programme was established with the following goals:

- \$ to create awareness of the need for mother tongue education;
- \$ to create awareness of dialect and standard language, and geographical and social variations;
- \$ to create awareness of the need to link the mother tongue with the school language;
- \$ to build confidence about the substantiality of the mother tongue, its potential capability, and the possibility of creating a formal grammar and dictionaries;
- \$ to create awareness of the distinctions between the concepts of first, second and foreign languages on the one hand, and the first, second and third languages actually used, on the other;
- \$ to systematically explain bilingualism and the concept of transfer and the technology for transfer;
- \$ to explain the structure of the material;
- \$ to offer an insight into linguistic analysis and its relevance for materials production, teaching, testing and error analysis; and
- \$ to create awareness of the differences between teaching a language, teaching about a language and teaching through a language.

The effect was electric. By bringing the home to the school, it was possible to recreate a little bit of school at home. The participation of the community in the process of schooling resulted in the diminution of drop-out. The motivation created by the use of the home language not only resulted in better attendance, but also better performance.

Two general assumptions can be inferred from this result. The first is that the children of a minority-language groups are ready to study through the medium of the linking majority language. The second is that an integrated approach to both the languages facilitates skill transfer. It must, however, be noted that the time allocation may be adjusted to reflect the distance between the codes and the nature and degree of adult bilingualism existing in a given area.

The experiment was highly innovative. Today, either the same paradigm or modified versions of it are being employed in different programmes all over the country. In order to create a literacy environment for children by giving form to the spoken content, and to ensure maintenance of that environment by creating new contents in the acquired form, is a major challenge. The CIIL experiment is a tiny step towards meeting this challenge.

Linguistic configuration and language policy

The question of using the mother tongue for literacy and primary education is of extreme importance. Colonial language policy was so detrimental that it resulted in the rejection of mother tongues as instructional languages by their speakers. People talking about colonial education have blamed either the orientalist, the occidentalists or the missionaries. But the role of the Indians themselves in shaping colonial education is often overlooked.

The Indians who saw in English education a potential springboard into general administrative and professional jobs naturally demanded English education. Moreover, the difference in the quality between mother-tongue schools and English schools convinced the Indian leaders of the time that this was the thin end of educational discrimination. The Indians themselves demanded English as the medium of instruction, as they imagined that the mere fact of knowing the language would make them equal to whites, or at least would free them from the bondage of caste and give them access to rank, status and privilege in society. They also thought that by training young men and women in concepts of liberty, fraternity and equality, which the colonialists themselves preached but did not practice, they could fight the colonialists on their own turf and defeat them. Once this attitude prevailed, the post-colonial era also saw the same demands for the use of English as the medium of instruction. The consensus that had emerged among the colonizers and the colonized in the colonial times continued as the elite emerged and became internal colonialists in the post-colonial era. That this experience is not restricted to India and is a phenomenon found in developing Africa can be attested by the use of the term 'internal colonialism' in the context of Africa.

Language represents a cultural code, but at the same time it is a political code. That language was used as a weapon to fight the colonizers is evidence of this. That language can be separated from its cultural matrix and used as a subtle instrument of oppression can be seen from the attack on mother tongues all around the world: the Mandarinisation of Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China; the thrust of Spanish over the Guarani speakers in Paraguay; Russian in the USSR; English and French in Africa; and English, Hindi and major languages in India.

There is no doubt that all culture and consciousness are coterminous with language. In a multilingual setting, culture and consciousness are shared by many languages. It is often pointed out that through the instrumentality of a foreign language, the elites have achieved success. There is nothing wrong, therefore, in the replacement of mother tongues by a foreign language. It must, however, be emphasized that through a foreign language it is possible to attain 'success' in life, but not 'cultural coherence'. The anomie, alienation and cultural blindness arising from such replacement pursue 'successful' persons all through their lives. This ultimately leads to change in cultural norms and standards, and the struggle for emancipation results in a new and sinister bondage.

There are those politicians and bureaucrats who speak with forked tongues. They give the slogan of mother-tongue education for the many and foreign language education for the progeny of the elite. The ordinary person's perception that these leaders are not far from the colonizers despite a different skin colour is close to reality. The fight for the mother tongue is about giving large numbers of people the chance to reach decision-making positions in society. The fight for the mother tongue is a fight against the limited new class, which has been spawned by the modern educational process and forms the hard core of the new colonialism.

English in India opens the way to urban life and helps in obtaining well-paid jobs. It is a language of proven utility which holds the lure of international contact and communication. But as a replacement for the mother tongue, this language makes the neighbour a stranger and loosens the bonds that hold the family and the community together. As a supplement to the mother tongue it could become a strength, but as a substitute it is a debilitation. The common people's suspicion of the

polemical perorations of the elite is so strong that they are sceptical of their mother tongue education and tilt towards early English education.

There is another dimension to the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Bronckart (1985), speaking about the teaching of French as the mother tongue, argues that,

what actually happens is not the teaching of the mother tongue. but a process in which that basic language is expanded and improved. It might seem a simple assignment on the surface, but throughout the world it creates frustration and failure. In a country as educationally advanced as France, it is still estimated that 45 per cent of pupils are failures by the end of the last year in primary school, and that the main cause of this high failure rate is the mother tongue.

Every language develops styles and registers appropriate to its needs, and school language is often a variety inaccessible to the ordinary user of the mother tongue. Mother tongue teaching involves understanding of the process of elaboration, expansion and development of the mother tongue into a standard. It is most unfortunate that while there is constant renewal of instructional methodology of second and foreign languages, there is seldom any research into the pedagogy of the mother tongue.

The variety of standard language used in school is the variety developed by the elite. To the common user of the language it is quite esoteric. But there is constant movement, bringing the written closer to the spoken and fashioning the spoken on the model of the written. There is therefore an organic relationship among the varieties constituting a range. To learn this is different from learning a foreign language

The African experience

A. Babs Fafunwa (1990) has listed the UNESCO efforts for the promotion of mother tongues in Africa. The University of Ife's six- year primary project in Yoruba (1970-78) is a landmark in mother- tongue experimentation. The two major recommendations of this project are:

- (a) that all African languages **B** major, medium and minor **B** be recognized and developed as national languages as a matter of national policy by all African states; and
- (b) that each language be made the medium of education for at least the first six years of the child's formal education and for mass literacy programmes for adults. As Fafunwa further points out, the Yoruba project, adopted by the Oyo State Government in Nigeria and involving 85,000 pupils, has proved conclusively that:
 - \$ the learner lost nothing and indeed gained cognitively and linguistically by exposure to six years of primary education through the medium of Yoruba;
 - \$ the exposure to Yoruba as medium of instruction and English as a second language for the first six years did not in any way adversely affect achievement in secondary and tertiary education; and
 - \$ the learner understood mathematical and scientific concepts better when instructed first in the mother tongue and later in English.

On the basis of these findings, the guidelines suggested by Fafunwa (1990) for African states are:

	Primary (6 years)	Secondary (6 years)	Tertiary (4 years)
Medium of instruction	Mother tongue/ community language	National language	National language
Subject(s)	National language	Mother tongue/ Community lang./ Associate lang. (Eng., Fr., Port.)	Mother tongue/ Community lang. Associate lang. (Eng., Fr., Port.)

Despite the overwhelming support given by such research findings to mother tongue primary education and the fact that the right to an education in one's mother tongue is recorded in Article 27 of the International Agreement on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1966, the UNESCO colloquium on 'Language, Identity and Communication' of 1986 struck a discordant note. The colloquium not only asserted 'the right to gain access, through instruction in one or several international languages, to scientific and technological advances on the world scale', but recommended the 'acquisition of practical multilingual skills in infancy, before that stage of linguistic and intellectual development at which the learning of languages other than the mother tongue becomes increasingly difficult' (UNESCO, 1986, p. 203). It should be noted that UNESCO's contribution towards mother-tongue education during the last four decades has been outstanding and commendable, but there is in such statements no recognition of the importance of the initial establishment of a child's identity through the mother tongue.

References

- Ahmed, M. 1982. *How to Write Primers for Adults*. New Delhi, Directorate of Adult Education, Government of India.
- Bronckart, J. P. 1985. *The Language Sciences: An Educational Challenge*. Paris, UNESCO.
- Deshmukh, D. 1957. *Report on Pilot Project in the Educational Literacy of 46 Villages*. Andhra Mahila Sagha, Hyderabad.
- Directorate of Adult Education. *Books for Post-Literacy: Guidelines*. New Delhi, Directorate of Adult Education, Government of India.
- Fafunwa, A. B. 1990. Who is Afraid of the Use of African Languages in Education? Contribution to: *Propos africains sur l'éducation pour tous*. Selection of articles presented on the occasion of the regional consultation on Education for All, Dakar, 27-30 November 1989, Dakar, UNESCO/BREDA/UNICEF.
- Government of India. 1986. *National Policy on Education: Programme of Action*. New Delhi, Government of India.
- UNESCO. 1986. *Language, Identity and Communication*. Colloquium Report. Paris, UNESCO.

12. LANGUAGE, ORALITY AND LITERACY: AN EXPERIENCE OF MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM ORALITY TO WRITING

Malini Ghose and Dipta Bhog

How do newly literate women make the transition from orality to writing? What problems and politics does it generate? If there is an asymmetry of power between the language of speech and writing, what is the nature of interchange between the two?

This study will explore these questions, in a preliminary way, on the basis of our experience of collectively evolving, with newly literate women, a bi-monthly broadsheet in which the latter defined not only the thematics and content of the broadsheet but also engaged in its writing and production. The broadsheet, *Mahila Dakiya* (Postwoman), was a collaborative venture of the National Institute of Adult Education (New Delhi) and Mahila Samakhya, a programme for women's empowerment, in Banda district in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh²⁶. Over the past five years Mahila Samakhya in Banda has addressed a number of issues - violence against women, struggles against landlords and forest produce contractors, education, health and water. A particularly innovative intervention has been training illiterate rural women as handpump mechanics. This intervention has had a number of positive spin-offs **B** a growing demand for literacy, the acquisition of new skills such as masonry and an interest in information on issues such as the environment, health, etc.

The approach to literacy and material production

Though the idea of the material-production project arose from these emerging needs, it is important to understand the context of the women's demand for literacy. This demand grew out of their involvement with Mahila Samakhya, an experience that confirmed their own knowledge and skills, and encouraged them to question, criticize and reflect on their life conditions. Literacy, in this process, was seen as a skill that would enable women to deal with their environment from a position of strength. As they were active participants in the process of learning every dimension of their life-world - their experiences of struggle, joy, folklore, indigenous ways of knowing - became a part of the agenda for learning

Transferring skills in material production: the process

Skills related to material production were imparted to a group of fifteen women during three residential workshops. This core group was differentiated in terms of levels of literacy. It included sahayoginis, sakhis

²⁶ The programme covers 120 villages in two development blocks - Manikpur and Tindwari. The backbone of the programme consists of village-level workers (Sakhis) who are poor, illiterate, low-caste women, and block-level workers (Sahayoginis). The latter coordinate the work of 10 villages and have some formal education (up to 5th grade). Planning and implementation are the work of three persons at the District Office.

and handpump mechanics. The training was in the nature of a 'hands-on' learning exercise of editing, layout, illustration, content selection and planning. The process followed during the workshops was based on group work involving collective writing and planning. Editing and corrections were carried out in the smaller groups after discussions in a larger forum, as this encouraged the active participation of the women. The role of the facilitators also changed in each workshop, from a more direct interventionist role to a facilitative one limited to providing specific input or raising questions. While the end-product of every workshop was the same the production of an issue of *Mahila Dakiya* the focus of each varied²⁷.

The issue of language and the attendant dilemmas faced in the transition from orality to writing was a common thread running through all the workshops. The 'culture' of Mahila Samakhya was reflected in the language of *Mahila Dakiya*: a creative fusion of Hindi with the local language, Bundeli.

Dealing with the issue of language

This intermingling was neither easy nor free of political undertones, given the contradictions and asymmetry of power that exists in the Indian context between the use of official standardized languages (in our case Hindi) and the local dialects. The complications were compounded by the fact that we worked with a minor sub-dialect of Bundeli a tribal version known as Bunfri²⁸.

While there are numerous points of difference in the debate on the interrelationship between local, regional and national languages, two extreme positions of relevance from the standpoint of this paper are:

- \$ Any standardization, whether national or regional, represents the cultural hegemony of the elite, subsuming the identity of subaltern groups outside of these.
- \$ The project of nationalism demands that local or regional languages must ultimately make place for a standardized 'national' language. The importance accorded to regional languages and

²⁷ The first workshop marked the important step of moving from a purely oral mode of communication to include the written word. The workshop primarily focused on building the confidence of participants through role plays, sharing of experiences, discussions and other creative exercises. As an initial exercise to break the psychological fears of writing, certain key issues were identified during the discussions, and participants in groups were asked to write down, or illustrate, what they had discussed or enacted.

The second workshop moved from recapitulating concepts previously introduced to an in-depth analysis of issues relating to languages, journal editing, various forms of writing, content, layout, etc. The importance of obtaining feedback was established by incorporating changes based on the core group's experiences of reading or distributing the broadsheet in the villages.

The third workshop consolidated the understanding developed in the first two workshops. The emphasis was on encouraging the groups to take on responsibility for all aspects of production. The fourth issue of *Mahila Dakiya* was brought out by the core group independently of the facilitators.

²⁸ In terms of the history of Indian languages Hindi, as it is spoken and written today, is the youngest - barely 100 years old. It is a mixture of elements from Sanskrit, Hindustani, Urdu and an assortment of regional and local languages. During the anti-colonial movement in India, Hindi was evolved by the political elite, often self-consciously, as an important means of expression for forging a national identity.

After political Independence in 1947, an attempt was made to Sanskritize Hindi with the ostensible aim of standardizing and modernizing it. With the objective of making it a 'national' language of administration and education, scholars drew upon Sanskrit to coin new terms and words. Therefore Hindi grew not from the life and experience of the users, but by dictat, making it increasingly alien to the people.

On January 26, 1950, the Indian Constitution declared Hindi as the national language. This was met by stiff opposition from various states in the south. Amendments to the Constitution gave regional languages the status of official languages and sanctioned teaching in the 'mother tongue' at the primary school level. However, despite an official recognition in the Eighth Schedule of 18 languages, confusion still prevails in many states over the relationship between standard regional language and local dialect, and which of the two constitutes the mother tongue.

dialects here is short-term and purely instrumental. This is the approach of various adult education efforts in India, where regional languages or local dialects have been used functionally with the final objective of teaching Hindi (in the north).

While we are in sympathy with the first view we think it is deficient in one respect. It fails to give importance to the fact that official languages are also languages of governance and power, and it is imperative that marginal groups enter into a critical engagement with them.

Moving towards a Hindi-Bundeli mix

The fact of evolving a Hindi-Bundeli Mix not only reflected the interactive and dialogical nature of Mahila Samakhya but was also an appreciation of some of the latter factors mentioned above. The work of sakhis and handpump mechanics brought them into constant contact with various state apparatuses. For these women, therefore, Hindi was not just another language of self-expression, but an iconic symbol of power and the powerful. Remaining outside or simply rejecting the mainstream language was seen by them both as a sign of and a continued acceptance of their marginalization. Yet the prominence given to women's ways of expressing and communicating their perceptions orally through songs, over into the language they used in the written mode. Rather than a conscious introduction of 'local flavour' into the mainstream language, their idiom, imagery and life context mingled organically with Hindi.

This combination also grew out of the nature of interaction between facilitators and participants. As facilitators, our backgrounds were important given our active role as interveners in the transfer of skills. We speak and write Hindi, have undergone years of formal education and are aware of the pedagogical aspects of literacy teaching and material production for new literates. Aspects of reading, writing, sentence construction and length of articles were therefore of concern to us, for introducing the written mode. The participants were of two kinds, those rooted in the local dialect and those who had a command over Hindi while maintaining close links with the local dialect. Given the approach and perspective outlined above, the coming together of these participants and the facilitators meant an intermingling of their language abilities.

The group saw *Mahila Dakiya* as a means of communicating and sharing their work and experience with a wider audience beyond the narrow geographical confines of their block B Manikpur. There were variations in the dialect from one block to another. The dialect of Manikpur differed from that of neighbouring Tindwari block, another area where Mahila Samakhya works. We decided that it would be prudent to draw upon a pool of common words that the women with, or intimately associated with their interaction with each other in the local dialect. For instance *mansaba* instead of *aadmi* (men); *meheriya* for *aurat* (women); *buiya* for *ladki* (young girl); *neek* instead of *accha* (nice); *gaonan* for *gaon* (village); *gharwa* for *ghar* (home), etc.

Another problem was transcribing the dialect into Deviiagiri script. The dialect, if accurately written, would be a complex mix of diacritic signs, conjoints and double consonants. To expect newly literate women with their limited reading abilities to read this complex script at an initial phase of literacy acquisition would have been counter-productive.

Breaking the hegemony of Hindi

Striking a balance was not always a simple task. Juxtaposed with their fluent case in the local dialect, the sakhis constantly used difficult and formal Hindi to emphasize their inclusion in the literate world. In a writing-exercise which detailed the responsibilities of village water committees, the women used officialese *parantu* (however), *tatha* (additionally), *ityadi* (etc.) **B** without themselves understanding their meanings. When asked what they meant, they replied that they had heard these words being used. This predilection for jargon among new literates clearly involves a negation of their spoken language, reflecting the internationalization of the belief that the local language is inferior and an indicator of low status in the social structure.

This problem was further accentuated by the women who had some formal education as they constantly tried to dominate and assert their superior command over Hindi and the written word. The facilitators had to reiterate that writing in a language that was easy, accessible and open to incorporating the nuances of the local language was of value. This involved carving a space for the creative use of language by breaking down preconceived notions of 'proper' language use, syntax, structure, etc. To infuse their writing with the vibrancy of their spoken language they would have to draw upon its imagery, tones, textures and experimental insights. Therefore, certain local idioms or turns of phrase which carry an emotive appeal and inflection were used. For example, *bisri n hamka jeevan ma* (won't forget all our lives), *chakiya chulha* (ceaselessness of housework **B** used in the context of women's lives), *roti-gobar* (menial household tasks, low-skilled, low caste, mindless **B** a phrase often used to describe women), *kamata baba tohe nariyal charaybe* (a phrase invoking the blessings of the local deity 'Kamta Baba' when something special is desired).

This opened up an entire new world of written communication techniques for the facilitators as well. What might have been a dry, mechanical account describing the handpump mechanics' first ever official study visit to Udaipur in Rajasthan state was transferred into a poem which resonated with the spirit of discovery and wonder, rich in detail. Seen through the eyes of women, many of whom had never travelled outside their village, it touched on the environment, habitat, clothes, categories of handpumps and the problem of guinea worms in Udaipur (see Appendix 1 to this chapter).

Resolving contradictions: some concrete instances

Another strong notion that prevailed among the participants was the formal nature of the written word **B** that is, anything written should provide information or instruct people about what is beneficial to them. This was the only kind of written material they had been exposed to. Participants almost automatically began taking on this tone in their writing. While writing a health and hygiene piece, the women constantly instructed the villager not to bathe near the handpump or to feed their cattle water directly from the pump. We observed that they repeatedly referred to some UNICEF material that was available which used this didactic style.

However, when we suggested that they might consider turning this into a firstperson account of 'The story of a germ' they were completely unnerved and unable to write a narrative **B** this despite their obvious narrative skills in the oral mode. It was only after much discussion and many drafts that they were able to grasp the concept.

This clear categorization in their mind **B** narratives are oral and information is written **B** was broken down most effectively by bringing in the element of humour in their writing. The experience of riding a cycle was not written up as an achievement of the programme detailing the number of cycles that come in as part of the handpump repair project. Instead it became a romantic, adventure poem in which the women, apart from describing the grace with which their feet moved over the

pedals, narrated the embarrassment experienced by the 'beloved' of one woman, the pillion rider, as he hangs his feet from the cycle, shying from meeting anyone from the village (see Appendix 2 to this chapter).

Yet the formality of the written word was not negated completely. Apart from demarcating certain columns as Information Columns, where Hindi dominated, care was taken to introduce local idiom and proverbs only after much discussion and consideration. In the case of the item on home remedies for common health problems in the area, quantities for ingredients were indicated in the locally prevalent measures (like *chuiya* for one small corn cob or a *lota* for a pitcherful, *ganth* for a handful) rather than in (grams or spoonfuls. This was a departure from health-related material even in Hindi, where measurements are invariably based on the metric system.

While sharing a piece of writing in the larger group on one occasion, a particular phrase became the focus of heated debate between women from Manikpur block and those from Tindwari. The Tindwari women said that the phrase would be interpreted in their area as a term for a 'loose woman'. The other group argued that they would explain and clarify in what context the term had been used. This raised the issue of how words that might be commonly used in oral communication need to be used selectively and responsibly in the written form. The differences in the two systems of communication took a while to sink in. Participants considered the fact that once printed, the word would be out of their reach to change, interpret and explain. They therefore could not use words that were situational, contextual or ambiguous. Also, to understand that the printed word is open to varied interpretations by the reader was difficult to absorb for those accustomed to listening to, explaining and clarifying issues verbally.

Further, in the oral mode one relies on voice modulation, tone, pauses, gestures, etc., to communicate a range of thoughts. That this in the written mode is translated into punctuation marks, indentation and demarcating paragraphs was not comprehensible to the group. That a full stop indicates a pause, a sentence expresses a complete thought, a paragraph a completely new point, or a question mark means an inquiring tone are some of the complexities that are yet to be discussed and internalized.

The limitation of using local dialect extensively for new literates came up clearly in the case of songs. While songs in *Mahila Samakhyā* had been a powerful medium in motivating women, transferring popular songs to the written form was problematic. It was impossible for newly literate women to either write or read their own songs, reflecting the wide gap between their oral and written capabilities. This meant that while songs were important, they needed to be modified or even composed and presented differently, keeping the medium in mind.

Conclusion

The handpump project and work with women on gender issues brought with it a new vocabulary. This included not merely new Hindi words such as *marammat* (to repair) and *kitanu* (germs), but also English terms such as meeting, training committee, mahila mechanic (women mechanics). These words were popularized through the broadsheet amongst a large audience.

The fourth issue of *Mahila Dakiya* was produced independently by the group and is indicative of the skills that had been transferred. An examination of the fourth broadsheet in terms of language shows that the local dialect finds an important place in the poetic narrative, local sayings and some riddles. There is limited fusion between Hindi and Bundeli although they appear as parallel modes of language use. While these last three workshops have been able to establish the legitimacy of using Bundeli as a means of written expression, a negotiation of creative space between the two still needs

to be worked out. It is our contention that, as the women gain greater control over their writing and reading skills, they will be in a stronger position to handle this complex process of language integration more deftly.

Appendix 1

An Ode to Udaipur

(A free translation of a poem describing an exposure visit made by the handpump mechanics of Banda to Udaipur in Rajasthan)

Listen O listen, my dear young one
Listen to this tale of Udaipur.
From Banda to Udaipur we went to roam
And saw things just like back home:
Women who've learnt to repair
Handpumps which they do with care.
Their pumps are Mark II, ours Mark III
But otherwise they were much like we
Except for a couple of things, we guess:
The way they live, they speak, they dress,
Metres and metres make the skirts of women
And metres wind round the heads of men
Riding camels, laden with gold.
The men too wear earrings, we're told.
And the most amazing of all this is
That there is built one home per hill.
A less pleasant sight which could make you all squirm
Is the five-foot long Naru, the dread guinea worm.
Cautious of Naru you must remain,
It lives in water and causes great pain.
And so we came back to near and dear
With memories for those who will hear.
So listen when I tell you
Listen my dear.

Appendix 2

My Tale of the Cycle

(A free translation of a poem describing a rural woman's story of learning to ride a cycle)

Listen O listen, my dear young one,
Listen to this new story I tell
Of my village, where women now
Ride the bicycle.
No shame no fear they feel
When they perform the amazing feat
Of managing to stay
On a cycle's seat.
See them stop and stare,
See all those who dare
And swear
That a woman can never **B** ever
Ride a bicycle.
Wonder how I reach the handpump?
When all I do is jump
And pedal while ringing the bell.
And my beloved now begs and pleads
As he sits behind hanging his feet,
And every time he sees a crowd
He shies away and demands a shroud. Oh, these are changing times, young one,
Changing times.

13. MULTILINGUALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM IN LATIN AMERICA: MATTERS OF IDENTITY OR OBSTACLES TO MODERNIZATION?

Utta von Gleich

The following contribution is divided into two parts. The first part gives an outline of the socio-historical conditions that have contributed to the specific features of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Latin America. A selective comparison with the colonial history of Africa explains the significant differences in the continental language profiles.

The second part introduces Ecuador as a multiethnic and multilingual country. The American Indian communities in Ecuador have attracted international attention because of their policy of autonomy.

Historical survey

Although the political and intellectual élites in Latin America hardly miss an opportunity to refer with pride to their unique pre-Colombian cultural heritage as a characteristic of their identity, they have great difficulty in actually dealing with individual and societal multilingualism although almost all Latin American countries have already incorporated multiculturalism into their respective constitutions.

A short historical review is indispensable in order to understand the current polarization between people who have command of the language and culture and people who do not.

The year 1992, the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the Latin American continent by the Europeans, clearly reflected the ideological split between Latin America and Europe, or more specifically the fact that the historical relationship between them has never been resolved, in particular the connection with Spain. The inner conflicts are epitomized by the launching of numerous projects and discussions on how to commemorate that year after five centuries of colonial history **B** as a discovery, as an encounter of cultures or as a rediscovery (*descubrimiento, encuentro, reencuentro*) **B** and the mobilization of the descendants of the original American Indian population against such a celebration. This uncertainty demonstrates the failure of nation-building on the European model, that is, of integrating all population groups into one nation in most Latin American states.

The arbitrary creation of administrative units by the Spanish Crown in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries without any regard for ethnic affiliation laid the foundation stone for multilingualism and multiculturalism in the states. As the Viceroyalties, however, had been founded in the spirit of Hispanicism, under the unifying, protection of the Christian religion and a single common language (Spanish/Portuguese), multilingualism and multi-culturalism were regarded as an obstacle to the unification process already at that time.

Accordingly, the use of the indigenous inter-regional *linguae francae*, Nahuatl in Mesoamerica and Quechua in South America, in missionary and state administrations cannot primarily be

classified as a policy for the protection of culture and language, but should rather be judged as instrumental.

This by no means reduces the considerable credit due to some representatives of the Catholic Church, who documented the indigenous languages by means of grammars, vocabularies, multilingual missionary texts and records of the oral tradition. This is all the truer as the majority of languages did not have a written culture, except for the Maya, whose hieroglyphs have still not been fully deciphered. In the course of the colonization process a group of bilingual mediators on both sides was created for the first time. They were regarded as suspect and dangerous in the discussions on language planning held at the councils of the Catholic Church.

The attitude of the indigenous population towards the new rules reveals two main trends:

- The Highland cultures of the American Indians (Inka, Maya) contested the claim to power of the new masters because of their own state organization. Eventually they were defeated politically, but they are still offering cultural resistance.
- The Lowland American Indians on the Atlantic Coast and in the Caribbean who were exposed to heterogenous European conquerors (British, Danish, French, Spanish and Portuguese), and also encountered imported slaves from Africa with different languages and cultures, tended rather to linguistic assimilation, especially as they could survive only as plantation workers living in isolation from the rest of the society.

The violent removal of the American Indian upper class and their replacement by representatives of the Spanish Crown in church and administration marked the beginning of a massive process of suppression of indigenous languages and cultures in America.

The rivalries that increased in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries between the Governors, who were still regularly despatched from Spain, and the descendants of the Spanish already born on the continent entailed a further suppression of the linguistic and cultural concerns of the original American Indian population.

The main aim of the independence movements was the separation from the motherland, Spain, to which end the American Indian mercenaries were merely instruments.

Demographic substitution increased. War and disease considerably reduced the American Indian population, and a *mestizo* class which sought to join the Spanish upper class came into being.

Despite the prohibition and formal abolition of slavery in the young republics, which became independent between 1810 and 1826, living conditions for the remaining American Indian lower class only changed very slightly. These American Indians became free wage slaves on the large estates and in the mines.

Only after the boom years of industrialization and urbanization at the beginning of the twentieth century did a desire to return to the old American heritage become discernible, especially in Mexico and Peru, in the so-called *indigenismo* movements, of socialist orientation. Like similar movements in Europe, these were led by middle-class intellectuals.

In the mid-1950s, the idea of consciously planning progress and development gained momentum. For the first time, several countries consciously considered education for the working masses in their development plans. Studies such as the *Estudios Conjuntos sobre la Integración Económica de América Latina* (ECIEL) programme indicate this process of change. Basic education was now also to prepare the indigenous rural and urban masses for work in industry and commerce. The élitist education of the upper class was not affected.

Following this short overview, it now seems reasonable to compare the characteristic features of colonization in Africa in order to understand the respective national language profiles resulting from the Colonial Age.

Determinants of the present-day continental language profile: a comparison between Latin America and Africa

While Latin America was marked by a phase of intensive colonization lasting over 300 years before the formal independence of the individual countries at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Africa was only affected by the second major wave of European expansion in the middle of the nineteenth century. Most African territories, however, already attained formal independence between 1960 and 1990. The colonial policy of the main colonizing powers, Great Britain and France, was very different from the Hispanic policy. They also destroyed social structures and deprived the colonized powers of their wealth, but the original population was not systematically exterminated or estranged from their languages and cultures.

Colonial rule

America's demography was changed completely because of new settlement and occupation of land, while only a few British and French colonial officers governed and administered the new colonies in Africa, supported by a local stratum of selected leaders. There was no intention of creating a mixed population, and any such persons were a rarity.

Latin America had a long fight in order to attain independence from the motherland, while in Africa there were only scattered uprisings against colonial rule. Independence was rather a consequence of a planned retreat from direct rule by the colonial powers.

Small local groups took over power, in general with colonial education and training, so that the real change of power was sociologically nowhere near as radical as in Latin America. Many indigenous forms of society survived and a parallel state hierarchy was formed on the colonial pattern. The relationship between these was marked by an alternating balance and tension.

Language and sociolinguistic peculiarities

According to Gerhardt (1990, p. 174), Africa is the continent with the greatest linguistic diversity. Depending on how a language is defined, the figure varies between 1,250 and 2,500, while in Latin America there are only between 125 and 250 languages. In Africa, 15 per cent of the world population, living on 20 per cent of the surface of the earth, speak 30 per cent of human languages.

The linguistic diversity in African states can be traced to the fact that in around fifty countries an average of twenty-five to fifty indigenous languages are spoken. In Latin American countries today, on the other hand, a small number of indigenous languages **B** between five and twenty-five **B** are used by the socio-economic minorities in opposition to a colonial majority language used by the *mestizo* class.

It is of socio-linguistic significance that in Africa only a small proportion of the population (10 to 20 per cent), i.e., the ruling class, have mastered the European lingua franca, mostly as a second language. Local multilingualism persists, not only because of the regional and geographical divisions between many tribes. It also remains alive in urban settings as only few people need or have access to European colonial languages. Indigenous African multilingualism often means trilingualism, a

combination of the local language as a first language with a regional second language, and thirdly with a language related to occupational or commercial use that is spoken also outside the region. Only few people had access to an élitist European colonial language, as can be seen in the low school enrolment rates from 1939: 2.4 per cent in French West Africa, 3 per cent in French Equatorial Africa and 7 per cent in Togo. Africa did not show the same rapid expansion of school education as Latin America in the early 1950s, where the majority colonial language was used in parallel. Enrollment rates remained low in Africa, illiteracy rates significantly higher. (According to UNESCO's *World Education Report 1991*, it is still only half of the children in the 6 to 11 age-group in sub-Saharan Africa who participate in formal education [UNESCO, 1991, p. 28]. In more than ten countries the percentage rate is under 30).

In Latin America, *mestizo* society, which makes up some 90 per cent of the total population on the continent, identifies itself with the ex-colonial languages, Spanish and Portuguese. For this majority population, these have become the mother tongue or first language with rarely an afterthought. The speakers of the Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese are much more interested in defending the particularity of their languages **B** which have changed due to the contact with indigenous languages **B** from the claim to pre-eminence of peninsular norms. At the same time they have no wish to endanger or to deny the ability to communicate throughout the entire region.

At present around 10 per cent of the total population, some 40 million people, are reckoned to be descendants of the original American Indian population. This explains the different meaning of indigenous languages in Africa and Latin America. The goal of a democratic policy that respects language and culture in Latin America is thus the recognition of national minority populations and the protection of their languages and cultures within the relevant states.

The differing socio-economic status of the indigenous population

The socio-economic difference in status of the speakers of indigenous languages in Latin America and Africa is significant. In Latin America, these languages are related to one single class, while in Africa the language is known and spoken at all levels. The American Indian population in Latin America is identical with that part of the population which is poorest and living in extreme poverty.

The first priority among the political demands of the Latin American autochthonous population is therefore the return, or the reallocation, of their land in order to secure their space for living and hence their reproduction. This does not apply in Africa to the same extent. The example of the standardization of Kanun undertaken by its own middle and upper class in Nigeria in just ten years (see Gerhardt, 1990, p. 178), partly motivated by a desire for defence against Hausa, illustrates the endogenous ethnic and linguistic power of resistance in Africa.

Somalia faces a grotesque situation. For 95 per cent of the population Somali is the mother tongue. However, until 1972, three foreign languages, English, Italian and Arabic, were official languages. All debates in parliament in the Somali language were translated into these. A main reason for this was disagreement over the written form, which would have presented no real technical problem to linguists. However, this can be an ideological problem in situations of national linguistic conflict. On the third anniversary of the Revolution, 21 October 1972, Somali became the official language and has henceforth been written in the Roman script. In the following years, language programmes for public administration and schools promoted implementation.

In summary, it can be stated that the perspectives of individual and social multilingualism in Latin America and Africa are different. In Latin America, political participation by the indigenous

population can be promoted by further democratization, for example by the participation of American Indian leaders in parliament and government, as has recently been seen in Colombia. Thus, greater respect and tolerance towards multiculturalism and multilingualism can be achieved.

Africa has a greater chance, and also a greater need, of retaining multilingualism. However, Africa also has to be wary in order to avoid being sucked into ex-colonial cultures via the mass media despite formal independence.

This applies in particular to the former French colonies. The standardization of African languages should thus have priority, lest the need to catch up with a back-log of educational demand should let in the ex-colonial Trojan horses as the easy option.

The following section deals with the efforts to revitalize American Indian languages in primary schools. Although there are a few language academies for indigenous languages in some Latin American countries, they have not been able to achieve a lasting stabilization of the languages owing to lack of sufficient funding, of trained experts, and of scientific and research networks.

At the beginning of the 1980s, this situation appeared to change. The American Indian grassroots movements now demanded the preservation of their language and culture, as will be later illustrated by the example of Ecuador. Primary schools have played the major role in supporting and promoting the Indian languages up to the 1980s. Since the early 1990s it is only through pilot projects that intercultural bilingual education in primary schools has been applied at the national level for instance in Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay (v. Gleich 2001)

Bilingual basic education as a strategy for the preservation and modernization of American Indian languages

The quantitative and qualitative expansion of education implies the adoption of a clear position on the issue of multilingualism in many Latin American countries, although deliberate policies on language have been rare and at most sporadic. There has only been a gradual improvement through the opening of the school system.

The problem of the choice of language occurs in this context: literacy in the American Indian mother tongue, in the inter-regional lingua franca of Spanish or Portuguese, or simultaneously in both languages?

The UNESCO Recommendation of 1953 on the preferred use of mother tongues in initial reading and writing lessons brought an avalanche of experimental and pilot projects on bilingual primary education in those Latin American countries with a high American Indian population (Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru). The latest developments have been summed up by Küper/Lopez (2002), new developments in Ecuador are dealt with in detail by Krainer (1998, 2000).

Today, in 2002, around fifty years of experimentation in the different countries can be analysed retrospectively and, roughly speaking, the following conclusions have been reached.

After the hesitant attempts of limited bilingual literacy projects, the 1960s were marked by bilingual transition programmes with initial mother tongue literacy, oral lessons in the second language (Spanish) and a progressive replacement of the first language by the second as the medium of instruction.

The success of these models was so insignificant that a new approach was tried: bilingualism throughout the primary school in order to preserve the mother tongue on the one hand, and on the

other, to enable the pupils to master the inter-regional lingua franca adequately. At the same time, the mainly urban curricular content of the education of rural American Indian children was questioned. As a consequence, bilingual, bicultural primary education was postulated and tried out in some major pilot projects conducted over a period of several years. At the end of the 1970s, this model was readjusted and extended to allow for the multicultural reality in most countries. We now talk about bilingual intercultural primary school education or, according to priorities, about intercultural bilingual primary school education²⁹. Support particularly for bilingual intercultural primary school education for non-Spanish-speaking American Indian pupils is closely connected with the *Proyecto Principal de Educación en América Latina y el Caribe*. The Latin American Ministers of Education decided on this project at a conference in Mexico City in 1979.

On balance, it can therefore be stated that the preservation of the mother tongue, together with a successful acquisition of the second language and adequate curricular attention to American Indian cultures, is a clearly defined aim. The process of democratization in the countries of Latin America shows considerable constitutional improvements in the position of autochthonous languages and cultures. Colombia, for example, included co-official status for all American Indian languages in the constitution of 1991. Paraguay finally made Guaraní the second official language in its constitution of 1992. Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru had already declared bilingual education the norm in those areas with a predominant American Indian population and initiated the relevant curricular changes in the 1980s (cf. von Gleich, 1992). In Central America, Guatemala deserves special attention. It has made bilingual intercultural primary education official policy after long pilot phases, even though it has not been possible so far to cover large areas.

At the continental level, however, intercultural bilingual education has not become the rule yet. There is still a long way to go to catch up with teacher training, even if in the 90s considerable efforts were made to move beyond monolingual Spanish training by establishing centres to provide bilingual training for primary school teachers, and by gradually developing the necessary teaching materials (Moya, 1999, Valiente-Catter & Küper, 1996). Parents are not fully convinced by the policy, and governments remain reluctant given the bad economic situation.

The way to a revitalization of the Indian languages could be paved by positive laws passed by the majority society, in order to increase their value by using them as teaching languages. This could have the effect of making them more appreciated, especially if 'bilingual literacy' (the ability to write in more than one language) leads to literary creativity in the language community (v. Gleich, 2001). Without the determined will and the active participation of the language communities concerned, however, lasting measures for language preservation are not possible. Such measures begin with the transmission of the mother tongue from parents to children. According to Fishman (1991), the transfer of the mother tongue from parents to children is the central precondition for language preservation and a revitalization of minority languages. Almost all American Indian language communities that are already in regular contact with Spanish and Portuguese-speaking societies find themselves at a moment of existential decision, if the major shift of language, so far the rule because

²⁹ The phases of this development are described in detail in the joint publication of UNESCO and the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano (I.I.I.): *Educación, Etnias y Descolonización en América Latina, Mexico* (1983), in two volumes. An update on the development of the main pilot projects and the related research projects in Latin America is given by v. Gleich (1989). Especially for Central America, the I.I.I. in cooperation with UNESCO-OREALC, published *Educación en Poblaciones Indígenas, Políticas y Estrategias en América*, and in 1990 data for Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia were brought up to date under the title *La Educación Indígena en América Latina*, published by the Project for Bilingual Intercultural Education (P.EBI-MEC-GTZ) in Quito, Ecuador, in cooperation with UNESCO/OREALC, Santiago de Chile.

of instruction in the majority language in primary school, migration and other work contacts, is to be halted and a lasting and balanced bilingualism is to be established.

