

SELECTED LANGUAGES AND THEIR POLICIES IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the selected language and their policies in Africa, the paper begins with the definition of the concept of language, policy and goes further to look at how scholars views on language policy. Next, the paper examines language policy as it appears in some country in African. The paper went further to discuss guage choice at independent, official language and national language. Finally, the conclusion was drawn that the national language recognizes mother tongue or language of the immediate environment, as a language of instruction in primary 1-3 and English, French, Portuguese, from primary 4 and above.

Keywords: *Language, language policy, language at independent, official language and national language.*

INTRODUCTION

An effective language policy is not only crucial to the nation's development, but it is a prime element in democratic governance since language is an instrument of politics, and the countries would be influence through the choices that make it the language of administration, media, law, the military, education and the rest of them. All the nations of the world that have advanced in whatever field of human endeavor, have gained their fame, largely through the exercise of their linguistic rights or the use of the indigenous languages as vehicle of transmission of knowledge and culture in their societies. Not only because there is a sense of national pride in this, but because of the need for the society to take its destiny in its own hands and be master of its own affairs.

Effective language policy is crucial to the implementation of the educational system of any country, especially in bilingual/multilingual country. Various linguistic groups are represented in a given classroom situation. And in order to be fair to the various multi-ethnic groups, the National Education policy must promote multilingualism in the school system. This approach is in consonance with the current thinking of some linguists that an indigenous tongue is the best medium of education.

LANGUAGE POLICY

ALGERIA

Pre-Independence

French Colonization. Prior to 1885, the education system was primarily for children of European colonists. In this year, the French colonizers founded a separate school system for

indigenous Algerians. The two systems were unified in 1949. At independence, only 600,000 children attended school (Chabou, 245 as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Independence

(1962) French was the medium in primary schools. Because there were so few teachers trained to teach Classical Arabic, only 7 hours of instruction was required each week. (Leclerc) In 1965, President Houari Boumedienne (who overthrew Ben Bella) began a major Arabization program (1965-78). From 1965 onward, there was a gradual process of Arabization, with Arabic replacing French as a medium for certain subjects as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim

In 1976, the Foundation School System made French a foreign language. "Classical Arabic is the only official language of the nation... French is regarded as a foreign language and is taught starting from the fourth year of the primary level" (Mostari, 29). By 1982, the six years of primary school included: first two years exclusively in Arabic, second two years 2/3 Arabic and 1/3 French; final two years 16 hours Arabic, 14 hours French (Chabou, 246). Another Arabization push began in 1989 and culminated in Law no. 91-05 of January 16, 1991, which required the use of Arabic in all official domains, including education. This was supposed to exclude the use of French, but it also threatened Berber groups, who had demonstrated in 1989 and did so again in 1991 (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005). "If the Algeria of 1962 was totally Frenchified, that of 1996 has become largely Arabified, but an Arabic that no one speaks" (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Current

General school boycott in 1994. Berbers were pushing hard to include their language in public life. As a result, in 1994, the government began discussions with Berber leaders regarding introduction of Tamazight in the schools, and in 1995, it set up a High Commission for Amazighité (Berber identity) (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005). In 2002, the Constitution was amended to make Tamazight a national language alongside Classical Arabic. In 2003, the government allowed Berber officially to be used in schools as cited in Albaugh (2005).

BENIN

Pre-Independence French colonization.

Independence

(1960). French only. In 1965, 45 percent of Dahomey's pupils were attending Catholic schools (McIntyre, 478 as cited in Albaugh, 2005)

Interim

All Beninese languages have the status of national languages. Linguists and other researchers chose six languages to promote in the alphabetization of adults (Aja, Batonum/Bariba, Dendi, Fon, Ditamari, Yoruba) (Leclerc). During the Marxist revolution between 1975 and 1989, the revolutionary Military Government decided to produce its own textbooks and national language materials, but implementation was problematic. Pre-schools used national languages during that time, but national languages have never been taught in primary schools (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Current

The Cultural Charter of Benin (Law no. 91-006 of 25 Feb 1991) highlighted the promotion of national languages: “The Beninese State, to ensure the equal promotion of all national languages, should put in place the reforms necessary to introduce these languages progressively and systematically in teaching.” (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005)

But they are still not used in public schools. SIL Benin Director Todd Nelson reports that there is “official support for mother tongue primary education in Benin, but efforts to develop materials are moving very slowly. None of our materials is explicitly designed for primary schools and actually, none of our materials is being used in primary school, but one of the programs we support (Tamberma) did have one class for non-schooled, primary-age children last year... using materials designed by a committee headed by Jérémy Bética and published by the (Beninese) Ditammari National Linguistic Commission” (Nelson as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

NIGER

Pre-Independence French colonization.

Independence (1960) French only.

Interim Though French is the sole official language, Hausa and Zarma are allowed in parliamentary debates (Leclerc). A few experimental schools in local languages began as early as 1973 as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Current By 1998, there were 42 experimental schools, assisted by GTZ and USAID, using the five main languages (Hovens, 253). The 1998 Law of Orientation states that the languages of instruction are French and national languages (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005). Niger recently decided to promote all of its eight national languages as media of instruction during the first years of school (Brock-Utne 2001, 128). The Swiss government and GTZ (which promised to participate over a 9-yr period) are helping in the implementation of the policy. In Niger’s primary schools, teaching is given in some of the national languages during the first three years, along with classical Arabic, which is taught in several schools experimentally. French remains the language of instruction from the fourth year of primary and throughout secondary (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

ANGOLA

Pre-Independence

Portuguese colonization. The MPLA in 1962 declared that “every national orethnic minority would have the right to use its own language, develop its ownsript, preserve and develop its cultural heritage” (Roy-ampbell, 176 as cited in Albaugh, 2005)

Independence

(1975) Portuguese only. Missionaries usually taught primary grades, the secondary level was taught exclusively by Portuguese expatriates. “At all levels of the system, the language of instruction was Portuguese” (Gorham and Duberg, 271) Six Bantu languages, however, were given the status of national languages as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim

Since 1975, many plans have been proposed to develop national languages for use in education. In 1977, the government created the National Language Institute to assist with the implementation of language policy. In 1985, it was renamed the Institute of National (African) Languages (Roy-Campbell, 176 as cited in Albaugh, 2005). Civil war made teaching in any language unproductive.

Current Portuguese only.

GUINEA-BISSAU

Pre-Independence Portuguese colonization.

Independence (1974) Portuguese medium. Liberation leader Amilcar Cabral did not push the subject of national languages as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim In 1987, The Ministry of Education, with the assistance of Dutch Cooperation (SNV) and a Portuguese NGO (CIDAC), created experimental bilingual schools using Kiriol as the medium of instruction for the first two grades. In grade three, students transitioned abruptly to Portuguese. By 1993, there were 30 as cited in Albaugh, (2005) experimental classes. The experiment ended in 1997 (Hovens, 253).

Current In the early 90s, the government initiated an experiment involving indigenized, a ruralized curriculum that used Kiriol, the lingua franca. But it stopped when the funding ended in 1994 [this is probably the same experiment as above, but is contradictory] (Benson 2004, 58 as cited in Albaugh, 2005). UNESCO reports that Guinea-Bissau is still experimenting with Creole (Bamgbose, 15 as cited in Albaugh, 2005)

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Pre-Independence Spanish colonization.