Country study of Ecuador

Ecuador will be presented as an example of the convergence of two central forces: support for multiculturalism and multilingualism by the state, and large-scale demands by language communities.

Language distribution in Ecuador

In 1990, around 30 per cent out of a total population of 10.5 million (*Latin American Yearbook*, 1992) speak American Indian mother tongues. Figures vary considerably and more exact language counts with details on the first or the second language, or on the level of bilingualism, are not available. A more extensive socio-linguistic study of the language level and the language use of the Quichua population was carried out by the Proyecto de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural (P.EBI) in 1992 and published by Büttner (1993).

According to Chiodi (1990), around 3 million American Indians are divided into nine nationalities, among whom the Highland Quichua³⁰ are the largest group (around 2.5 million), with 60,000 to 100,000 Quichua in the Lowlands (Selva). The Shuar, who belong to the linguistic family of the Jivaros, are in third place with 40,000 speakers in the Selva area; we will come back to them later as their determined preservation of their language and culture, including bilingual intercultural education supported by radio programmes, has shaped Ecuador. The American Indian population known under the general term Quechua living in the Highlands is not a homogeneous group; during the process of expansion of the Inca empire before colonial times the different ethnic groups became 'Quechuanized' and later the Quechua language became a unifying medium of resistance against the Spanish. The dialect variation within Quechua is by no means as significant in Ecuador as in Peru, mutual comprehension is largely possible and this may be a major reason why the Ecuadorean efforts at standardization have been more successful than in the neighbouring countries of Peru and Bolivia, where Quichua is also spoken.

The substrates of other American Indian languages have either already disappeared completely or are seriously endangered. There is an urgent need to document the smaller languages that are dying out. For South America, Adelaar (1991, pp. 45-91) has compiled a summary of threatened languages (for Mexico see Garza Cuaron and Lastra, 1991).

In contrast to Peru and Bolivia, a mixture of Spanish and Quechua has been formed in Ecuador which is used in severely limited areas in the Province of Cotopaxi as a business language, the so-called *media lengua (chaupi lengua)* (see Muysken, 1981 and Büttner, 1993).

The remaining Ecuadorean nationalities (Chiodi, 1990, p. 392), Achuar, Huarorani (Aucas), A'i Cofán and Siona-Secoya, are small linguistic communities in the Selva with fewer than 2,000 members. The traditional area of settlement of the Awa, Tsáchila and Chachi, with a few thousand members, is situated in the coastal area of Ecuador. They have largely been assimilated linguistically through participation in regional and national economic activities. In recent years, however, these nationalities have shown an increased interest in the revitalization of their languages and cultures due to their participation in the *Consejo de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador* (CONAIE).

³⁰ The Ecuadorean variation of Quechua is called Quichua

Figures on the number of migrants working temporarily or permanently in the urban centres of the Highlands and the coast have not been systematically collected.

The level of education of the American Indian population

The high literacy rate of over 80 per cent given in all statistics disguises regional disadvantage. Even the high enrolment rates do not give any indication of the proportion of pupils who graduate from primary school. In 1980 (von Gleich, 1989, p. 241), around 60 per cent of rural pupils were either early school-leavers or drop-outs. In 1992, a drop-out rate of around 30 per cent was still assumed and this almost exclusively concerned pupils with a non-Spanish mother tongue. Compared to boys, girls are at a greater disadvantage but this relationship has improved considerably over the past twenty years. While in the 1950s and 1960s, primary-school pupils often left school after having repeated the first or second grade, today it is mainly boys who leave school in the fifth or sixth grade of primary school to go to urban areas as migrant workers at the age of 14. Some commuting workers later try to finish primary school at the age of 17 or 18 in order to gain access to vocational education. Very few American Indian graduates succeed in transferring to secondary school.

This deficiency **B** even if there are no exact figures **B** is seen in the fact that for pilot projects on bilingual intercultural education there were **B** and are **B** far too few well-trained American Indian teachers, let alone leaders of educational and linguistic planning. The few American Indian graduates of the Ecuadorean universities with solid basic education in linguistics can be counted on the fingers of one hand, or amount at most to a dozen, as the author of this contribution discovered once more during an evaluation of bilingual intercultural projects in Ecuador in 1992.

The impact of indigenous movements on the education system

What makes the Ecuadorean development special in the field of multilingualism, multiculturalism and education?

The American Indian minorities in Ecuador who, since colonial times, have not been treated better or worse than the speakers of vernacular languages in neighbouring Andean countries, have since the 1950s pursued a consistent policy of mobilizing and unifying the Indian community through conscious isolation from the Hispanic majority.

Similar activities did not take place in Peru. After the upsurge of *indigenismo* at the beginning of the twentieth century and the economic boom in Latin America, the cultural autonomy of the American Indian minorities in Peru was no longer discussed within the Marxist parties, which followed the lead of the Peruvian philosopher Mariategi. In the tradition of critical socialism, and with close conceptual links to Mexican *indigenismo* (see Marzal, 1981, pp. 439-73), he demanded, in his 'Second Thesis on the Interpretation of Reality in Peru', the abolition of economic discrimination against the American Indian population by means of agricultural reform. An autonomous American Indian political force did not therefore come into being. The term *indigena* was replaced under the military regime of General Alvarado Vlasco by *campesino*.

In Bolivia, too, there are no autonomous American Indian political parties, but the American Indian presence in the unions of miners and small farmers is significantly higher and more active. Their demands on the state are thus articulated clearly. The greater physical day-to-day presence of the American Indian population in the capital of Bolivia, La Paz, high in the Andes and near to the communities of origin can also not be ignored by national leaders and government officials.

The Ecuadorean study on the relationship between the state and the American Indian communities by Alicia Ibarra, *Los Indígenas y el Estado en el Ecuador*, was published in time for the so-called commemoration of the discovery of America. The study deals with the major ideological trends of *indigenismo* in Ecuador, the development and effects of capitalism on the American Indian population, the mobilization and organization of the American Indian population, the key problems and demands of the American Indian population (land, culture, language and education). and with the past and present policies of the State. It is of note that the Council of American Indian Nationalities (CONAIE), also published in 1992 a detailed description of the emergence and gradual convergence of the regional American Indian associations. These two publications are examples of numerous other studies on Indian cultures and communities, typifying the growing restoration of self-confidence and stable identity among American Indian ethnic groups.

For lack of space, only a few of the milestones in the fight of the American Indian population for the implementation of their rights in the field of education in recent decades can be mentioned here.

Even though the Republican constitution of 1946 once more declared Spanish to be the official language, despite previous efforts to upgrade American Indian languages in the constitution, American Indian cultural demands are receiving more attention from society and the Government. This is evident in President Galo Plazo's gesture towards the rural population through his *Servicio Ambulante Rural de Extensión Cultural*, which follows the example of similar Mexican strategies towards the American Indian population. This, together with the initiation of activities by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (1952) during a long period of economic prosperity, made room for the public expression of the cultural interests of the American Indian population.

There has been a series of international missions concerned with modernization and the planning of progress. The *Misión Andina*, a project of the United Nations (FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; ILO, International Labour Organization; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNICEF, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund; WHO, World Health Organization), focuses on the integral development of the American Indian communities. It concentrates on various activities, such as social services in rural areas, agricultural support programmes, programmes to support artistic crafts, the training of American Indian leaders and infrastructure of public works (construction of schools, roads, community centres, etc). Following a change of government and divided opinions among and towards the American Indian communities, activities were drastically reduced in the 1970s.

Nonetheless, the seed is bearing fruit. As early as 1963, the activities of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in the field of school education for the first time led to the approval of a pilot plan for bilingual education by the Ministry of Education. Despite an ambivalent evaluation of SIL activities in Ecuador, which hardly differ from the measures taken in other Latin American countries, and the termination of the contract by the Roldos government in 1981 with a one-year transition period, this pioneer project should not be underestimated.

The 1960s and 1970s were marked by a number of pilot projects on bilingual education and the *Seminario Nacional Ecuatoriano sobre Bilingüismo* in 1973, with the help of USAID, was a highlight. These measures, however, did not lead to lasting changes and improvement in education.

The situation was aggravated by the fact that the agricultural reforms of the 1970s enshrined the rights of the *latifundios*, the large estates, and were indeed reactionary counter-reforms. They restricted even further the Indian pattern of self sufficient reproduction, the rural proletariat became

larger, and socio-economic pressure led to convergence and solidarity. Apart from the *Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios* (FEI), which had existed since 1940 and was organized by the Communist party, ECUARUNARI, formed at the beginning of the 1970s (union of indigenous people of the Andes) and CONFENAIE founded in 1980 in the Amazon region, deserve attention. The next step was the union of these two large regional associations with the *Consejo de Coordinación de las Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador* (CONACNIE) in 1980. Subsequently, CONACNIE opened contact and discussions with the remaining national and international American Indian associations and organized the first congress of American Indian nationalities in Ecuador in 1986. The umbrella organization CONAIE was founded on this occasion. Since then, it has been the official representative of the American Indian populations in Ecuador in negotiations with governments.

In the meantime, reform groups within the Church and among intellectuals had supported the establishment of education programmes that met the needs of Indian cultures.

After the Second Vatican Council, the Bishop of Riobamba, Monseigneur Leonidas Proaho, organized the *Escuelas Radiofónicas Populares de Riobamba* between 1959 and 1962. They were recognized by the State in 1963. With the help of this programme, around 14,000 adult farmers in nine provinces of the Sierra, in two provinces on the coast and in four Amazon regions were taught to read and write.

At the same time, the Salesians helped to launch the large-scale Shuar education project, the *Sistema de Educación Radiofónicas Bicultural Shuar* with the claim that they should be recognized as a nationality by the Ecuadorean government. The claims of the Shuar to partial hegemony over other ethnic groups led to increased organization of the Highland American Indians in the ECUARUNARI association against the ruling military dictatorship.

In 1973, the Ministry of Education organized the first Ecuadorean Seminar on Bilingual Education with the help of SIL and, following this seminar, the Office of Bilingual Education was created in the Ministry. This was followed, in 1978, by the creation, with constitutional protection, of the *Centro de Investigación para la Educación Indígena* (CIEI) at the renowned Catholic University (PUCE) in Quito.

The progressive President Roldos, democratically elected in 1979, and his successor Hurtado (1981-84) paved the way for a serious political consideration of the American Indian population in Ecuador. In 1980, five bilingual teacher-education institutions were authorized by decree and, in 1983, the Ministry of Social Affairs created a Department of American Indian Affairs.

The Ministry of Education (1984) gave CIEI a contract for the planning and conduct of a major educational project (literacy, aftercare and teaching, of Spanish as a second language). This was to start in the American Indian community MACAC Grande, and was subsequently known as the MACAC project. In 1988, the President, by *Decreto presidencial No. 203* created the *Dirección Nacional de Educación Indígena Intercultural Bilingüe* (DINEIIB). The American Indian population thus acquired its own educational administration with previously unattained autonomy and powers at all levels, parallel to the administration for the Spanish-speaking population. The rights and obligations of DINEIIB comprised planning, management and implementation of American Indian education, from the design of an autonomous curriculum to initial and in-service teacher training, evaluation and permanent educational counselling, and to the provision of continuous information and advice to the Minister of Education. DINEIIB was also to co-operate with the National Literacy Programme for Adults and to establish regional educational authorities at provincial level.

At the time of the establishment of DINEIIB, the conceptual direction CONAIE would pursue in co-operation with DINEIIB was not quite clear: a kind of segregation through *Etnoeducación* such as that practised in Colombia for very remote ethnic groups living in the savanna or the jungle or intercultural education with an implicit openness towards the Hispanic majority society. After a few years of autonomous administration, this decision has been largely clarified through co-operation on the P.EBI project with the Federal Republic of Germany via the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ, German Agency for Technical Cooperation) led to EIB being declared official policy through a decree of June 1993.

Even if representatives of CONAIE (personal communication, 1992) would like a parallel system at all levels (primary school, secondary school, university) in the long run, the focus of the programme has been placed on the quantitative expansion and the qualitative improvement of existing bilingual primary schools in order first of all to guarantee transfer to the Hispanic secondary school. The expansion of the system of intercultural bilingual education has been seriously restricted by the very few previous possibilities of access to education for the American Indian population. These are revealed in the very low transfer rates to secondary school and to teacher education, and consequently in the severe shortage of trained bilingual teachers, and administrative and executive staff in education authorities.

Language planning and policy

There is no established language planning institution for the languages of Ecuador. The norms for the use of the Spanish language mainly correspond to those of the *Real Academia de la Lengua Española*, of which a branch in Ecuador co-ordinates the collation and consideration of so-called Americanisms. There is no similar institution for American Indian languages with similar influence and competence. Achievements in the standardization of the Quechua language had been made by American Indian associations within the CONAIE umbrella organization, in co-operation with academic institutions and individuals. The mid-1970s saw the beginning of regional co-operation, with language planning supported by joint activities between neighbouring countries as well as at seminars and work-shops on bilingual education projects. The highlight was a seminar in Cochabamba in 1989.

So far, follow-up meetings could not be held because of a lack of financial means and the projected creation of a pan-Andean alphabet by 1992 could not be carried through. The American Indian associations could now turn for support in continuing the project to the Indigenous Peoples Fund, founded in 1992, with its administrative headquarters in Bolivia.

Finally, it has to be stated that it is not possible in the case of Ecuador to speak either of status planning or of corpus planning. Rather, there has been a series of small victories by the American Indian populations in having their claims met, with the goal of being accepted as autonomous linguistic and cultural nationalities.

The legal framework for intercultural bilingual education in Ecuador in the twentieth century also mirrors an increasing process of democratization due to the energetic demands of the so far marginalized but now ever better organized American Indian nations of Ecuador. Qualitative improvements from law to law run almost parallel with the process of national unification among the American Indians. A short review of the most important legal regulations will illustrate this process.

According to Article 5 of the Constitution of 1945, Spanish is the national language (official language); Quechua and the remaining indigenous languages (aboriginal languages) are elements of the national culture. The Constitution of 1946 abolishes Article 5 and replaces it by Article 7: the national language of the Republic is Spanish. The coat of arms, the flag and the national anthem are laid down by law. The Constitution of 1979 re-establishes Quechua and the other national languages as integral parts of the national culture. (Article 6: *El idioma oficial es el castellano. Se reconoce el quichua y demás lenguas aborígenes como integrantes de la cultura nacional*).

Ministerial Decree No. 000529 of 12 January 1981 already stipulates an official policy of bicultural, bilingual education in primary and secondary school in areas with a predominantly American Indian population. The priority of American Indian languages is determined in Article 27 by means of an alteration in the Constitution (*Official Gazette*, No. 163 of 12 June 1983):

In educational facilities in areas with a predominantly indigenous population, Quechua or the language of the respective culture shall be used as the main medium of instruction, and Spanish as the intercultural second language.

The greatest achievement in ensuring legal provision for the right to use American mother tongues in accordance with Article 27, in full recognition that Ecuador is a multilingual and multicultural country with an Indian population of considerable size, was the issuing of decrees reforming the General Education Law. Article 10 establishes the *Dirección Nacional de Educación Indígena Intercultural Bilingüe* (DINEIIB):

The Directorate, whose staff shall possess in addition to competence in Spanish one of the indigenous languages of Ecuador, shall be charged with the planning, organization, management, supervision, coordination and evaluation of indigenous education in subsystems for those in school and those out of school. The school sub-system shall include general, compensatory and special indigenous education, at pre-primary, primary and intermediate levels. The highest authority is the National Director of Indigenous Education.

Article 11 determines the division into two parallel systems: an American Indian and a Hispanic school and out-of-school national education system. This separation into Indian and Hispanic educational modalities was overcome by the 1993 decree making EIB official policy and fusing the two into one common system.

In Latin America, only Nicaragua has provided for a similar degree of cultural autonomy, and then only briefly during the Sandinista government. It can be compared in theory with the territorial cultural autonomy of Catalonia in the Iberian Peninsula, but there are massive social differences. The descendants of the original American Indian population in Ecuador are almost without exception poor, marginalized groups, while the Catalonians are one of the key economic forces in the Spanish state. This is one reason why an attempt to introduce Catalonian standards into the linguistic and educational policy of Latin America would be unwise.

The further demands made by the Ecuadorean American Indian associations include raising linguistic and cultural rights from the level of educational law to that of the Constitution. This means a co-official place for the American Indian languages alongside Spanish, in order to achieve a revitalization of the American Indian languages in the fields of administration, jurisdiction and so on.

Essential projects of intercultural bilingual education in Ecuador

The history of the conceptual development of the individual education projects for the American Indian population of Ecuador has been outlined in the opening section of this case study and is

extensively dealt with in Chiodi (1990), so it is only necessary here to consider some examples of projects, their goals and target groups. Those selected are the MACAC project, the Shuar radio education project and the P.EBI project.

The MACAC project

The MACAC projects, symbolically named after the community of origin of a Quechua literacy project in co-operation with CIEI, was divided into two phases. The first phase began with the foundation of CID and a co-operation contract with the Ministry of Education for the conduct of literacy campaigns in American Indian languages from 1978 to 1982 in primary schools. By the end of 1984, 300 schools had been established under the direction of the Ministry of Education, while pedagogical responsibility lay with CIEI. The agreement was not extended for political reasons.

The second phase of the project started with the foundation of the *Corporación Educativa MACAC* in 1985 as a private, non-profit association, by the Ecuadorean linguist Consuelo Yahez. Secondary schooling became the target group. The Ministry of Education legalized the project in 1986. It was a non-conventional, compensatory education programme for young people and adults who lived in the Highlands and spoke Quechua, and who for financial reasons had no chance of attending a formal secondary school. Consuelo Yañez, who in numerous publications (MACAC, 1989; Yahez, 1991) described the analysis of need and the research co-operation with American Indian colleagues and target groups in the creation of instruction material, directed the project.

According to MACAC (1989, pp. 11-12), the project was autodidactic (*autoeducativo*), as the young adults initiated their own learning in groups and were only occasionally supported by the presence of a teacher. It was community-oriented, as it was organized at community level and represented the interests of the community. It was bilingual and intercultural, as the mother tongue, Quechua, was the main medium of instruction, the contents of Quechua culture constituted the basic knowledge to be acquired, and Spanish and Hispanic culture were studied for purposes of intercultural comprehension. It was self determining (auto-evaluativo), as the decision to learn was taken individually, in small groups or in the community, and it was not directed from outside.

Until 1984, the MACAC project was financed largely by UNESCO and worked in close co-operation with CONAIE; thereafter, funds came from the community itself and from grants from various non-governmental organizations. In the beginning there was co-operation with DINEIIB, which had been founded in 1988 but which very soon concentrated on the P.EBI project in the field of bilingual intercultural education in co-operation with the GTZ. In 1988, 1,314 students aged between 11 and 56 were still attending ninety-one schools in eight provinces, in 1989 six validated textbooks were available and around thirty more instructional materials were being developed.

The syllabus of this secondary education comprises two blocks: a general part (history, mathematics, Quechua, society and technology, integrated science and Spanish as a second language) and a special part (bilingual education, agriculture, cattle breeding, community administration, art and health care) with the relevant instructional units.

For various reasons, the MACAC model could not be continued and deepened to the extent desired.

The Sistema de Educación Radiofónicas Bicultural Shuar (SERBISH)

The Shuar radio education programme illustrates that the consistent determination of one ethnic group to defend their living space is at the same time a precondition preserving culture and language.

The Shuar are a small ethnic group, today estimated at around 30,000 to 40,000 people. Various historical sources are in agreement that they have been living in the east of Ecuador since the eleventh century. So far, their origin is uncertain, but it is assumed that they descended from Asiatic groups. There is also a hypothesis that they are descendants of a relationship between the Proto-Arawaks from the Caribbean and members of the Mochica, today called the Chibcha. They belong to the Jívaro language family and are divided into four major tribes: Shuar, Achuar (Achuales), Awajun (Aguaruna) and Wampis (Wambisa). 'Jívaro' itself is a deformation by Spanish-speakers of the tribal name 'Shuar'. The group refers to itself as the 'Untsuri Shuar' (numerous group) or 'Muraya Shuar' (hill residents). The Shuar are related to the Quechua from Pastaza who were originally Shuar and merely adopted the other language.

Reports unanimously describe them as wild people who could not be conquered and who spread fear among missionaries and even among the new settlers of the twentieth century. Thanks to their inaccessible territory in the primeval forest, they were able to retreat before the numerous military and missionary incursions for some time. The priest Francesco Viva reported at the end of the seventeenth century that 1,360 Jívaros had been lured out of their seclusion and captured within a space of five years, but that they had totally rejected the missionaries' message and had preferred freedom through suicide. The Shuar remained untouched by the wars of liberation. Not until around 1893 did the Salesians, in the name of the Ecuadorean Government, succeed in advancing into Shuar territory, and in the twentieth century in bringing them into the majority culture by means of boarding school education.

According to the Salesian Botasso, the growing presence of new colonizers, supported by the *Instituto Ecuadorean de Reforma Agraria y Colonización* (IERAC) led both to increased retreat and adaptation on the part of the Shuar, and at the same time to greater resistance and to the foundation of the Shuar Federation in 1964 as a direct result of a training course for Shuar leaders provided by the Salesians. The activities of the Shuar Federation, however, have never been directed aggressively against the state; on the contrary, co-operation was sought in order to secure the title to the land. By 1987, around 140 agricultural co-operatives had joined the Shuar Federation. The activities of the Federation fall under several departments: (a) jurisdiction and colonization, (b) work and artistic crafts, (c) co-operatives and stock keeping, (d) education and culture, and (e) means of social communication.

In 1976, the education department became responsible for the establishment of autonomous distance education. authorized by the State, which in 1982 went beyond the stage of a pilot project and became by government decree a regular programme with an autonomous departmental educational administration. The Salesian mission continued to be involved as a contract partner and contributed to funding. By 1989, SERBISH successfully covered 90 per cent of school-age children.

The goal of the radio correspondence course is to offer children, adolescents and adults a national education that takes into account the local culture, as well as to strengthen loyalty to their ethnic group, to upgrade their own culture, to eradicate illiteracy and thus finally to guarantee that the Shuar communities can remain in the areas that they have endured hardship to secure.

There are three key features of the education of the Shuar: it is radiophonic, bilingual and bicultural. In view of the shifting agriculture used by the Shuar to farm the cultivable land, and of their activities as hunters or fishermen, distance education, transmitted by radio and using local assistants, is the only feasible way of delivering continuous education, and has led to the abolition of the cultural alienation previously practised through socialization in boarding schools. Bilingual

means that Shuar as the mother tongue is given priority, but for pragmatic reasons Spanish is offered with equal seriousness as a second language. In secondary school, Quechua and/or English are even offered as third languages. Bicultural means being adequately prepared to act in two different cultures.

In short, this is an education which belongs to the Shuar people, since they organize it themselves, Shuar teachers deliver it, and the group itself monitors and evaluates it. If one applies the critical standards of intercultural education to the project, Chiodi (1990) is right when he criticizes the lack of explicit cultural autonomy in the curricula and instructional material, and at the same time the unspoken, creeping conformity with national Hispanic curricula. If one considers, however, that similar models exist in other national programmes throughout the Latin American continent as well as in Guatemala, it can only be hoped and desired that the Shuar Federation can use the situation to take one more step along the narrow path to cultural resistance and autonomy. The remarkable teacher training institute of the Shuar (INBISH), created in 1984, could contribute to this goal.

Despite the lack of detailed evaluation reports **B** previous publications are rather programmatic **B** there is no doubt that the Shuar people have, with the tolerance and the support of the Salesian mission, succeeded in establishing an autonomous universal educational system authorized by the State.

The Proyecto de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural (P.EBI)

P.EBI is important for Ecuador because it aims at the creation of an adequate form of primary education for the majority American Indian Quechua population. It was therefore deliberately integrated into the national educational administration for the whole of its duration, initially in the Rural Education Department, with a subsequent transfer to DINEIIB, the new educational administration for the American Indian population created in 1988. P.EBI has inherited a pool of proposals, agreements, failures and partial successes in education which were planned for rural areas and the American Indian population.

The predecessors of this project are not only linked institutionally to the MACAC project through their relationship with the Ministry of Education, but also conceptually. From the outset, P.EBI has attempted consistently to build into the project participation by the American Indian target groups in its planning and implementation. In 1981-82, a socio-linguistic preliminary study was carried out with the help of the GTZ (cf. Abram, 1992; von Gleich, 1989).

The core problem that had to be solved was the disadvantage suffered by the American Indian population in Ecuadorean educational policy and planning, i.e., the lack of a linguistically and culturally appropriate form of primary education within the state education system for Quechua-speaking children of school age living in the Highlands, who had not had the same learning opportunities as Spanish-speaking children. This was leading to serious economic, social and political deprivation.

P.EBI was made possible by a co-operation agreement between the Republic of Ecuador and the Federal Republic of Germany via the Ecuadorean Ministry of Education and GTZ, valid for five years from 1984 to 1990 and extended for a second phase for three more years until 1993 with a subsequent follow-up phase of 3 years.

The goal of the project was to create a form of primary education that would give the children's mother tongue (Quichua) and the American Indian culture of origin an appropriate position in the

curriculum. The model is bicultural, i.e., the mother tongue (Quechua = L1) is used in the initial reading and writing courses and Spanish, the dominant inter-regional national language (L2) is at first only acquired orally. The process of learning how to read is later systematically transferred to the L2. Both languages are autonomous subjects (mother tongue/first language and second language) and are systematically maintained throughout the whole of the primary education using differing and thus adequate methodology and materials. The use of both contact languages as media of instruction not only aims at strengthening functional mastery (written and oral at the end of primary school), but also represents at the same time a conscious effort to value and preserve the mother tongue as an important element of an autonomous culture and to adapt its lexis to the requirements of the global modernization of Ecuador.

The harmonious development and consolidation of the school child's Indian identity is guaranteed by the fact that all subjects are based on local Quechua culture, which also systematizes traditional knowledge and thereby creates the preconditions for the acquisition of knowledge from the contact cultures (Hispanic and other American Indian), i.e., through interculturalism.

Two key features arise from this description of goals:

- \$ the development of adequate teaching materials in all subjects for all of primary education and its curriculum; and
- \$ the initial and continuing training of specialized teachers for a complex set of roles (material production, teacher training, planning, super-vision, etc.).

As this was a pilot project, complete coverage was not planned until after validation. During the project, between 2,000 and 3,000 pupils were covered, a very small percentage of the 1 million or so American Indian children of school age who do not have Spanish as their mother tongue. In its two phases, the project reached the intended goals in large measure and received a follow-up phase for sustainable consolidation.

The first phase, which concentrated on the raising the awareness of the whole society and the participation of the beneficiaries, is described fully in the reflections of the German expert sent to assist (Abram, 1992).

The second phase, which had become a DINEIIB project, emphasized the revision and completion of all teaching materials for all subjects and classes in the six years of primary schooling. The materials are now available. A summary description of the second phase by two visiting experts, Valiente-Catter and Küper (1996), assesses what had been achieved. P.EBI also published a very useful series of fifty-seven reports, the content of which enables the individual procedures (seminars, work-shops, initial and continuing training of teachers, research reports, preparation of textbooks, international symposia and curriculum design) to be reconstructed. A series in fourteen volumes entitled *Pädagogik und Didaktik* was also compiled by Küper in association with Valiente and other experts as an aid for teachers and students in the field of general pedagogy, and particularly of intercultural bilingual education, in view of the general lack of innovative specialist publications on education in Spanish. The exchange of experience in intercultural bilingual education in Latin America is now supported by P.EBI-MEC-GTZ and the Abya-Yala publishing house through the specialized journal *Pueblos Indígenas y Educación*.

In the second phase, efforts to train qualified teachers were particularly intense. In 1993, the first full-time training course for bilingual primary-school teachers ended, with thirty-five qualified graduates. The inservice training of teachers in post also continued. At the University of Cuenca, likewise in 1993, the first one-year diploma course in Andean linguistics and bilingual education was

concluded under the direction of the Ecuadorean anthropologist and linguist, Ruth Moya. Its graduates are almost all in leading positions in the educational administration and can thus better carry out their tasks as multipliers of intercultural bilingual primary education.

The P.EBI method thus provides an integrated form of primary education which was developed in close co-operation with the beneficiaries, the Indian communities, teachers, parents and pupils. Given the complexity of the task and the time and means available, it goes without saying that this model can and should be improved in some particulars **B** continuing training in education, supervision of teaching and care in introducing new material. The official acceptance of the P.EBI curriculum by DINEIIB was achieved by the officialization decree in 1993 (República del Ecuador)

In summary, it can be said that all three projects briefly described here have made a significant contribution to the democratization of education and to the maintenance and modernization of the Indian languages involved through the commitment shown by the linguistic and cultural communities and the demands made by them for autonomous education in co-operation with the State.

References

- Abram, M. 1992. *Lengua, Cultura e Identidad, El proyecto EBI 1985-1990*. Quito, Editorial Abya-Yala.
- Adelaar, W. F. H. 1991. The Endangered Languages Problem: South America. In: R. H. Robins and E. M. Uhlenbeck, *Endangered Languages*. Oxford, New York, BERG.
- BID (BANCO INTERAMERICANO DE DESARROLLO), 1992. Proyecto para la Creación del Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de America Latina y El Caribe. Doc. Madrid. Indigenous Peoples Fund.
- Büttner, T. 1993 *Uso del Quichua y del Castellano en la Sierra Ecuatoriana*. P.EBI-MEC-GTZ. Ediciones Abya Yala, Quito
- Chiodi, F. 1990. Chapter 111: Ecuador. In: P.EBI (MEC-GTZ) and Abya Yala (eds). *La Educación Indígena en América Latina*. Santiago, Chile, UNESCO-OREALC.
- CONAIE, 1989. *Las Nacionalidades Indígenas en el Ecuador. Nuestro Proceso Organizativo*. Quito, Ediciones Tincui-Abya- Yala.
- Fishman, J. A. 1991. op.cit. chap. 1
- Garcés, L.F. 1998. El Sistema de Escritura Unificado del Quichua Ecuatoriano. 115-125. In: Lopez, L.E. & Jung, I. (Comps). *Sobre las huellas de la voz*. Ediciones Morata
- Garza Cuarzon, B.; Lastra, Y. 1991. In: R.H. Robins, and E.M. Uhlenbeck, *Endangered Languages*. Oxford, New York, BERG.
- Gerhardt, L. 1990. Was heißt Computer auf Swahili? Oder Sind Afrikanische Sprachen ein Entwicklungshindernis? *Universitas*, no. 524.
- Von Gleich, U. 1989. *Educación Primaria Bilingüe Intercultural en América Latina*. Schriftenreihe der GTZ, No. 214. Eschborn, GTZ.
- Von Gleich, U. 1992. Changes in the Status and Function of Quechua. In: U. Ammon and M. Hellinger (Eds.), *Status Change of Languages*. Berlin, Walter de Gruyter.
- Von Gleich, U. 1998. Linguistic Rights and the Role of Indigenous Languages in Adult Education. In: L.King, *Reflecting Visions - New Perspectives on Adult Education for Indigenous Peoples*. UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg
- Krainer, A. 1999a. El Rol de la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y el Mantenimiento de las Lenguas Indígenas en Ecuador, Dissertation, University of Vienna
- _____. 1999b. Vitalidad de las Lenguas Cha'palaa, Shuar y Quichua: El rol de la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y el Mantenimiento de las Lenguas Indígenas del Ecuador. In: *Pueblos Indígenas y Educación*, Nr. 47-48, January - June 1999, pp. 35-76. Proyecto EBI-GTZ y Abya Yala, Quito, Ecuador
- Krainer, A. 2000. Rein vindicación Lingüística y Cultural a través de una nueva Corriente Educativa: La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en el Ecuador. Faculty of Language and Literature, Papat Catholic University of Ecuador, Quito, Ecuador.
- López, L. E.; Küper, W. 2002. La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en América Latina, Balance y Perspectivas, *Informe Educativo*, No. 94 (also English Version), GTZ, Sección Educación, Ciencia, Juventud. Eschborn, Alemania

- MACAC (CORPORACIÓN EDUCATIVA MACAC). 1989. *Educación Bilingüe Intercultural: Una experiencia educativa*. Quito, Corp. MACAC-Abya-Yala.
- Marzal, M. 1981. *Historia de la Antropología Indigenista: Mexico y, Perú*. Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Lima, Fondo Editorial.
- Moya, R. 1987. *Cultura, Conflicto y Utopia*, CEDIME, Quito, Ecuador
- Moya, Ruth (ed.). 1999. *Interculturalidad y Educación. Diálogo para la Democracia en América Latina. Pueblos Indígenas y Educación. Simposio LIN 06.49 ICA, Quito, 1997.*
- Muysken, P. 1981. Halfway between Quechua and Spanish: The case for relexification. In: A. Highfield and A. Valdman (eds), *Historicity and Variation in Creole Studies*. Ann Arbor, Mi, Karoma Publishers, Inc.
- República del Ecuador. Ministerio de Educación y Cultura. 1993. *Oficialización del Modelo de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y correspondiente Currículo para la Educación básica*. Quito.
- UNESCO-I.I.I. (*Instituto Indigenista Interamericano*). 1983. *Educación, Etnias y Descolonización en América Latina. Un Guía para la Educación Bilingüe Intercultural*, vol. 1 and vol. 2. México, UNESCO.
- UNESCO. 1953. The Use of Vernacular Languages. *Monographs on Fundamental Education*, pp. 45-75, Paris.
- UNESCO-OREALC. 1991. Proyecto Principal de Educación en América Latina y el Caribe. In: *Boletín*, no. 24.
- UNESCO-OREALC - P.EBI (MEC-GTZ); ABYA-YALA (Eds.). 1990. *La Educación Indígena en América Latina. Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Perú, Bolivia*. Quito, Santiago, Comp. Francesco Chiodi.
- Valiente Catter, T.; Küper, W. 1996. *Sprache, Kultur und Erziehung in Ecuador. Ein Projekt der interkulturellen zweisprachigen Erziehung in Ecuador (1990-1993)*, TZ-Verlagsgesellschaft, Roßdorf.
- World Education Report. 1991, p. 28. Paris, France
- Yanez Cossio, C. 1991. The Implementation of Language Policy: The Case of Ecuador, *Education*, Vol. 37, No. 1.

14. CENTRAL LANGUAGE ISSUES IN LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION: THREE MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION EXPERIMENTS IN NIGERIA

Efurosibina Adegbija

Using Nigeria as a point of reference, this paper investigates some of the central issues in post-literacy and basic level education. To give the discussion a concrete background, reports on three Nigerian experiences in literacy and basic level education, namely, the Six Year Primary Project (SYPP), the Rivers Readers Project (RRP) and the Ókó Graphicization Project (OGP) are briefly presented before the selected issues are discussed. The implications of the issues for the planning of literacy in multicultural contexts are then highlighted.

Three experiments on the use of mother tongues in literacy and basic education

The policy context of language use in literacy in present-day Nigeria is prescribed in paragraph 15 (4) of the *National Policy on Education* as follows:

Government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the Primary School is initially the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community and, at a later stage, English (NPE, 1985).

The change-over to English normally occurs in the fourth class of primary school and one of the major Nigerian languages continues as a subject up to the secondary school. Problems of pupils not understanding what is being taught often necessitate the use of the mother tongues in crucial explanations even beyond the level to which the policy gives them legitimacy as a medium. In most states, the reality of policy implementation is that the predominant mother tongue of an area in which a school is located is normally used in initial literacy, no matter what the different mother tongues represented by pupils in a particular class may be. Also, there are special private nursery schools in many places (especially in big cities, over whose language policies the government has little control) that defy the mother-tongue policy and use English right from the beginning of basic literacy, even in nursery classes. Most elites prefer to send their children to such schools because they are better staffed and have better and more adequate materials for pupils.

The general rationale behind the mother-tongue-medium policy was explained thus by the Oyo State Commissioner for Education, Youth and Sports:

The idea of using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools is mooted on the premise that children learn better when they can use previous knowledge to solve new problems. The school-age child has acquired such knowledge through the mother tongue which is his first language; he would therefore feel more at home with the school if the language he has already acquired could be used to advantage at least for the first few years of his school life (Discours du Délégué à l'Éducation, 1991).

In addition, mother tongues have many natural resources including natural artefacts, a rich predominantly oral society, etc., that can easily be tapped to ensure maximum understanding in the school environment.

The language issues discussed in this paper should be seen from the perspective of such a policy and background in a society with over 400 different mother tongues, of which 3, namely Hausa,

Yoruba and Igbo have been proclaimed by the government as the 'major languages'. We shall now examine the three literacy projects to be used in illustrating the paper.

The Six Year Primary Project (SYPP)

SYPP started in Ile-Ife, Nigeria, in 1970, at the former University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University. Before it began, it had been discovered that six years of primary education in English all over Nigeria left pupils virtually ignorant, functionally illiterate and without the built-in apparatus that literacy should provide for a better appreciation of the world.

Shortly before the project began, the Nigerian Federal Government had introduced universal primary education, resulting in very large classes which undoubtedly posed a serious threat to the effective dissemination of literacy. To worsen matters, many untrained or poorly trained teachers were recruited, and one teacher traditionally taught all subjects in a class. Furthermore, educational materials were in short supply, there was poor supervision of teachers and the curriculum then in use was rather outmoded and contextually insensitive. As regards language, the products of primary schools were neither literate in their mother tongues nor in English.

From the governmental perspective, the falling standards in English, which is the official language and the language of secondary and higher education, were of greater concern and a survey of English-language teaching in Nigeria (ELT) was conducted in 1966. It confirmed fears about the falling standards and recommended pre-service and in-service English-language training for teachers, improved teaching materials and library facilities, and the establishment of an English Language Centre to co-ordinate ELT in Nigeria (cf. Jacobs, 1966). Soon, however, it became apparent that one way of improving pupils' English competence would be better teaching of Yoruba, the mother tongue of the pupils, which provided the foundation for the acquisition of basic concepts in life. Given the fact that primary education was terminal for many of the pupils and that the overall drop-out rate was as high as 40 per cent (cf. Bamgbose, 1991, p. 85) and was even as high as 85 per cent in some villages (cf. Dunstan, 1971, p. 571), it would be an understatement to say that in the education system, and as far as literacy in particular was concerned, a drastic situation existed that needed a drastic remedy. This spurred the Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, to make proposals to the Ford Foundation to support SYYP.

Aims, objectives and description of the project

SYYP had four main aims:

- to develop a primary education curriculum with a strong enough market value, since primary education is terminal for the majority of Nigerian children;
- to develop materials, together with appropriate methodology, for teaching the prepared curriculum effectively;
- to use the Yoruba language as the medium of instruction throughout, in order to demonstrate that primary education, when given in the child's mother tongue rather than in a second or foreign language, is more effective and meaningful; and
- to teach English effectively as a second language through specialist teachers. This provides an alternative which is generally assumed to be more practicable and rewarding than the current educational practice of equipping primary school graduates with a knowledge of English adequate for secondary education or for appointments usually given to people of that level of formal education (Afolayan, n.d., pp. 4-5).

Yoruba was used as a medium of instruction for the full six-year term of primary education for all subjects except English, with an enriched primary-school curriculum that was more functionally relevant to the learners' context and specialist English teachers. More effective materials and methodology that were in consonance with contemporary principles of language teaching and pedagogy were also used. Experimental and control groups were created and given different treatments. Metalanguage for the teaching of mathematics, English, science, Yoruba, and social and cultural studies in Yoruba had to be developed, and specialist English teachers also had to be trained.