Independence (1968) Leaders never raised the question of using languages. Spanish continued to be used for administration and schooling as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim France propped up Nguema's replacement, Obiang, and even succeeded in getting Equatorial Guinea into the Franc Zone in 1985, though Spain remained the main donor (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005). Equatorial Guinea asked to become a member of the Francophonie in 1989, and French was elevated to a "working language." In 1998, French became the country's "second official language" (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Current Spanish is the only medium in primary through secondary school (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

ERITREA

Pre-Independence During the 30 years of conflict with Ethiopia, Eritrean languages were banned in public places. However, most Eritreans refused to speak Amharic and continued to teach their languages to their children. There was, however, significant population movement during the war, and people came into contact with Eritreans speaking different languages, with the result that there are few remaining monolingual regions in Eritrea (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Independence (1993) Multilingual

Interim Multilingual

Current Each Eritrean language (Tigrina, Tigré, Afar, Saho, Kunama, Bedawi, Bilen, Nara, Hijazi Arabic) is encouraged to be used and developed at the local level, and children receive their primary education in their mother tongue. The government sees it necessary to give mother tongue education to all groups, no matter what their size. In addition, each student is expected to learn one of the state languages (Tigrina or Arabic) In secondary school, teaching is given in Tigrina or English (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

BOTSWANA

Pre-Independence

British colonization. The first primary schools were established by the London Missionary Society. Other missions participated in education from 1840 onward (Lockhart, 504). Education was relatively neglected by the colonial administration as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Independence

(1966) From independence, there was some use of Setswana in the first three years, but lack of materials and the fact it was not subject to testing at the end of primary school meant that it was not taught well (Molosiwa et al). The normal practice was to teach in Setswana for the first two or three years and then switch to English for the remainder of primary school (Basimolodi, 144) as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim

The National Commission on Education (NCE) in 1977 recommended more and better materials, and the official policy was to teach in Setswana to grade 4 and then English thereafter (Lockhart, 506 as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

Current

The Report of the second National Commission on Education (1993) as cited in Albaugh, 2005 considered the language question and decided “in favor of the introduction of the use of English as the medium of instruction from Standard 1 by 2000.” This was later amended to: “English should be used as a medium of instruction from the standard 2 by year 2002” (Basimolodi, 145). Setswana should be taught as a compulsory subject through primary school. The policy was silent on the use of languages other than Setswana.

NIGERIA

Pre-Independence. British colonization.

Independence (1960) Vernacular medium in the first years. But it was not a very firm policy. At the Meeting of Experts on the Use of the Mother Tongue for Literacy (held in Ibadan 1964), Nigeria did not have a stated policy (Armstrong, 232) as cited in Albaugh, 2005.

Interim The 1977 Education Policy: “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 (Section 3:15 (4), Akinnaso, 261 as cited in Albaugh, 2005). In practice, English and math virtually monopolize the attention of teachers because they are the two major subjects on the First School Leaving Certificate Examinations (Ogundimu, 3535)

Current The government recognizes 27 minority local languages in education. This means that primary education begins in one of these languages, followed by one of the three major languages (Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba). English is obligatory from primary school, as is Arabic in Koranic schools (Leclerc as cited in Albaugh, 2005).

It is typically the language of the immediate community, and not necessarily the mother tongue, that is taught. The national language policy in primary school is that the medium of instruction shall be the language of the environment for the first three years (NPE, 2004). During this period, English shall be taught as a subject. From the four years, English shall be progressively used as a medium of instruction. By this time (4 years) the language of immediate community (LIC) and French shall be taught as a subject (NPE, 2004)

SOUTH AFRICA

Pre-Independence Dutch and British colonization.

Independence (1910) Pre-apartheid: English only. Between 1953 and 1979, South Africa practiced “Bantu Education,” during which time “the mother tongue was phased in and maintained for 8 years as the primary language of learning.” This was actually a better language policy for the majority of the population, but for the wrong reasons, and “the matriculation results of black students steadily improved, reaching their zenith in 1979.” But the strict implementation of Afrikaans for half of the subjects in secondary school led to the Soweto student uprising in 1976.

The students wanted to learn English instead. The government had to back down on its language policy (Brock-Utne 2001, 127).

Interim In 1979, the Education and Training Act was passed, which reduced the mother tongue to four years of primary school, and then students could choose between Afrikaans or English medium. Most schools opted for English, and the “reduction in the use of the mother tongue has coincided with decreasing pass rates” (Brock-Utne 2001, 127).

Current The 1997 Constitution recognized 11 official languages, and Article 29 (2) gives everyone the right to basic education in the official language or languages of his choice were “reasonably practicable.” Vic Web (1999) [paraphrased in Brock-Utne 2001, 127] says that despite the constitutional goals of multilingual education, the country seems to be regressing to its pre-apartheid practice of English-only. Schools are allowed to choose their medium. Government documents show that: 11% chose Afrikaans (11.3% of the school population); 51% chose English (5.7% of the population); 37% chose a Bantu language (83% of the school population) [Webb 1999, Citing South African Department of Education Statistics from 1997, 58].

GHANA

The controversy about the language to use as the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools, especially at the lower basic level dates back to the castle schools and missionary era. Before formal education was introduced into Ghana in the name of white love (spring, 1998), traditional education was conducted in the indigenous languages.

With the inception of formal education and the subsequent use of English as the medium of instruction, the indigenous languages were seen as “inadequate” as teaching media (Bamgbose, 2000). Bilingual education in Ghana commenced with the inception of formal education in Ghana which began with the castle schools and was later continued by the Christian missionaries. This period is the pre-colonial period (1529-1925).

The languages used were those of the home country (the metropolitan languages). Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, and English were used as media of instruction wherever and whenever the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the English respectively were in power. The situation, however, changed with the arrival of the missionaries, who resorted to the development of the local languages in both their education.

The use of a Ghanaian language during the period from 1529 to 1925 had gained root to the extent that when the British colonial government took over the administration of education in the country in 1925, it could not reverse the trend (Bamgbose, 2000). During this period, a systematic pattern began to emerge with regard to both education and language use.

Ghanaian language was to be used as the medium of instruction only at the lower primary level, with English used thereafter. The policy was reversed and became unstable when the administration of the country came under the jurisdiction of indigenous Ghanaians in 1957. Since then, the use of a Ghanaian language as the medium of instruction at the lower primary level has had a checkered history. From 1925 to 1951, a Ghanaian language was used as a medium of instruction for the first three years. Between 1951 and 1956, it was used only for the first year. From 1957 to 1966 a Ghanaian language was not used at all, from 1967 to 1969 it was used only for the first year, and between 1970 and 1974 a Ghanaian language was used for the first three years and where possible beyond (to the sixth year). From 1974 to 2002 a Ghanaian language was used for the first three years. A Ghanaian language, in this case, is the language of the locality which includes one of the following: Akan (Fante and Twi), Nzema, Ga, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, Gonja, Kasem, Dagbani, and Dagaare.

CURRENT

At present, the policy states that English should be used as the medium of instruction from the primary one, with a Ghanaian language studied as a compulsory subject to the Senior secondary school (High School) (Ameyaw-Akumfi, 2002).

The government on 15th August 2002 approved this policy to be implemented in September 2002. Since the announcement of the change of policy, the debate over the language of education has picked up momentum from academics, politicians, educators, educational planners, traditional rulers, and the general populace. Ghana has been a strong advocate of the African personality since Nkrumah's era. The Promulgation of the use of English as the medium of instruction in education and the abandoning of her indigenous languages in education is therefore in opposition to this ideology.

Unlike most francophone countries which had French forced on them as medium of instruction through the Brazzaville Conference of 1944 and made the use of local languages in schools forbidden (Djite, 2000), Ghana had the British lay a solid foundation for the use of the indigenous languages as media of instruction at the lower primary level. For example, Cote d'Ivoire prior to independence in 1960 entered into an agreement with France to maintain the cultural and linguistic policies of their colonizers (Djite, 2000). Ghana, unlike most Francophone countries, has come a long way in the use of indigenous languages as media of instruction. The country's recent turn towards the "Francophone phenomenon" is saddening and baffling. The multimillion-dollar question is what necessitated the change of policy.