Regular, systematic and comprehensive evaluations of the projects were carried out through elaborate scientific tests covering the syllabus content, verbal tests in Yoruba and English, and performance in promotion examinations. The overall results clearly demonstrated that the experimental groups did significantly better than the control groups, even when given the same treatment except for the language medium. This demonstrated the effectiveness of mother-tongue instruction and of the use of specialist English teachers, and the superiority of the new materials over the traditional ones (Ojerinde and Cziko, 1977; Ojerinde, 1979; 1983). Although pupils who participated in the projects, according to the evaluations, also did better in English than did the control group, observations and isolated instances of self-reports tend to point to the possibility of initial difficulty in adjusting to the use of English as a medium at secondary school and sometimes up to university level. There is therefore probably a need to conduct follow-up studies on project participants up to university level to investigate whether or not the beneficial effects recorded in the use of the mother tongue in initial literacy have indeed been sustained on a longer-term basis.

Post-project activities, particularly relating to the adoption of the results of SYPP by the Government, include the following:

- The project provided a strong input into the current *National Policy on Education* and its implementation, particularly the recent establishment of a special National Institute for the Training of Nigerian Mother-Tongue Teachers (i.e., teachers of Nigerian languages as mother tongues and second languages). In this connection, *A Vocabulary of Primary Science and Mathematics in Nine Nigerian Languages* has been published by the Federal Ministry of Education in three volumes (Vol. I: Fulfulde, Izon and Yoruba; Vol. II: Edo, Igbo and Kanun; Vol. III: Efik, Hausa and Tiv) (Afolayan: personal communication).
- Since 1985, the Oyo State Government has embarked on a pilot implementation project in respect of paragraph 15 (4) of the *National Policy*, utilizing the SYPP results and working in collaboration with a team under the chairmanship of Professor Afolayan, consultant linguist and current acting, Chairman of the Executive Committee of SYPP. This scheme had the blessing of the National Implementation Committee of the Federal Ministry of Education. In Oyo State, 131 schools have been teaching in the mother tongue and using materials prepared in Yoruba since 1986 (Commissioner's Address, p. 1).
- The old Oyo State Government (now Oyo and Osun States) decided to adopt the results of the project in implementing the relevant provisions of the National Policy systematically in the current school year, and all pupils from class 1 onwards would use books published by the project. In this connection, in December 1991, an induction workshop was run for teachers on the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools in Kwara, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States. SYPP's books published in the five subject areas of English, Yoruba, mathematics, science and social studies number altogether over 100 and work is in progress on the production of Hausa and Igbo editions of them (Afolayan: personal communication).

§ A Consultative Committee of all the Yoruba-speaking states of Nigeria was established in 1991 to make possible the effective joint efforts of all the states in the implementation of the National Policy. Professor Adebisi Afolayan has made significant contributions to the Consultative Committee's regular deliberations (see, for example, Afolayan, 1991). However, political developments, for example, the creation of new states and the preparations by the military to hand over to a civilian government, sometimes create situations that hinder or delay the implementation of decisions. This illustrates that the political life of a nation can impinge on the implementation of literacy decisions.

The Rivers Readers' Project (RRP)

In Rivers State, the home base of RRP, which also started in 1970, there are over twenty minority languages and dialects. The traditional response to literacy teaching in such a multilingual and multicultural context would have been to provide literacy in Igbo, a lingua franca different from the child's mother tongue, and spoken with varying competence by children from different language backgrounds. But instead of following the traditional line the project introduced initial literacy in about 20 languages or dialects spoken only by small numbers of primary school children. These ranged from 4,200 pupils for the Ikwerre language with the largest population, to 200 pupils for Degema, with the smallest population. Minority languages were used as medium of instruction for all subjects, except English, in the first two years of primary education (Williamson, 1976).

Directly or indirectly, RRP addressed the following issues, among others: (a) how to cope in the educational domain with a multilingual and multicultural society with small-group languages, some of which have no written form; and (b) how to manage limited resources prudently in a multilingual society in which several languages demand and deserve attention to their development, involving graphicization, improvement of old orthographic systems, production of readers, etc. (see Williamson, 1979, pp. 95-105; 1990; Bamgbose, 1984).

Basic description of the project

The project necessarily involved the description of the languages, the creation of alphabets for those without, the improvement of some alphabets created mainly by missionaries, the harmonization of orthographies in different languages and dialects, and the writing of primers, supplementary texts and teachers' notes. One noteworthy innovation which resulted in significant cost-saving was the strategy of gains, identical formats and illustrations for the readers in different languages. Awareness of the limited resources and the number of languages needing development also reduced obsessive concern with the aesthetic quality of the finished product. Instead, cheap methods for producing materials were utilized, thus making it possible for forty publications including primers, supplementary readers, teachers' notes, orthography booklets, and dictionaries in fifteen languages/ dialects to have been produced by 1972 at the relatively low cost of US\$ 2,000 (Williamson, 1976, 1979).

The support of language committees consisting of linguists and influential native speakers of the languages was sought right from the outset, for instance, in reviewing orthography proposals and commissioned materials, in the launching of books and in general publicity for the project. Members of the communities concerned often provided funds and the kind of emotional commitment that, as Williamson (1990) points out, is needed to support a project in small-group languages.

A basic shortcoming of the project, however, is that unlike SYPP, there were no regular objective evaluations. There were also some practical problems of teacher training and distribution of the materials produced (Bamgbose, 1984).

The Ókó Graphicization Project (OGP)

Compared to the two projects described above, the Ókó Graphicization Project is in its infancy in that even though an orthography has been devised, it is not yet being used en masse.

Ókó is spoken in Ogon, (where it has about 31,000 speakers), Magongo (18,000 speakers) and Kogi State (Adegbija, 1991; 1992). The Magongo people refer to their variety as Ósanyin, while the Ogori people refer to theirs as Ókó however, both varieties are mutually intelligible and could theoretically be referred to as 'Ókó-Ósanyin' (Voegelin and Voegelin, 1977), though neither of the two groups of native speakers would probably accept this nomenclature. In the immediate political background is the Ogon Development Union (ODU), the political and developmental organ of the Ogon community, which has been keenly interested in the development of the Ókó language and culture.

Brief description of the project

The project involved the following:

- \$ codification of the language to be graphicized;
- \$ decisions on several issues including use of the Latin script, which is that most commonly used for Nigerian languages; omission of tone in the orthography (see Adegbija, 1992 for the explanation of this); what the impact of the syllable structure of the language was to be on the orthography, etc.;
- \$ identifying the distinctive phonemes requiring separate graphemes;
- \$ identifying the social, psychological and pedagogical aspects that have an impact on the creation of an orthography and their recognition in the devising of one;
- \$ constant involvement of the community through ODU. This had been the collection point for early orthographies and recommendations on future approaches to the implementation of an orthography, for instance, those relating to evaluation, the development of primers, supplementary texts, dictionaries, creative writing, the need for a co-ordinating body, the creation of a linguo-pragmatic context for literacy to blossom, etc.;
- \$ harmonization of earlier orthographies devised in 1982, 1987 and 1989 by different members of the community and their alignment with current linguistic insights on the development of an orthography. Such harmonization and the involvement of ODU would help to avoid the kind of incidents over some languages like Igbo in Nigeria (Okezie, 1975, p. 30) and Occitan in France (Coulmas, 1984, p. 12), in which two independent orthographies were at one time concurrently in use, with different parties becoming enthusiastic about cultivating the languages as literacy tools.

Language issues in literacy

Under this heading we will examine various questions concerning the socio-linguistic context, in particular matters relating to linguistic policy and the requirements that they entail for literacy, as well as the thorny question of attitudes to language, how they are formed and what their implications are for literacy. This will lead to an examination of the question: What kinds of socio-linguistic context are favourable to a profound and sustainable literacy?

Sociolinguistic background and identification of the central issues

Some of the central issues involved in literacy in the Nigerian multilingual context can certainly be inferred from the projects described above. A better understanding of such issues is possible when we look at some basic facts of the Nigerian sociolinguistic profile:

- \$ with a population of 88.5 million people, the country has over 400 languages;
- \$ about 50 per cent of the population speak Hausa, Yoruba or Igbo, the three officially recognized major languages, implying that at least 397 languages are the languages of minorities; many of the languages have several dialects to which their speakers are often very deeply loyal;
- \$ English, the official language, has grown functionally in most domains since its entrenchment during colonialism and later through policies giving further power and prestige above indigenous languages, especially in the domain of education;
- \$ such language policies, in addition to the official functions which English is seen to perform, have, over the years, built up a favourable attitude toward English, especially in the educational domain, but have resulted in the development of negative attitudes concerning the capacity of the Nigerian indigenous languages to function at all.

Among the language issues in literacy that many African countries have to grapple with, the following five are, in my view, central:

- (1) The choice, selection or determination of the appropriate language that can result in 'functional literacy', in UNESCO's sense of the term (UNESCO, 1970), in a predominantly multilingual context. We shall call this the *what* question of literacy language.
- (2) Problems surrounding the timing of the introduction of an exoglossic language, if considered desirable, and the nature of its use: as a medium or as a subject? These are the *when* and *how* of literacy language.
- (3) The language attitudes relating to the literacy language. These come into the equation because even when the 'what', 'when' and 'how' questions of literacy language have been determined, no one can be forced to become literate. The *language attitude* dimension of literacy must therefore be considered as of paramount importance.
- (4) The determining of the optimal and pragmatic language policies that are sensitive to the 'what', 'when' and 'how' dimension of literacy language as well as 'language attitudes' (i.e., 1, 2 and 3 above). This is the *language* policy issue in literacy; and
- (5) The provision of the linguistic and pragmatic context (i.e., the literacy environment), particularly in a multilingual and multicultural setting, that can stimulate and perpetuate the literacy skills learned. This is the *linguopragmatic* question of literacy.

There is no easy solution to the above language issues in literacy, which normally assume gargantuan problematic dimensions in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Also, to compound the problems of policy planners, language issues in literacy also form intertwining subterranean historical, social, political and pedagogical networks which, in the kind of sociolinguistic profile provided earlier, give virtually every policy action or inertia sharp socio-political cutting edges.

Each of the language issues raised above will now be examined in greater depth.

The 'what' of literacy language

Particularly in a multilingual context, determining language functions is often a politically charged issue because language and ethnicity, though often not entirely the same, are closely intertwined. Moreover, to select one language or a number of languages implies placing them above all other languages and excluding all other languages not selected. This, in itself, speaks volumes for the political voice of the speakers of the selected and the excluded languages, the prestige and status of the languages, their future development, and their national and international charisma. This notwithstanding, a decision still has to be made in a multilingual context concerning, for instance, what language to use in basic level literacy. In some contexts, the essential question is to use or not to use, or rather, to select or not to select, a particular language. At the moment in Nigeria, a basic question that is often asked hinges on whether or not many indigenous languages, in their present states of development, qualify even to be considered for selection. The lesson of the three projects described earlier seems to be that as far as language planning decisions are concerned, the future should shape the present. That is, today's incapacity can be turned into tomorrow's ability. For instance, in RRP, the bold and daring decision was taken to use all the languages and dialects of the Rivers State. In spite of the low development status of the languages when the project began, they were all potentially and in principle considered acceptable and usable as media of literacy. This, in itself, is an important starting point. Later developments demonstrate clearly how language policy can have a consequential bearing on language building, for the policy or principle of selecting all languages motivated studies on the different languages, the creation of alphabets for those that had none, the revision of old alphabets considered unsuitable, their codification and elaboration, and eventually, the production of at least fifty books (Williamson, 1990). The policy of developing all languages involved in the project also provided a challenge to devise innovative techniques for managing scarce funds, that is, the use of uniform formats and illustrations for texts in all the languages concerned, which resulted in remarkable cost-saving.

The same intricate interaction between selection of a literacy language, policy and implementation is demonstrated by SYPP. A decision was made to use Yoruba for the full six-year term of primary education and this called for innovative ways of addressing the issue of literacy in education. For instance, methodological issues that had to be addressed included the determining of an effective way of teaching Yoruba and using it as a medium of basic level literacy. This resulted in the development of an eclectic methodology that involved inductive problem-solving, group discussions, role-playing and other types of learning by doing and active learning methods solidly anchored in current linguistic and pedagogical principles. For instance, the telling of folktales involved active dialogues between the narrator and the other pupils. More importantly, SYPP resulted in considerable language-building efforts. Since other subjects such as mathematics, and social and cultural studies, etc., had to be taught in Yoruba for the first time, the onus was on the project planners to develop a metalanguage for expressing experiences in all these apparently new domains of functions. This meant growth for the language. In essence, as far as literacy and basic level education in general and the projects under review in particular are concerned, planners must be ready both to be innovative and to confront apparently daring challenges. A perspicacious, innovative and daring mother-tongue medium literacy policy, if prudently implemented, carefully and devotedly managed, has the prospect of creating and multiplying language-building efforts and thus resulting in a phenomenal growth of the indigenous African languages.

The language policy issue in literacy

Behind every successful literacy programme, there is almost always an effective language policy. Policy is a statement of intention. SYPP, RPP and OGP seemed to aim both at implementing and challenging aspects of Nigeria's existing language policy practice, later articulated in the *National Policy on Education*

(NPE) (1981, and revised, 1985), which, with regard to literacy and basic level education, provides as follows:

(a) *at the pre-primary level:*

Government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or language of the immediate community and to this end will develop the orthography of many more Nigerian languages and produce textbooks in Nigerian languages.

(b) *at the primary school level:*

Government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary school is initially the mother tongue or language of the immediate community and, at a later stage, English.

The above provisions of the policy and several other aspects of NPE have been criticized on the grounds of being vague, inadequate, wrongly worded, imprecise and unspecific, especially with regard to implementation, etc. Other weaknesses of the policy include the lack of a definite time schedule for all states to follow, the lack of legal or other sanctions to deter state governments or any of their agents from failing to implement the provisions of the policy and failure to confront the problem of teacher preparation inherent in the policy (for details, see Awobuluyi, 1979; Jibril, 1990; Olaofe, 1990; Sofunke, 1990; Elugbe, 1990).

The intended aims of the policy, at both the pre-primary and the primary level, are directly relevant to UNESCO's 1970 concept of functional literacy and national development, as well as language issues in literacy in particular. Specific pre-primary aims include the following:

- \$ inculcating social norms;
- \$ inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature and the local environment;
- \$ teaching co-operation and team spirit;
- \$ teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc. through play; and
- \$ teaching good habits, especially good health habits (*National Policy on Education*, 1985, p. 10).

Primary-level objectives are equally relevant to literacy and other issues identified for the pre-primary level. They include the following:

- \$ the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy, and the ability to communicate effectively;
- \$ the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- \$ citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in, and contribution to, the life of the society;
- \$ character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes;
- \$ developing in children the ability to adapt to their changing environment;
- \$ giving children the opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable them to function effectively in the society within the limits of their capacities; and
- \$ providing basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality (*National Policy on Education*, 1985, p. 12)

SYPP and RRP appear to have been forerunners in the fulfilment of the above purposes. Implicit in the policies is the choice of the mother tongue or 'the language of the immediate community', whatever this may mean, given that there could be several equally powerful languages in one

community in a multilingual and multicultural context as a media of instruction. The change-over to English at a vague, later stage, is what SYPP has proved to be undesirable and pedagogically counter-productive as regards basic level education and the retention of literacy are concerned. The experiences gained in the SYPP project thus implicitly challenge the government policy on the timing of the introduction of English and the how (as a medium at the primary level) of its use. The government policy of changing over to English at a later stage is undoubtedly, underpinned by a sensitivity to the complex sociolinguistic configuration of the Nigerian environment and the problems such a context implicitly poses to the effective teaching of literacy.

Whereas the government policies grant that the mother tongue could be effective initially, they are sceptical about the later years. Besides the impact of multiculturalism and multilingualism on such a policy decision, other contributory factors are the cost of using the mother tongue in later stages and the present level of the development of many of the mother tongues (see, for example, Jibril, 1990). Williamson (1990), for instance, is able to find written materials or some measure of written tradition (which does not connote instant readiness for use in literacy) for only about 117 of all the languages in Nigeria. The innovation and moral of RPP is that when there is the will, every language has the potential for being developed and equipped as a tool for literacy. Thus, every language in the Rivers State received an opportunity of being developed and consequently, as pointed out earlier, over 50 primary school readers and supporting materials, books, pamphlets and charts in 21 of these languages have been published (Williamson, 1990, p. 120). The psychological and pedagogical harvests from the project have been very promising and instructive, specifically for those who necessarily see multilingualism as a barrier to effective literacy teaching. Prudence in financial development, rather than abundance of funds, is a major explanation for the ability to develop several minority languages at a time.

Underpinning both SYPP and RPP, and to a modest extent, OGP, is the principle or policy that all people have a right to receive literacy and basic education in their languages. It was discovered that children who receive initial literacy in the mother tongue 'are happier at school, are more relaxed' and perform better than their counterparts (Commissioner's Address, p. 2). In addition, evaluations of patterns of classroom interaction of pupils taught in the mother tongue throughout primary school indicate that they tend to participate more actively in class, are more original in their oral contributions, and are able to use their mother tongues to interact with teachers and query some of the points they raise instead of simply accepting everything and becoming adept at rote-learning as is the case with most pupils taught through the medium of English after the initial years of primary education (Ojerinde, 1979, 1983).

The language attitude issue in literacy

Language attitudes are central to the success or failure of literacy programmes. In this section, I shall focus on language attitudes, especially as they relate to ethno-linguistic minority groups and literacy. Hitherto, the general educational policy of many countries, it seems, has been that of forcing ethno-linguistic minorities into the majority mould. General attitudes towards minority languages, as reflected in language policies in many parts of the world, can be summarized in these key phrases, ranging from the worst at the top to the most benign at the bottom:

- \$ kill them
- \$ assimilate them
- \$ neglect them
- \$ tolerate them
- \$ rescue them

The killing of small-group languages often begins with their being neglected, or assimilated into a lingua franca, the ultimate aim being the eradication of the languages and the cultures they represent. An assimilationist policy involves the imposition of majority language groups upon minorities. While a few minorities may not bother about their languages and cultures dying, many ethno-linguistic minorities are unwilling to have their identities effaced and do not want to have themselves swallowed up by major language groups. From this perspective of language attitudes, then, RRP was a potent attitudinal booster for small-group languages, for not only did it provide literacy, but it also resulted in the enhancing and preservation of the languages and cultures of the groups involved. It thus constituted an innovation in the Nigerian context, where the unspoken policy seems to embrace the first four of the above mentioned. Arguments normally used to support the extermination of small-group languages are that they are spoken by too few people, they are an impediment to national unity, they are linguistically inadequate, they will not develop into a useful medium of communication, they are not widely accepted, and they lack materials and personnel. Overarching these factors is the issue of the huge costs required to develop them (see, for instance, Jibril, 1990). RPP and, modestly, OGP are practical ways of deflating or totally defeating such arguments.

OGP is particularly significant in that it demonstrates what positive attitudes towards a minority language can achieve. It shows that government neglect should not necessarily kill a minority language if the speakers of the language not only have a positive attitude towards it but also do all that is in their power to ensure its growth and development. That is, whether a small language lives or dies is often directly and particularly dependent on the emotional, financial, psychological and intellectual commitment of the speakers. In OGP, such commitment resulted in locally initiated efforts to give the language life through graphicization, the very bedrock of the beginning of literacy (Adegbija, 1991).

The *neglect them* and *tolerate them* attitudes are only milder forms of the *assimilationist* and *kill them* attitudes. Their main advantage, however, is that occasionally tolerated and neglected groups succeed in blowing their own trumpets, engaging in people's attention and doing something palpable to overcome their linguistic and cultural plight. It is in this way that the Ókó graphicization project, despite its problem of not having a co-ordinating body, a fact that has resulted in a delay in implementation of the devised orthography, is still worthy of emulation by other small-language group communities as an instance of an ethno-linguistic minority group taking its linguistic, cultural and literacy destiny into its own hands.

The final attitude pattern identified above, *rescue them*, is characterized by the recognition of the integrity of small-group languages and their right to existence, no matter how small they are. This attitude motivates their graphicization, codification, modernisation and ultimate development into proper tools of literacy. Williamson (1990) and Essien (1990) strongly manifest such an attitude. RRP and OGP are founded on the principle of rescuing, saving or developing minority languages.

Negative language attitude goals are often achieved through policies that deny small-group languages any functions, attract all significant functions to the majority language, and create a looming sense in the small-group language speakers of the indispensability of major languages, on the one hand, and the dispensability of the small-group languages, on the other. Lack of financial support for self-initiated developmental efforts, ostensibly because there are more pressing priorities, the stifling of the potential of such languages through legislation, etc., are other ways in which negative attitudes towards small-group languages may be demonstrated. Undoubtedly, such governmental attitudes attest the status and functions of the languages concerned.

As pointed out earlier, the functions allocated to English have resulted in its acquiring an overblown high prestige in Nigeria's body politic, so much so that most language development efforts in the past were directed towards it. This case of the rich becoming richer makes English grow in functions, status and prestige, and results in predominantly negative attitudes towards the abilities of the indigenous languages, especially in the domain of literacy and education.

Since most of the indigenous languages are not being widely used in literacy, they miss the opportunity for development and so, naturally, the poor become poorer. The loss for Nigeria is a high rate of illiteracy, especially among the adult population, with grave implications for information flow, mass mobilization, general self-improvement and national development. In essence, the risks taken in the neglect of ethno-linguistic minority languages in particular, and indigenous languages in general, bring incalculable costs and are dangerous and rather ominous for the future, especially for the development of human resources. In addition, the poor treatment of small-group languages does not allow for the kind of 'dynamic complementarity' (Giere, Ouane and Ranaweera, 1990, p. 94) between languages that is essential for harmonious co-existence in situations of language contact.

When all is said, however, it must be indicated that ethno-linguistic minorities, though small, can sometimes bite. Recent events in many parts of the world including the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, the former Soviet Union and Los Angeles, California, have shown beyond doubt the possible dangers of trampling on the educational, linguistic, cultural and social rights of ethno-linguistic minorities. A Yoruba proverb, with equivalents in many Nigerian languages, has a fitting application for this discussion and warns against the danger inherent in treating something small with levity. It says: 'Small though the needle is, it cannot be swallowed by the hen.'

Sadly, in the Nigerian case, even though illiteracy is worse among ethnolinguistic minorities, it is very high and evident even among speakers of majority languages, especially the adult population. The three projects discussed give an indication that both for major group languages and for minor ones, it is possible, more productive, and more meaningful for post-literacy and basic level education to be earned out in the mother tongue.

The linguo-pragmatic context of literacy

A linguo-pragmatic environment, in the sense intended here, is one that not only stimulates and perpetuates the further development of literacy skills already learned, but is also supremely relevant to the nitty-gritty issues of day-to-day life. To create a literacy programme without a concomitant linguo-pragmatic environment is virtually like pouring water into a basket: a useless, wasted effort. A linguo-pragmatic context is needed to create a conducive atmosphere for the enhancement, growth and further practice and acquisition of versatility in the literacy skills acquired. Such an environment enhances mass participation in the cultural, economic and socio-cultural affairs of a nation, thus ensuring that the newly literate people make constant progress in their appreciation of life, of ideas and of their environment, and begin to evolve into real assets to themselves and their nation.

Obviously, the creation of such a context is virtually impossible without materials such as primers, supplementary texts, readers, newspapers, pamphlets, tracts, books, etc., in the language of literacy. Such materials should be readily available or accessible and should be couched in terms which the newly literate individual can grasp. RRP attempted to create such an atmosphere by producing reading materials of the sort mentioned above. Other strategies for creating such an environment or context, especially among speakers of a small language, have been suggested for OGP in Adegbija (1992) and include the following:

- the regular publication of a community magazine or newspaper in the new orthography;
- the commissioning of people specifically to write the kinds of materials listed above, i.e., primers and other basic level education materials;
- the encouragement of creative writing through scholarship awards, annual prizes for best stories, etc.;
- the assigning of people to tape-record and transcribe community songs, folklore, riddles and proverbs, etc., that can be edited and used as authentic, societally-based, psychologically appealing and motivating sources of written materials. Some of these texts could be elicited from the new literates themselves, who would be excited and further motivated when they discover that their words have 'become books'. In addition, texts of national campaign programmes in Nigeria on Immunization and Child Health, Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), National Day and other special government broadcasts, etc. should be written in the language of literacy and made readily accessible. The latter type of text would have the additional advantage of contributing, specially and immediately to the raising of national awareness. In fact, some basic international texts of general interest could also be made available in the literacy language in order to provide a measure of international cross-fertilization of ideas. Thanks to modern technology such texts can easily be mass produced and RRP has demonstrated how this can be done inexpensively;
- the assignment of slots on local or state radio to a newly graphicized language. The Ókó language, for instance, used to have a one-hour programme, on Radio Kwara. Now that its area falls within the new Kogi State, there should be fewer languages competing for air time, both on radio and television, and its chances of being aired more frequently should theoretically increase. Such radio or television time could be used for several purposes ranging from general mass mobilization to information dissemination and pure literacy enhancement. All of these would make the listeners more effective participants in the building of the nation while they themselves are simultaneously being developed; the creation of dictionaries, which are store-houses for different experiences, words and insights. and constitute good tools for continuing literacy. Thus, efforts should be begun as soon as possible to put together a dictionary for a newly graphicized language or a language being used the pursuit of post-literacy and basic level education;
- the establishment of a well-informed and influential co-ordinating body to create and constantly pump life into the literacy environment through some of the strategies suggested above. Other methods may be used if they can be seen to work and if they can ensure the implementation of the various tasks of developing an orthography for newly written languages such as Ókó and of other language development programmes;
- the conduct of constant, systematic and comprehensive evaluations of the effectiveness of the literacy environment and other language development efforts, as has been done in the case of SYPP.

However, the creation of a linguo-pragmatic context for literacy (or a literacy environment) that does not go beyond societal arrangements, efforts and programmes is doomed to failure. At the personal level, individuals should be encouraged to use a newly graphicized language such as Ókó, for instance, in formal and informal contexts, for instance personal communications and letters to the editor, to friends, to the town council and its agencies. It is only when the language is seen to function in mundane, real-life contexts and becomes part and parcel of day-to-day life, with the use of reading

and writing relevant to the total pragmatic contexts of the new literates, that the acquired literacy skills can become ingrained, deep-rooted and assimilated into life's bona fide experiences. Only then can literacy indeed be perceived as a worthy and worthwhile enterprise having a bearing on day-to-day life. When this happens, people will be willing, to have a lifelong stake in continuing literacy and will perceive literacy as not intruding on daily joys and chores; instead, advancement in literacy will be coveted. As Lazarus (1982, p. 68) puts it, 'a literate environment creates and ensures a cultural, economic and social environment favourable to the retention of literacy and continuing education.' Any literacy programme that does not at least aim at achieving such goals, especially in small-group language communities, is imperilled and risks the premature death of literacy skills both at the individual and societal levels.

Some implications of the Nigerian experiences for other multilingual contexts

Before concluding this study, I would like to highlight some of its implications for multilingual and multicultural contexts.

- A well-planned, goal-directed, meaningful and worthwhile post-literacy and basic level education is feasible through Africa's mother tongues. SYPP demonstrated this for large-group languages while RRP, and to some extent, OGP, did so for small-group languages. Put differently, if you challenge the indigenous languages with educational functions, they will ultimately prove their abilities.
- Given unshakeable commitment, able leadership and effective and judicious management, scarce resources can be deployed in such a manner that even speakers of small-group languages can receive basic-level literacy in their mother tongues and be given a sense of belonging to a nation. This creates the knowledge that the integrity and value of their languages are respected notwithstanding the number of speakers.
- Mutual esteem and the valuing of diversity should be adopted as a strategy for ensuring mutually beneficent language attitudes and national integration in a multilingual and multicultural setting. Appropriate and prudent allocation of functions to languages in such an atmosphere tends to enhance positive attitudes towards the different languages in a country.
- Community and emotional investment in post-literacy and basic-level education programmes are necessary to guarantee the longevity and effectiveness of programmes and to sustain interest in them, as demonstrated by RRP, but are not sufficient to ensure that a literacy programme actually sees the light of day or is carried through to the stage of fruition. This is demonstrated by the slow progress of the graphicization of Ókó in spite of substantial community interest in the project. In fact, a body that includes influential members of a target literacy community should be specifically assigned definite responsibilities relating to the implementation of the different aspects of a literacy project.
- Graphicization is the life-blood and trigger for further language development, especially when the graphicized language is used in basic-level literacy, which creates a compelling necessity for a literate environment. This, in turn, results in the writing of books, primers, supplementary readers, creative writing, etc. **B** all of which further enhance the status of a language and result in lexical expansion and modernization. The combined impact of these enhance further the suitability of a language for pursuing more advanced literacy programmes. In essence, the only way to know the potency and ability of a language in the educational domain is to test it; this has been shown by OGP **B** the attempt to provide illustrative texts for the new orthography has demonstrated beyond doubt the potential of the language in formal and informal as well as technical and non-technical domains.

Conversely, a good way to deny a language growth as a literacy medium is to doubt its potency, deny it the opportunity of being used and condemn it to the oral medium. Hitherto, this seems to have been the plight of most African indigenous languages and so I would like to plead with policy planners for a change in attitude. The truth is this: languages effectively used in literacy row in status and functional charisma, those unused shrink and are sometimes eventually strangled out of existence. In the words of Mackey (1984, p. 45), such languages will always be secondary instruments of communication and 'will not only remain as they are: they must proportionally regress, as areas of knowledge expand.'

- Finally, there is a very major implication resulting from this study, particularly regarding the Ókó project, and that should be of considerable interest, first, to policy planners in all developing nations with scarce financial resources and, second, to speakers of small-group languages who may be about to give up hope owing to government neglect. This is the fact that, given strong commitment and positive attitudes towards their mother tongues, small-group languages neglected in literacy programmes and general language-building projects in a country can find a way out. Thus, when a government does not fund language development and, at the same time, does not legally and politically aid locally initiated language development efforts, speakers of small-group languages can always do something to salvage their linguistic and cultural destiny, and redeem their downtrodden and neglected status. A parallel related implication is that governments in developing countries should consciously create contextually favourable and sensitive strategies for tapping and bringing to fruition such locally-initiated language development efforts. The conclusion arrived at in Adebija (1991) is particularly pertinent for the self-initiated language development efforts of small-language groups and cultures and is here quoted at length:

A cocktail of internally initiated survival ploys seems to be the most promising for minority groups in multilingual and multicultural contexts for guaranteeing their future security and existence. This would seem to be particularly true of African multilingual and multicultural settings. Here, owing to the abundant ready-made excuses, at times apparently genuine, of scarce resources, lack of a future national function or utility, the existence of more pressing priorities competing for the limited resources available, etc., the way of salvation for minority languages promises to remain narrow and crooked for a long time to come. In Nigeria, for instance, where there are up to 380 minority languages, some, like Ókó being more chronically minor than others, only a few minority languages can cross the hurdles of possible periphery, oblivion and damnation, and enter this crooked and narrow road to salvation. Those that do, and so, ultimately are not strangled or choked out of existence by governmental action or inaction, will only do by the skin of their teeth. One Ókó proverb is particularly pertinent to this concept of survival through daring and self-effort; it says: "Ogben néné din akó bi sye puwa uba na, ayé a ma osuda e jijen" (only a child that knows how to wash his hands on his own can eat with elders).

Conclusion

Because effective literacy is the key to unlock the door to self-improvement as well as to overall communal and national development, post-literacy and basic-level education must be seen as life-giving forces. In view of the many facets of the language issue in post-literacy and basic-level education, some of which have been discussed above, all hands, including those of linguists, educationalists, economists, social scientists, anthropologists, technologists, politicians and administrators of different kinds, must try to remove the roadblocks on the path to effective post-literacy and basic-level education. Otherwise, not only will the significant illiterate majority all over the world, especially in Africa, continue to be intellectually, socially and politically disenfranchised, but also the very bedrock of any effective national development risks disintegration, thus leaving many citizens of the world perpetually wrapped up in ignorance, largely intellectually disabled and imprisoned within themselves by illiteracy. Such people will, of necessity and to a large extent,

continue to depend on the charity and the pittance of information and ideas delivered to them, second hand, by the chosen few. Basic-level literacy, on the other hand, in teaching how to find and appraise ideas, and to grapple with information and the world independently, grants the individual autonomy and freedom.

References

- Adegbija, E. 1991. Survival Strategies for Minority Languages: The Case of Ókó ITL *Review of Applied Linguistics*, No. 101.
- Adegbija, E. 1992. The Graphicization of a Small-Group Language: A Case Study of Ókó. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, No. 102.
- Afolayan, A. n.d. *The Six-Year Primary Project Policy: A Possible Primary Educational Policy for Nigeria*. (Mimeo).
- Afolayan, A. 1991. Special Address presented to the inaugural Consultative Committee of the Ministries of Education of States in which the Yoruba language can serve as the medium of primary education in accordance with the national policy on education.
- Awobuluyi, O. 1979. *The New National Policy on Education in Linguistic Perspective*. Ilorin, The University of Ilorin Lectures.
- Bamgbose, A. 1984. Mother-tongue Medium and Scholastic Attainment in Nigeria. *Prospects*, Vol. 14, No. 1.
- Bamgbose, A. 1991. *Language and the Nation*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press
- Coulmas, F. 1984. op.cit. chap. 5.
- Discours du Délégué à l'Education, à la Jeunesse et au Sport lors de la cérémonie officielle d'ouverture de l'atelier d'induction sur l'utilisation de la langue maternelle à l'école primaire. 10 décembre 1991 (Commissioner's address).
- Dunstan, E. 1971. Language Teaching. In: T. Sebeok (ed.), *Linguistics in sub-Saharan Africa, Current Trends in Linguistics*, Vol. 7. The Hague, Mouton.
- Elugbe, B. O. 1990. National Language and National Development. In: E. N. Emenanjo (ed.), *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria*. Agbor, Central Books Limited, in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Nigeria.
- Essien, O. E. 1990. The Future of Minority Languages. In: E. N. Emenanjo, (ed.), *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria*. Agbor, Central Books Limited, in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Nigeria.
- Giere, U.; Ouane, A.; Ranaweera, A. M. 1990. Literacy in Developing Countries. *Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education*. Jan-Dec., No. 254-257. Paris, UNESCO.
- Jacobs, R. (ed). 1966. *English Language Teaching in Nigeria*. Lagos, The Ford Foundation.
- Jibril, M. 1990. Minority Languages and Lingua Francas in Nigerian Education. In: E. N. Emenanjo (ed.), *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria*. Agbor, Central Books Limited, in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Nigeria.
- Lazarus, R. 1982. Reflections on Creating a Literate Environment. *Convergence*, Vol. 15, No. 3.
- Mackey, W. F. 1984. Mother-tongue education: problems and prospects. *Prospects*, Vol. XIV, No. 1.

- National Policy on Education*. (revised) 1985. Lagos, Federal Government Press.
- Ojerinde, A. 1979. *The Effects of a Mother Tongue, Yoruba, on the Academic Achievement of Primary Five Pupils of the Six Year Yoruba Primary Project. June, 1978 Evaluation*. Ife, University of Ife Institute of Education.
- Ojerinde, A. 1983. *Six Year Primary Project-1979 Primary Six Evaluation*. Ife, University of Ife Institute of Education.
- Ojerinde, A.; Cziko. G. A. 1977. *Yoruba Six Year Primary Project. June, 1976 Evaluation*. Ife, University of Ife, Institute of Education.
- Okezie, J. A. 1975. Language Planning and Literacy Development: An African Example. In: R. Herbert (ed.), *Patterns in Language, Culture and Society: sub-Saharan Africa*. Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University Department of Linguistics.
- Olaofe, I. 1990. The Relevance of Linguistic Teaching and Language Learning to the Implementation of the National Language Policy. In: E. N. Emenanjo (ed.), *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria*. Agbor, Central Books Limited, in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Nigeria.
- Sofunke, B. 1990. National Language Policy for Democratic Nigeria. In: E. N. Emenanjo (ed), op. cit.
- UNESCO. 1970. *Functional Literacy*. Paris, UNESCO.
- Voegelin, C. F.; Voegelin, F. M. 1977. *Classification and Index of the World's Languages*. New York, Elsevier.
- Williamson, K. 1976. The Rivers Readers Project in Nigeria. In: A. Bamgbose (ed.), *Mother-Tongue Education: The West African Experience*. London/Paris, Hodder & Stoughton/UNESCO.
- Williamson, K. 1979. Small Languages in Primary Education: The River Readers as a Case History. *African Languages*, Vol. 5, no. 2.
- Williamson, K. 1990. *Development of Minority Languages Blishing Problems and Prospects*. In: E. N. Emenanjo (ed), op. cit.

15. CHOICE AND DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL LANGUAGES WITH REGARD TO THEIR UTILITY IN LITERACY AND EDUCATION IN ANGOLA

Boubacar Diarra

This study examines the whole issue of national languages in Angola, from their selection to the use made of them, in both the state and private sectors. Special attention is given to the tripartite Angola/UNDP/UNESCO project that, between 1978 and 1992, established the basic technical, educational and psychological conditions for enabling these languages to make their full contribution to all aspects of the country's development. The study ends by looking at the further outlook for the use of the national languages in Angola alongside the official language, Portuguese, at a time when the country appears to be back on the road to peace after several years of warfare.

The Context

When Angola gained independence, the favoured language, accepted and used at every level by the former colonial power, was its own language, Portuguese. Local languages were looked down upon, so much so that they were referred to as "dog's languages". Not only were no systematic studies carried out to investigate and make use of them, but to all intents and purposes it was only the churches which employed them to disseminate their message, at least in written form. Some of the political parties, prior to independence, also fought for these languages to be preserved, or even to be used on an equal footing with that of the colonial metropolis.

This represented a real innovation since, as just stated, absolute priority was given to Portuguese throughout the pre-independence period in the political sphere, in the public service and in cultural affairs, as well as in education, both and informal.³¹

How the project started

When Angola became independent, it found itself in a difficult situation, not least as regards education and culture. Trained professionals were few and far between, while the great mass of the rural population was illiterate. Angolan culture, heavily infiltrated by western influences, especially in the major towns, was similarly marked, in linguistic terms, by the omnipresence of Portuguese, to the detriment of the local languages. This was why one of the very first of the young republic's cultural projects was the 'Development of the national languages in the People's Republic of Angola', a project funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and carried out by UNESCO, which provided various experts for it between 1978 and 1992.

The aims of the original project included, in the short term, the selection of certain of the languages spoken within the country, or more precisely the most representative dialects thereof, with

³¹ According to a report by the National Literacy Centre, a million adults B 10 per cent of the country's total population or 22 per cent of the illiterate population B were taught to read and write between 1976 and 1986

a view to preparing a scientific description of them; and the establishment of the linguistic tools for enabling these languages to be used in written form (alphabets, grammars, glossaries, literacy manuals and so forth). In the long term, they included the use of the national languages in all sectors of the country's social and economic life.

Six national languages were selected, at an initial stage, on mainly numerical criteria. These were Kikongo. Also spoken in the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaïre); Kimbundu, Umbundu and Cowke (also spoken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia); Oshiwambo (also spoken in Namibia); and Ngangela (also spoken in Zambia). The geographical distribution of these languages within Angola is as follows: Kikongo: provinces of Zaïre, Cabinda, Uije, Bengo (municipality of Ambriz); Kimbundu: provinces of Malanje, Luanda, Kwanza Norte, Bengo, Kwanza Sul; Umbundu: provinces of Huambo, Bié, Benguela, Huila; Cokwe: provinces of Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, Moxico; Ngangela: southern part of Moxico province and eastern part of Kwando Kubango; and Oshiwambo: Cuene province.

A study of the chosen variants of these languages led to the establishment of alphabets and transcription rules for sounds not existing in the alphabet, grammars, basic dictionaries (national language/Portuguese and vice versa) and various special-subject dictionaries.