Colonial Language Policies

The external powers that colonized the different African countries came from different parts of Europe, and as their origins differed, so, too, did their language policies. They, of course, all imposed their respective official languages on the different territories controlled by them. But in addition to that, whereas the English displayed linguistic tolerance to the extent of permitting suitable indigenous African languages to be used as media of instruction for the first three to four years of grade school and then taught thereafter as a school subject if so desired, the French, the Portuguese, and the Spanish did not tolerate the use of any indigenous African languages at all in the public domain. Pursuing a policy of total assimilation, their aim was to turn each and every one of their subjects in Africa into a perfect linguistic and cultural replica of the corresponding citizen in their respective home countries in Europe.

In other words, the French, for example, wanted the indigenous peoples of their African territories to be French through and through; similarly for the Portuguese and the Spanish. Accordingly, while colonialism lasted, no indigenous African languages were ever taught in school, let alone being used as media of instruction in the territories controlled by those three colonial powers. In those territories, French, Portuguese, and Spanish were, as applicable, the sole media of instruction at all levels of the education system.¹ The effect of that policy remains there till today, as will be seen below. But even where indigenous languages were allowed to be used in grade schools, as in the English colonial territories, the use of such languages was restricted. As said earlier, such languages could only be used officially in the first three to four years of grade school. Thereafter, all instruction was expected to be given in English. From grade four onwards and except during the few periods allotted to indigenous languages on the official timetable, all pupils were expected to converse among themselves as well as with their teachers only in English. Anyone caught conversing during school hours in any indigenous language (pejoratively termed a ‘vernacular’) was liable to a fine, corporal punishment, or some other form of punishment such as being made to write out in longhand a hundred or two hundred tokens of the promise, “I shall never again speak in the vernacular in school.”

The writer remains greatly indebted to the organizers of ACAL 43 for fully sponsoring his attendance at the conference to present this commissioned paper, which made him think what he didn’t think before as well as ask questions that never even crossed his mind before about official language policies in Africa. The only known exception to these observations and a very happy one at that is that of the colonial territory then known as Belgian Congo, but now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). There, thanks largely to the liberal disposition of King Leopold II of Belgium, the then sole proprietor of the colony, Christian missionaries developed a number of indigenous languages, among them Lingala, for propagating their immigrant religion and also for use as media of instruction in grade schools.

Not being taught one’s native language at all in school, as under the French, the Portuguese, and the Spanish, also referring to it as a ‘vernacular’ in the sense of some unworthy and primitive speech form, and, above all, being punished for speaking it even to

one’s little school friends – all these said one and the same thing to the young African school child, namely, that his native language was definitely inferior to the colonial language taught to him and also spoken to him in school. This feeling was to be later reinforced by the unfortunate choice of official language made by his newly independent country!

Language Choices at Independence

At independence, each newly emerged country in Africa had to decide, in line with practice elsewhere in the world, what language or languages it would use for its nationalist and nationalistic needs.

The choices made then or shortly thereafter are as shown in Table.

S/N	Country	Colonial countries	Official language(s)	National language(s)	Pseudo/national language(s)
1	Algeria	French	Arabic	Arabic, Tamazight	-----
2	Egypt		Arabic	Arabic	-----
3	Eritrea		Arabic, English	Arabic	-----
4	Libya		Arabic	Arabic	-----
5	Mauritania		Arabic, French	Arabic	-----
6	Morocco		Arabic	Arabic	-----
7	Suda Republic		Arabic	Arabic	-----
8	Tunisia		Arabic	Arabic	-----
9	Benin Republic		French	-----	Adja, Fon, Batonu,/Bariba, Dendi, Yoruba, Ditamari
10	Burkina Faso	French	French	-----	-----
11	Burundi	French	French	Kirundi, Swahili	-----
12	Cameroon	French	French, English	-----	-----
13	Central African Republic	French	French	Sango	-----
14	Chad	French	French, Arabic	-----	-----
15	Comoros	French	French	-----	-----
16	Cote D’ivoire	French	French	-----	-----
17	Democratic Republic of the Congo	French	French	Chiluba, Kikongo, Lingala, Swahili	-----
18	Djibouti	French	French, Arabic	-----	-----
19	Gabon	French	French	-----	-----
20	Guinea Conakry	French	French	-----	Fula,Kissi, Kpelle,Malinke,So usou, Toma
21	Madagascar	British, French	French	Malagasy	-----
22	Mali	French	French	-----	Arabic, Bozo, Bambara, Bomu, Dogon, Fulfulde,Manikaka