In parallel with the fundamental and applied research carried out under it, the project helped to train Angolan personnel both in linguistics and in the written mastery of the national languages.

Brief description of the project

The project is tripartite in nature, involving Angola as 'owner' and beneficiary, UNDP as funding agency and UNESCO as executing agency. Joint responsibility for its activities was vested in the UNESCO expert in African linguistics and his national counterpart, the Director of the Institute of National Languages. As regards linguistic research, the project achieved the detailed objectives set out above. In addition, various documents and brochures were translated for Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Fisheries, and for international bodies such as UNICEF.

As regards training, several members of the staff of the Institute of National Languages received basic training in linguistic adapted to their academic level, while two of them received more advanced training in Bantu linguistic abroad. At the same time, instructors for the training of teachers from the national and provincial literacy centres themselves attended a number of courses where they learned to read, write, do arithmetic and translate in the national languages covered by the project. These courses were always attended by staff members from other ministries and departments wishing to use the national languages in their own fields of activity.

Linguistic problems in literacy teaching and basic education

This section will deal with the language situation, in education in particular, and also with language policies in the media and with attempts at language development, laying emphasis on the choice between different options and on the consensual approach to the technical development of languages, while the thorny issue of the creation of a literate environment will be dealt with in relation to the predominance of an oral culture and the persistent, increasingly visible intrusion of modern technologies.

The set-up and language policy of education in general and of basic education in particular

Angola is a multilingual country with, at one end of the spectrum, Portuguese, and, for the rest, the national languages, of which 98 per cent belong to the Bantu family (we shall not here be dealing with the foreign languages taught in secondary and higher education). As a result of the prolonged state of war that the country has gone through, it is impossible at present to quote reliable figures for the number of speakers of the languages concerned, but in the absence of statistics, the following comments may be made:

- \$ Portuguese clearly tends to be the language most often used as the lingua franca in urban environments;
- \$ in spite of its status as lingua franca, speakers who have not had the benefit of advanced basic education in Portuguese have a very poor command of it;
- \$ Portuguese is increasingly the mother tongue of the younger generation in the urban centres, but is to a very great extent only a second lingua franca for young children in the countryside;
- \$ the national languages are very widely spoken throughout the country, but less so in the urban centres, even if the proportion of speakers is visibly greater in some than in others;
- \$ Portuguese, as the only official language, the only one hitherto used as the medium of instruction in formal education, and the one predominantly used in the public services, is held in much higher esteem than the national languages by intellectuals in general.

These observations need to be borne in mind in analysing the country's linguistic and educational policies.

As far as we are aware, there is no official, commonly acknowledged document clearly defining the country's language policy. Although policy statements by certain leading figures touch upon this matter, the question to what extent they may be regarded as authoritative expositions of the country's language policy remains open. This question was raised by the Director of the National Institute for Educational Research and Development (INRDE) in a document entitled *Estratégia para a introdução das línguas nacionais no ensino na R.P.A.* [Strategy for the introduction of national languages into education in the People's Republic of Angola] (INRDE, 1990.)

The de facto language policy is coexistence of Portuguese and the national languages in a context of multilingualism wherein the two are complementary but wherein Portuguese takes the lion's share and enjoys considerable prestige, as a result of the disdain in which the national languages were held under the colonial regime. Education policy entailed, until 1987, the exclusive use of Portuguese at all levels in both literacy work and formal education. Beginning in 1987, thanks to the work carried out by the Institute of National Languages, the National Literacy Centre launched an experimental national-language literacy programme. Data as of 11 June 1991 showed the results of this experiment to be as followed: literacy instructors: 24 (all male); illiterates enrolled: first phase: 361 (257 men, 104 women); second phase: 294 (197 men, 97 women); number completing literacy training: 200 (152 men, 48 women).

Since 1992, the question of putting this type of training into general use has been on the agenda, given the encouraging results achieved (in qualitative rather than quantitative terms, according to the National Literacy Centre) and the conviction to which those in charge of literacy teaching have come, namely, that the use of the learners' mother tongue facilitates and considerably accelerates their assimilation of the subjects taught. The Ministry of Education seems not yet to see the need to use the national languages in formal education, even **B** for obvious and scientifically long-established reasons of educational psychology **B** as a springboard for Portuguese, which is at the time of writing

the only language of instruction; the latest official document on the restructuring of the education system virtually ignores the national languages as media of instruction.

However, in April 1990, soon after this document was prepared, INRDE, one of its main authors in conjunction with the Institute of National Languages drew up a preliminary draft document on the use of national languages in education. Unfortunately, this latter document has so far remained a dead letter, and use of the national language is still confined to the literacy sector, which does not come under the authority of the Ministry of Education, except as regards the teaching of adults, in which case there is a short-term plan to use them at the post-literacy phase. For this purpose, the National Directorate of Adult Education is currently having national-language translations made of the mathematics, textbooks, readers and general science textbooks used in the second semester of training, considered to be a post-literacy phase.

Two sectors have been defined as having priority in the literacy teaching process: firstly the armed forces and police, and secondly the productive sector, comprising the sub-sectors industry (manual workers) and agriculture (subsistence farmers organized in agricultural production co-operatives, and co-operatives themselves).

In terms of strategy, literacy teaching takes place in stages, each of which lasts six to eight months. It is foreseen that national-language literacy training, when it comes into general effect, will last for four months. A literacy session conducted by a trained volunteer instructor or a schoolteacher retrained as a literacy instructor lasts for two hours a day on average, in the case of Portuguese. While literacy training as such occupies only one semester, the post-literacy phase lasts from the second to the fourth semesters.

As concerns the use of languages in their own environment, it may, generally speaking, be observed that:

- except for religious texts and a few works of literature, everything that is published, whether books or newspapers, appears in Portuguese; the number of people receiving literacy training through the agency of the churches is considerable, especially in the Umbundu and Kikongo areas;
- the national languages are fairly well represented on radio and television, both national and regional, and the tendency, at least at the national level, is towards giving them increased air time;
- the national languages are used during sessions of the National Assembly, translation and interpretation being provided by staff of the Institute of National Languages;
- the national languages are very little used in public places (e.g. on shop fronts or road signs) and when they are used they are often badly written and fail to follow the rules laid down by the Institute of National Languages: the name of the Luanda orphanage Kuzola, for instance, is shown as Kwzola, and that of the big Fuma service station comes out spelt Fwma.

Policies regarding the media of instruction for basic education

The national languages are not being used as the medium of instruction, but the present situation of very high educational failure rates requires that they should be, even if the medium of instruction is not the only reason for that situation. No in-depth study is required to see that the indifferent results generally obtained in the teaching of Portuguese are due in very large measure either to an inadequate command of the language on the part of both teachers and pupils or to confusion between it and the national languages, from the phonetic level to that of syntax and semantics. As a result, the rate of

learning is slowed down and the quality of teaching is noticeably affected. Short of introducing the national languages into the education system for their own sake, it would perhaps be advisable to give teachers in the basic education system a grounding in the comparative study of Portuguese and the locally dominant national language, so that they are better able to teach Portuguese in accordance with the methods suited to second languages.

The INRDE document referred to above suggested a strategy in four essential stages: (1) establishment of a national languages bureau within INRDE; (2) introduction of choral singing as a subject in primary schools; (3) experimentation with three national languages (Kikongo, Kimbundu and Umbundu) as media of instruction; and (4) general use of national languages in teaching. This document, emanating as it does from the body with primary responsibility for the process of reformulation of the education system, deserves greater attention from the senior officials of the Ministry.

Adaptation and linguistic factors in the implementation of the policy

Before any policy relating to languages without a written tradition, as is the case with African languages, is put into effect, a number of questions need to be settled as a matter of priority: first and foremost, the large-scale use of the language.

The choice of the representative dialect

As it is neither possible nor desirable to promote all the dialectal variants of a given language equally, a selection must be made, and the criteria involved vary from case to case. In Angola, in the case of five of six 'national' languages, the representative dialect was chosen for historical reasons (Kikongo, Kimbundu), geographical reasons (central dialects of Umbundu and Cowke), or socio-linguistic reasons (Oshikwanyama is the main dialect of Oshiwambo on Angolan territory). The choice of Mbunda to represent the Ngangela language appears not to meet any of these criteria, and is accordingly being challenged at present by the majority of Ngangela speakers.

In the process of standardization of the language, the choice of a given dialect has educational implications: learners who are to be made literate in a dialect other than their own have no option but to adapt themselves to the rules for the reading and transcription of the sounds of the dialect, and such adaptation is not always easy.

The choice of graphemes to be included in the alphabet

This choice may be affected by factors such as the existence of various written forms prior to any attempt at standardization. At the time when the Institute of National Languages was set up, all the languages with which it was to deal were already being written, mainly by people connected with religious bodies, but none of them was being written on the basis of a single alphabet or, rather, the alphabet used was that of some language or other of neo-Latin origin, with certain small modifications to take account of sounds in the national languages that did not exist in the European languages.

In Umbundu, for instance, the initial sound in the English word *cheap* is variously represented in religious works as *ch*, *tch*, *tx* and *c* (this last form being the one adopted by the Institute of National Languages). In drawing up the alphabets for the national languages, the Institute followed the main lines of the recommendations made by the UNESCO experts at the Niamey meeting in 1978, but the

alphabets it has put forward run up in certain milieux against the weight of tradition, which slows down their dissemination. Thus, one of the hardest things to teach to people who are used to writing the national languages as if they were Portuguese is the transformation of the vowels *i* and *u* into *y* and *w* respectively, in front of another vowel belonging in the same syllable. The same people have a natural tendency to write *o* at the end of words, reading it as *u*, as in Portuguese.

The grammatical description of the language

This is not only a scientific necessity but one that has important effects on spelling, which cannot take account of such important phenomena as the length of vowels, tones, or problems of segmentation, unless the grammar of the language provides the requisite information. One of the specific characteristics of the grammatical study of the Angolan language is that, because of their common origin, morpho-syntactic problems are dealt with in the same way in all six languages, which makes it easier to learn to write any of the six languages for someone who speaks one of the others; similarly, at the level of phonetics, a sound common to several languages is represented by the same grapheme in the corresponding alphabets.

The 'modernization' of the language

Whether for purposes of literacy teaching or of formal education, it is difficult to teach a language or use it as the medium of instruction without being in possession of a basic metalinguistic terminology, including words as apparently simple (for those who have never tried to translate them into languages that have only recently acquired a written form) as vowel, consonant, semi-consonant, full stop. Comma, sentence, clause, and so on. The need for this extends, however, well beyond the domain of linguistics: in all areas of African society other than the traditional ones, terminological research needs to be carried out in order to cover everything that results from the contact between two different cultures and civilizations. For this reason, the Institute of National Languages has set out to establish special-subject glossaries in such widely differing fields as arithmetic, history, geography, public service, information, culture and natural sciences. This being the first time that such work has been carried out in Angola, recipients of the various glossaries are asked to cast a critical eye over them and send back their comments and suggestions to the Institute, which will take them into account for the final publication. Some of the glossaries have already been tried out at various literacy-instructor training courses organized by the Institute. Furthermore, radio and television **B** some of the staff of which also take part in these courses **B** help to spread the suggested neologisms around, one of the surest ways of standardizing the language.

The method of preparing these glossaries is to proceed, as far as possible, by the following stages: establishment of the list of words or expressions to be translated from Portuguese into the national language, on the basis of texts, dictionaries, or suggestions from members of the working team (information specialist, translator, linguistic, subject specialist); stocktaking of the words or expressions available in the mother tongue, so as to avoid easy, or indeed useless, loans; attribution of a new signifié to words existing in the language, creation of new words on the basis of the language's own resources -- the procedures given preference at this level are derivation and composition, followed by the creation of syntagms; and borrowing from other languages of words not obtained at the previous stages, adapting them both to the phonetics and to the morphology of the target language; words may be borrowed from a genetically or culturally related language, from another African language, or from a non-African language; they are borrowed from the languages, African or otherwise, spoken in neighbouring countries, which in Angola's case are Lingala and

French to the north, English to the east, Oshindonga, English and Africaans to the south, and Portuguese everywhere. In translations done by the Institute of National Languages for its partners, the translators generally prefer neologisms to loan-words.

The literate environment and its relationship with the oral tradition and with modern technology

It is no easy matter to create a written-language environment in the case of national languages that are used only in restricted milieux. The question often asked is whether it is literacy teaching that creates such an environment or whether it is the existence of that environment that induces people to learn to read and write. We believe this to be a false problem, in as much as the two processes may occur simultaneously and there is, of necessity, a dialectical relationship between them. The churches, for example, did not wait until their potential readers had learned to read and write before starting to translate the Bible into the widest possible variety of languages, including some that had very few speakers.

All it takes, furthermore, is a certain number of newly literate people in some communities for all kinds of written messages to start appearing: personal letters, street signs and advertisements, novels, newspapers and other documents of collective or individual interest. It is nonetheless the case that, for the national languages to make their presence felt as much as possible in the environment, the state and the government must give practical expression to their political determination to promote these languages, by means of such measures as: strengthening of the Institute of National Languages, at present the only institution responsible for language research for purposes of standardization, the only institution to which all those who want training in the standard written use of the national languages can turn; strengthening of the National Literacy Centre, which alone would be capable, if it had the resources, of carrying out a widespread literacy programme, on a national scale and in all the national languages **B** this would involve the establishment of a training school for literacy-teaching personnel, the creation of a national-languages newspaper, and a restructuring of the education system to eliminate the discontinuity between literacy and post-literacy work which present exists as a result of the difference in the parent bodies responsible for the two different phases; the translation into the national languages of such important documents as the Constitution or identity cards, and, at the level of each of ministries, of the main forms and information documents; the use of the national languages for inscriptions on public buildings, shop signs, road signs, etc; the systematic introduction of national-language literacy element into all rural development projects, so that the project's organizers and beneficiaries produce documents in those languages; and the introduction of the national languages into primary education, thus encouraging parents to take literacy training so that they can help their children and follow their progress.

While it is for the State and government to undertake these actions, the community itself must become involved spontaneously in them. In particular, writers who have a command of the national languages should make more use of them in their writing. Private schools should consider teaching in the national languages. The Angolan Translators' association should put into practical effects its desire to work in the national languages as well, while the newly literate, at their own level, should also help to create a written-language environment from which they will all benefit.

The translation undertaken by the Institute of national languages, at the request of UNICEF, of the brochure *Facts for Life* will be, after the translation of the Bible, one of the greatest contributions to the creation of a written-language environment for Angola's national languages.

If all these preconditions were to be met, Angolan society, and especially the rural component thereof, would once and for all make the transition from the era of the oral culture so that of the

written word, the benefits of which include not only the possibility of communicating in writing but also that of access to modern science and technology.

The immediate future of Angola's national languages

Since the signing of the first Bicesse peace accords, the country has been changing rather rapidly in every respect.

In this context, it is not surprising to see the way in which the country's first multi-party election campaign homed in on the question of the national languages and the various projects and societal blueprints that invoke it. The interruption in the democratic process and the resumption of hostilities put paid to these early promises of reform. The Lusaka accords appear to have re-established peace, arousing longer-term optimism.

One of the main acts of any negotiated or elected Government of Union should be, as a preliminary to any other educational measure, to define a clear language policy allowing optimum use to be made of the national languages alongside the official language. Those who will have future responsibilities in education should pay special attention to two projects: the National Literacy Centre's project for the general introduction of literacy teaching in the national languages; and the project put forward by the Ministry of Education's National Institute for Educational Research and Development, for the experimental introduction, in an initial phase, of some national languages in the education system.

References

INRDE. 1990. *Estrategia para a introdução das linguas nacionais no ensino na R.P.A.* Luanda, Ministério da Educação.

16. THE ISSUE OF LANGUAGE IN DEMOCRATIZATION: THE NIGER EXPERIENCE IN LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION

Ekkehard Wolff

The Republic of Niger, like a number of other countries in the African region, is currently witnessing considerable political unrest and militant activities in various sectors of society in favour of increased democratic participation. In the fervent discussions that have been going on for some years in Niger, and that relate to a long history of attempted educational reforms since the country gained independence in 1960, the issue of language **B** i.e. the use of national languages as official languages, and as media of instruction in formal and non-formal education **B** continues to play a major role.

The quest for democratization must be understood against the background of prolonged colonial and neo-colonial domination. In the case of Niger and some of its neighbouring countries in the region, one of the several instruments of neocolonial domination was the propagation and use of French (*la francophonie*) as official language and medium of instruction in the former French colonies. Thus language use, literacy and basic education are intimately connected to the issue of democratization which, in the given historical and political context, is to a large extent a question of intellectual and mental decolonization of the policy-makers, i.e., the modern élites. One of the partners in the dialogue, the Syndicat National des Enseignants du Niger (SNEN) has said that³²:

There is a strong link between colonialism and the education system that it introduced. Let us recall that the primary function of school was to provide the colonial economy and administration with its workforce, and that its goal was to reproduce and expand the social structure of the latter by, enabling its culture, ideology and politics to be defended and preserved.

The conditions under which the anti-colonial struggle was conducted, and the political forces of hegemony at the time our country became independent, could not and did not allow colonialism in general, and its education system in particular, to be called into question.

We should recall that during the early years of independence, the political authority of our country was so subordinate to French imperialism that every policy was decided by ex-colonials turned co-operators. They, thus had control of the entire education system.

Even today, all the examinations, certificates, divisions in the system and programmes of the various levels of education are governed by French texts, guaranteed by institutions within the embrace of France. Since political sovereignty is incomplete, especially in these times of financial crisis, it is only relative in the field of education and training (SNEN, 1991).

Post-literacy is certainly one of the most neglected fields in the overall educational landscape of Niger. This is not in the least surprising because its immediate prerequisite, literacy, is also deplorably, underdeveloped (cf. below). In order to create and maintain a literate environment, so desirable in the perspective of 'education for all', the foundations need to be laid first in formal and non-formal basic

³² As this paper is put together by an outside observer who gained some first-hand experience while serving as a professor in the linguistics department of the University of Niamey during three academic years (1986/87-1988/89), I shall quote extensively and verbatim from Niger sources for obvious reasons of authenticity.

I wish to thank my former student at the linguistic department of the University of Niamey, co-worker and friend, Mrs Hassana Alidou, for providing me with several most valuable documents on educational reform activities in Niger. I also express my thanks for support rendered by the German Embassy, Niamey.

education (i.e., mostly literacy work in the national languages). Other still unsolved issues that also count among the prerequisites for successful literacy work pertain to final decisions on choice of language, choice and standardization of forms, and pedagogical dimensions, particularly with regard to teaching the grammar of the national languages. Post-literacy as such, therefore, can only play a minor role in the following description of the Niger experience.

However, Niger has conducted a remarkable project of educational reform at the basic level with its experimental schools, a project with far-reaching consequences that was begun in 1973. Therefore, experimental education that involves the use of mother tongues as media of instruction will be dealt with in detail in this presentation.

Background

The basic contextual factors that must be examined and analysed include the history of the country, its socio-cultural traditions, its demographic evolution, its languages and their degree of vitality, and the resulting socio-linguistic structure.

Outline of the demographic and sociolinguistic profile of Niger

Niger is a large, landlocked country covering 1,267,000 km² in the arid and semi-arid zones of West Africa. Its population of about 8 million is comprised of ten officially recognized ethnic cum linguistic units plus, of course, various expatriate groups due to international labour migration which play no significant role in relation to internal questions of language beyond strengthening the link with France. In national discussion of language, particularly in official documents, the ethno-linguistic units are referred to as 'national languages'. Table 1 lists them in order of decreasing numbers of members/mother-tongue speakers.

In the most recent documents of the Rapport sur l'éducation of the Conférence Nationale (République du Niger/Conférence Nationale, 1991), two additional languages are recognized as 'national languages' which would imply a recognition of separate ethnic status as well: Buduma and Tasawaq³³. In terms of geo-political distribution, practically all of these languages are cross-border languages; with the exception of Tasawaq, none of them is spoken exclusively within Niger³⁴.

³³ There are no census figures available to me for these two groups/languages, but they would certainly rank below the Gurmance figures given above. Buduma is spoken by the people originally inhabiting the floating islands and the eastern shores of Lake Chad. Because of the high rate of Buduma-Kanuri bilingualism, Buduma speakers tended to be subsumed into Kanuri speakers. Tasawaq (also referred to as Ingelsi) is one of the names given to a language spoken in the oasis of In-Gall. Its recognition as a separate language is long overdue. Tasawaq speakers, too, tend to be actively multilingual.

³⁴ Tasawaq may perhaps be classified together with several other languages of comparable mixed ancestry in Niger, Mali and in Algeria although their genetic affiliations are not yet finally established (Research on these languages has barely begun). If this is so, then Tasawaq too is a local variety of a cross-border language (or dialect cluster).

Table 1

Ethnic group (alternative names)	Language name	Percentage population acc. to different sources (approx. min. and max. figures) (in %)
Hausa	Hausa	44-54
Zarma (Djerma)	Songhay (-Zarma)	17-24
Fulbe (Peulh)	Fulfulde	10-14
Tuareg	Tamajaq	8-11
Kanuri (Manga)	Kanuri	4-7
Tubu (Teda, Daza)	Tubu	0.5
Arabs	Arabic	0.3
Gurmance	Gurmancema	0.2-0.5

Genetic linguistic affiliation, in the case of the languages under consideration, means very little in terms of structural and/or lexical proximity that might be exploited for educational purposes. However, the ten national languages may be grouped as in Table 2.

Table 2

Language phylum	Language family	Language	Sub-family/remarks
Afroasiatic	Chadic	Hausa	West Chadic
		Buduma	Central Chadic
	Berber Semitic	Tamajaq	
		Arabic	
Niger-Congo	Atlantic	Fulfulde	
	Volta-Congo	Gurmancema	
Nilosaharan	Saharan	Kanuri	West Saharan
		Tubu	West Saharan
	Songhay	Zarma	
		Tasawaq	Mixed ancestry with Afroasiatic Tamajaq

None of these national languages, however, is given the status of 'official' language, this role has been reserved for French alone, the language of the former colonial master. In the ongoing general political discussion in Niger, however, there is fervent support for change in this situation.

An outstanding sociolinguistic issue which Niger shares with most of its neighbouring countries is the high rate of bilingualism and multilingualism of individuals as well as of larger segments of society. This multilingualism is basically of two types:

- \$ multilingualism involving national languages only;
- \$ multilingualism involving the official language (French).

In each of these cases, several different national languages may be involved. Multilingualism involving various African languages for inter-ethnic communication is a very old and almost 'natural' communication pattern in the area and predates by far the colonial period. This relates to the historical fact that some of the national languages of today have served for centuries as languages of wider communication (*linguae francae*, vehicular languages) for intensive commercial, administrative, military

and religious exchanges. The principal languages used in this way are Hausa and Songhay-Zarma³⁵, which have been recognized as such and have consequently been accorded an elevated status as 'working languages', for instance, in the activities of the Conseil national de développement the mid 1980s. Estimates agree that about 80 per cent of the Niger population in all but the western part of the country but including the capital city of Niamey in the west, understand or actively use Hausa. In the western part of Niger, Zarma serves as a language of inter-ethnic communication and about 30 per cent of the population may understand or actively use it for these purposes. In the light of these estimates, which include a fair number of Niger people who are able to use both Hausa and Zarma for purposes of wider communication, we may safely assume that about 90 per cent of the population would be reached if both Hausa and Zarma were used in official communication, as opposed to about 10 per cent who are able to understand or use French, the only official language for the time being.

On the other hand, there are, of course, large pockets of monolingual use of one particular national language as language of the surrounding community or vernacular/ethnic language.

In the case of multilingualism involving national languages only, I would claim that the urban/rural dichotomy hardly exists. In Niamey, the capital city of a highly centralized state³⁶ with about half a million inhabitants, and also in the rest of the country, minority groups of monolingual speakers can be found beside larger segments of the population that are multilingual in two or more national languages. The picture is entirely different, however, when it comes to multilingualism involving the official language, French. I have no figures available, yet I maintain that about 90 per cent of the French-speaking, multilingual Niger people are to be found in the capital city of Niamey, whereas the remaining 10 per cent or so of this overall minority (out of a mere 10 per cent of the total population to begin with) can be found in the more or less urban settings of the seven *département* headquarters of Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabery and Zinder. Since about 15 per cent of the population live in the urban agglomerations, this estimate means that this type of multilingualism is practically absent in the rural areas in which 85 per cent of the population live.

Given the outstanding role and number of speakers of the two national languages, Hausa and Zarma, we must not forget, however, that these two are not homogeneous linguistic units. There is considerable dialectal variation in both languages yet mutual intelligibility is nowhere threatened. Standardization of Zarma has merely begun, it still lacks widespread acceptance, which is primarily due to lack of written texts and must be understood in the light of the almost total absence of this language from public life. Hausa, on the other hand, has a long record of standardization, yet this standard has been developed in, and is associated with, the demographically and economically dominant neighbouring English-speaking county of Nigeria. There is no 'Niger Standard' for Hausa so that Standard Hausa of Nigeria (which, of course, is based on non-Niger dialectal forms) serves as a de facto standard also for Niger.

³⁵ The role of Zarma as a lingua franca can be historically related to the precolonial Songhay Empire in which Songhay, a linguistic variety closely related to Zarma, must have functioned as a language of inter-ethnic communication. The dynamic spread of Hausa is more recent and ties up with the expansion of the Sikoto Caliphate in the beginning of the last century. Pre-dating Hausa and Songhay-Zarma as vehicular languages in West Africa were Arabic and Kanuri, which are also now recognized as national languages. They, however, have been reduced to rather marginal significance for inter-ethnic communication: Arabic remains the language of learned exchange about Islam, within and outside the specialized schools ('medersa', cf. Franco-Arabic education below) and at the Islamic University at Say. Kanuri was the former vehicular language of the Kanem-Borno Empire on the northern and western banks of Lake Chad which looks back on a millennium of continuing history in eastern parts of Niger. It appears to be losing ground to Hausa even as a trade language in Kanuri dominated settlements such as Fachi and Bilma. These are oases in the southern central Sahara....where the Kanuri produce the salt which the caravans of the Tuareg collect, thereby linking these oases to the Hausa-speaking regions further south and west.

³⁶ The administrative set-up of the Republic of Niger was modelled after that of the former colonial power, France, the main administrative units being the *départements* and *arrondissements* with a strong national capital city: Niamey.

In addition to multilingualism and multidialectism, there is also multiscriptism. Hausa particularly, and also Fulfulde, have a tradition of using Arabic script (referred to in Hausa as *ajami*), which is still alive. Standard Hausa, as well as all other national languages, are regularly written in adaptations of the Roman script. Only Tamjaq, the language of the Tuareg, has a unique writing system of its own called *tifinagh* which goes back historically to the writing system of the Phoenicians; it is still productively used.

This leads us to the question of literacy rates. Only 10 per cent of the total population are literate (either in French or a national language) B 85 per cent of the male and 94 per cent of the female population must be considered to be illiterate. Literacy in French is 7.56 per cent (9.9 per cent males, 5.3 per cent females) (Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992). These figures reflect the history of literacy policies: literacy education meant, first of all, learning to read and write in French while literacy in national languages was limited to adult education in the rural areas.

Given the present situation in Niger, there appears to be little social demand for literacy and education in national languages. It is very difficult to see what gain there would be for the mother tongue communities if they became literate in their own or another national language, since national languages are largely absent from public life. Written materials, if used at all in administration and/or education, are practically all in French. Further, a command of spoken and written French appears to be the main key to jobs in government and administration, and the official language is associated with upward social mobility. Therefore, despite pedagogical and cultural reasons that strongly urge education in national languages there is an overpowering economic drive towards literacy and education in French. This prestigious choice is generally accompanied by a negative attitude towards the mother tongue, and therefore the dominant role of the official language, French, causes the gap between the elite, who are mainly government officials, and the masses to widen. This particular dominance of the prestigious code is one of the salient reasons behind school failure, sentiments of social exclusion and social violence.

Outline of the education system of Niger

School attendance is notoriously low in Niger: it ranks among the bottom five countries in the world. At independence in 1960, the rate was between 2.5 per cent and 4.5 per cent, according to different sources. The rate today remains well below 30 per cent, despite the considerable efforts and means that have gone into the education system over the past 30 years. The education system of Niger is to a large extent a mirror image of the system of the former colonial master, France. It is a system consisting of three levels, which can be represented as in Table 3.

Table 3

Basic education

Formal education

- Preschool education (since 1977)
- Primary level education
- Franco-Arabic education (*medersas*, since 1957)

Non -formal education

- Literacy (first campaign in 1961-62)

secondary education

Secondary level education

- General education
- Teacher training
- Technical and vocational education

Tertiary education

Higher education

Alongside this three-tier formal system, private and specialized schools offer the basic education courses set out in Table 4.

Table 4

Private education

- Pre-school education
- School education
- Para-school education: Qr'anic schools, adult courses, crèches

Special education

- For children with handicaps (deaf and dumb)

Generally speaking, the percentages of the population that have received any kind of formal education are very low (see Table 5), with women generally at much lower rates than men (Bergmann and Yahouza 1992, p. iii). In line with the purposes of this seminar, and for reasons of space, I shall limit this presentation to basic education (the main source of figures being Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992).

Table 5

Level of education	Men (%)	Women	Total (%)
None	69.9	87.6	78.9
Qr'anic school	15.7	4.6	10.1
Primary school	11.2	6.6	8.8
Secondary school	11.0	1.2	2.1
University	0.05	0.14	0.14

(NB: Attendance at primary, school does not exclude previous or simultaneous attendance at a qr'anic school.)

Pre-school education

This sector of the education system is still very little developed and is concentrated in urban areas (41.77 per cent of establishments are in Niamey alone). In 1990, only 11,463 children were enrolled.

Primary education

There were, in 1990, 2,305 primary schools in operation offering a six-year cycle of primary education (Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992). These were of three types (see Table 6) and they took care of about 97 per cent of schoolchildren in 1990. Only about 3 per cent received their education in private schools. The salient difference between parents' choice of school type is related to the children's sex. Whereas girls make up a meager 36.1 per cent (in 1990) of the total, their percentage tends to be higher than average in the non-traditional schools. In 1990, the figures were 36 per cent in traditional schools, 38 per cent in the *medersas*, and 39.7 per cent in the experimental schools.

Table 6

Primary school type	Number of schools	(in %)
Traditional schools	2,172	94.2 per cent
<i>Medersas</i> (Franco-Arabic schools)	95	4.1 per cent
Experimental schools	38	1.6 per cent

At the end of the six-year cycle of primary education, the child is expected to pass the Certificat de Fin d'Études du Premier Degré (CFEPD). This corresponds to the Certificat d'Études Primaires Élémentaires Franco-Arabes (CEPEF/A) in the *medersas*. Ideally they should pass on into secondary education by entry examination. In 1988/89, about 18.5 per cent of the children who entered primary schools dropped out of primary education before they reached Grade 6, another 24 per cent of them did not pass CFEPD, which resulted in a total of 42.62 per cent complete failures. In earlier years, the rate was even higher (46 per cent early drop-outs and 54 per cent failures at CFEPD level before 1979). These figures do not take into account the number of years needed to finally pass CFEPD and the rate of failure at this examination amounts to 71 per cent. When it comes to passing on into secondary education, considerably less than a third make it; between 1980 and 1990, out of 445,982 candidates who sat for the examination, only 131,530 (29.49 per cent) passed either CFEPD or CEPEF/A. Out of 436,303 candidates who sat for the entrance examination, only 122,971 (28.18 per cent) were accepted into secondary school. All available figures show the extraordinary lack of efficiency in the primary education system in Niger.

A comparison of traditional schools, in which French is the medium of instruction, with experimental schools in which national languages are used as media of instruction, shows considerable differences. These differences strongly suggest that mother-tongue instruction, in addition to certain further educational reforms, is far superior and more efficient than instruction in the official language, French, as practised in the traditional primary schools. A significantly higher percentage of children succeeded at the CFEPD and in being accepted for secondary education (for a detailed discussion of the experimental school project see following text).

Franco-Arabic education

The *medersa* school type differs from traditional primary schools in subject selection as much as in language use: both French and Arabic are used. The objectives of this type of school, when established in 1957, were: the teaching of texts and languages indispensable for knowledge and practice of the Moslem religion; and the rapid training of monitors of q'ranic education. (République du Niger/Conférence Nationale, 1991)

Table 7 gives a break-down of what is taught and the distribution between the two languages of instruction.

Table 7

Subject	Language of instruction	
	French	Arabic
Oral expression	+	+
Reading	+	+
Writing	+	+
Mathematics	+	+
Physical education	+	+
Islam	+	
The Qran		+
Grammar		+
Singing	+	
History		+
Recitation	+	
Sensory exercises	+	
PPA* and agriculture	+	
Metric system	+	
Geography	+	
Hygiene	+	
Natural sciences	+	
Drawing	+	

* Practical and productive activities. see below

Source: Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992, p. 26

Literacy

Government-controlled non-formal education consists of literacy campaigns for adults and adolescents who have not been through the formal education system. There are literacy courses both in French and in national languages.

A two-year course has been devised and is administered by the Direction de l'Alphabétisation et de la Formation des Adultes (DAFA) under the ministère de l'Éducation et de la Recherche (MEN/R). Its infrastructure comprises eight departmental literacy inspectorates and eighteen *arrondissement* literacy inspectorates. Further, it runs a training centre for its literacy workers, the Centre de Formation des Cadres d'Alphabétisation (CFCA). Communities that take part in a literacy campaign establish literacy centres in their village or urban area which, however, must be separate for each sex and require a female teacher for women.

Participation is fairly low. In the 1989/90 campaign, 1,443 centres were actually opened (i.e. 88.9 per cent of the envisaged number of 1,623 centres), and out of these 1,247 (76.8 per cent) were still

active at the final stage of the campaign. Only 0.77 per cent of the population over 15 years of age (but 1.55 per cent of the target sector of persons between 15 and 30 years of age) took part in the campaign, with heavy under-representation of women (between 7 and 8 per cent). Drop-out rates were high; about a third of the men and 40 per cent of the women. Dropping out resulted in 14 per cent of the centres closing down before the end of the campaign. The average number of participants per centre was 17-18, dropping to 12-13 at the final test. About 60 per cent of the men took the final test, but only about half the women.

The most recent assessment (République du Niger/Conférence Nationale, 1991) deplores the 1986 rate of literacy in national languages among those who had not attended school: only 0.09 per cent.

Post-literacy activities involve the establishment and stocking of village libraries and a village press publishing monthly or bi-monthly journals in national languages. Since 1965, the journal *Ganga B* a widespread word referring to a big drum **B** has been distributed free nationally in both Hausa and Zarma, with 1,50 copies per language/issue³⁷. Recipients of village libraries may be at the moment literacy centres or the Centres Issus de la Post-Alphabétisation (CIPA). During the 1989/90 campaign, 373 village libraries and 140 village presses were counted. Literacy courses are run in primary schools during the evening, in temporary ad hoc buildings, or in maternity and infant welfare clinics (especially for women), in training centres for young farmers, in teacher-training centres or in rural development centres.

The issue of language

There is a lively debate in Niger about various aspects of democratization, among which language issues play no small role. The debate goes back a number of years and, as far as the problems are concerned, may be considered typical of former French colonies in West Africa. I shall quote at length from official documents that were compiled with a fair amount of democratic participation, reflecting not the attitude of a particular regime but rather the ideas and aspirations of the intellectual elite of the country outside the ruling class.

What we are witnessing in Niger (and other French-speaking countries in West Africa) is an exercise in mental and intellectual decolonization. This is an attempt at ridding the country of the neocolonial grip of the former colonial power which, in addition to other means of exerting political and economic pressure, has a very strong intellectual hold on the members of the ruling class. These have all passed successfully through the colonial and neocolonial education system.

The colonial heritage: la francophonie

As a former French colony, Niger shares with a number of other African countries one particular blessing or burden **B** depending on how one looks at this double-edged sword **B** the use of French as the official language, i.e., *la francophonie*. It may be a blessing in terms of international relations, but it is a heavy burden in terms of internal communication. For basic education it is a disaster.

³⁷ As part of recent democratization activities, a weekly journal *Kakaki* (Hausa: a long metal horn blown in honor of an Emir, (also: a spokesman) has seen the light of day and is sold throughout the country (Bergmann and Yahouza 1992).

The national debate on language

... The national languages are: Arabic, Fulfulde, Gurmance, Hausa, Kanuri, Songhay-Zarma, Tamajaq and Tubu. The official language is French.

(Article 6 of the 1989 Constitution of the Republic of Niger)

In the context of Niger, the status of national language means that:

- \$ A proportion of the speakers of the language live more or less permanently on the territory of Niger and are, generally, citizens of Niger.
- \$ The language is used **B** within certain time limits and a restricted range **B** on radio and television (essentially for news, and occasionally for advertisements).
- \$ The language is or might be used in the basic education provided in the secondary sectors of education such as experimental schools (which represent only 1.6 per cent of all primary schools) and non-formal literacy campaigns (covering only between 1 per cent and 2 per cent of the target population);
- \$ The language may be used in post-literacy activities, i.e., in the monthly or bi-monthly newspapers of the village presses (the *Ganga* newspaper is distributed throughout the country, with a circulation of over 1,500 copies in each of the two major languages Hausa and Zarma).
- \$ Alternately, the language is absent from public life and its speakers are expected to make use of the official language (which hardly 10 per cent of the population can use correctly) for matters of public affairs.

The 1989 Constitution is the outcome of a long political debate, launched by the Development Society, which subsequently became a sort of political party: the National Movement for the Development Society. Its ideological principles were defined in the National Charter, adopted by referendum in 1987. This document deserves detailed examination. It contains elements of realistic sociolinguistic analysis and hence provides evidence of the chismatic language situation which prevails in the country. The National Charter refers especially to the primary cultural task of 'restoring value to Niger languages, the vehicle of our culture and the best tool in the fight against illiteracy', and expresses the need to 'ensure the democratization of teaching by using national languages while guaranteeing its political independence'. An entire section of the chapter 'On cultural policy' is devoted to national languages (and this is quoted below).

Despite its thorough analysis of the sociolinguistic realities of the country, the Charter remains a prisoner of the notion of 'one state - one language,' imported from the European ideology of the Nation-State, which has been used in France, for example, to justify cultural imperialism, and had its roots in German national Romanticism. It is also a clear case of the self-imposed intellectual dilemma from which the members of the French-speaking elite suffer, having undergone what one might call 'brain-washing' in the education system of the colonial power.

National languages

The main characteristic of the language situation in Niger is the complete divorce between language policy and the national sociolinguistic reality. In fact, while the French language, spoken and understood by a minority of the population, is the principal instrument of social advance, the Niger languages, used by the vast majority of the population, are kept in a position of inferiority and are excluded from the life of the state.

The use of national languages for adult literacy in rural settings, in culture and crafts, and in the media, does nothing to overcome the marginalization of the masses, or to threaten the domination of our languages by the foreign language.

The acquisition of knowledge and social advancement are by way of the official language which is also the medium of teaching at all levels. In these circumstances, it is important to give fundamental reconsideration to the language situation by adopting a coherent, resolute policy to promote national languages indispensable for the affirmation and protection of our cultural identity. It is our mother tongues which are the source, the prop and the vehicle of our thought and culture, and the instrument of social communication of the vast majority of the people. It is therefore proper to restore value to these languages in order that all may have access to modern knowledge and education and thus play a more active part in national life. The choice of a national language and its promotion as official language is an imperative.

The study and the promotion of the languages of Niger is the most urgent task for the raising of the intellectual and technical level of the masses, thereby creating the psychological, ideological and political conditions that will consolidate national independence and economic, social and cultural development. Hence the need and the urgency of a language policy and a coherent strategy for the development of Niger languages.

The main points of such a language policy can be set out as follows:

- The conduct of studies leading to the selection of a Niger language as official language. To this end, provision will have to be made for the planning of a coherent programme of linguistic research with its own institutional structure.
- The implementation of all measures likely to favour the real advancement of national languages.
- The training of trainers in national languages in an interdisciplinary spirit, and the renewal of teaching methods and contents, adapting them to the true needs of the population.
- The pursuit and evaluation of the teaching in national languages current in experimental schools, with a view to its general extension at all levels.
- The implementation of an educational support structure for the production and distribution of teaching material in all national languages;
- The promotion of international and inter-African linguistic co-operation.

(National Charter Part III, Chapter 1, Section 2)

There is still some doubt that a monolingual solution is a realistic choice for the problem of the 'official language' of Niger. All sociolinguistic factors and parameters point to a multilingual solution, in which Hausa, Zarma and French would be given 'official' functions of the same order³⁸ at least for quite a long transition period.

As regards formal education, the Charter adheres to the same idea of 'one state one language'; it envisages a single national language as the future medium of instruction, thereby relegating the others to the position of teaching subjects. Since it is an official policy document of which the French government might take note, the National Charter scrupulously avoids treading on the toes of the former colonial power (note the way in which the French language is referred to anonymously by the

³⁸ The example of Switzerland, which has four official languages plus several non official minority languages might be a model for Niger

general term 'the foreign language' and also by non-specific expressions such as 'the enriching values of other cultures' or 'languages of international communication').

On the language of instruction

The desire that the direction taken by the school system should be in harmony with national realities means that it has to be 'Nigerized', that is, to match the specific values of the cultural identity of the people of Niger, which does not rule out its being open to the enriching values of other cultures. All the languages of Niger will be used as teaching at all levels. Research in this field will be intensified by all possible means. But the choice of a national teaching language has to be made, and this choice will be based on analysis of the sociocultural dynamics of each of our languages. The recovery of the value of our cultural identity will in no way be an obstacle to the teaching and practice of languages of international communication, which is called for by our place in the continent and the world. (National Charter, Part III, Chapter II, Section 2)

What the Charter says here is less important than what it does not say: if a national language had to be chosen on the basis of sociocultural factors, that language would be Hausa. (The Zarma-speaking group in Niger, which has great political influence, would not easily accept this decision.). And if French were treated as if it were an 'international' foreign language it would be in competition with English, which is the official language of an important neighboring country: Nigeria! (The French might regard such an attitude as an act of hostility and decide to turn off the flow of funds to the Niger budget.)

The Charter has also shown great interest in the aspect of propaganda and the role which oral communication in national languages plays in spreading knowledge and information (Part III, Chapter V 'On information and communication'):

The traditional mode of social communication, typified by orality and direct contact, is deeply rooted in the population. It takes diverse forms, but it is verbal dialog which is its essential characteristic. Our languages occupy a predominant place, and beyond relationship, of mutual exchange, they engender behaviors.

And so that the government may exercise its authority, it appeared necessary to ensure the adequate training of communicators, particularly, in national languages (idem).

Here, the Charter seems to stop short: should this point not apply to all levels of public communication, to politicians and administrators in general as 'communicators' par excellence, and thus furnish an argument for the officialization of national languages? In fact, the Charter contains a very clear suggestion in this direction, but it is wrapped up in a reference to literacy (Part I, Chapter II, Section 3 'The mobilization of social forces'):

In this field, some priority will have to be given to literacy, since illiteracy remains a serious handicap to development action. For this reason, every employee of the administration must, in addition to his or her mother tongue, be able to read and write a second national language. Similarly, it is necessary that essential administrative documents be written in our national languages. Such measures will encourage literacy activities.

The present debate: the Education Commission of the National Conference (1991)

We are not surprised once more to find 'the colonial inheritance' and the issue of 'language of instruction' among the six reasons given by the Education Commission of the Conférence Nationale (1991) for their devastatingly negative overall evaluation of the Niger education system: 'Schools are in crisis in Niger....Today, our education system has reached an impasse...:

1. The colonial inheritance,

2. The unsuitability of structures, methods and programmes,
3. The gap between the targets set and the results achieved,
4. The inequality of access to school and chances of success,
5. The language in which the teaching is conducted,
6. The lack of responsibility in educational policy.'

The Commission goes on to elaborate on the issue of language:

Teaching is conducted in a foreign language in Niger: French. This is a major factor in the unsuitability of the education system for our social, economic and cultural realities, and for our aspirations.

The first consequence of teaching in a foreign language is the break, between the child and his or her social environment. First, he or she must spend years learning to speak, read and write this foreign language before receiving an education.

The learning of the foreign language alone thus takes up a good part of school time, especially at the primary level, and this could be avoided if teaching were in the national languages. Such a system can only be elitist, and its persistence necessarily means that knowledge in our society will continue to be monopolized by an alienated elite that is cut off from its socio-cultural environment.

The goal of economic and social development will remain a chimera if the labouring masses have no part in it for want of learning and for lack of the knowledge capital accumulated by their children. Moreover, teaching through national languages is an act of sovereignty, a will to break with the neo-colonial order.

The use of national languages is thus indispensable for the true democratization of an education that is to be open to all.

The Commission then derives from its analysis the following Articles to be proclaimed, among others, by the Conférence Nationale:

- \$ The following eight [sic] languages are proclaimed national languages: Arabic, Buduma, Fulfulde, Gurmancema, Hausa, Kanuri, Tamajaq, Tasawaq, Tubu, Zarma.
- \$ The ten languages mentioned above are all to serve regionally and nationally as media and subjects of instruction with complete equality.

For the new constitution, the Commission recommends the following text³⁹:

In Niger, language use is covered essentially by the national languages and French; the national languages are: Arabic, Buduma, Fulfulde, Gurmancema, Hausa, Kanuri, Tamajaq, Tasawaq, Tubu and Zarma-Songhay.

According to the Commission, the following steps are to be taken immediately. These pertain to the status and standardization of the national languages and to non-formal literacy education in general:

1. To establish our national languages immediately, by statute.
2. To prepare the use of the national languages in teaching and administration.
3. To define clearly the aims of literacy.

³⁹ One of the two documents on this issue available to me has an additional recommendation; I have no means of knowing which of the two versions is preliminary and which final. The recommendation in question concerns the touchy issue of 'one national official language' and does not progress beyond the National Charter: 'The choice of a single national language which will also be the official language, without, however neglecting the other languages.'

4. To restructure and equip the inspectorates and directorates of literacy at all levels.
5. To proceed to launch a wide-scale literacy programme.
6. To involve associations and enterprises in the literacy effort while obliging them to be responsible for their staffs becoming literate.
7. To make best use of the opportunities provided by CFCA and the regional literacy centre for the training of CERFOCA staff.
8. To make best use of all the human resources available in the various sectors of the administration.

Realizing that academic research and input is needed for the promotion of national languages, the Commission suggests various medium- or long-term measures, including: the creation of an institute for national languages within the university and the adoption of a law on the status of national languages and the establishment of a national structure with a mandate to organize, put in place and follow through educational reform.

Language in education

To address this question is to sift through a history of incessant reforms and small, hesitant steps, in the hope of finding reliable results among many experimental projects of varying complexity. It emerges that the linguistic issue is more an educational issue, a questioning of the content and method of instruction.

The endless history of educational reform

In the light of what has been said and quoted above it will not come as a surprise that Niger has witnessed an endless history of educational reforms halfheartedly implemented, if at all, and has been in constant fear of French reaction against all attempts to reduce the dominance of the 'foreign language' which remains the 'official language', and the particular system of cultural values which this language conveys within a neocolonial education system. *La francophonie* and its agent institutions such as the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) is a political instrument skillfully wielded by the French Government, and is a major reason why the education system in Niger is 'in crisis' with a 'disastrous balance sheet' (SNEN, 1991).

I shall not here analyse present-day cultural imperialism and neocolonialism, or discuss the identification of the Niger primary school as a neocolonial school, i.e., as a direct continuation of the colonial school, the unsuitability of its structures, methods, content and programmes, and the general devaluing of the teaching function of schools (SNEN, 1991). Rather than do this, I shall direct the reader's attention to one particular element of the continuing educational reform: experimental schools.

The solution at hand: the innovative project of experimental schools

Despite all the shortcomings and failures of the Niger education system, as testified to by all the sources quoted above, the country is in the possession of highly valuable experiences which, if only generalized for the whole country, could be the answer to most of its educational problems at the basic level: the experimental schools.

The following eye-witness report, which Mary White Kaba (1985) prepared for UNESCO, may be cited:

Ever since 1968, when Niger called upon UNESCO for help in re-organizing the Teacher Training School of Zinder, plans were being made for experimenting with use of national languages in primary education. In March 1973, a Symposium on Educational Reform took place, and the following October the first experimental class in Hausa was opened in Zinder. In 1976, researchers of the University of Niamey took the initiative of joining together with other institutions concerned with the development of the national languages to form the group for Reflection and Research for the Promotion of National Languages, which has contributed significantly (through research, publicity and training) to the programme of national language education. A second experimental school, in Zarma-Songhay, was opened in Tilabery in 1977. The following year about 20 teachers were recruited and trained for teaching in the five major national languages. In 1979, five new experimental schools were opened, and the year after, seven more.

1980 was also the year in which a Permanent Secretariat of the National Commission for Educational Reform was set up within the Ministry of National Education. In March 1982 an important debate on educational reform was held in Zinder. This assembly of educators proposed, among other reforms, the 'generalization' of the experiment in mother tongue education to the first three years of all primary schools, with transition to a 'unitary' language which for the moment is French, but also the continuation of national language teaching during the first nine years of schooling. Expected benefits include the possibility for the child to participate actively in the classroom, greater ease in learning to read and to write, and the prospect of better integrating parents (and even the entire village) into the teaching process. Preliminary results of the experiment, especially those from the original Hausa-language school in Zinder, have been very encouraging: it becomes more and more evident that children who have first learned to read and write in their mother tongue make the transition to French with much greater ease: the experimental school children from Zinder and Tilabery have an exceptionally high success rate in the Primary School Certificate exams, and continue to have well above average performance on the Secondary School level...

Teaching in Niger's experimental schools is not simply a matter of translating into national languages the content of the French-language education given in the traditional schools. The approach is radically different: whereas in the traditional school the teacher follows a manual which guides his teaching step by step, and whose content is sometimes far removed from the children's daily experience, the role of the experimental school teacher is to help the children themselves to do research on a 'theme' belonging to their own environment (hygiene, family, traditional or modern professions, etc.) which in turn becomes the point of departure for a lesson in subjects such as arithmetic or science, as well as for reading and writing through composition of a 'collective text' summing up the theme...

The second innovation of the experimental schools is the importance they accord to 'technical and productive activities' such as gardening, animal husbandry, fabrication of useful and ornamental objects. Each school is encouraged to organize itself into a co-operative (another practical lesson for future farmers and livestock raisers), and some school co-operatives make a real profit. The emphasis placed on these activities reflects a desire to maintain the child's equilibrium and not alienate him/her from manual work, as is too often the case in the traditional schools.

This report needs a little updating. By 1990, there were 38 experimental schools in operation, teaching 4,707 children in one of the five major national languages: 18 schools in Hausa, seven in Zarma, five in Tamajaq, four in Kanuri, and also four in Fulfulde. Table 8 shows their historical evolution.

Table 8 - Evolution of teaching in national languages - number of schools

Year	Number	Pupils	Remarks
1973/74	1		in Hausa at Zinder
1976/78	2		1 in Djerma at Tilabery
1979/80	7		1 school in each language
1980/81	14		Permanent Secretariat of the National Commission for Educational Reform
1982/83	20	2,000	Hausa 10, Djerma 7, Tamasheq 5, Kanuri 3
1984/85	25		Fulfulde 4
1987/88	31	3,661	Hausa 18, Djerma 7,
1989/90	38	4,707	Tamasheq 5, Kanuri 4, Fulfulde 4

The pedagogical differences and advantages which distinguish the experimental schools from traditional schools, are the following (Mary White Kaba 1988, pp. 39 et seq.):

- \$ The language of instruction: During the first two years the child is taught in his/her mother tongue. Transition to French begins in the third year. From the fourth year, the medium of instruction is French. The mother tongue remains a subject of instruction.
- \$ The innovative pedagogical concept of 'local studies'. Teacher and children do not follow a textbook, but choose 'topics' relating to their socio-cultural environment. Starting from aspects of the chosen 'topic', subject matter such as science, arithmetic, reading, creative writing, etc., emerge almost naturally from it.
- \$ The integration of 'practical and productive activities' (PPA) into indoor and outdoor classroom activities. Such PPA relate to gardening (schools should have an experimental garden), small animal husbandry, traditional and/or modern crafts.
- \$ Relating to PPA: the establishment of a school co-operative which sells such products and organizes purchase of materials, seeds, etc., in which the children should learn about organizing themselves and democratic participation in decision-making.

The PPA program contains three sub-programmes illustrated by Bergmann and Yahouza (1992, p. 111) as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Program of activities in craft and technology		
<i>Crafts</i>		
Braiding and basketwork	3 subjects	
Weaving	3 subjects	
Modeling and pottery	2 subjects	
Coloured drawing and painting	2 subjects	
Leather and plastic work	2 subjects	
Decoration	1 subject	
<i>Technology</i>		
Folding, cutting and assembly	3 subjects	
General repairs		1 subject
Bricklaying	1 subject	
Carpentry	1 subject	
Blacksmithing	1 subject	
Programme of activities in agriculture, forestry, stock-keeping and fishery		
Miniature nursery, reforestation, arboriculture and fruit-growing	10 subjects	
Landscaping	1 subject	
Gardening (market gardening, cereals) and aquaculture	4 subjects	
Small-scale stock-raising	6 subjects	
Harvesting	3 subjects	
Programme of activities in domestic economy (for girls and boys)		
Sewing, crochet, clothes-mending	14 subjects	
Cookery	15 subjects	
Linen repairs	13 subjects	
Domestic economy and property maintenance	8 subjects	

The expectations connected with these new pedagogical notions lie in the areas of:

- \$ preventing alienation of the child from his/her daily socio-cultural environment;
- \$ stimulating the child's intelligence by actively involving him/her in meaningful communicative activities without his/her having to jump a foreign language barrier;
- \$ preparing the child for both a career as government functionary and as a farmer or livestock raiser (even drop-outs, which occur but at lower rates compared with the traditional school, who make a living in the agricultural sector would still have learned something useful, including reading and writing in the mother tongue.); and
- \$ bridging the schism between rural and urban areas as much as between the elite and the masses, i.e., reducing the advantage a child with a French-speaking family background tends to have over children with 'only' a national language family background.

Another important advantage of experimental schools is the easy transfer to French and better performance in the official language. Kaba (1988, p. 42) quotes a study conducted in 1979, which states that after only six months' experimental school, children had acquired a command of French which it took children from the traditional school three years to acquire.

The new educational concepts are applied in the manner shown in Table 10 (Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992, p. 103).

Table 10: Primary school timetables by subject and course, teaching in national languages (hours per week)

subjects	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5-6
National languages	13.30	11	5	3	3.30
French	-	3	6	8	6
PPA + domestic economy	4.30	4	3.15	3	3.30
History	-	-	1	1	1
Civil and moral instruction	0.30	0.30	0.45	1	1
Geography	-	-	-	1	11
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5
Phys. and nat. sciences	-	-	1.30	1.30	2
Phys. ed. + sports	2	2	2	2	2
Drawing	2	2	2	2	2.30
Recreation		2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30
Total hours per week	30	30	30	30	30
No. of subjects	6	7	10	10	10

Since 1985, PPA have been generalized for all primary schools but mother-tongue teaching has not. This half-hearted partial generalization of experimental schools can only be explained by the fear on the part of the Niger government that if French were replaced in all primary schools by the appropriate national language, the country would risk a setback in Franco-Niger relations which would have immediate negative repercussions in the economic and fiscal sectors, Niger being economically and financially largely dependent on French 'co-operation'.

In order to harvest the full yields of experimental school teaching, the linguistic part, mother-tongue education would have to be generally applied. Like the authors of the National Charter of 1987, the most recent Education Commission, in their evaluation work for the Conférence Nationale (1991), is convinced of the potential of the experimental school project. The Commission urges the Ministry of National Education to:

- evaluate the experimental schools and introduce all the technical measures to make them operational with a view to their generalization;
- \$ work out a management plan for the generalization of reform at all levels ... throughout the national territory;
- \$ provide the Institut National de Documentation, de Recherche et d'Animation Pédagogique (INDRAP), with the means necessary to prepare and publish works appropriate to the reform process.

These steps should be supported by boosting non-formal literacy education and, innovatively, involving university graduates in the campaigns, and also by regularly offering courses on national languages at the secondary and tertiary levels of education:

- \$ To implement a national literacy campaign in order to enable populations to acquire reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- \$ To introduce a follow-up structure in post-literacy.
- \$ To maintain National Civil Service for one year, to pursue the aim of a mass literacy campaign. This arrangement will enable costs to be reduced and students to be involved at the socio-cultural level.
- \$ To develop the teaching of national languages in all training colleges for the professions (administration, agriculture, post and tele-communications, economics, education, etc.) and in all faculties of the University of Niamey.

In the medium or long term, the Commission proposes:

- \$ The creation of an institute of national languages (attached to the university) which will have the role of transcription and development, in collaboration with the other countries in the sub-region.
- \$ The matching of administrative action to national realities and the national context, through the production of documentation and the dissemination of this in national languages.

I shall conclude this overview of the language issue in education by quoting again the complementary outside account of the situation furnished very recently by a renowned German institution of technical co-operation (GTZ) (Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992). The authors (one of them from Nigeria) summarize the 'evident advantages of mother-tongue education' as follows:

- \$ Communication with the teacher is not obstructed, as is the case when French is used. This obviates the development of worry and insecurity.
- \$ The acquisition of literacy is quicker and more secure.
- \$ The results of the primary leaving certificate are better even though children take the same examinations as those in traditional schools ... the rates of drop-out and repetition are lower.
- \$ The learning of French is benefited since the skills acquired through literacy in the mother tongue are transferred to the foreign language.
- \$ In secondary school, the pupils from experimental schools are not handicapped in becoming fluent in French ... ; on the contrary, they seem more active, 'aware' and better equipped to learn scientific disciplines.
- \$ The child's relationship with his/her original environment remains closer.

On the other hand, the GTZ report lists a number of difficulties, some of them pedagogical and, therefore, easier to overcome⁴⁰ than an apparent general reluctance among parents to send their children to schools in which French does not figure in the usual way. It is these social factors that stand in the way of a speedy 'generalization' of mother-tongue education despite the promising results (Bergmann and Yahouza 1992, pp. 103 et seq.):

- \$ The results are too little known by the general public.
- \$ National languages lack official recognition and practical use **B** they have been recognized in the National Charter since 1984, and the most widespread languages were the working languages of the National Development Council, but Raymaekers' observations remain pertinent:

⁴⁰ Among these are the transition from mother tongue to French in the fourth year, problems with teaching the grammar of the particular national language and a general lack of experience in how to teach mathematics in national languages.

- \$ <.. the usefulness of national languages as tools of written communication with the local, regional and national authorities has been illusory until now, given that the official language of the administration at all levels remains French' (Raymaekers, 1985, p. 12).
- \$ Thus, family planning programmes produce no information material in national languages. The staff running these programmes is not trained to read and write these languages.
- \$ Even during meetings held in national languages reports are written in French for lack of training in the formal use of African languages.

Parents fear that their children will be disadvantaged and that mother tongue schools are schools for the poor, giving education <on the cheap'.

The authors of the GTZ report conclude with a straightforward recommendation for the introduction of national languages as languages of instruction (p. 120):

We believe that the medium of instruction has such an influence on learning in most of the other subjects that efforts to improve the sector will be in vain if this obstruction is not overcome. Given the encouraging results from the experimental schools, conducted in national languages, and the significant preparatory work done by INDRAP, the Permanent Secretariat for Reform and the Directorate of Literacy, we recommend co-operation in the introduction of national languages in practically all the primary schools in the country. The present political situation is favourable, and an official status for the national languages has been demanded on several occasions.

Strategies for the improvement of literacy and post-literacy in the national languages

The predominant and most urgent problems and tasks concerning the improvement of literacy in the national languages in Niger appear to be the following:

1. to create an adequate literacy environment for national languages;
2. to increase, through advocacy work, the acceptability among parents of national language teaching in all primary schools;
3. to establish and improve the co-operation/integration of those literacy agencies that are already well established in the country, i.e., INDRAP, SPCNRE/PS and DAFA with CFCA, in order to optimize means and efforts towards high quality production of didactic and other materials in the national languages;
4. to boost further standardization efforts with the goal of producing:
 - (a) the immediate necessary basic materials for the five <minor' national languages (vernacular Arabic, Buduma, Gurmancema, Tasawaq and Tubu) in order to allow mother-tongue education in these hitherto neglected languages,
 - (b) more advanced materials for all national languages;
5. to secure continuous and sufficient funding (through international cooperation).

Task 1 would imply, most of all, making national languages <public', i.e., having public notices, signboards, inscriptions, street names, etc., printed and painted in the national language of the community. For a period of transition, such public inscriptions could be bilingual or trilingual (including French). In learning from the Somali example, government civil servants should be put through examinations as to their command, both oral and written, of two national languages (not French), i.e., their own mother tongue plus a second African language. Those who fail the language examinations would risk being retired early or would lose their job. The daily government-controlled newspaper *Le Sahel* should contain at least one page with texts in one or more national languages;

for instance, the television and radio news of the previous evening could be repeated in written form in the newspaper. The media should be supported in organizing competitions of creative writing in national languages, from local to national level; winners should receive as much publicity and remuneration as do the traditional wrestlers in Niger. This task involves mostly imagination and goodwill, and requires only a minimum of financial support, once the political decisions have been taken. A 'National Languages Bureau' could be set up to stimulate and coordinate such cultural activities.

Task 2 is probably the hardest to achieve. Public reaction towards the introduction of national languages ranges from total rejection in some quarters to enthusiastic acceptance of the idea (which does not necessarily mean that those who favour the idea would agree to send their own children to the 'new' schools if there was an alternative). (cf. Bergmann and Yahouza, 1992, p. 108):

One important reason is certainly the history of the modern school (as opposed to the q'ranic school) in Niger. It was introduced as a French school during the colonial era, and afterwards those who benefited from it had to do so through mastery of French. In educational practice, French language and culture have been accorded greater value than anything else. Excellence in French has been the pride of pupils and students, and the encouragement received (and the contempt shown for national languages and cultures, often accompanied by punishment) has necessarily produced attitudes strongly in favour of that system of education...

Many parents, in both urban and rural settings, are not convinced by the value of mother tongues in school. What counts for them is fluency in French. This attitude is understandable: the parents in urban areas, especially government officers, fear that their children's advantage of a head start in French could be lost. Given the importance of French in every formal, official context, parents in rural areas insist on the school's teaching as much of it as possible. In their thinking, mother tongues are brought in at the expense of French.

Task 3 would be the object of study of a commission (yet to be established) on the internal administrative structures within the ministère de l'Enseignement national et de la Recherche (MEN/R).

Task 4 would rely on the availability of skilled manpower, funds for modern (i.e., computerized) word processing and funds for printing and distribution of materials. As for skilled manpower, curricula at the University of Niamey, particularly in the departments of linguistics and education, need to be changed in order to devote more time and effort to the study of national languages and their use in Buduma, Niger Gurmancema varieties (the majority live in Burkina Faso), Tasawaq and related languages (about which even specialists know very little), and Tubu (especially Daza). As for the five 'major' national languages, no one has as yet achieved the ultimate goal of providing users and educators with a comprehensive monolingual dictionary. There is, however, a fairly solid foundation already laid by the works of institutions such as INDRAP and DAFA in five languages: Fulfulde, Hausa, Kanuni, Tamajaq and Zarma. Bergmann and Yahouza (1992, p. 106) have surveyed the teaching materials available in these five languages (see Table 11).

Task 5 is self-explanatory.

Table 11

General teaching documents:		
Methodological teaching guide in national languages (1981)	printed	
Development and evaluation of programmes	printed	
Thematic exploitation	printed	
Reading		
1 introduction to reading book per language:		
pupil's book	in press	
teacher's book	in press	
1 reading book per language and year (1-3)	printed	
Language		
1 grammar per language. for Year 3	printed	
1 grammar per language, for year 4	being written	
1 language book per language, level 1	being written	
French-Kanuri lexicon	printed	
French-Tamajaq lexicon	printed	
1 monolingual dictionary per language (to stabilize orthography)		being written
1 French as a second language teaching book (1984)	printed	
Mathematics - arithmetic		
1 arithmetic book per language	being written	
1 specialized mathematical lexicon per language	printed	

References

- Bergmann, H.; Yahouza, I. 1992. *Niger - étude sectorielle sur l'éducation de base. GTZ rapport pédagogique* 55. Eschborn, GTZ. (Contains an extensive bibliography.)
- Kaba, M. W. 1985. *Situation of Niger*. UNESCO Interregional Symposium (Africa, Asia) on Content, Teaching Methods and Teacher Training Programmes in the Use of National and Mother Tongue Languages in Teaching and in Culture. Niamey, May 1985. (Mimeo.)
- Kaba, M. W. 1988. Bericht Erziehungswesen. Beitrag zum BMZ/GTZ-Forschungsprojekt 'Soziokulturelle Länderstudie Niger', Juli 1988. (Mimeo.)
- République du Niger/Conseil militaire suprême. 1987. *Charte Nationale*. Niamey.
- République du Niger/Conseil national de développement. 1989. Projet de Constitution. *CND Bulletin*, Special Issue, Febr. 1989.
- République du Niger/Conférence nationale 1991. *Commission Education: Rapport sur l'Éducation* (mimeo)
- Syndicat national des enseignants du Niger. 1991. *Contribution du bureau exécutif national au forum sur l'éducation*. (Mimeo.)

17. THE LANGUAGE QUESTION IN LITERACY TEACHING AND BASIC EDUCATION: THE EXPERIENCE OF SENEGAL

Arame Diop Fal

The purpose of this study is to examine the issues relating to the use of the national languages in the education system and the implications arising from it, in the context of the implementation of the proposals put forward by CNREF (Senegal's National Reform Commission for Education and Training). It begins by taking stock of the language situation and language policy in Senegal, with a brief look at the experience acquired in the use of the national languages in teaching.

The language situation and language policies

Senegal's 6,928,000 inhabitants speak score of languages, all of which belong to one or other of two groups: the West Atlantic group, by far the larger of the two, and the Mande group. Both groups belong to the Niger-Congo family of languages. Two of the national languages, Manding and Pular, are widely spoken in West Africa and even, in case of Pular, in Central Africa. It is important to point out that these two languages, together with Wolof, feature on the provisional list of inter-African languages drawn up by the UNESCO meeting of experts on the harmonization and transcription of African languages held in Niamey in 1981. The same languages, together with Soninke, are also officially recognized as national languages in neighbouring states such as Gambia (Manding, Pular, Wolof), Guinea (Manding, Pular), Mali (Manding, Pular, Soninke) and Mauritania (Pular, Soninke, Wolof).

The official language is French. The overall literacy rate is 28 per cent, which means that about three-quarters of the population do not understand the language of government. French is also the only language used in formal education, apart from the experiments which we shall refer to later and which, in any case, are no longer taking place.

Six of the native languages are officially recognized as national languages: decree 71-566 of 21 May 1971, amending and replacing decree 68-871 of 24 July 1968, and supplemented by decree 72-702, lays down the alphabets of Wolof (spoken by 70.9 per cent of the population), Pular (21.1 per cent), Sereer (13.7 per cent), Manding (6.2 per cent), Jo'ola (5.2 per cent) and Soninke (3 per cent). As far as we are aware, there is no text explicitly defining the functions assigned to the national languages or the fields in which they are to be used. In actual practice, these are the languages used in literacy teaching and educational experiments, as well as in the media; however, radio programmes are broadcast at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun in other languages spoken by Catholic-majority communities, such as Manjaku, Noon, etc. We can safely say that every Senegalese speaks at least one of six national languages. Wolof is the country's *lingua franca*, being spoken over practically the whole of its territory, whereas the other five languages are regionally predominant.

Development of written forms for the six languages has been completed, although, as is only to be expected, problems of standardization remain to be solved and certain choices of spelling need to be reviewed.

Use of the national languages in socio-cultural activities

The national languages are widely used on the radio and, to a lesser extent, television for news bulletins, cultural programmes, commercials, etc. They have become the favoured means of expression for singers, who include international stars such as Baaba Maal (Pular), Youssou N'dour (Wolof) and the Turekunda group (Manding). Wolof has been used in the National Assembly for some years now, following the election of non-French-speaking deputies. This has, however, remained a token development **B** and the same could be said about the use of languages in the regional, *département* and local assemblies **B** since it has not been backed up by such essential measures as literacy training for deputies, the translation of statutory texts and references documents, the training of secretaries to take records of proceedings, etc.

As regards literature, the state is for the time being interested only in French-language works. French-language authors, who are few in number and whose readership is necessarily limited, formed an association, l'Association des Écrivains du Sénégal (AES), some twenty years ago. This body receives aid from the state in the form of headquarters premises, a recently created literary prize, the Prix du Président de la République pour les Lettres, the Biennale of Arts and Letters, aid to publishers, television programmes promoting books at peak viewing times, and periodic opportunities for publishing a column in the national daily, *Le Soleil*.

As to national-language literature, the state largely ignores it, and it is scarcely surprising that it is not taken into account in the institutions dealing with African thought or literature (university departments of philosophy or the arts, for instance). These institutions are generally more interested in the oral tradition. This interest is in itself a good thing: the oral tradition does indeed need to be saved while there is still time and transmitted to the younger generations; but it would, in our opinion, be a serious mistake to restrict action to preserving it. All languages, it is quite obvious, went through this stage before they could be set down in the form of writing, which is what is required in the modern age. This is what makes it necessary to move beyond nostalgia for the oral tradition and at the same time take steps to promote written literature. We shall return to this subject later.

In short, one might say that, thirty years after independence, and in spite of certain measures that have been taken in favour of the national languages, Senegal is in fact perpetuating France's language policy, thus excluding the overwhelming non-French-speaking majority of the population from direct communication and full participation in the running of public affairs. However, the population at large, always quick to react and adapt, has managed by means of a variety of initiatives not only to preserve the vitality of the national languages but even to extend their use into areas previously closed to them, such as scientific, economic and other matters. In response to public demand, for example, Radio-Télévision du Sénégal is broadcasting more and more popular science programmes in the national languages.

The national-language press is making a breakthrough, albeit a half-hearted one, mainly because of the high rate of illiteracy and the low purchasing power of the population groups concerned. Mention should be made, following the disappearance of *Kàddu* ("word" in Wolof), established in the 1970s by Pathé Diagne, of a bilingual Pular-Wolof newspaper *Sofaa* ('soldier' in Manding), published since 1988 by the Association des Chercheurs Sénégalais. The other national-language papers are usually linked to literacy projects, have a limited circulation and contain material specific to the project.

Even the French-language newspapers make increasing use of the national languages, sometimes even for their titles, e.g. *Fagaru* (Wolof for 'making arrangements'), the organ of the LD-MPT Party, or *Suka* (Pular for 'child'), a magazine issued by the publishers Nouvelles Éditions Africaines. Quite often, words, phrases or complete sentences **B** especially in satirical papers **B** are inserted into the

body of an article, rather in the style of certain Senegalese writers whose works in French are sprinkled with expressions in the national languages. Until such time as these languages are fully and independently used in the print media, this practice can at least familiarize people with how they are written **B** provided that words are correctly written. Unfortunately, this is seldom the case, as journalists cannot be bothered to learn how the national languages are spelt.

Journalists are, however, not the only people concerned; the same remark applies to academics, teachers, people in the world of the arts, in short, the intellectual elite who, overwhelmingly, have until recent years felt little involvement. Even the political parties, especially the opposition parties who claim to be fighting for the advent of democracy and social justice, have no attached to the language question all the importance it deserves. One may wonder, along with Mr M. Ngalasso, whether the participation of the various population groups in democratic development can be enlisted without speaking their languages, without teaching them to read them and without ensuring that those languages are genuine instruments for economic and social advancement. Some parties have, it is true, organized literacy classes for their activists but have gone no further, whereas they could have at the same time given them an opportunity to make use of what they had learned, e.g. in their newspapers, where a number of column-inches could be set aside for the national languages, or by means of educational pamphlets in civic, political, cultural and other issues. Better than any declarations of intent, similar action by other mass organizations, such as trade unions and religious or lay associations, would be more effective in influencing the state's language policy and would at the same time help the national languages to settle into written tradition.

The Union des Ecrivains Sénégalais en Langues Nationales (UESLAN), founded only a few years ago, aims mainly to promote national-language literature by publishing existing works. Its members are drawn from various linguistic backgrounds: students of Koranic schools who have gone over to using Latin script, recent graduates from literacy training, teachers, researchers, civil servants, and so on. It is important to point out that Cheik Aliou Ndao, one of the great names of French-language Senegalese literature, is a member of the board of this association. It should also be remembered that written literature in the national languages originated in the centres of Islamic education, the *marabouts* having managed, with varying degrees of success, to adapt the Arabic alphabet to the sounds of the native tongues, giving us such great names as Moussa Ka and Cheikh Samba Diarra Mbaye for Wolof, and Alioune Thiam, Thiemo Boye for Pular, etc.

Wolof literature, with which I am more familiar, was at first little known except to initiates, and perhaps to a limited audience who took note of the poetry chanted day in and day out by beggars. In the age of cassettes, however, an efficient distribution system has come into being, thanks in large measure to the enterprise of the Mourides (a religious brotherhood) as authors, producers and vendors of cassettes, to which must be added the impact of the poetry of Moussa Ka, Serigne Mbaye Diakhaté, Cheikh Samba Diarra Mbaye and others, declaimed on the occasion of the *Màggal* that are regularly organized throughout Senegal and even in the United States and Europe. This has helped to make Wolof poetry known and has given rise to new talents, not only in the centres of Islamic education but also among the newly literate and those who have been educated in French: secondary and primary school teachers, civil servants, academics, and so forth. The radio programme *Taalifi Doomi Réew Mi* (Poems by the children of our country), in which invited authors recite their works, is highly popular, despite the unpropitious time **B** opposite the slot for *Dallas* or some other television soap **B** at which it goes out. Poetry is not the only genre in which authors work: they also tackle those of the novel, the short story, drama, etc.

Works such as Cheikh Aliou Ndao's *Taataan ak Lolli* and Mame Younoussé Dieng's *Aawo Bi* are being analysed in Germany. The large literary in Pular has also been enriched of late by

Aboubacry Dem's translation of Cheikh Amidou Kane's *l'Aventure Ambigüe*. Works are produced in other languages, too, but the absence of any systematic collecting of the manuscripts jealously guarded in the village will make it difficult to obtain any precise idea of this heritage.

Experiments in the use of national languages in elementary school

The history of teaching in the national languages goes back to the colonial period and to Jean Dard (1770-1843), the first French teacher to be sent to Senegal. In Saint-Louis, then the territory's capital, realizing the difficulties and obstacles arising from the exclusive use of French in the education of children whose everyday language was Wolof, he endeavoured to establish for these French-African or Wolof-French schools an original method of teaching, adapted to the social and linguistic context, and based on the use of Wolof as the medium of instruction. The results were soon forthcoming, if one is to believe Jean Dard himself:

The children made rapid progress: in two years, more than eighty young blacks and mulattos benefited so greatly from school's lessons that they were able to write Wolof in French characters; it was observed that the young Africans had entirely overcome the difficulties of the elementary lessons, wrote and did arithmetic correctly, and could express themselves as well as the European children of Saint-Louis who took the same lessons (Dard, 1825).

Jean Dard's work was not appreciated at the time and caused a commotion that resulted in his being recalled to France.

Similar experiments took place at the various missions; every time a chapel was built, the priests tried to open a school. In 1909, so D. Bouche reports, the Fadiouth Sereer-language school was attended by 100 boys, a good many of whom could read quite well, but they soon lost heart because there were no books available in Sereer to enable them to keep up their knowledge' (unpublished report by Albert Faye on the use of national languages in the education system, 1992).

More than half a century later, these experiments were resumed. Four of national languages (Wolof, Pular, Sereer and Jo'ola) were introduced experimentally between 1978 and 1984 in elementary schools, in the context both of educational television and of non-television education. In the first two years, teaching was provided in the national languages only. French was introduced from the third year on, while the syllabus time devoted to the national languages was reduced (in the last year but one of primary school, for instance, Wolof was reduced to one-and-three-quarter hours) and their status was downgraded, from that of written to solely spoken languages.

Educational Television

We refer here to the television project which constitutes the realization in practice of the agreement concluded in 1976 between the Senegalese Ministry of Education and the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) for funding totalling 346,925,000 CFA (African Francophone Community) francs (346,925 French francs, following the 1993 devaluation). As concerns the ten experimental classes set up in urban and semi-rural areas, this project has been carried through to completion, whereas non-television education was suspended after the second year, for the obvious reason that it had not been properly prepared, and pupils were transferred back, not without unfortunate effects for some of them, into the traditional French-language system.

The objectives

The objectives were: to try out television as an educational medium; to conduct an experiment in the teaching of a national language by television at elementary-school level; and to test the following hypotheses: (a) that the national languages are more suitable than foreign languages for conveying educational content; and (b) that in a bilingual French/national languages context, the teaching of the latter is not an obstacle to the teaching of the former.

The strategy

The initial year is conducted entirely in Wolof, prior to the introduction of French, which is introduced first in oral form in the second year and then written form in the third year. From the fourth year on, Wolof gradually loses its status as medium of instruction, ending up in the sixth, final, year as one subject among others, on oral use only.

Preparing the ground

Awareness-raising activities, though intensive outside of the country, thanks in particular to ACCT publications, (ACCT, 1982 a) made little impact in Senegal itself. Although the teachers in charge of the experiment and the school heads directly involved were given proper advance notice, the same was not true of the other parties such as the educators who were not directly involved, the parents of the pupils, etc.

Three months before the project started, the teachers, all of whom were volunteers, first took a three-week language course and then a teacher-training course. Some of them were subsequently able to go on in-service study tours to Europe or elsewhere in Africa, but, regrettably, the school heads and inspectors who were supposed to be providing overall supervision were excluded from this training.

How the classes operated

The ten classes began operating in 1978 in Dakar, Thiès, Bambey, Mbour and Saint-Louis, the most distant locality being 270 km from Dakar. Teachers were supplied with television programmes once a fortnight from the production centre in Dakar. At the same time they received teaching notes for each programme, explaining the objectives and giving tips on using it. They were not supposed to view the programmes before they were shown to the pupils; the intention of those in charge of the project was thereby to put teachers from the outset in a situation like that of a broadcast on national television, in case the experiment was later extended on a wide scale.

The teachers faced difficulties of several kinds. Some of the programmes did not tally with the objective as stated in the accompanying notes. The French lesson on energy at which we were present, for example, was supposed to highlight the use of various conjunctions, but this was not clearly apparent. According to the teachers, such shortcomings could have been avoided if, as was not the case, they had been involved in the making of the programmes. It must, however, be acknowledged that the situation improved greatly later on, when teachers were asked to submit suggestions, special forms having been drawn up for this purpose. It should also be pointed out that meetings were held two or three times a year to take stock and to solve problems vital to the continuation of the experiment, such as the replacement of a teacher, in addition to which visits by supervisors provided an opportunity to settle any matters outstanding.

The level of the pupils in the experimental French classes was lower than that of those on the other classes, particularly in respect of written work. Being used to Wolof spelling, which is phonetic, they had trouble adapting to French spelling. The overall strategy had failed to take this into account, and the programmes for the fourth, fifth and sixth years had to be adjusted accordingly.