					n,Mamara, Senufo,Syenara,Senufo,Songhay,Soninke,Tamasheq,Xaasongaxango
23	Niger Republic	French	French	-----	Hausa, Zerma, Songhai,Tubu,Tamajeq,Fulfulde, Kanuri,Gurma
24	Republic of the Congo		French	-----	-----
25	Rwanda	German, Belgian		Kinyarwanda	-----
26	Senegal		French	Diola, Malinke, Peul, Serer, Soninke, Wolof	-----
27	Seychelles		French, English	Creole	-----
28	Togo		French	-----	Ewe, Kabiye
29	Angola		Portuguese	-----	-----
30	Cape Verde		Portuguese	-----	-----
31	Equatorial Guinea		Portuguese	-----	-----
32	Guinea Bissau		Spanish	-----	-----
33	Mozambique		Portuguese	-----	-----
34	Sao Tome and Principe		Portuguese	-----	-----
35	Botswana		English	Setswana	-----
36	The Gambia		English	-----	-----
37	Ghana		English	-----	Akan, Dabane, Ga, Gonja, Ewe, Adangbe, Kasem, Nzema dagaare
38	Kenya		English	Swahili	-----
39	Lesotho		English	Sesotho	-----
40	Malawi		English	Chichewa	-----
41	Mauritius	French	English, French		
42	Namibia	German, British,	English, Afrikaans		
43	NIGERIA	BRITISH	English, French	Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba	
44	Sierra Leone		English		
45	Somalia	Italian,British	Somali, English	Somali	
46	South Africa	Dutch, British	English, Afrikaans	Venda, Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Sesotho, Pedi, Tsonga, Swazi, Ndebele	
47	South Sudan	British	English	-----	-----

48	Swaziland	British	English	SiSwati	-----
49	Tanzania	German, British	English	Swahili	-----
50	Uganda	British	English	Swahili	-----
51	Zambia	British	English	-----	-----
52	Zimbabwe	British	English	Shona, Ndebele	-----
53	Ethiopia	No colonization Italian (Occupation)	Amharic, English	Tigrinya	-----
54	Liberia		English	-----	-----

Table: Showing Official Language Choices by the African States

The countries to the north of the Sahara (Nos. 1-8) in the vast majority of cases chose Arabic as their sole official and national language and only in a few cases chose it as a co-official language with the languages of their former colonial masters. In other words, whereas the countries to the north of the Sahara overwhelmingly chose to drop colonial languages at independence, the ones to the south all chose, instead, to retain them. The countries (Nos.9-34) that chose French, Portuguese, and Spanish as their official languages, the two sets of countries concerned are mostly located to the south of the Sahara. The countries that choose English as their official language (Nos. 35-52), they had no indigenous languages of their own that could effectively fill that role.

National languages in Table 1 are indigenous African languages that have been specifically designated as such either in the constitutions of the countries concerned or in some other kinds of official documents put out by such countries. Very clear cases of such languages are those of Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba in Nigeria. Swahili in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as Xhosa, Venda, Zulu, etc. in South Africa. The Nigerian constitution, for example, makes very clear provisions for Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba (the three major languages in that country) to be used (along with English). However, being designated on paper as a national language is one thing and being active and a so used is quite something else. Thus, the official policy regarding Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba in Nigeria was announced for the first time at an official press conference in late December 1977. Up to now (more than thirty years later), however, there has been no clear indication that the government of that country has any serious intention of implementing it (Awobuluyi 2010: 12-17; Bamgbose 1991: 117-18; Emenanjo 1998).