As regards Wolof, the teachers ran up against problems of terminology, especially in relation to grammar. As we saw for ourselves, the terms employed in the teaching notes were not always appropriate; many of them were closely based on French grammar, and a particular view of French grammar at that. On top of this there were problems relating to dialects and other variants, in short, all the sorts of questions that a proper linguistic training could have solved. The thorny problem of geminate consonants, which had resulted in a certain inconsistency in the drafting of the documentation, was neatly solved by the repeal of the decree that was at fault.

Arlette Bienfait's report

There has not, to our knowledge, been any comprehensive evaluation of this experiment. The only assessments available are to be found in the report that was drawn up by Arlette Bienfait (1981), that is to say halfway through the project, and of which we shall now attempt to set out the major points. After passing favourable judgement on the study which constituted, as it were, the theoretical basis of the project, the author tries to compare what was actually achieved by Télévision Scolaire du Sénégal (TSS) with the principles set forth in the study. Her observations come under several headings, including the following:

Evaluation as envisaged

The study provided for three kinds of evaluation: spot check, systematic evaluation, and class-by-class continuous assessment. The author observes that evaluation came to a halt at the end of the first year when no replacement was found after the person responsible for it was transferred to another post.

Teaching staff

The study foresaw that the best of the serving teachers would be selected. After meeting four of the ten teachers working with an experimental class, the report's author reckoned that two out of the four were mediocre to rather poor. Her assessment of the teachers appointed to the TSS production centre was that they were competent, and she praises their team spirit, while regretting that educational co-ordination was dropped because of staff shortages.

Preparation of the programmes

The author points out that there was not sufficient lead-time between the making of the programmes and their showing, with the result that necessary modifications could not be made. She states (Bienfait, 1981, p. 57) that it was already apparent at the time of the preparatory meetings that the choice of methods for the showing of the programmes was dictated not so much by their educational content as by the speed and ease with which they could be made.

Syllabus design

The author expresses regret that the three-monthly meetings with inspectors and principals of teaching-training colleges could not take place as had been planned. These would have had the twofold advantage, she notes, of involving the teaching profession and ensuring that the television project was integrated into the existing system in terms of ideas and people. She takes the opportunity to deplore the insufficient attention given to integration in the ACCT study.

Training of the teachers

The training broadcast foreseen in the study were not carried out. Such additional training was all the more necessary in that the initial training was, as we have seen, of short duration. It was especially inadequate at the linguistic level, since the time allotted to it allowed for only an introduction to the writing of the national languages, to the detriment of any close study of their functioning, their literature, problems of dialects, etc.

Other questions

The author of the report reviews a number of 'essential questions' in respect of which there is no documentary evidence of how TSS dealt with them: What was the educational thinking of written and spoken Wolof? What type of grammar was chosen? Were the psychological and intellectual processes involved in the use of Wolof in education taken into account? How were the problems arising from the existence of dialectal differences resolved? How was the problem of extending the vocabulary for other subjects dealt with? What would happen if the other languages became teaching languages?

The author asks some searching questions about the status of French. She writes that TSS, which starts teaching oral French in the first year of primary and written French in the second, seems not to have grasped the place and purpose of that language in the system of education it was trying out, nor, accordingly, the future of Wolof. Questions could also be asked about the ultimate purpose of the teaching of Wolof, which seems to have no other aim than that of improving the teaching of French: after playing a walk-on part for an hour-and-a-half a week of oral lessons in the last two years of primary schooling, Wolof then simply disappears from sight since, as we have seen, it counts for nothing in the examinations at the end of the primary stage.

Results

The first result to note is the massive 'failures' by the television class pupils in examinations, especially the competitive exam for admission into the first grade of secondary school. However, since at the time the subjects in this entrance exam were French and arithmetic, making a good command of French (which is also the gateway to arithmetic) central to the required skills, one cannot but wonder about the significance of these 'failures' generated by an evaluation system manifestly inappropriate to the training received in the television classes. In fact, all the people involved – former teachers of the experimental classes, their colleagues in the same schools, parents, etc. – who were questioned stressed the more relaxed atmosphere of the classes, the eagerness, liveliness and spontaneity of the pupils, in short, fertile ground for the acquisition of knowledge and an atmosphere rarely found in traditional French-language classes. Thus, in spite of the serious shortcomings already mentioned, the experiments showed the irreplaceable role of national languages in Senegalese children's all-round development. What remains at issue, therefore, is not the principle of the incorporation of the national languages into the education system, but the approach which needs to be reoriented towards a rational and methodical acceptance of responsibility for everything

that needs to be done from beginning to end, so that the serious shortcomings that bedevilled this project from the preparatory phase to its completion do not recur.

In summing up, the first thing to note is the absence of general guidelines. Question-marks still hang over the aims of incorporating the national languages into the formal and non-formal education systems and over the ways to achieve the necessary linkage between education and political life and public affairs; these experiments cannot continue in isolation, sheltered from day-to-day realities. Other shortcomings include the inadequacy of the training given to the staff, the problems connected with the design of teaching aids and with the availability of specialized terminologies for various subjects. As regards teaching methods, the teachers did not succeed in making the most of the fact that the children already spoke the language of instruction. It was as if the teachers found it hard to shake off habits acquired in teaching French, a foreign language. Another fact worth mentioning is that the national languages were confined to the first two years of elementary school or to the so called 'traditional' subjects such as history and the oral tradition, and received a purely symbolic continuation, in oral form only and after the first two years, as happened with the television project. We should not have raised this matter if it had concerned a transitory arrangement, pending the implementation of a strategy for the modernization of these languages so as gradually to adapt them to their role at all levels and in all areas of training; but that was not the case. An examination of ACCT's periodic progress reports on experiments under way in the states of the French-speaking community gives the impression that those countries are locked into a closed circuit of projects that are being constantly renewed but which are hardly ever extended in any significant manner. The technical development of the languages chosen for use in education is thus in danger of marking time. At the elementary level where those languages are at present being used, it is in fact possible to get by with rudimentary instruments, which is incidentally why the Senegalese experiments were carried out without any concern for the literature produced in those languages. This jeopardizes their adaptation to modern requirements, since a language is enriched only by conquering new fields of knowledge. While it is surely important to proceed with caution, it is still necessary to move forward.

The national languages in literacy teaching

The functional literacy teaching that started before independence was provided entirely in French. It was in 1970 that Senegal opted for literacy teaching to be dispensed in the national languages, on the grounds that French was confined to a small proportion of the population, particularly workers in the urban centres. Twenty years on, the results of that campaign are unsatisfactory, since, in spite of the efforts of non-governmental organizations, development agencies and other bodies, in conjunction with the (admittedly limited) resources of the state, Senegal figures, with a 70 per cent rate, among the thirteen sub-Saharan countries with the highest levels of illiteracy. The various studies carried out to evaluate the literacy schemes suggest the following reasons for the poor results:

First, an inappropriate language policy: the newly literate cannot communicate with the authorities, and the provincial senior officials do not feel involved, since their working language is French. This state of affairs naturally destroys the motivation of those wanting to learn to read and write. Second, inadequate teacher training: in most literacy projects, the only preparation provided for teachers is usually a short traineeship period, mainly devoted to the writing of the national languages. This means that, among other things, two basic aspects of the strategy are overlooked, viz. mother-tongue teaching methods and adult education methods, the same defect recurring in the design of the course materials. Some of the arithmetic textbooks, for example, contain lessons teaching adults to count in their own language, and some language textbooks help them to memorize the grammatical rules of a language they speak perfectly well. The adults are thus being treated like

children and the training is made unnecessarily long; the 'childishness' of the syllabus is, indeed, one of the reasons why adults drop out. The third reason is failure to take account of adult education methods in the design of the course material.

Other factors that we have ourselves observed in the course of our missions in the ten regions of Senegal are: shortage of books, including teacher handbooks and books for the newly literate; and an unduly narrow view of the functional nature of literacy: where books do exist, from syllabaries to post-literacy reading matter by way of arithmetic textbooks, everything is closely confined to the immediate requirements of the development scheme that initiated the literacy programme. This over-utilitarian approach is to be regretted: it leaves little room **B** and in some cases none **B** in the range of post-literacy reading matter for general knowledge, science, technology, literature, etc.

Truth to tell, the introduction of the national languages into formal and non-formal education is not an end in itself. It has to be seen in the context of an overall development policy that calls on the participation of all population groups and aims to use the languages they understand as languages of communication in all sectors of development, including education and training. This requires political decision to be taken.

As stressed by the experts who met in Bamako in 1979 under the aegis of UNESCO, it is illusory to restrict the African languages to emotional, sectoral or utilitarian functions (adult education); on the contrary, they must be made to contribute simultaneously to all the essential sectors of African life: education at all levels, politics, information, business and the public services.

Prospects for the readjustment of language policy and the choice of languages

It was with these things in mind that the Commission Nationale de Réforme de l'Éducation et de la Formation (CNREF), set up by the government following the national conference known as the "Estates General of Education and Training" to look into the education system in general, stepped in. Adopting a distinctive approach as compared with the language policy followed since independence in most of the former colonies, and on the basis of a critical analysis of the experiments carried out, without tangible success, in Senegal in the preceding period of nearly two decades, it linked use of the national languages in the education system with their recognition as official languages in political and administrative life, jointly with French and in accordance with procedures which it defined, taking into account the linguistic and socio-linguistic situation in Senegal. According to these guidelines, which were supposed to be further developed in monitoring commissions which unfortunately never operated, Wolof, as the lingua franca, was to be the language of national unification, while the other five languages were to be used in conjunction with French at regional level, each in the area where it predominated. Thus, in the National Assembly, for instance, deputies could speak as they chose or as the interests of their constituents required, either in French or in Wolof, while in a regional assembly, in Fatik for instance, in the predominantly Sereer-speaking area, they could choose between French, Wolof and Sereer.

As concerns schools, the general guidelines relate to the use of the national languages as medium of instruction, gradually introduced. They acknowledge the need of all children for nursery school education in the language of their own milieu, which will be one of the six national languages. They also underline the need for the education system to develop practical, effective teaching of the major inter-African and international languages. It is important to note that these proposals did not meet with unanimous support; they were the outcome of a consensus that was resisted by those who advocated a continuation of the status quo, pending **B** according to them **B** proof of the vitality of each language. We shall return to this matter.

While the government officially accepted the principle of the introduction of the national languages into the education system, on the other hand it gave no clear response to the recommendation concerning their status within the public services. It is, in any case, hard to see how education, whether formal or non-formal, could evolve in isolation from political and public life: so long as the national languages are absent from that sector, and so long as French remains the only language of upward mobility, experiments in the use of the national languages will be diverted from their true aim. What good is it for adults **B** confining ourselves to adult education **B** to learn and write in a national language if there is no one to read the letters they write to the authorities or the complaints they lodge with the courts? They will be unable to consult the verbatim reports of the various meetings in parliament or in the rural council.

We need to take a look at the objective factors that might explain why most African states are so little inclined to adopt a language policy that is appropriate to the realities of their linguistic situations and that could achieve their development objectives. The UNESCO study (UNESCO, 1985) on community languages may throw an interesting light in this subject. Of the forty-five states covered by the study, only eight, breaking with colonial language policy, chose an African language as their official language, usually together with a European one. It is noteworthy that there is not one former French or Portuguese colony in that group; it is true that two of them, Burundi and Rwanda, are states belonging to the French-speaking community, but they are former Belgian colonies. An initial factor that could be deduced from this relates to the identity of the colonial power: the language policy applied by the British colonial authorities, even if certain doubts might be expressed as to their real motives, did on the whole prepare the ground for the development of the African languages, whereas France's assimilationist policy had an adverse effect, especially among intellectuals.

In terms of language situation, the eight states in our sample are generally regarded **B** even if it is not strictly the case **B** as being monolingual, precisely because a language understood by the whole population has emerged within each of them. This quasi-monolingual situation may have made the choice easier, since multilingualism seems to decision-makers to constitute an obstacle to the granting of official status to African languages. Given the difficulties that may arise from the (understandable) attachment of each community to its own language, there is, it is true, a strong temptation to stick with the status quo, a position is indeed defended by many political leaders. This is, however, to overlook the fact that continuation of the status quo is itself a choice and one of the most frustrating choices since, as far as concerns decision-making, it marginalised the 80 per cent of the African populations who do not speak the official European language. Each state therefore needs to make judicious choice on the basis of the realities of its own language situation so as to define an appropriate language policy. The most important point here is that choices should have an objective foundation. In most states, socio-linguistic studies giving accurate data on the situation of the country's languages, their vitality and the general trends in their evolution are available. It is not enough, however, to define such a policy; the means for actually applying it must also be to hand.

Support measures

What is in fact required, in all sectors of national life, is to prepare a cultural context conducive to the implementation of the decisions taken at the political level. The following are some measures we consider essential.

- § Teaching all those who can already read and write French to write the national languages, the priority target groups being public-sector and private-sector officials, pupils in the final grade of secondary school and students at the training colleges for the civil service, the police, the health services, secretarial employment or journalism.

- \$ Roughly speaking, it takes no more than 30 hours to learn to read and write a language that the learner already speaks. We should point out that the spelling systems of the national languages have been harmonized on a phonetic basis, using Latin characters. Materials are also available for home study.
- \$ Launching of a mass literacy campaign with the participation of all the country's active forces, especially teachers, researchers, last-grade secondary pupils, etc.
- \$ Creation of a national-language press: To begin with, French-language papers could set aside a certain space for the national languages. We consider this solution preferable to publishing papers exclusively for the rural population, a practice that merely serves to accentuate the rift between the elite, educated in French, and the broad majority, who receive literacy training in the national languages. The Centre for the Study of Information Science and Technology (CESTI) should, furthermore, incorporate the national languages into its curriculum so that any student graduating from it can use either French or one or other of the national languages they understand. Supplementary training would be organized in the meantime for the staff of radio and television who use these languages in order to provide them with the technical knowledge they need in dealing with information, since it is not enough to be able to speak Pular, Jo'ola, Wolof or Sereer to be capable of presenting a news bulletin in those languages.
- \$ Promotion of national-language literature. A considerable amount of literature is produced in the national languages in Arabic script. The specialized institutions, the Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Dakar (CLAD) and the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire (IFAN) Cheikh Anta Diop, if given sufficient resources, could carry out a programme focusing on the systematic collection of manuscripts and the transliteration of selected texts in the official orthographic system. A start has in fact been made on this programme, thanks to the collaboration between the departments of Islamic studies and linguistics at IFAN Cheikh Anta Diop. There are also many manuscripts by modern authors who write in Latin script. This whole heritage should be made available to teachers, researchers, students, the newly literate and other users.
- \$ Awareness-raising activity among intellectuals to encourage them to become more involved in all the efforts to promote national languages. University departments of literature and Arabic, in particular, could direct students towards authors who wrote in the national languages in Arabic script but whose works have now sunk into oblivion.

Modernization of the languages

The following institutions of Cheikh Anta Diop University are conducting research in this area: CLAD, the Department of Linguistics of the Dakar Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, and the Department of Linguistics of IFAN Cheikh Anta Diop.

Status of research on the national languages

The basic studies (phonological, grammatical, lexical, dialectological, etc.) are available, should co-operation be required between the States sharing languages with Senegal (Mali, Mauritania and Gambia, to name only the nearest).

These studies have enabled such basic instruments as orthographic systems, practical grammars, dictionaries and so on, to be devised. Work continues on enriching the languages' vocabularies so as to fit them for the new tasks they are set to perform in modern life, especially in education of all kinds, politics and government, the media etc. Although encouraging results have been achieved in

this field, more often than not thanks to private initiatives, a stronger commitment on the part of the state, embodied in the form of provision of the necessary funding, is still to be desired.

IFAN Cheikh Anta Diop has, for its part, done much work in the area of modernization of languages: grammars in French and in the national languages, bilingual French/national-languages dictionaries (pending the compilation of monolingual dictionaries), spelling guides and, in short, any publication that makes an effective contribution to the standardization of the languages while at the same time serving as an aid to home study for those who can read and write French, and want to learn to read and write in the national languages. Several terminological projects are also under way, including projects relating to grammar, health, justice and the registration of birth, marriages and deaths, etc. For each subject covered, research is carried out with the collaboration not only of one or more specialists

in the field concerned but also of good speakers of the language in question who are in possession of traditional knowledge of the subject. Mention should also be made of the descriptions of plants, with references to the traditional pharmacopoeia, drawn up by the IFAN Cheikh Anta Diop Department of Botany in conjunction with linguists from the same institute. Other natural science departments (zoology and terrestrial invertebrates) are following suit.

On the scale of Africa as a whole, I would say that the African languages are sufficiently advanced for it to be possible for the African States, taking a co-ordinated and mutually supportive approach, to commit themselves resolutely to making the necessary changes. It must be clearly understood that it is not possible to carry out a full range of laboratory studies before beginning, and that some gaps and shortcomings will become apparent only as and when schemes are put into effect. The difficulties that have been cited, such as multilingualism or the small area of dissemination of the language (and this latter difficulty in any case need not be overstated, since the area of dissemination of languages such as Pular and Manding is in fact larger than that of certain European languages official-language status) are not specific to Africa and have been overcome elsewhere at a time when the science was still in its infancy.

There is no apparent reason why Africa should not overcome them, in a situation that is especially favourable as regards scientific, technical and technological progress.

References

Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT)

(a) Les classes "Télé-Wolof" au Sénégal, *in Agecoop Liaison* No. 67, October 1982.

(b) *Les universités francophones des pays en développement et la lutte contre l'analphabétisme*. International seminar, Dakar University, 17-20 May 1982.

Bienfait, A. 1981. *Rapport général sur l'évaluation de l'expérimentation de l'introduction des langues nationales dans le système éducatif*. Mission UNESCO/BREDA, Dakar, 3-24 April 1981.

Commission nationale de Réforme de l'Éducation et de la formation (CNREF). 1984. *Rapport général et annexes*. 5 tomes. Ministère de l'Éducation nationale. Dakar, UNESCO-BREDA.

Documents de la réunion d'experts sur la transcription et l'harmonisation des langues africaines. 1981. Niamey, 17-21 July 1978. Doc. CC. 80/WS/60. Paris, UNESCO.

Documents de la réunion d'experts sur l'utilisation des langues africaines régionales ou sous-régionales comme véhicule de culture et moyen de communication dans le continent. Bamako, 18-22 June 1979. Paris. UNESCO 1981.

- Dard, J. 1825. *Dictionnaire Wolof-Français et Français Bambara, suivi du dictionnaire Français-Wolof*. Paris, Imprimerie royale.
- Fave, A. 1992. Report on the use of languages in the education system. Unpublished.
- Houis, M. 1971. *Anthropologie linguistique de l'Afrique noire*. Paris, PUF.
- UNESCO. 1985. *Les langues communautaires africaines et leur utilisation dans l'enseignement et l'alphabétisation: une enquête régionale*. Dakar, UNESCO-BREDA.

18. MULTILINGUALISM AND SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Heike Niedrig

The education system has a major role to play in the process of social and political change in South Africa. This is true with respect to the cohesion of society as a whole as well as, more particularly, with respect to the future opportunities of children from the historically suppressed and marginalized majority of the population. A central factor in the transformation of the South African educational system is the language policy adopted in and for schools against the backdrop of the new South African constitution, which recognizes the multilingual reality of the country and obliges the state to encourage multilingualism. Concepts for the reform of school-related language policy have been developed and discussed since the mid-90s.

This South African debate has certain parallels with the situation in Germany, as documented in the results of the research project entitled 'Consequences of Labour Immigration for Training and Education' or '*Folgen der Arbeitsmigration für Bildung und Erziehung*' (FABER). The acronym FABER is the name for a co-ordinated research programme financed by the German Research Association (DFG). In South Africa as well as in Germany the notion of the 'normality' of monolingualism and a monolingual school system is being challenged (for South Africa, see Alexander 1994, 1995; for Germany, see Gogolin 1994).

Within the FABER framework, one particular study **B** whose central findings will be presented here **B** surveyed the South African debate on multilingualism in the education system in 1995-1997, the key transitional period during which new educational guidelines were being put into law. The main goal of this study was to analyse the different perspectives on multilingualism and examine innovative approaches for language training in a school setting characterised by linguistic and cultural plurality.

The context : language policy in post-Apartheid South Africa

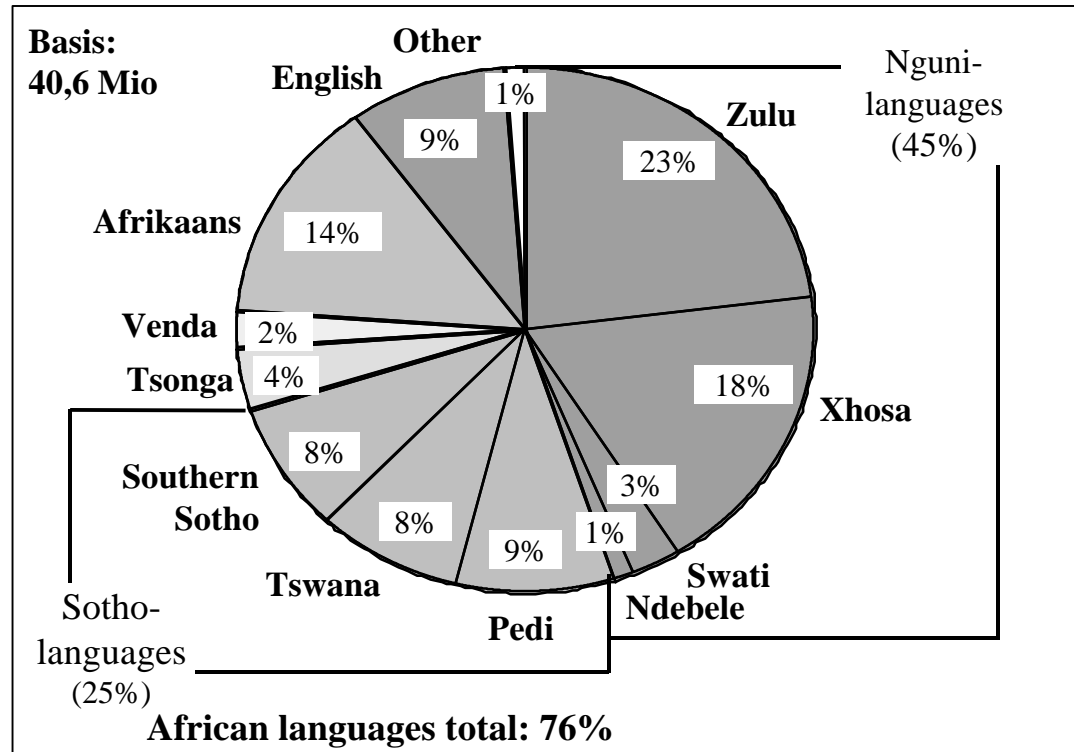
The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.

Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status of these languages. (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Chapter 1, Art. 6 [1, 2])

Eleven official languages are endorsed in the new South African constitution of May 1996. Besides the previously privileged languages English and Afrikaans, these include nine African languages, which are spoken by about 75 per cent of the population (see Fig. 1), but which so far had official status only in the limited territory of the so-called homelands. In addition, the following languages are mentioned in the constitution: the Khoi, Nama and San languages, which are the oldest spoken languages in South Africa; the South African sign language of the Deaf Community; various immigrant languages, namely German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu;

and finally languages which are associated with religious purposes, such as Arabic, Hebrew and Sanskrit. The promotion of multilingualism has become one of the basic tasks of the government laid down in the constitution.

Fig. 1. Languages spoken in South Africa as major home languages.



Source: Census in brief, 1998. Graphic representation by H.N (percentages in round figures).

Which were the essential concepts that entered into the debate on language diversity in the South African education system? What parallels can be drawn between the South African and German situations with regard to multilingualism? To investigate these questions I conducted a total of 76 interviews between March and May 1996 with experts in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban.

Themes of interviews with experts: Language, equal opportunity and cultural identity

The experts whom I interviewed included several members of different advisory committees, who were assigned to draft the new school language policy of the government. Representatives of NGOs were strongly represented in the process. One of the tasks of these committees was to counter pressure for an 'English only' language policy, which was coming from various interest groups in politics, education and the media.

The interviews conducted with experts cover a wide range of positions on multilingualism. They are sub-divided into four major categories:

1. Interviews conducted with experts identified according to their practical experience in the education sector. They were concerned above all with educational opportunities for the historically disadvantaged children with African mother tongues.
2. Interviews conducted with individuals representing important language groups, such as members of the 'Foundation for Afrikaans, the friendly language', and members of the 'Institute of Indian Languages of South Africa'.
3. Interviews conducted with scholars, mainly from the fields of linguistics and education. Here there are some overlaps with the groups mentioned earlier.
4. Interviews conducted with representatives of the national and regional school authorities, who acted as mediators in the discussion process of the curriculum reform.

In the discussion held with these experts the issues of class and culture featured prominently. The issue of 'language and class' dealt with equality of opportunity in the education system. In this context, language is conceived of as 'capital' and a sign of belonging to a particular social class. Since South Africa's Apartheid policy has produced a very large overlap between 'class' and 'race', this discussion focused mainly on children with an African language as their mother tongue. My analysis of the discourse will concentrate on this issue and its relevance for the German language in education debate.

The second issue, 'language and culture', defined language as an expression of belonging to a community with a common 'culture'. Here the main concern was to ensure the right to cultural identity. This perspective of language was put forward mainly by representatives of Afrikaans and the various Indian languages as well as other 'heritage languages'. This debate also links up in an interesting way with the debate on 'intercultural education' in Germany. In the history of South Africa, 'culture' is not a neutral concept but one that is politically charged. I will briefly sketch this aspect in the second part of this essay.

I. Language and equal opportunities

Among the important NGOs active in the education sector are the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), the English Language Teaching Information Centre (ELTIC) and the Molteno Project. Both PRAESA and ELTIC have played an important role in the preparation for the government's future school language policy. The third organisation, the Molteno Project, is included in this research because it promotes a different language in education policy which can be said to represent 'common sense' and 'mainstream' attitudes.

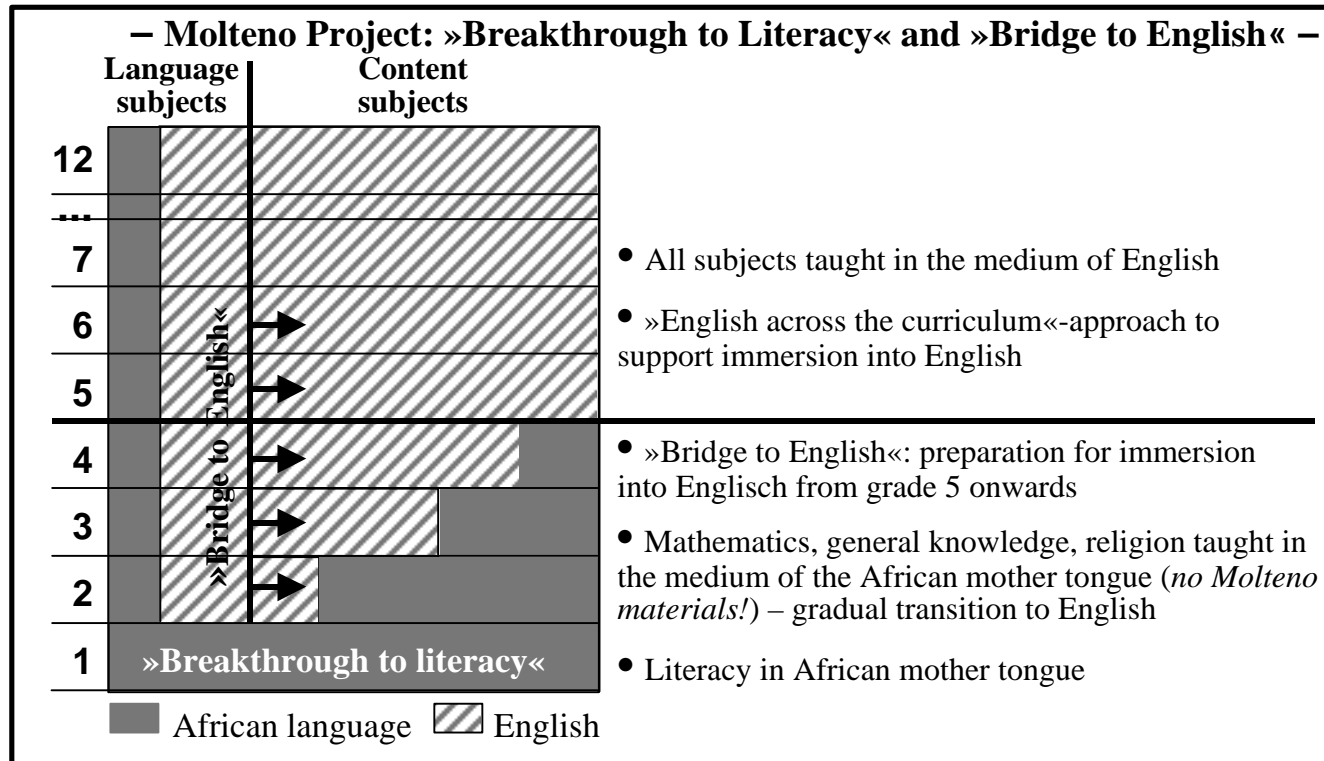
All three of the above-mentioned organizations want to expand educational opportunities, especially for the hitherto disadvantaged black children, through measures related to the language of instruction. However, each of the three have different conceptions as to how this can be achieved. In particular the programmes differ with regard to the role accorded to the African mother tongues of the pupils.

Three strategies for dealing with linguistic diversity

The Molteno Project: English as target language and African languages as the springboard

Since the 1970s, the Molteno Project has developed student materials and teaching aids for children and teachers in the 'black school sector'. Key components of the project are the 'breakthrough to literacy'-programme in an African mother tongue during the first year of school, followed up by the 'bridge to English'-programme starting in grade 2. The idea is that writing and reading skills acquired in the mother tongue will serve as a base for literacy in English. English is to be the only medium of instruction for all subjects from grade 5 onwards, and the Molteno materials are designed to facilitate this transition to immersion in English. English competence is enhanced through an 'English-across-the-curriculum'-approach which integrates English language instruction with content teaching in all other subjects.

Fig. 2. The Molteno programme: Transition to English-medium-instruction



The Molteno materials were developed in the historic context of the Apartheid school system. Since 1976 African children received their initial education in the medium of one of the African languages followed by a sudden transfer to English as medium of instruction in grade 5. When classroom-based research conducted in one of the 'homelands' in the late 1980s found out that precisely this sudden introduction of English as language of teaching in all subjects was one of the main causes of school failure in the black schools, these findings stirred up a new debate about language use in education. Therefore the Molteno experts interviewed favoured a gradual transition to English immersion, introducing English as medium of instruction step by step, e.g. one subject per year/grade (see Fig. 2). This implies an earlier replacement of African languages by English in the education of African children.

Apart from the initial literacy programme, the Molteno project has not produced any African language materials which could make the content teaching in the medium of African languages more efficient. The focus of this NGO is obviously to improve an early immersion into English. Questioned about the role of African languages in their approach, the Molteno expert explained that the project considered, at least, to prepare reading texts in African languages as a follow-up to the literacy programme in mother tongues to support good teaching of African languages as subjects. I have interpreted this consideration as a reaction to the discussion about the new status of African languages after the end of the Apartheid regime.

In principle, however, the *Molteno* materials are *not* designed to develop the African languages but to facilitate a successful transition to English as a medium of instruction. The role of the African languages within this approach is well illustrated in the metaphor of the 'springboard' used by one of the interviewed experts: According to him, literacy in African languages has no value in itself, but is supposed to serve as a springboard to the acquisition of writing skills in English.

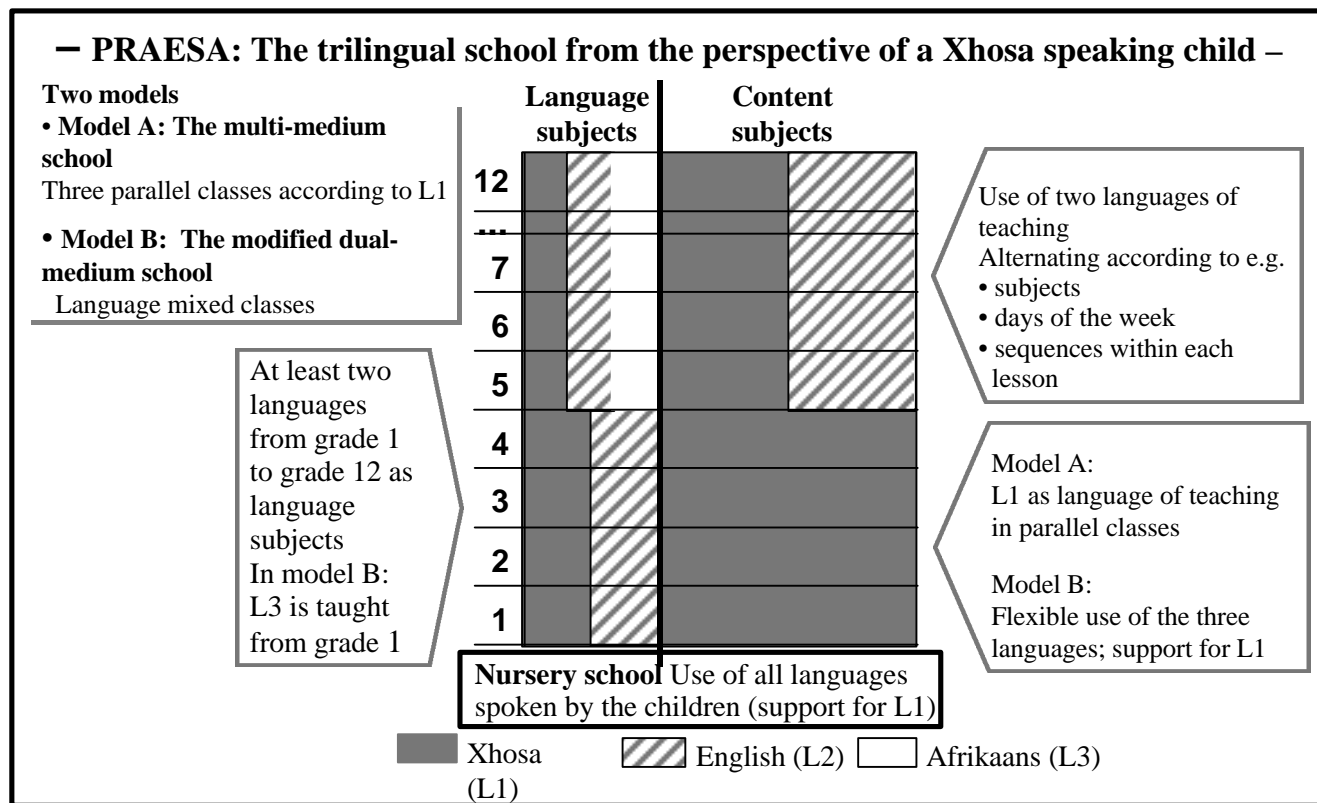
PRAESA: Additive trilingualism as a national education target

The school model which was designed by *PRAESA* is unquestionably more complicated than the *Molteno* model. I had to reduce this complexity in my graphic illustration in order to point out the basic ideas (see Fig. 3, p. 236).

According to the *PRAESA* model, the objective of language education for every South African child is trilingualism, i.e. competence in the mother tongue and in English as well as the ability to converse in at least one additional major regional language of South Africa. The basis for this should be laid in a multicultural nursery school, where children would acquire some basic trilingual knowledge through playing. In this concept the nursery school introduces all children at an early age to multi-lingualism. This approach contrasts with the mainstream-perspective on language education which favours early immersion into English for African children.

The trilingual schools are intended to be based on the multilingual pre-school education. *PRAESA* suggested the foundation of a demonstration school in Cape Town to experiment with two different approaches to trilingual education. Since the dominant languages of the Cape Province are Afrikaans (spoken by ca. 60 per cent of the population of the Cape), English and Xhosa (each ca. 20 per cent), these three languages were to be used in the demonstration school as the major media of instruction.

Fig. 3. The PRAESA programme: Multilingual education



In Model A, children are divided into three parallel classes in accordance with their mother tongues. In Model B, children remain in linguistically mixed classes as in the nursery school and are taught by trilingual teachers or else by a team of teachers with complementary language competencies. In the case of mixed classes, additional teachers are needed to be able to divide the class temporarily into mother tongue groups to support children in the development of their first languages. The two models are shown (see Fig. 3, p. 236) from Xhosa-speaking children's perspective.

The important feature which both organisational models have in common is that about half of the instruction is in the mother tongue until the pupil finishes school. The second language is introduced as a language of teaching from the 3rd or 4th grade onwards. But teaching in the mother tongue continues and runs parallel to instruction in the second language. This is the decisive difference between PRAESA and the Molteno approach. The latter has been criticized by PRAESA for being a transitory and subtractive model of bilingual education. Additive bilingualism or multilingualism, by contrast, means that the mother tongue is not replaced by the second language as a medium of instruction. In particular, it is considered important that children whose first language is a language with low social status, such as Xhosa, should not learn a high status language, such as English, at the expense of the development of their first language competence (PRAESA, 1995; see also Alexander, 1995; Heugh, 1995a).

Teacher training and in-service training for teaching staff at mainstream-schools should be an integral component of the trilingual schools because many South African teachers struggle to cope with the challenges of the desegregated schools and their multilingual student population. The foundation of the demonstration school was delayed for political and financial reasons. However, PRAESA has established, in the meantime, a course 'Further Diploma for Multilingual Education' at the University of Cape Town.

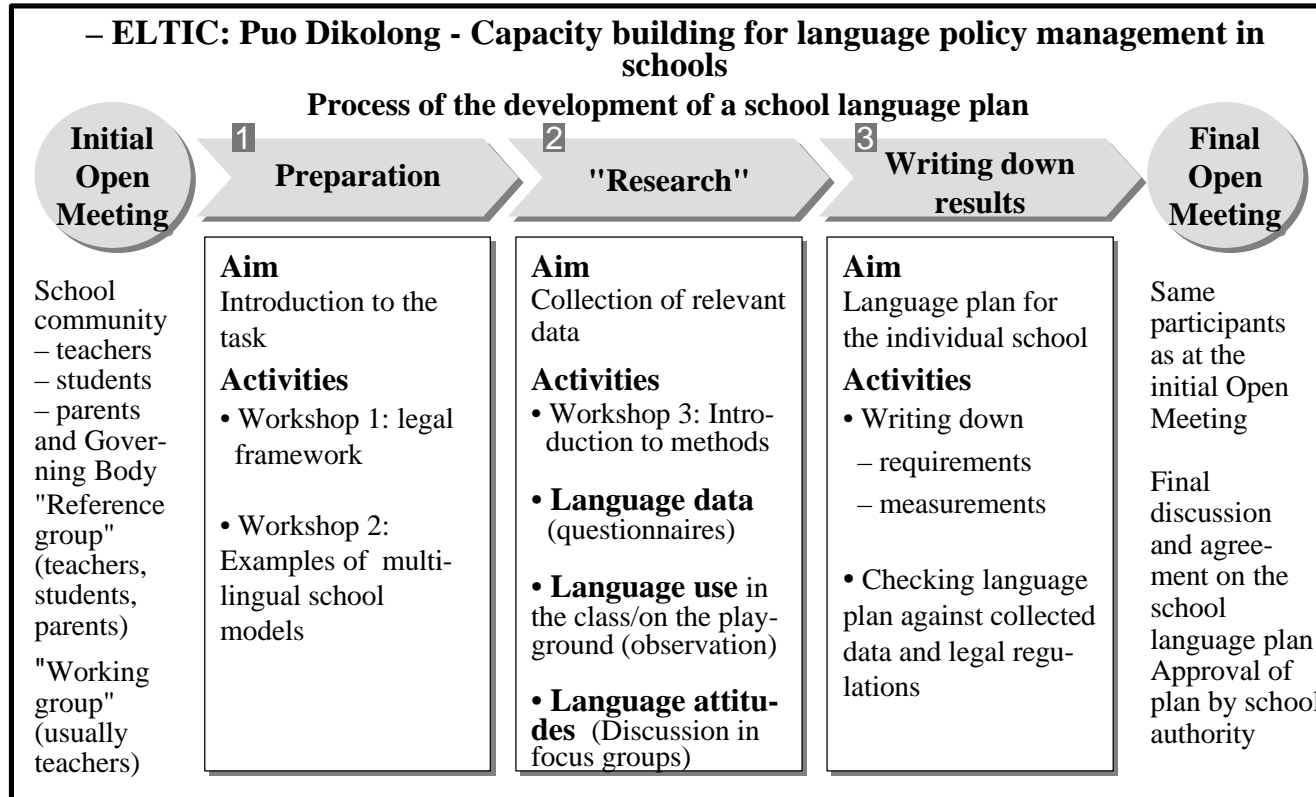
ELTIC: Linguistic diversity as a point of departure in the process of training

Like PRAESA, the ELTIC educational programme has strong links with education policy, school development and in-service teacher training. Under the influence of ELTIC, a clause was introduced first into one of the provincial school laws and later into the national language in education law of 1997 to the effect that the school governing body (consisting of representatives of parents, teachers, the headmaster and **B** in secondary schools **B** also of students) of each school had to develop a school language plan for the respective school. In order to support the schools' efforts to implement this legal obligation, *ELTIC* designed the school development project *Puo Dikolong*.

The *Puo Dikolong* project differs quite fundamentally from the above mentioned approaches to language in education: Whilst the Molteno Project and PRAESA suggest different models of organising language teaching and language use in schools **B** either transition to English (Molteno) or trilingual education (PRAESA) **B** ELTIC's project *Puo Dikolong* consists of a set of rules and skills needed to organize a participatory decision-making process about the language in education policy of individual schools

Puo Dikolong was carried out in a pilot phase with twelve schools, which represented a wide spectrum of school types with respect to ethnic and language constellations. With the assistance of *Puo Dikolong* rules and skills, the *ELTIC* team acted as moderators in the school communities' development of their individual school language plans, focusing on the local conditions of each school.

Fig. 4. The ELTIC programme: Dealing with multilingualism at schools



The school governing body appointed a 'reference group', including parents, teachers and pupils, each representing one of the various language groups in the schools. Members of this group were nominated (as working-group) to prepare the ground for decision-making by collecting relevant information, whereby the following factors were taken into consideration: Linguistic and demographic data of the schools' students and teachers, the wishes and goals of parents and children on language learning, as well as any conflicts, disadvantages, and injustices connected with the language policy at the school. These data were gathered with the help of standard questionnaires and qualitative methods including observation of language use in class and on the playground. Additionally, discussions (stimulated by role-play) were conducted with representatives of focus groups led by ELTIC moderators.

ELTIC supported the schools by structuring this process, according to the following procedure (see Fig. 4, p. 238). After an introductory meeting informing the whole school community about the *Puo Dikolong* process and its objective, the reference group and working group were set up and a series of workshops were conducted, together with ELTIC representatives. In these workshops, the new legal regulations concerning language in South Africa were clarified, several examples of multilingual school models were presented, and methods of investigation and evaluation of language data were introduced. Finally the ELTIC moderators assisted in formulating the proposal for a school language plan. At the end of the workshops, this proposal for the future rules of language use at the school was discussed by the whole school community. Once the school language plan was accepted by the majority of the members of a school community, it was legally examined by the corresponding regional school authority. The approved programme then had to be backed up by allocating suitable personnel, by providing teaching materials and by promoting co-operation between schools. ELTIC also encouraged the teaching staff involved in the *Puo Dikolong* Project to participate in the ELTIC in-service teacher training programme *Diteme tsa Thuto* (multilingual education) so as to acquire competence in dealing with multilingualism in daily teaching practice.

Theoretical approach: Pierre Bourdieu's sociolinguistic reflections on legitimising language resources in the education system

In South Africa, the intensive social and political debate about school language policy reflects the central role of language in the reproduction of social inequality. The political abolition of apartheid has not yet resulted in a corresponding radical change of economic and social inequalities. Therefore great hopes are placed on a transformation of the education system which would promote social upward mobility of the historically disadvantaged majority of the population. This goal implies a genuine reallocation of 'cultural capital'.

I have borrowed the concept 'cultural capital' from the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu developed this concept in the 1970s in connection with a sociological study of education in France, to explain why children from different social backgrounds, despite having equal access to the educational system, show different levels of educational achievement. Bourdieu argues that a major cultural resource directly associated with education is 'language'.

According to Bourdieu's analysis, language is analogous to financial capital in a market. It is continually reproduced by institutions which are part of the ruling system in such a way that those in power maintain a generally recognized position of dominance (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 21). In this process the education system plays a central role.

Bourdieu says that legitimate language competence functions as capital, which yields a profit in the form of an advantage in every social exchange (social recognition and authority, better access to

well-paid jobs, potential to be heard in political disputes etc.). The relative increase of this profit depends, in particular, on the rareness of legitimised linguistic products (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 32). This means that the profit rate of those with the legitimate language capital increases in the same measure as the general social recognition of the legitimate language is enhanced, on the one hand, and as the competence in the legitimate language within a society is limited to few of its members, on the other hand.

What function has the education system in the reproduction of the legitimacy of language capital? Seemingly the major task consists in the dissemination of linguistic and cultural competence. Bourdieu, however, identifies as one of the main effects of general education the reinforcement of social recognition of the dominant language, particularly amongst those population groups who do not speak it (well) and whose children only learn it inadequately at school: If teaching is conducted through that language alone, its importance is reinforced. Thus, the educational market tends to affirm the hierarchic evaluation of the cultural capital of different social groups, contributing to the reproduction of the social structure (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 40). Especially in African countries this clearly affects many children who drop out of schools before acquiring competence in the medium of instruction. If the lack of competence in the dominant language is a major cause of exclusion from the education system, which seems to be often the case (ADEA Newsletter 1996), then the act of exclusion itself is a particularly impressive mode of teaching these children about the unchallengeable and exclusive legitimacy of this language capital.

The South African language market

Bourdieu's approach lends itself as a point of departure for research on the South African language market and its associated power struggles and transformation processes. In its essential features the development of the South African language market corresponds to the basic pattern of the colonial language market (see Goke-Pariola, 1993), in which European colonisers penetrated into a multilingual territory and established the national language of the 'mother land' as the official colonial language, using it as an instrument of rule.

The linguistic constellation which was brought by colonisation led to the massive devaluation of indigenous languages, and to what Albert Memmi calls 'colonial bilingualism' (Memmi, 1958/1994), meaning knowledge of the colonial language in addition to one or more African language(s).

The bilingual African elites, who were created as part of this system, form the ruling class of the independent African nations. The retention of the former colonial languages as official languages of decolonised African states is in the interest of these elites, whose members thereby obtain a profit from the linguistic capital that they possess. This profit is enhanced as a result of the rareness of legitimate linguistic products in post-colonial Africa: It is assumed that not more than 20% of the population of anglophone African countries and probably less than 10% in francophone Africa are able to speak the respective official language well enough to ensure efficient political, economic and social participation (Heugh 1995b, p. 46).

The South African language market is complicated by the fact there are two former colonial languages, English and Afrikaans, which have often competed with each other. The Apartheid regime attempted to obtain a high status for Afrikaans against English and this subsequently led to the rejection of Afrikaans by the majority of the black population. Resistance to the rigidly imposed language policy culminated in the uprising known as the 'student revolt of Soweto' (1976), which forced the government to back down on the language issue. However this symbolic victory against

Afrikaans did not enhance the status of African languages; it rather reinforced the role of English as 'legitimate language' in South Africa.

The post-colonial language market has perpetuated the old stratification. For example, many middle class black families send their children to English-speaking schools and encourage them to speak English at home. This is understandable, given the desire of black parents to give their children a good start and help them to compete with children of middle class white families. In the context of the post-Apartheid labour market, which is re-structured by affirmative action, this strategy is likely to be successful for black middle class children whose families provide access to language capital.

The prospects for the large majority of children, who belong to the black working class and lower strata of society, are far less optimistic. Here, there is also a desire among parents to have their children taught in the medium of English. This desire has historically been produced by an anglocentric education system; now this desire in turn legitimates the continuation of an 'English-only' language in education policy. An anglocentric school language policy will continue to produce systematic failure among those children who have limited access to the dominant language, and thus paradoxically affirm the general desire for English via English-medium-instruction. It's a vicious circle which can only be interrupted by a radical transformation of the education system.

Three strategies for dealing with linguistic diversity: Analysis of the approaches

Returning to the non-governmental organizations' initiatives already mentioned, there is agreement among representatives of the three non-governmental organizations that the linguistic capital of children is a major factor in determining the success of their educational career. The educational disadvantage experienced by African children is connected with the difference of status between English and the African languages and with the fact that the latter are not used as languages of teaching at the institutes of higher education.

Comparison of approaches 1: Strategies of educational policies and their effects on the language market

Against this background, the strategies of Molteno, ELTIC and PRAESA/NLP are compared as follows:

The Molteno Project takes the view that learning languages means essentially learning English. The limited use of African languages at school must therefore serve to achieve this aim. Logically, the target groups are children and teaching staff of black schools. At the same time, the project sees itself to be perfectly in accordance with the desires of target groups and their parents, and defends its Bridge-to-English model, in which the African languages are merely seen as a 'springboard' in the transition to English. This approach, however, tends to consolidate the monopoly of legitimacy of English instead of questioning the language hierarchy. Even if this educational strategy should turn out successful in the dissemination of English knowledge, there can be no doubt that a large percentage of African students will not acquire sufficient English proficiency to compete on an equal footing with native speakers of English. But within an educational and social context that equates English proficiency with successful education, these students will be marginalized and excluded from access to higher institutes of education, from socio-economic upward mobility and from active political participation.

The opposite strategy recognizes that languages other than English have a rightful place in the education system and strives to improve their social status. Consequently, PRAESA and ELTIC reject

the focus on English and regard all members of the multilingual society as target groups of educational language activities. Whereas the Molteno approach accepts the structure of the language market as given, the ELTIC and PRAESA approaches aim to transform this structure: They question, for instance, the great importance placed on English language proficiency in examinations that control access to the next higher educational institutions. And they propose, in particular, measures of affirmative action to support speakers of African languages on the labour market, e.g. when choosing employees for public administration or the health service, the government should give preference to candidates who speak at least one African language. This kind of measure might in turn motivate English speakers to learn African languages, thus raising these languages' status in the education system.

In their interviews, representatives of both PRAESA and ELTIC recognize the importance of English as working language in South Africa and say that the question is not *whether* but *how* English should be learned. Based on results of international research on bilingual education, representatives of PRAESA argue for the national implementation of an 'additive bilingual teaching model'. According to this approach the successful learning of a high-status language like English depends on the parallel development of mother tongue proficiency throughout the educational career. This argument does imply, however, that the effective acquisition of competence in English should be seen as the central criterion of 'success' in bilingual education. This argument is problematic, as it represents the traditional school conception, in which the essential aim of bilingual lessons approaches is to promote the second language. All other aims of bilingual education in South Africa B e.g. mother tongue literacy, promotion of African languages, strengthening of self-esteem of African children, more active involvement of African parents in school issues B could thus easily be ignored.

Comparison of approaches 2: The 'common sense' views about African Languages as a media of instruction

The question whether African languages are suitable as media of instruction is one of the most heatedly contested issues in the South African language debate. Paul Musker, Director of ELTIC, summarizes the 'common sense' attitude of many South Africans: 'It has become common sense to think that African languages are only for Junior Primary (= grade 1-3). And it's nonsense. But that has become common sense.' (*Interview with Paul Musker, ELTIC, on 5.3.1996*).

The so-called 'common sense' arguments, which are accepted by a broad cross-section of society, include the following:

The argument of 'underdevelopment'

African languages are underdeveloped and do not have the terms needed to express scientific concepts.

The cost argument

The development of African languages requires a lot of resources. Equally expensive is the preparation of school textbooks in all African Languages. (This argument implies that education must be based on textbooks).

The argument of ‘practicability and equality’

The children in the urban schools speak many languages. Which one should be selected? English is more practical for everybody and does not favour any one of the African language groups.

The argument of ‘language preference’

Speakers of African languages themselves would prefer to have lessons in English rather than in their own languages.

The reactions of the NGOs to the ‘common sense’ basically fall into two categories which are in line with their ‘market strategies’ analysed above. They either use the ‘common sense’ arguments to support their own language-in-education approach or they reject it in favour of a transformational strategy.

An example of the first category is the Molteno Project which is largely in line with the linguistic status quo and which considers itself a ‘purely pedagogical’ organization without any political agenda.

In contrast to this, the multilingual pedagogical programme of PREASA and ELTIC is linked with the political stance of these organisations. Both aim to enhance the language capital of African children in the school system and thus promote fundamental political and economic changes. They therefore struggle to undermine the dominant discourse on African languages. Thus they question, for instance, the logic of ‘cost effectiveness’ of an English-only approach in textbook production: Isn’t the printing of textbooks in a language, of which not even the majority of black teachers has an adequate understanding (as classroom based research could prove), a waste of money? They also scrutinize the discourse on ‘language attitudes’, to give a second example, and point out the historic development (and that means changeability) of language attitudes. Moreover they could show that the standard questions in language attitude surveys of the past were highly biased, because they usually compelled African parents to choose between *either* mother tongue *or* English as medium of instruction for their children. More recent surveys which contain items referring to multilingual education models show an overwhelming support for multilingual teaching across all language groups in South Africa, but particularly amongst speakers of African languages.

Comparison of approaches 3: Perspectives on multilingualism

The three approaches to language already outlined can also be compared in terms of the image of multilingualism that they foster. Here a comparison with Germany is relevant.

The position of Molteno, as already pointed out, tolerates multilingualism in instruction, at most, as an inevitable transition stage towards instruction in English. This perspective corresponds with the mainstream opinion in Germany about the role of immigrants’ languages, which are banned from classroom communication unless they are used to facilitate communication in the legitimate language **B** German.

In contrast to this transitional perspective, PRAESA regards multilingualism as a qualification and a goal of education. As much as possible, every South African should be trilingual. This aim is

a challenge to current German views on language learning because it means that no dominant language, be it German or English, should be learned at the expense and marginalization of all other relevant languages. It also implies a more just distribution of the language learning load, because speakers of the dominant language can no longer sit back while members of other language groups struggle to learn their language in order to communicate with them. In Germany, this approach to language education could be implemented by demanding that every German citizen should learn three languages: In addition to the national official language German and an 'important international language' (usually interpreted as English) they should acquire at least basic conversational skills in one of the locally relevant languages, e.g. one of the many languages of immigrants or else a neighbouring language, such as Dutch, Danish, Polish or Czech. A report on the teaching of foreign languages in the Federal Republic of Germany commissioned by the Ministries of Education Conference (KMK) in fact already addressed the issue. In contrast to PRAESA's approach, however, the experts begin with the assumption that combinations involving minority languages deviate from the rule and simply supplement traditionally taught Foreign languages (Bliesener, Christ and Kästner, 1994, p. 18). The prerequisites for the application of a 'plural' language education model which includes 'small languages' would be, among other things, the agreement that language teaching within the framework of general education should not be restricted to purely instrumental goals (meaning to teach the most 'useful' language), but should also promote general aims of education, for instance foster mutual respect for each others cultural heritages (Decke-Cornill 1997).

My criticism of PRAESA's additive model is that it largely ignores the diversity of the children's linguistic resources. Like the Molteno approach, the PRAESA model presupposes a defined mother tongue as a point of departure in the learning process. Multilingualism is only perceived as the outcome, not as the starting point of education. This is also quite a common view in Germany. Therefore it seems to me that the most promising approach lies in the third position, which emerged from the interviews conducted with ELTIC experts. This approach involves multilingualism, or **B** more precisely **B** linguistic variety in its widest sense, as a prerequisite for education. The diverse and heterogeneous language competencies which children bring into the classroom are perceived not as an obstacle to education, but as a capability and richness that should be exploited and developed by teachers.

To conclude, I would suggest that the three approaches described above do not necessarily exclude one another. Under certain conditions, elements from all of them could be incorporated into a general model for language education in multilingual societies (Niedrig, 2000).

II. Language and culture

In Germany, the concept 'intercultural education' has predominantly a positive connotation. Auernheimer, for example, argues for the recognition of cultural diversity inside German schools as fact and as a benefit (Auernheimer, 1995). The opposite view emanates mainly from nationalist conservative political circles. In South Africa, by contrast, criticism of multilingualism comes to a large extent from 'progressive' political activists. This criticism has its root in the instrumentalisation of the concept of culture in the framework of Apartheid ideology, which actively promoted separate cultural development. Against this specific political background, I have outlined three different types of conflicts over the language issue.

Language and cultural identity: Three conflict scenarios

The first case involves some white parents and Afrikaans lobbyists who advocate monolingual instruction in the medium of Afrikaans and argue that additional languages of instruction endanger the cultural identity of the Afrikaans speaking pupils. This argument, which goes back to social theory of Apartheid, is nowadays used to justify a continued exclusion of black children from white Afrikaans-medium schools. The conflict at stake is basically one about educational resources and privileges.

The second case, the wish to preserve Indian languages in South Africa, is fundamentally different, even though it also involves the argument of language maintenance to protect cultural identity. Within the past two decades, many families of Indian origin have felt their culture to be threatened in the same measure as the younger generation adopted English as first language. They advocate the teaching of Indian languages as (optional) third language subjects as a way of giving their children access to the cultural and religious heritage of their ancestors. At the same time, Indian parents agree that their children should be proficient in English and Zulu (or another African language). In contrast to the argumentation of Afrikaans lobbyists, this goal implies no cultural exclusiveness. It is rather about the recognition of heterogeneity.

Finally, the third conflict constellation can be characterised by the phrase 'Africanisation of the curriculum'. This is a rather complex issue, and those who support greater use of African languages in education do as a rule not resort to cultural arguments. As I have already pointed out, the 'progressive' sector of South African educationists uses the term 'African culture' with a certain unease, because of the racist connotations of this term within Apartheid discourse. Therefore it is not easy to discuss the question, whether and to which extent elements of 'African culture' should be incorporated into the general South African curriculum.

◀Cultural identity' in post-colonial theory

Post-colonial theory provides a useful conceptual framework for understanding such concepts as 'culture' and 'multiculturalism' and locating them in the field of pedagogy. To start with, post-colonial theory challenges the mainstream concept of 'cultural identity'. 'Cultural identity' is so a widespread belief that it *reflects* the historical experiences and shared cultural codes of a community. Stuart Hall, a Jamaican-British post-colonial thinker, characterizes this traditional concept of 'cultural identity' as the imagining of a collective *one true self*. In contrast to this perspective he proposes a non-essentialist concept of identity, which not only recognizes the historical dimension of 'cultural identity', its transformations, changes and ruptures, but which also considers 'identity' as a *product* of discursive and visual (re)presentation (Hall, 1990).

Applying this concept to the discussion on culture in post-colonial and post-Apartheid South Africa, we find that it is not possible to go back to a pre-colonial, authentic African cultural identity, not distorted by colonialism and Apartheid. The 'African' has been established through the European gaze and in the narratives of the colonisers as the primitive 'other' of European civilization. No post-colonial (re)presentation of the 'African' can ignore this fact. Therefore, it is not simply a question of rehabilitating 'African culture' as legitimate culture, e.g. through integrating appropriate themes into the general curriculum. Rather it is necessary to deal with the dominant narratives of South African history, which produced 'cultural identities' within a dichotomy of black and white.

The relevance of post-colonial theory for Germany

The multi-layered discussion on 'multiculturalism' in South Africa prompts us to also consider the German discussion of 'intercultural education' in a broader context so that its historical and conceptional foundations can be understood. As Krüger-Potratz (1998) argues, the 'short history' of intercultural pedagogy in Germany has to be examined in the light of its 'long past' to be able to recognize historic patterns in today's debates and in 'new' problem-solving strategies put forward. In addition to the historical dimensions envisaged by Krüger-Potratz, this perspective should also consider the global dimension, including patterns of colonial education. The parallel between the paradigm of 'intercultural pedagogy' and theories of colonial education has been pointed out, for example, by Nestvogel (1991) on several occasions.

In contrast to Great Britain and France, Germany is not normally considered as a former colonial power. The colonial history of the German Reich is erased from collective national memory to an astonishing degree, as the critical memory of German history is dominated by the debate on National Socialism and the Holocaust. Nevertheless, Germany is indisputably part of the history of colonialism. The fact that Germany was, after 1918, no longer involved in colonialism *in the same way* as other Western nations does not imply that it was not involved *at all* in the 'colonial syndrom' (Hall, 1997, p. 225).

'We are here, because you were there!' says a slogan among immigrants in England. At first glance, this slogan seems not applicable to the post-colonial immigration in Germany. However, the colonial syndrome is not restricted to the historical phase of colonial rule and political domination. Economic hegemony can also be considered as a form of (neo-)colonialism. From this perspective, the slogan 'We are here, because you were there!' could apply, for instance, to the German recruiting offices in Turkey in the 1960s. It could also be read as a reference to the presence of various consumer goods 'made in Germany' in the periphery of the post-colonial world, and the advertisements that go with them, which convey an image of affluent life style, not only promoting consumption, but also inviting immigration.

The global meaning of colonialism must be recognized not only as a system of power and exploitation but also as one of knowledge and representation (Hall, 1997, p. 238). This can be the starting point for an investigation of the formation of post-colonial cultural identities in the multicultural society of Germany **B** which are constituted in opposition to 'external others' as well as 'internal others' (Todorov, 1985, p. 186). Further to be investigated is, for example, the role of Turkish Muslims in Germany and how their presence affects the concept of ethnically defined 'Germanness'. Also the debate around the issue of political asylum and the fear of (increased) African immigration to Germany needs critical analysis. In view of the current formation of a 'German-European identity' and in the context of the political unification of Europe, such discussions are of growing importance.

References

- ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa) Newsletter. 1996. *Research on Languages of Instruction and School Outcomes*, Vol. 8, Heft 4.
- Alexander, N. 1994. *Nation Building in the new South Africa*. Address delivered at the University of Leuven, 8 Nov. 1994. Duisburg: L.A.U.D. (Paper No. 257).
- Alexander, N. 1995. *Models of multilingual schooling for a democratic South Africa*. In: K. Heugh, A. Siegrühn & P. Plüddemann (eds.), S. 79-82.
- Auernheimer, G. 1995. *Einführung in die Interkulturelle Erziehung*. 2. überarb. Aufl. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Bliesener, U.; Christ, I. & Kästner, H. 1994. Gutachten im Auftrag des Schulausschusses der Kultusministerkonferenz zum Fremd-sprachenunterricht in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Gegebenheiten und Vorschläge zur Weiterentwicklung (Stand: 15. 09. 1994) mit Anlagenband. Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.
- Bourdieu, P. 1990. *Was heißt sprechen? Die Ökonomie des sprachlichen Tausches*. Wien: Braumüller.
- Census in brief. The People of South Africa. Population Census, 1996. Published by Statistics South Africa, Pretoria, 1998.
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996). As adopted on 8 May 1996 and amended on 11 October 1996 by the Constitutional Assembly (Spezielle Publikation für Bürgerinnen und Bürger, o.O., o.J.)
- Decke-Cornill, H. 1997. Zum Verhältnis von Englischunterricht und interkulturellem Lernen. In: *Lernen in Deutschland*, Nr. 1, S. 46-59.
- ELTIC, 1997a. *Multilingual Learning. Working in multilingual classrooms*. A Diteme Tsa Thuto project developed for teachers by ELTIC. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- ELTIC, 1997b. *Activities for Multilingual Classrooms*. A Diteme Project by Eltic. Hatfield: Via Africa.
- ELTIC, 1997c. *Report on ELTIC's Pilot Project. Puo Dikolong. Capacity building for language policy management in schools*. A Diteme project offered by Eltic and the Gauteng Department of Education. June 1997.
- Gauteng School Education Act. 1995 (Act 6 of 1995). In: *Provincial Gazette Extraordinary of the Province of Gauteng*, Vol. 1, No. 113, Pretoria, 8 December 1995.
- Geertz, C. 1997. *Common sense als kulturelles System* (zuerst 1983). In: ders.: *Dichte Beschreibung. Beiträge zum Verstehen kultureller Systeme*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, S. 261-288.
- Gogolin, I. 1994. *Der monolinguale Habitus der multilingualen Schule*. Münster & New York: Waxmann.
- Goke-Pariola, A. 1993. Language and symbolic power: Bourdieu and the legacy of Euro-American colonialism in an African society. In: *Language & Communication*, Vol. 13, No. 3, S. 219-234.
- Hall, S. 1990. Cultural Identity and Diaspora. In: J. Rutherford (ed.): *Identity. Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, S. 222-237.

- Hall, S. 1997. Wann war 'der Postkolonialismus'? Denken an der Grenze. In: E. Bronfen, B. Marius & Th. Steffen (Hrsg.): *Hybride Kulturen. Beiträge zur anglo-amerikanischen Multikulturalismus-debatte*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, S. 219-246.
- Heugh, K. 1995a. *The multilingual school: modified dual medium*. In: K. Heugh, A. Siegrühn & P. Plüddemann (eds.), S. 83-88.
- Heugh, Kathleen (1995b): *From unequal education to the real thing*. In: K. Heugh, A. Siegrühn & P. Plüddemann (eds.), S. 42-52.
- Heugh, K.; Siegrühn A. & Plüddemann P. (eds.). 1995. *Multilingual education for South Africa*. Johannesburg: Heinemann.
- Krüger-Potratz, M. 1998. Zur Einführung. Die 'lange Vergangenheit' der Interkulturellen Pädagogik. In: *'Fremdsprachige Volksteile' und deutsche Schule. Schulpolitik für die Kinder der autochthonen Minderheiten in der Weimarer Republik* B ein Quellen- und Arbeitsbuch, zusammengestellt, eingeleitet und kommentiert von M. Krüger-Potratz, D. Jasper & F. Knabe. Münster: Waxmann, S. 7-18.
- Language in Education Policy. 1997. Consisting of Language in Education Policy in terms of section 3 (4)(m) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), and the Norms and Standards regarding Language Policy published in terms of section 6 (1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996. Published by the Department of Education, 14 July 1997.
- Memmi, A. (engl.) 1958. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. London: Souvenir.
- Molteno Project. 1994. *A guide to Molteno Project courses*. The principles, characteristics and components of the Molteno Project's Primary School, and Adult Literacy Programmes. Johannesburg: Molteno Project.
- Nestvogel, R. 1991. Einleitung. In: dies. (Hrsg.): *Interkulturelles Lernen oder verdeckte Dominanz? Hinterfragung 'unseres' Verhältnisses zur 'Dritten Welt'*. Frankfurt/M., S. 1-12.
- Niedrig, H. 2000. *Sprache B Macht B Kultur. Multilinguale Erziehung im Post-Apartheid-Südafrika*. Münster u.a.: Waxmann.
- Nuttall, C. & Langan, D. 1997. The Molteno Project. A case study of immersion for English-medium instruction in South Africa. In: R. K. Johnson & M. Swain (eds.): *Immersion Education: International Perspectives*. (Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series). Ontario: Cambridge University Press, S. 210-237.
- PRAESA. 1995. Project proposal for the establishment of a demonstration school to explore multilingual teaching strategies and for the training of multilingual teacher specialists under South African conditions, submitted by the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), Revised December 1995.
- Todorov, T. 1985. *Die Eroberung Amerikas. Das Problem des Anderen*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

19. BY WAY OF CONCLUSION: THE NORMALITY OF MULTILINGUALISM AND ITS POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Adama Ouane

Multilingualism is the natural order of things whereas monolingualism corresponds to a construction imposed for political and educational reasons as the linguistic ideal. Countries are multilingual but policies are, in many cases, monolingual. Monolingualism is prejudicial to the languages of the majority of people. As a result, 80 to 90 per cent of the population of Angola, Mali, Niger and Senegal, to mention only a few examples that have been considered, are marginalized by the decisions taken concerning their local languages. This affects countries where there are major groups, both linguistically, numerically and sociologically, and multilingual countries such as Indonesia and the United Republic of Tanzania that have imposed a local language broadly accepted by the rest as the national language. Large groups of people are, it is true, on their way to becoming proficient in the state language, but are handicapped by their lack of language skills in the national medium of communication and by the fact that their ethnic culture and its specific social characteristics are relegated to the sidelines.

The plural reality seen by the <mono' ethos

It is in the order of things that the presence of different mother tongues or local languages leads to a multilingual situation. The analysis of this situation is central to a controversy the motives for which are not clearly defined. Perhaps through subtlety or perhaps in order to muddy the waters, massive use is made of very varied expressions in order to describe the languages in contact with each other. The semantic profusion and the battle of words show that a <war of languages'⁴¹ is smouldering in many countries and within many language communities, and that it is not simply a historical phenomenon. Mackey, for example, says that the introduction of a feasible policy on pluralism in education is complicated by the lack of enough common terms for the many varied language contexts and functions, and for the wide differences in interpretation of what the existing terms imply. He explains this situation by the fact that the terms that do exist come from the Nation-States that had least need of them. What is more, the failure to identify and name the components of pluralism is to maintain the assumption that a plural society is constrained to use a single language for all its functions by preserving concepts and terms imposed long ago by dominant peoples and their cultures (Mackey, 1992, pp. 49-50). This confusion of terms both shows up and is the cause of questionable educational practices that owe their existence only to the predominance of language policies with their roots in those practices and which those practices carefully serve. In contrast to the 'wealth' of the discourse, one finds the poverty and routine of action completely slanted towards serving a policy of maintaining the monolingualism of the élites in the languages of the former colonial powers. Given the reality of multilingualism, one might be entitled to expect that all the languages of a country would be recognized as such, whether they were local, regional, national or international. In actual fact, this recognition is not granted to every language present on the national scene, as has been

⁴¹ Title of a book by Louis-Jean Calvet (1987).

observed not only in several African countries but also in Asia, Latin America and Europe. The majority of them are even refused such recognition in the name of monolingualism.

Nevertheless, within a country, all these languages have their identity and fulfil a variety of functions. Within the sphere of communication, a complementary distribution of roles occurs. One is entitled to expect these languages to be recognized both politically and in education. Political decision-makers must therefore be made aware of the need to promote mother tongues and to associate them with other neighbouring languages, whether local, regional or national. There is an increasing demand for the recognition of local languages as a counterweight to the former colonial languages. Any hierarchy of languages and cultures is thus condemned, and the wish is being expressed for some local languages to be given the status of national language (formal recognition of existence) or official language (recognition of legitimacy as a potential medium for advancement). It is perhaps this wish to set their languages free that has led most French-speaking countries in Africa to denote all their languages as national languages, thus adding to the current semantic turmoil. It is by fighting and by maintaining constant pressure that the groups concerned will keep the issue on the agenda and arrive at an acceptable solution.

On this divergent issue of the relationships between local, regional and national languages, Ghose and Bhog maintain two relevant but extreme views: that any standardization, whether national or regional, represents the cultural hegemony of the élite, subsuming the identity of subaltern groups outside of these; and that the project of nationalism demands that local or regional languages must ultimately make place for a standardized 'national' language.

The importance accorded here to regional languages and dialects is short-term and purely instrumental. It is the approach adopted by various adult education ventures in India, where regional languages or local dialects have been used functionally with the final objective of teaching Hindi. The authors are indeed in sympathy with the first point of view but it also has its deficiencies. It fails to give importance to the fact official languages are also languages of governance and power, and that it is imperative that marginal groups enter into a critical engagement with them (Ghose and Bogh, chap. 12).

This concern appears to have prevailed with a number of political leaders such as Gandhi and Nyerere, who advocated the use of English as an effective instrument with which to oppose the colonial power and later as a way of empowering oppressed communities against the local élites. The same concern is found in Freire and Macedo, who are of the opinion that the greatest importance must be attached to the mother tongues of learners, since it is through these languages that the people concerned will be able to reconstruct their history and their culture. This does not prevent Freire and Macedo from stressing that the goal of literacy, which liberates and emancipates, should never be to restrict students to their own vernacular. Such a linguistic constriction inevitably leads to a linguistic ghetto and reduces people to silence. Giving power and responsibility to learners requires them to master the dominant language in society, failing which they are in danger of being reduced to silence and of sacrificing their voices, the only means at their disposal through which they can make sense of their own experience in the world (Freire and Macedo, 1987, pp. 151-2). Similarly, the neo-colonial leanings of the élites sometimes shelter behind the same logic of support for the colonial languages. Following the independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) in 1962, a presidential decree introduced French as the language of education at all levels, thus giving the people the 'right to French' that the Belgian system had denied them.

Choosing is not excluding

Where there is multilingualism, choices have to be made and this is as true for individuals as it is for institutions. *Choosing languages* implies giving priority to some without, however, rejecting the others. This means that all languages must be cultivated so that all legitimate language communities can play a part in the socio-economic reconstruction of their country while remaining firmly rooted in their cultures and specific local characteristics. To prepare a suitable institutional framework, national, regional or local governments must adopt the necessary legislative measures for the recognition of all languages within their boundaries. Achieving such recognition calls for constant pressure on the élites **B** and the government which embodies them **B** by the groups concerned and by voluntary agencies. One example is the request from the Etats Généraux in Senegal for the recognition and introduction of the country's national languages as official languages in education, as proposed by the Senegalese National Commission for the Reform of Education and Training. In addition, voluntary associations and non-government organizations are active *inter alia* in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in promoting the national languages. There are a number of events and forums that can be used for this purpose. International Literacy Year 1990 thus provided a platform for making several nations and communities aware of multilingualism and of the need to take it into account if they wish to achieve universal and irreversible literacy.

There is thus nothing surprising about the fact that this debate has been transferred to the arena of school, both the place where basic learning is institutionalized and where values are reproduced and handed on, and also the battleground where the social changes are fought for. Over and above all controversy, the central question is surely how to construct an educational approach that, while giving the learners responsibility and showing regard for their identity, ensures that within the school there is a transition towards mastery of the tools of language, arranged so as to correspond to the natural gradation found in the traditional sphere of communication. To put it succinctly, language teaching should be based on the progression that leads to the formation of multilingualism in society, a progression that is far from being conflict-free but that has the merit of matching the wishes of the communities and individuals involved and of providing a response to their basic needs and concerns. The dynamics of the languages present and their varied nature should therefore be an incentive for researchers at the institutional level to become interested in and to work on the different methods of teaching not only mother tongues but second languages and foreign languages as well, since the differing ways in which these languages and their relationships are perceived lead to different methods of teaching them. A serious study needs to be made of language teaching so that progress can be made from the methodological point of view with setting standards for multilingualism and with its application in education. This should lead to a reconsideration and questioning of the controversy about bilingualism, sustained as it is by the monolingual context and inappropriate to transfer to situations where the existence of many different languages is experienced, allowed and managed without any trouble at all.

The path towards the recognition and above all towards the use of mother tongues languages and local languages is full of pitfalls, and there is fierce resistance to taking it. Arguments of all sorts are put forward and an obstructive attitude is adopted towards these languages. This attitude stems from the stormy and very frequently conflict-ridden relationships that have grown up between the languages in the course of their contact with each other. The various forms of discrimination were summed up as follows by Pattanayak during the discussion:

Mother tongues have been constantly discriminated against. They have been disregarded, rejected and repressed. They have in turn been called vernacular languages, ethnic languages, heritage languages, community languages, and so on, each expression bearing its burden of discrimination

and expressing a precise attitude. They have been referred to in terms of dialects, languages without grammar, languages with limited linguistic and cultural horizons or even as languages of small commercial value.

The arguments put forward against the use of local mother tongues, particularly in the prestige areas of communication usually reserved for official languages, cannot easily be refuted since they are of several kinds: political, based on educational psychology, economic, technological and so on. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence in favour of the viability and feasibility of education in local languages. The technology is available and teaching methods have shown themselves to be effective enough to confirm the views of those who are constantly advocating the use of these languages in education and in all areas of life.

Against the status quo and in favour of managing diversity and a multifaceted partnership

Strategically speaking, it is important to make mother tongues the medium for basic education and literacy. Decisions relating to simultaneous bilingual and bicultural literacy, or literacy in a national language following literacy in the mother tongue, must be taken having regard to actual circumstances. In every case, however, local languages must be part of the education system. This educational approach is being hindered by the political attitude to the languages. A political decision is necessary in order to lay the foundations of a situation whose justification seems clear. It would then be for national, regional or local governments to decide how, and at what suitable moment, local, national and international languages should be used in the education system. The taking of a final decision has been fought over for several decades and in most multilingual countries it is far from certain that a decision will be made. The excessive use of experiment should not delay initiatives along these lines. Achievements have sometimes been called slender but this is chiefly due to difficulties with methods of identifying what has been accomplished and attributing it to the change in the medium of instruction. In general, these achievements could be reviewed. This is exactly what Cummins meant by his observation about the research done by MacNamara (1966) into the Irish experience with bilingualism and primary education, when he said that when one considered the unfavourable context in which the programmes were being run (low-prestige, low-utility language, non-supportive parental attitudes), what was surprising was that there was so little evidence of negative academic effects (Cummins, 1978, p. 277).

Where all languages are politically recognized, the task of education is simplified as a result and it then remains to develop *methods* for co-ordinating the relationships between them. For this, extensive technical studies need to be carried out on the languages. In order to identify the situations where a language is taught as a second or foreign language and to prepare appropriate materials and methods.

Intersectoral and interinstitutional co-operation is needed to make a success of the language strategies thus elaborated, i.e. co-operation between people on the ground and academics, between two or more universities in one and the same country, between a number of universities in the southern and northern hemispheres, and between universities and other educational institutions in the same country. The representatives of the language communities, in the shape of their natural leaders and of those who are skilled in the language and whose proven competence and achievements in it entitle them to the status of 'pundits', must be associated with this dialogue. The standardization and modernization of the languages should be an integral part of the strategies for implementing language policies. It is vital that the actions of all the people involved should be brought into line with each other. In practice, conflict is latent at all levels. Dialogue is virtually non-existent among the various

groups and even within them as most are structured vertically. Conflict is exacerbated by interests and interests make the prospects for dialogue unlikely.

Scholars, those professionally involved and politicians have views about the question that are difficult to reconcile. Efforts are nevertheless being made here and there to direct the energies and creative spirit of all those involved into constructing a solution to the language problem. Thus in Mali, language commissions, which are operational units for the standardization of languages and for the introduction of technical terms into them, are being planned and set up in a rather non-uniform way in order to tap the sensitivity and wealth of each language, and to include and translate the variety of specialized fields. Peasants, cattle breeders, craftsmen, soothsayers and other traditional masters of the art of words, writers, doctors, engineers, agronomists, linguists, demographers, economists and others thus find themselves working side by side. Scholars in the North have a timetable and an agenda that are often at odds with those of their colleagues in the South, some of whom disagree with the justification offered for the monolingual State and its transfer to their contexts.