Consider Swahili next. This is a national language that keenly interested outside observers saw Tanzania's independence in 1964 as having, of all the indigenous languages south of the Sahara, the brightest prospect of becoming a truly official indigenous language. But the government of that country apparently felt otherwise; for in 1987, at the instance of an aid agency whose main mission was (and stillis) to promote English values at the expense of others, it decided to in effect foreclose any further development of that language by having it completely replaced by English as medium of instruction in all the country's high schools and colleges (Albaugh 2005: 48; Mgwashu 2004). As for the nine indigenous national



languages of post-Apartheid South Africa, another key country in Africa, it appears that they are now only so in the name (Buekes 2008), partly owing to resistance from no less than the intended indigenous beneficiaries of the policy concerned (Mgqwashu 2004).

The term “pseudo-national languages” is used in the same Table in reference to indigenous languages that are officially recognized, as it would seem, merely to make the peoples speaking them feel good at being recognized and acknowledged by no less than their own governments! Such languages tend to be almost any and every significant indigenous language present in the country concerned. Clear examples of such languages are the languages called ‘national languages’ in the Benin Republic, namely, Adja, Batonu/Bariba, Datimari, Dendi, Fon, and Yoruba. Such languages may be used for news broadcast on radio and television but are otherwise not officially used for any other purpose, particularly informal education. According to Wolff (2000: 341), the ‘national languages’ in Niger Republic fall in this category, too. And the nine ‘national languages’ of Ghana, officially so declared in the early 1960s, arguably now fall in this category as well, as that country has since 2002 opted for an English-only medium of instruction throughout its education system (Owu-Ewie 2006).

There are countries in Table that have nothing at all entered for them whether under national Languages or under pseudo-national languages. Most such countries were under French, Portuguese, or Spanish colonial rule, and as said before, those three external powers neither recognized any indigenous African languages nor assigned them any official role at all under them in Africa. Their colonial policy of not acknowledging the existence of indigenous African languages outlived their stay in Africa and carried over with little or no change into the post-independence era in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa. That accounts for countries like Angola, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, and Togo in Africa today that still do not make use of any of their indigenous languages either at all in the public domain or for more than news broadcasts on radio and television and, maybe, for occasion alelectioneering as well.³ Any developmental work that has so far been done on any of the indigenous languages in such countries has been done mostly by foreigners and foreign NGOs like SIL in the Cameroon and Benin Republic, for example.

CONCLUSION

Most of the African countries do not have a well-articulated and explicit National language policy that can be found in the document. Countries of African South of the Saharan they all need to take their indigenous languages much more seriously, they have a lot more work to do on those languages than they appear generally to realize. The work requires them to zealously develop both the linguistic and literary potentials of at least the major one among such languages.

The language policy in Education most of the African countries especially the British country territories recognizes. Mother Tongue (MT) or language of the immediate community (LIC) as the language of initial literacy at the primary 1-3. English, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish as an official language.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the discussion above, the following recommendations were made.

- Bridge the gap between the home and the school to help children overcome initial social adjustment problems in school.
- Make learners literate in both language (Mother tongue (MT), or the language of the immediate community (LIC) and English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese.
- Give the learner the needed exposure in the L1 to make them balanced bilinguals' so that they can develop cognitively and academically and transfer the language skill acquired in L1 to L2.
- Make learners appreciate their culture so that they can understand and appreciate the culture of the L2'
- Make learner bilingual in two indigenous languages.
- There will be a decision-making process which will involve teachers, learners, and language coordinators.
- The educators, parents and all stakeholders on the policy and the benefits of bilingual education to the learner, the community and the entire nation will be given high priority.
- Another stage will be human resource development; we need to invest in the training of teacher for the task ahead. This will include the training and retraining of teacher to the indigenous languages.
- There is also a need for instructional materials for use in the school to make the learning more meaningful.
- Another important area in ensuring the success of the programme is monitoring (supervision) and evaluation

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