Exaggeratedly pragmatic arguments make use of obvious, trite rationalism to explain an imbalance that arose out of a situation of persistent injustice. Any strategy that fails to include corrective measures is doomed to perpetuate the status quo. The magnanimity that allows language groups that have been discriminated against to speak particularly in favour of the colonial languages reveals more cynicism than innocence. Can and should these language groups be expected to refuse to allow their children to learn the dominant language or languages through which so many social, cultural and economic advantages can be obtained? The answer is clearly no. The problem lies more in the way in which such a question is worded, since it aims to provide support for the *fait accompli* and to justify a policy to which recognition of any alternative is refused. Even assuming that it is in the interests of these people to learn an international language, should a method that alienates be employed none the less? Seeing the efforts that are required, the price to be paid is surely high. In the same vein, scholars are often expected to provide scientific proof for these policies, which are in search of excuses and delaying strategies in order to maintain the existing relationships. Those who support a contrary view are harassed and called upon to produce irrefutable scientific evidence to back up their opinions. Politicians also demand scientific proof and shelter behind the inadequacy of the data to justify their inaction, or rather their backing for current practice. The following box illustrates the subtlety of the arguments in favour of the status quo:

Creole in Cape Verde

A former Euro-MP, Willy Kuijpers, (ARC-Belgium) put the following question to the Commission of the European Communities:

◁Creole has been the vernacular in Cape Verde for over 300 years and, although schools still use only Portuguese, according to the party newspaper 80% of pupils in the second class of the grammar school fail the end of year exam in Portuguese which would entitle them to move up to the next class. The Cape Verde poet and philosopher Tomé Varela da Silva has therefore suggested that education in the vernacular might produce better results. The town of Boston (USA) provides an example where the education authorities give immigrant children from Cape Verde lessons in Creole as well as in English.

Can the Commission state whether a project for education in Creole in Cape Verde is being considered under Title VIII of the Third Lomé Convention (or similar future provisions under Lomé IV) with regard to cultural and social co-operation?'

Vice-President Manuel Marin replied on behalf of the Commission:

◁The Cape Verdean authorities are very conscious of the importance of Creole as part of the nation's cultural identity.

The Government has commissioned a group of linguists to analyse Creole scientifically in order to create a basis for its effective and rational use as, for example, a medium of instruction. At the same time, the Government is eager to establish a new method of teaching Portuguese, using the methodology of foreign language teaching. Once the research has been completed, the problem of teacher training will arise.

The Commission, which is currently providing aid for the training of primary and secondary schoolteachers, will probably have occasion to support this development.'

Source: *The ACP Courier*, N° 119, January-February 1990, p. 61.

Access to the media is also a hotly disputed terrain for the promotion of languages. The battle for the message and the image is reaching a scale that has never been equalled in the age of the *videosphere*⁴². The stakes are therefore enormous. While they reflect a certain status, the media contribute greatly to shaping it. They are a means of developing languages and above all of enabling them to deal with technical matters and at the same time a platform for the popularization and normalization of standardized forms. The mass media are powerful instruments for making available basic literacy and post-literacy programmes. The use of languages by the media gives value to the languages concerned and inspires confidence in their rediscovered image. In Angola over the past eight years, the number of languages used on radio and television has increased considerably and the consequence of this has been a proportional increase in broadcasting time. In many cases, the radio and television programmes in local languages are for entertainment, but even the oral use of the languages gives satisfaction. It is nevertheless noteworthy that the systematic use of translations into these languages instead of original material, and especially the increasing number of bad translations, frequently lead to a loss of interest in the languages. This is why it is of the utmost importance that the staff who are recruited and trained should have a very high level of proficiency in the languages and an adequate grasp of the on-going process of giving those languages a technical capability.

The mass media rest on the foundation of the traditional media, whose role in arousing and motivating people to become literate and in developing awareness in communities and nations is far from insignificant in the building of a language. As far as possible, newspapers should be published in all the languages to be developed. Articles in an existing official language are a temporary strategy but are not a satisfactory solution for promoting the development, standardization and technical capabilities of a language. With this aim in view, the best solution would be to promote written expression in the local languages. This is why it is wrong to overestimate the importance of the mass media in the development, standardization, harmonization and modernization of languages.

Another important equation to be included in the discussion **B** it is easily overlooked in the controversy **B** is the relationship of people to their cultures and the mediating role of the language which embodies, strengthens and gives a direction to that link. Culture involves all aspects of human life and language is the most important part of it. In this context, the mother tongue is the natural instrument of thought and intimate communication. It is regrettable that in attempting, often through education, to neutralize these differences and to make this instrument excessively functional, the indivisible link between thought and language is overlooked, thus alienating the individual from his/her group, himself/herself, his/her past and his/her traditions.

The facts are such that there is no direct correlation between multilingualism and multiculturalism. Distinctions may be created by the fact that one language can express a variety of cultures. On the other hand, several languages may belong to one and the same culture. It must nevertheless not be forgotten that every language is the expression of a culture. Seen from this angle, learning a language amounts to learning a particular culture.

In countries where there are several languages, national cohesion can be expressed in two ways: choosing a language as a national symbol or developing all languages and, in so doing, developing

⁴² This expression is taken from the typology of Régis Debray. In an article in the newspaper *Le Monde*, he describes the development of communication through the ages and the characteristics of the main periods. He thus calls the age of the word **logosphere**, when the rare reference texts, and then the Holy Books (Thora, Veda, Bible, Koran) were passed on orally. Paper, and printing above all, brought transmission into the **graphosphere**, the age of discourses on reason. Film and television have brought us into the **videosphere**. In the videosphere, the image dematerializes and iconology gradually replaces ideology. Debray warns against this change since 'every image is a choice, an interpretation and a montage, hence a lie. In any event, it is manufactured' (Debray, 1993, p. 2).

an awareness and mutual understanding among the speakers, particularly as regards their national identity. In a multilingual and multicultural world, the strategy of recognizing all languages and developing good-neighbourly relations between them is the best way to achieve national cohesion.

The promotion of languages has to take account of *the procurement, use and management of resources*. By the procurement of resources is generally meant human and financial resources. The possibility that the language itself might be a resource is often overlooked, both in planning and by language policies. It has to be realized that a language, as a means of knowing, understanding and becoming aware, is a major human resource. Put to suitable use, it can enable national cohesion. Communities are another resource and must be involved in the various educational and language programmes and in the production of materials. Linguists are yet another important resource and their expertise is vital for achieving literacy in, and the modernization and standardization of, the different languages.

It is important to remember that when one is working with limited resources, pressure groups have a significant role to play by influencing decision-makers to allocate appropriate resources to language development. In addition, establishing contacts among groups and individuals engaged in language development, basic literacy and post-literacy work will be an important step towards the achievement of linguistic objectives.

The progress made in language development must be evaluated in order to improve follow-up support and the use and management of the resources allocated to this sector. On the basis of the experience of the United Nations and the World Bank, use of a physical index of the quality of life, or of the Human Development Index (HDI), devised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will make it possible to measure the progress made with development. These indices must not be ignored when the allocation of resources for language development is being discussed.

The vitality of languages and the demands of a literate environment

The potential of languages is gradually becoming apparent in the current literacy programmes, despite the limitations and shortcomings that can be observed. Literacy is increasingly becoming a valuable and necessary instrument in the implementation of local development projects, and people with literacy skills are becoming key agents in the self-management process at local and community level. The existence of a core of literate men and women is already making it possible to deploy skills and accept responsibilities based and dependent on writing, in the service of communities that feel the need for writing in order to undertake activities of this kind.

Applying knowledge and skills learned in literacy classes goes hand in hand with the creation of an environment favourable to communication based on writing. The need to establish and maintain an environment of this kind no longer has to be proved, especially in the case of languages that have recently acquired an alphabet and are not yet being used in education systems. Literacy in these languages is frail when it has been recently acquired, as the newly literate have to make their way in an environment politically and psychologically dominated by languages which possess a very substantial and age-old tradition and offer valuable opportunities to those who use them. It goes without saying that suitable measures must be taken to establish, maintain and protect a literate environment that is favourable to local languages. What is understood by such an environment and how can it be created? Lazarus provides the following pointers:

A literate environment implies the development of an infrastructure to ensure, firstly, the easy availability of written material, newspapers, books, pamphlets, leaflets, etc. for the new literates at the level of their understanding; secondly, the possibilities of further education provision through

evening schools, correspondence education, etc.; and thirdly, the possibilities of new literates to become their own 'agents of change' by using their new skills in work and in their social and personal lives. Thus, a literate environment creates and ensures a cultural, economic and social environment favourable to the retention of literacy and continuing education (Lazarus, 1982, p. 68).

In multilingual countries, some national languages are still not equipped to support effectively the functions inherent in the full status of a language of education. The concern of literacy work and especially of post-literacy activities is how to equip languages so that they can assume these functions. Languages are constructed and made ready while simultaneously being used in the educational curriculum. Their use goes hand in hand with the establishment of social and cultural facilities for the advancement of the newly literate.

As the written form of these languages has sometimes been introduced quite recently, literacy then means the change-over from oral expression to symbolic expression, accompanied by new references and an introduction to particular forms of perception and thought.

It is easy to understand the stress laid by multilingual countries on helping to establish and maintain an economic, social and cultural environment that is favourable to the written word. This environment contains the greatest possible number of stimulations and offers of the written word and requests for it.

One of the basic functions of any system of literacy is thus to produce, acquire and manage learning materials in the national languages and mother tongues. These materials are partly in print form and partly constructed around modern media such as radio, television, film and so on, or traditional media like drama, folklore and various games. Some countries have also provided a variety of ways of making materials accessible to users, i.e. libraries and various fairs and exhibitions, or have made provision for exploring ways of getting the maximum number of people to benefit from the content of the materials, e.g. through listening groups, study and action groups, and so on.

Establishing a written environment thus means plunging the newly literate into an environment where they constantly have to accept the challenge that the use of writing confronts them with. This challenge cannot be created simply by the presence of written material, however aggressive that presence may be. The newly literate must be involved in actions and activities whose complexity and technical level outstrip the capacity of their memories and oblige them to turn to written communication. The actions undertaken in most of the French-speaking countries of Africa involve making administrators and development workers aware of, and introducing them to, the written use of the languages of literacy work, the production in those languages of technical and administrative documents in versions accessible to the people, the production of increasing numbers of notices, road signs and advertisements, the labelling of goods, making books, brochures and newspapers available, and transferring a number of basic development functions to the newly literate.

The aim of these actions is to overcome the hesitation, not to say the contempt, of the upper echelons who have usually been educated in another educational tradition and use a language (generally the colonial language) different from the language or languages employed in literacy work. These actions help to end the marginalization of the newly literate by giving them a sense of security and by broadening the written environment in which they are beginning to move.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that considerable efforts have been made by individuals, States, independent groups and the international community in general in the field of experimental and applied research in order to equip the most disadvantaged mother tongues and national languages to take on a full role in education and to claim the privileges enjoyed by the international languages and some widely spoken languages.

The lack of regard of which local languages are the victims seriously endangers their survival. Fortunately, the strength for their survival and development comes chiefly from oral tradition. Local languages draw their vitality from the driving force of this tradition. When there is no written tradition, oral transmission, like literature yesterday and today, serves to maintain the cultural continuity of these societies. In most of the countries concerned, oral tradition is extremely rich and diversified and ensures that individuals are firmly rooted in their culture. It forms a historical reference point and is a depositary which gathers and reflects the trends and the varied forms of use of the language communities in these countries.

Sustainable development that affects the basic communities and is to their advantage can be of significance only if it is based on endogenous practices and current usage. This is what Prah also observes, saying that «African languages may be today possibly the most crucial missing link in the planning, propagation and development of culture, science and technology based on known and historical foundations rooted in the practices of the people» (Prah, 1993, p. 9).

Universal literacy can be brought about by devoting attention to these endogenous ways of building up knowledge and by using the languages that are their foundation. This objective cannot be attained world wide if one rests content with literacy work in a limited number of languages, excluding thereby a large number of individuals for whom these languages form almost insurmountable barriers.

References

Calvet, L.J. 1987. op. cit. Chap. 1.

Cummins, J. 1978. Immersion Programmes: The Irish Experience. In: *International Review of Education*, Vol. 24, N° 3. Special Number: Language of Instruction in a Multi-Cultural Setting.

Debray, R. 19 January 1993. *Le Monde*.

Freire, P. and Macedo, D. 1987. *The Role of Language in Literacy*. In their: *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*. London. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Lazarus, R. 1982. op. cit. Chap 13.

Mackey, W.F. 1992. Mother-Tongues, Other Tongues and Link Languages. In: *Prospects*, Vol. 22, N° 1.

Macnamara, J. 1966. op. cit. chap. 4.

Prah, K.K. 1993. *Mother Tongue for Scientific and Technological Development in Africa*. Bonn. DSE/ZED.

APPENDICES

ANNEX 1

The languages of sub-Saharan Africa

	Number of languages		Principal languages	Percentage of population speaking language as:		Language used as				
	Total	Principal		Mother tongue	Second language	Official language	Lingua franca	Medium of instruction in:		
								Lower primary	Upper primary	Post-primary
Angola	29	4	Umbundu Kimbudu Kongo Portuguese	38 23 13 low	20 35	 x	x	 x	 x	 x
Benin	51	4	Fon-Ewe Yoruba Bariba French	26 14 13 low	30 15 10	 x	x	 x	 x	 x
Botswana	18	3	Tswana Kalanga English	90 low	9	x x	x	x x	 x	 x
Burkina Faso	50	5	More Jula Fulfulde Gurmance French	48 20 11 low	15 35	 x	x	 x	 x	 x
Burundi	3	3	Kirundi Swahili French	99 low	10	x x		 x	 x	 x
Cameroon	234	9	Beti Pidgin Ewondo Fulfulde Bassa Bamun French English	27 20 18 8 low low	7 21	 x x	x x	 x x	 x x	 x x
Cape Verde	2		Crioulo Portuguese	95 12		x	x	x	x	x
Central African Republic	54	4	Banda Baya Sango French	39 27 5 low	47 65	 x	x	 x	 x	 x
Chad	112	3	Arabic Sara/ Gambai French	13 19 low	40 10 13	 x	x x	x x x	x x	 x
Comoros	5		Comore Malagashy Swahili French Arabic			 x	x	 x x	 x x	 x x
Congo	55	5	Kongo Teke Lingala Mboshi French	52 25 low		x x		 x	 x	 x
Côte d'Ivoire	69	5	Anyi- Baoule Dyula Senoufo Bete French	24 11 10 6 low	64 61 35	 x	x	 x	 x	 x
Djibouti	4		Afar Arabic Somali/ Issa French	37 6 47 8			x	 x	 x	 x
Ethiopia	99	4	Amharic Oromo Tigrinya English	31 27 14 low	40	x	x x	x	x	 x

	Number of languages		Principal languages	Percentage of population speaking language as:		Language used as				
	Total	Principal		Mother tongue	Second language	Official language	Lingua franca	Medium of instruction in:		
								Lower primary	Upper primary	Post-primary
Guinea	20	4	Fulfulde Manding Sousou French	25 40 10	18 5	x	x	x	x	x
Guinea Bissau	19	5	Mandinka Balanta Fulacunda Crioulo Portuguese	35 30 20 low	15	x x	x	x	x	x
Guinea Ecuatorial	9	3	Fang Bubi Spanish	75 7 low		x	x	x	x	x
Kenya	55	7	Swahili Kikuyu Luhya Luo Kamba English	1 20 13 14 11 low	65	x x x x x x	x	x	x	x
Lesotho	4	3	Sotho Zulu English	85 15 low	14	x	x	x	x	x
Liberia	31	4	Krio Kpelle Bassa English	40 23 16 low	50 40 23	x	x	x	x	x
Madagascar	3	2	Malagasy French	98 low		x	x	x	x	x
Malawi	13	4	Nyanja/ Cicewa Lomwe/ Ngulu Yao English	50 15 14	27 5	x	x	x	x	x
Mali	12	5	Bambara Fulfulde Songhraï Tamasheq French Arabic	45 20 low low	30	x	x	x	x	x
Mauritania	5	4	Arabic Fulfulde Wolof Soninke French	80 low	7 13	x	x	x	x	x
Mauritius	6	3	Crioulo Hindi/ Bhojpur Tamil Urdu English French	54 20 low low	40	x	x	x	x	x
Mozambique	23	8	Makua Tsonga Ngulu/ Lomwe Portuguese	38 24 low		x	x	x	x	x
Namibia	17	7	Kwanyama Afrikaans Mamo Herero German English	47 14 13 7 low low		x	x	x	x	x

	Number of languages		Principal languages	Percentage of population speaking language as:		Language used as				
	Total	Principal		Mother tongue	Second language	Official language	Lingua franca	Medium of instruction in:		
								Lower primary	Upper primary	Post-primary
Niger	10	7	Hausa Songhai/ Zarma Fulfulde Tamasheq Kanuri French	50 23 15 low	24 19 low	 x	x x	x x x x	 x	 x
Sao Tome and Principe	2	2	Crioulo Portuguese	98 low	 low	 x	 x	 x	 x	 x
Seychelles	3	3	Seselwa English French	94 3 2	97 low	x x x	x x	x x x x	 x x	 x x
Senegal	20	8	Wolof Pular/ Fulfulde Serer Diola Manding Soninke Arabic French	36 21 16 7 6 3 low low	45 5 high low	x x x x x x	x x x x	x x x	 x	 x
Sierra Leone	20	4	Mende Temme Krio English	31 30 1 low	25 10 30 low	 x x	x x x	 x	 x	 x
Somalia	5	4	Somali Arabic English Italian	95 2 low low	2 15 low	x x x x	 x	x x	 x	 x
South Africa	28	6	Zulu Afrikaans Xhosa English Tswana Sotho	22 18 17 10 9 8	 low	 x x x	x x x x x	x x x x x	 x	 x
Sudan	136	13	Arabic Dinka Zandé Beja Nuer Latuka English	51 10 5 2 2 low	39 low	x x x x x x	x x	x x	x x	x x
Swaziland	4	2	Swati English	91 low	 low	 x	x x	x x	 x	 x
Tanzania	115	3	Sukuma Swahili English	12 6 low	90 15 low	 x x	x x x	x x x	 x	 x
Togo	42	4	Ewe Kabiye Hausa French	44 21 low	6 4 low	 x x	x x x	x x x	 x	 x
Uganda	44	7	Nyankole Luganda Ateso/ Akarimo- Jong Lwo Swahili Lugbara English	20 18 11 7 4 low	20 35 low	x x x	x x x	 x	 x	 x

	Number of languages		Principal languages	Percentage of population speaking language as:		Language used as					
	Total	Principal		Mother tongue	Second language	Official language	Lingua franca	Medium of instruction in:			
								Lower primary	Upper primary	Post-primary	
Zaire (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	192	5	Swahili Lingala Luba Kongo French	36 28 17 12 low	13 41 18		x x x x	x x x			x x
Zambia	31	8	Bemba Nyanja Tonga Lozi Kaonde Lunda Luvale English	31 11 11 9 5 4 4 low	25 31		x x	x x			x x
Zimbabwe	19	3	Shona Ndebele English	75 16 low			x x x	x x	x x		x x

Sources : *The Courier ACP - European Community*. January - February 1990, n° 119.

Grimes, B. F. (ed) 1988. *Ethnologue. Languages of the World*. Dallas, Texas : Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc.

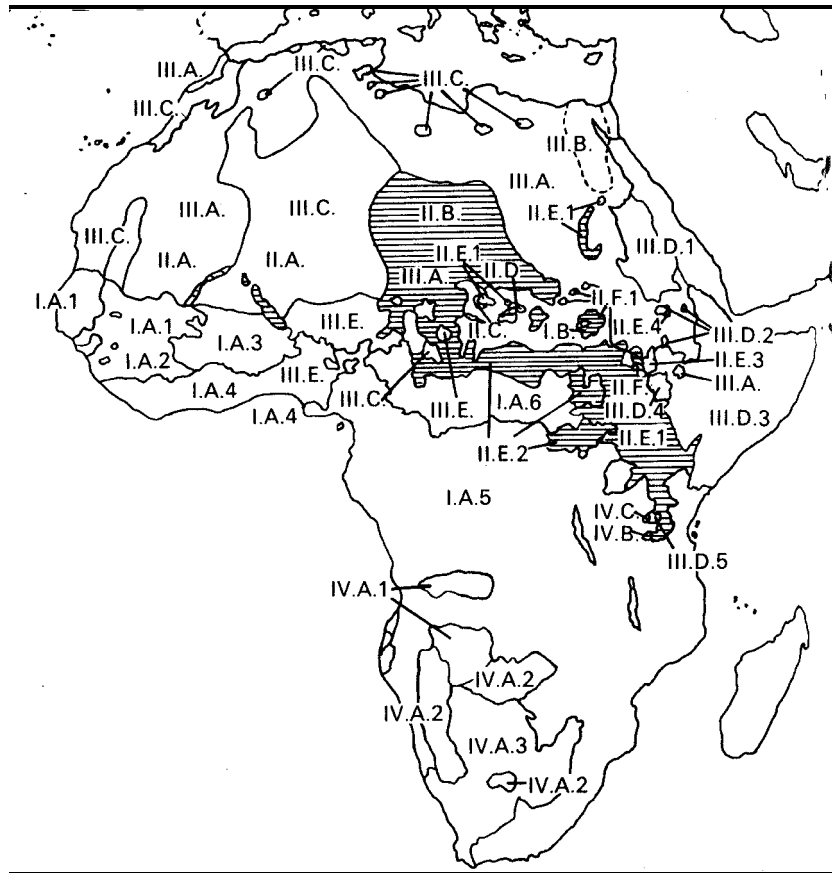
Mann, M. and Dalby, D. 1988. *A Thesaurus of African Languages. A Classified and Annotated Inventory of the Spoken Languages of Africa with an Appendix on their Written Representation*. London, Munich, New York : Hans Zell Publishers.

UNESCO. 1981. Documents de la réunion d'experts sur l'utilisation des langues africaines régionales et sous-régionales comme véhicule de culture et moyen de communication dans le continent. Bamako, 18-22 juin 1979. Paris : UNESCO.

ANNEX 2

The Languages of Africa: an annotated map

Source: A. Coupez, Head of the African Linguistics Section, Royal Central African Museum, Tervueren, Belgium. In: *The Courier ACP*, No 119 - January/February 1990



Classification of African languages

Here are the traditional African languages spoken by about 5 million people or more on their own territory:

Peul	(Fulbe) enclaves of speakers from Senegal to Sudan
Igbo;	Nigeria
Yoruba;	Nigeria and Benin

Bantu group

Rwanda-Rundi-Ha;	Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Sotho-Pedi-Tswana;	Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe
Nguni (including Zulu, Xhosa or Cafre and Swazi);	South Africa and Zimbabwe
Amharic;	Ethiopia
Tigrinya;	Ethiopia
Galla;	Ethiopia, Kenya
Somali;	Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya
Hawsa;	Nigeria and Niger

Widespread traditional languages tend to be used as vehicular languages outside their own territories. The 40 or so commonest of these include:

- III E **Hawsa**, with more than 20 millions speakers outside the countries of origin (Niger, Nigeria), is spoken particularly in Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cameroon and Chad.
- I A 2 **Mandekan** (ou **Dyula**), covering the traditional languages Bambara, Maninka and Dyula - outside the countries of origin (Mali, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau) is also spoken particularly in Liberia, Burkina Faso and Ghana
- I A 4 **Agni-Baule** (Côte d'Ivoire)
- I A 6 **Sango**, related to the traditional **Ngbandi** - Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- I A 5D Bantu C 36 **Ngala** (**Lingala, Bangala, Mangala, Lusengo...**) is not exactly a traditional language but a group of languages spoken along the River Zaïre - Zaïre, Ccongo and the Central African Republic
- I A 5D Bantou G 42 Swahili (Kishwahili and locally in Zaïre Kingwana) - outside the countries of origin (Kenya and Tanzania) is spoken particularly in Uganda, Rwanda, eastern Zaïre, Burundi and Zambia
- I A 5D Bantu H 16 **Kongo** (**Kikongo, Fiote, Ikeleve, Kituba, Monokotuba**) - Congo, Cabinda, Zaïre and Angola
- I A 5D Bantu S 40 **Fanagalo** (or **Kitchen Kaffir**), based on **Xhosa** - South Africa

CLASSIFICATION

Family I - Congo-Kordofan (or Niger-Kordofan)

This family which includes the majority of the African languages and covers half the continent, is divided into two branches : *Niger-Congo* (I A) and *Kordofan* (I B). The second branch contains only a few small languages spoken in Sudan.

I A 1 **West-Atlantique**

This branch is divided into two groups, a northern and a southern group, the latter being nearer to the rest of Niger-Congo. **Northern group**: Fulani (Fulbe, Fula and Peul), with enclaves of speakers between Senegal and Sudan, and **Wolof** in Senegal.

Southern group : **Sereer** in Senegal and **Temme** in Sierra Leone

I A 2 **Mande**

It is still not clear exactly how this subgroup hangs together. The main languages, in decreasing order of number of speakers are:

Bambara - Mali, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal.

Malinke - Mali, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Guinea Bissau.

Mende : Sierra Leone, Liberia.

Soninke : Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Mauritania, and Guinea Bissau

Susu : Sierra Leone and Guinea.

I A 3 **Voltaic**

The Voltaic branch is made up of a central group, which includes **Môôre**, the profile of which has been properly established, and various groups.

Senufo : Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana.

I A 4 **Kwa**

The groups of languages in this subgroup are given from west to east. The last four are designated by their principal language.

Kru: Bassa - Liberia.

Western group - Akan (Fante and Twi) - Ghana

Ewe ; Togo and Benin.

Yoruba group - Benin and Nigeria.

Nupe - Nigeria.

Bini group : **Edo** - Nigeria.

Igbo group : **Ibo** - Nigeria.

I A 5 **Benue-Congo**

This branch is a crucial position as far as the classification of African languages is concerned, because of both the number of languages it covers and the extraordinary extension constituted by the Bantu group in the extreme south east. It is divided into four groups:

I A 5 A **Plateau** : Nigeria.

I A 5 B **Jukunoid** : Nigeria.

I A 5 C **Cross River** : **Efik-Ibibio** - Nigeria.

I A 5 D **Bantu-type** - Nigeria and Cameroon.

In the northern part of this group are languages which are a relatively long way from Bantu, particularly Tiv, spoken in Nigeria. Further south, in the savannah areas of western Cameroon, are two groups more closely linked to Bantu: the Western Savannah group and the Mbam-Nkan group, which includes Bamileke. The Bantu group is at the extreme south east of the Bantu-

Details of the Bantu group :

Fang-Bulu-Ewondo ; Cameroon

Myene, Mpongwe and Galwa ; Gabon

Mongo ; Zaïre, **Tetela** : Zaïre

Lega ; Zaïre, **Nyanga** : Zaïre

Nyamwezi-Sukuma ; Tanzania

Swahili ; Kenya, Tanzania

Kongo ; Congo, Cabinda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola

Northern Mbundu (Kimbudu) ; Angola

Toro-Nyoro-Kiga-Nkore ; Uganda

Ganda ; Uganda, **Luyia** : Uganda and Kenya

Rwanda-Rundi-Ha ; Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Tanzania

Cokwe ; Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Zambia

Luba-Kasayi (Ciluba) ; Zaïre, **Lba-Shaba (kiluba)** - Zaïre

Bemba ; Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia

Nyanja ; Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique

Yao ; Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique

Southern Mbundu (Umbundu) - Angola

Shona ; Zimbabwe and Mozambique

Suthu-Pedi-Tswana - Lesotho, Botswana, and South Africa.

Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa or Cafre and Swazi); South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Ronga-Tsonga-Tswa; Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

I A 6 **Adamawa-Ubangi**

This branch is divided into two groups:

Adamawa group: Nigeria, Cameroon and , Tchad.

Ubangi group; Zaïre, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic.

II **Nilo-Saharan**

This family, scattered across the northern part of Africa, is the most heterogenous. It includes a majority of isolated enclaves in the desert and in the middle of other language groups. We only give some of the branches and some of the subgroups here.

II A **Songhai**

Most Songhai languages are spoken along the Niger where the River forms a loop (Mali and Niger). The main ones are **Songhai** and **Zarma**.

II B **Saharan**

These languages are spoken mainly in central and northern Chad. The main ones are **Teda** (or **Tubu**) spoken in the Tibesti, and the **Kanuri** group, which comprises **Kanuri** and **Kanembu**, spoken in Bornu.

II E **Chari-Nile**

These languages are scattered over an area from the northern Sahara down to Tanzania.

II E 1 **Eastern Sudanic**

Nubian ; Sudan

The Nilotic group:

- **Dinka** ; Sudan

- **Acholi-Luo** ; Uganda

- **Nandi** ; Kenya

- **Masai** ; Kenya and Tanzania

II E 2 **Central Sudanic**

These languages, none of which are widespread, are divided into two groups: a western group (spoken in Chad, the Central African Republic and Sudan) containing, in particular, **Sara**, **Bongo** and **Bagirmi**, and an eastern group (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Uganda), containing, in particular, **Logo** and **Mangbetu**.

II E 3 **Berta**

II E 4 **Kunama**

II F **Koman**

III **Afro-Asiatic**

This family has six very distantly related branches.

II A **Semitic**

The Semitic languages, which include Arabic and Hebrew, are centred on the Middle East, although several of them are scattered over Ethiopia, among the Cushitic languages, primarily **Amharic**, the official language of Ethiopia, and **Tigrinya**. The expansion of **Arabic** in Africa, linked to the expansion of Islam, has occurred above all in the regions of the Sahara and the east coast.

III B **Egyptian**

Ancient Egyptian has left no descendants other than **Coptic**, the liturgical language of the Christians of Egypt.

III C **Berber**

These languages, which are centred on the Maghreb, also occupy the central Sahara. **Tamasheq** is spoken in northern Mali and Niger.

III D **Chad**

These languages are spoken in northern Nigeria and northern Cameroon and in eastern and western Chad. The main one is **Hausa** (Nigeria and Niger).

III E **Cushitic**

The internal classification of this branch is complex. The main languages are :

Galla ; Ethiopia, Kenya.

Somali ; Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

III F **Omotic**

This branch, spoken in western Ethiopia, does not contain any widespread language.

IV **Khoisan**

These languages are spoken mainly by the Bushmen and Hottentots in the desert regions of southern Africa, but there are also enclaves of speakers in Tanzania. Few studies have been made of them and their historical relations are by no means clear. They differ from other languages in having clicks as regular consonants.

►Kisi		1M,2M
►Kpelle	*2	1M,2M
►Loma		1M,2M
►Mandinka	*6	1M,2M
►Sousou		1M,2M

Equatorial Guinea

►Créole/Fernandino	*4	
►Crioulo/Annobones	*4	
►Fang	*2	

Guinea-Bissau

►Crioulo	*4	1P
----------	----	----

Ivory Coast

►Baoule		3S
►Bete		
►Dyula	*2	3S
►Mandinka	*6	3S
►Senoufo		3S

Kenya

►Kalenjin		1M
►Kikamba		1M
►Kikuyu		1M
►Kiswahili	*7	1M,2S,3S
►Luluyia		1M
►Luo	*2	1M

Lesotho

►Sesotho		1M,2S,3S
----------	--	----------

Liberia

►Bassa		
►Belle		1P
►Kpelle	*2	1P
►Krahn		1P
►Mandinka	*6	
►Vai		1P

Madagascar

►Malagasy		
-----------	--	--

Malawi

►Chichewa		1M,2S,3S
►Tumbuka		

Mali

►Bambara		1M
►Dogon		
►Fulfulde/Pular	*10	
►Mandinka	*6	
►Soninke *3		
►Tamashek	*2	
►Zarma/Songhai	*4	

Mauritius

►Bhojpuri/Hindi		1S
►Kreol/Mauritian	*2	

Mauritania

►Hassaniya		
►Fulfulde/Pular	*10	1P
►Soninke *3		1P
►Wolof *3		1P

Mozambique

►Cisena/Cipodzo		
►Imakua/Ilomwe		
►Kiswahili *7		
►Shitsonga		
►Shona	*2	

Namibia

►Ambo		
►Herero		
►Kwangali		
►Lozi	*2	
►Nama		
►Setswana *2		

Niger

►Fulfulde/Pular	*10	1P,2S,3S
►Hausa	*3	1P,2S,3S
►Kanuri	*2	1P,2S,3S
►Tamashek	*2	1P,2S,3S
►Zarma/Songhai	*4	1P,2S,3S

Nigeria

►Abua		
►Anaang		
►Angas		
►Beroun		
►Bura		
►Chamba-Daka		
►Duka		
►Ebira		
►Edo		1M,2S,3S
►Efik		1M,2S
►Ekpoye		
►Esan		
►Fulfulde/Pular	*10	1M,2S,3S
►Gwari		
►Hausa	*3	1M,2S,3S
►Ibibio		
►Idoma		1M,2S
►Igala		1M,2S
►Igbo		1M,2S,3S
►Igede		
►Ijo		1M,2S
►Isoko		
►Kalabari		
►Kamuku		
►Kamwe		
►Kanuri	*2	1M,2S
►Lela		
►Mumuye		

►Nupe		1M,2S		►Runyankore		1M
►Pidgin/Creole	*4			►Ruchiga		
►Reshe				►Rutoro		1M
►Tiv		1M,2S				
►Urhobo				Zaire (Democratic Republic of the Congo)		
►Yerkhee				►Ciluba		1M,2S,3S
►Yoruba	*2	1M,2S,3S		►Kikongo	*3	1M,2S,3S
►Zarma/Songhai	*4			►Kiswahili	*7	1M,2S,3S
				►Lingala	*2	1M,2S,3S
Rwanda				►Otela		
►Kinyarwanda		1M,3S				
►Kiswahili				Zambia		
				►Bemba		1S,2S,3S
Sao Tomé & Príncipe				►Kaonde		1S
►Crioulo/Saotomense	*4			►Lozi	*2	1S,2S,3S
				►Lunda		1S
Senegal				►Luvale		1S
►Joola		1P		►Nyanja		1S,2S,3S
►Fulfulde/Pular	*10	1P		►Tonga		1S,2S,3S
►Mandinka	*6					
►Serer		1P		Zimbabwe		
►Soninke	*3			►Ndebele		1M,2S,3S
►Wolof	*3	1P,3S		►Shona	*2	1M,2S,3S
Seychelles						
►Kreol/Seychellois	*2	1M				
Sierra Leone						
►Krio/Creole	*4	1P				
►Limba		1P				
►Mende		1P				
►Temme		1P				
Somalia						
►Somali		1M,2S,3S				
Sudan						
►Bari		1M,3S				
►Besa		1M,3S				
►Dinka		1M,3S				
►Moru		1M,3S				
►Nuer						
►Zande		1M,3S				
►Kiswahili	*7	3S				
►Nubian		1M,3S				
Swaziland						
►Siswati		1M,2S,3S				
Tanzania						
►Kiswahili	*7	1M,2S,3S				
Togo						
►Ewe	*2	1M,2S				
►Kabiye		1M,2S				
Uganda						
►Ateso		1M				
►Kiswahili	*7	1P,2S,3S				
►Luganda		1M,2S,3S				
►Lugbara		1M				
►Luo	*2					

ANNEX 4

Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights

At its 22nd seminar on Human Rights and Cultural Rights (7-9 October 1987, Recife, Brazil, Francisco Gomes de Matos, Chair), the International Association for the Development of Cross-Cultural Communication issued the following:

The Recife Declaration

Considering that the ideals and principles of equality, solidarity, freedom, justice, peace and understanding, which have inspired national and international legislation and instruments on human rights, share a crucial linguistic dimension.

Recognizing that the learning and use, maintenance and promotion of languages contribute significantly to the intellectual, educational, sociocultural, economic and political development of individuals, groups and states.

Noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants related to human rights and other international universal instruments make provision for cultural rights.

Mindful of the need to arouse and foster awareness, within and across cultures, of the recognition and promotion of the linguistic rights of individuals and groups.

Asserting that linguistic rights should be acknowledged, promoted, and observed, nationally, regionally and internationally, so as to promote and assure the dignity and equity of all languages.

Aware of the need for legislation to eliminate linguistic prejudice and discrimination and all forms of linguistic domination, injustice and oppression, in such contexts as services to the public, the place of work, the educational system, the courtroom, and the mass media.

Stressing the need to sensitize individuals, groups, and states to linguistic rights, to promote positive societal attitudes toward plurilingualism and to change societal structures toward equality between users of different languages and varieties of languages.

Hence cognizant of the need to provide explicit legal guarantees for linguistic rights to individuals and groups by the appropriate bodies of the member states of the United Nations.

The XXII Seminar of the International Association for the Development of Cross Cultural Communication recommends that steps be taken by the United Nations to adopt and implement a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, which would require a reformulation of national, regional, and international language policies.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

- Prof. Mohamed Hassan Abdulaziz**, University of Nairobi, Kenya
Joachim Abanda Abena, Literacy Bureau, Yaoundé, Cameroon
Dr Efurosibina Adegbija, University of Lorin, Nigeria
Dr Seitay L. Chachage, University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
Prof. Angel Garnica Copa, National Literacy and Popular Education Service (SNAEP), La Paz, Bolivia
John A. Davani, NCD University, Waigani, Papua New Guinea
Dr Boubacar Diarra, National Institute of Languages, Bamako, Mali
Dr Arame Diop Fal, IFAM, Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal
Dr Darlis Djosan, Department of Social Affairs, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia
Dr Emilia Ferreiro, National Polytechnic Institute, Mexico City, Mexico
Prof. Clifford Nelson Fyle, Regional Bureau of Education and Development in Africa (BREDA), Dakar, Senegal
Dr Utta von Gleich, Ibero-American Institute, Hamburg, Germany
Prof. Marc-Laurent Hazoumé, National University of Benin, Cotonou, Benin
Prof. Abdu Mtajuka Kamisi, University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
Emile Kpikpidi, Bureau of Literacy, Cotonou, Benin
Wolfgang Küper, German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Germany
Dr Hans Lapoliwa, National Centre for the Development of Languages, Jakarta, Indonesia
Vincent Manukayasi, NCD University, Waigani, Papua New Guinea
Dr Noé Nguesso, University of Yaoundé, Cameroon
Heike Niedrig, Institut für International und Interkulturell Vergleichende Erziehungs-wissenschaft, University of Hamburg, Germany
Prof. Pai Obanya, Regional Bureau of Education and Development in Africa (BREDA), Dakar, Senegal
Margaret J. Obi, NCD University, Waigani, Papua New Guinea
Prof. Joseph Taiwo Okedara, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Dr D.P. Pattanayak, Indian Institute for Applied Linguistic Sciences, Mysore, India
Dr José G. Mendoza Quiroga, University of La Paz, Bolivia
Mammo Kebede Shenkut, linguist, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia
Ramesh Thanvi, linguist, folklore specialist, Jaipur, India
Dr Saydul Wahab Touré, Ecole normale supérieure, Bamako, Mali
Ruth Lozano Vallejo, Ministry of Education, Lima, Peru
Prof. V.N. Webb, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Prof. Dr Ekkehard Wolff, University of Hamburg, Germany
Dr Abdel Wahib Yousif, UNESCO, Paris

This book, bringing together contributions from many different parts of the world, seeks to demonstrate the normality of multilingualism and to question the teaching/learning systems which are grounded on the principle of monolingualism. The study is both theoretical and empirical. Investigations carried out in 30 African, Asian and Latin American countries bear witness to the often striking failure of linguistic policies inherited from the colonial era. Although the authors do not deny the influence of these policies, they uphold plurilingualism as a natural state in human society and strongly recommend the use of local languages and mother tongues in formal and non-formal education. Without attempting to conceal the cultural, political and linguistic problems linked to such an approach, this book highlights the numerous advantages it would bring: laying a sound basis for future learning as well as preserving the identity of communities, their cultural wealth and diversity. This study addresses not only linguists and decision-makers but also field workers and teachers who are confronted daily with the consequences of the "single language" dogma.