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CROSS-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION IN WEST AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW

BERNICE KWAKYEWA AYE

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Supervisor: Prof. Annie Brisset

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	viii
RÉSUMÉ	VIII
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	X
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	XI
TABLES AND FIGURES	XIV
INTRODUCTION	15
CHAPTER 1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	31
1.1 CLASSIFICATION OF WEST AFRICAN LANGUAGE PHYLA	32
1.2 FROM THE PRE-COLONIAL TO POST- COLONIAL ERA	35
1.2.1 Languages across Political Boundaries	36
1.2.2 Missionary Activity	38
1.2.3 Colonial Government	42
1.2.3.1 History of Language in Education Policies	45
1.2.4 The African political identity and indigenous languages	48
1.3 HISTORY OF TRANSLATION IN AFRICA	51
1.3.1 Oral Tradition (Interpretation)	53
1.3.2 Translations (Written Texts)	55
1.3.2.1 Religious Texts	55
1.4 TRANSLATION OF LITERATURE IN AFRICA	58
1.4.1 Translation Styles	59
1.4.2 Role of African Literary Translations	62

CHAPTER 2 CROSS-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	66
2.1 TRANSLATION AND REGIONAL PEACEKEEPING	68
2.2 ECONOMICS OF LANGUAGE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION	72
2.3 LANGUAGE IN FORMAL EDUCATION POLICIES	79
2.4 LANGUAGES, LITERACY AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	83
2.4.1 Mother-tongue literacy	88
2.4.2 Literacy, Translation and Religion	90
2.5 LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION IN THE BOOK INDUSTRY	93
2.6 TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION WITHIN PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES AND LAW COURTS	96
2.6.1 Translation and Interpretation in Ghana's Parliament	98
2.6.2 Interpretation in Ghana's Courts	101
2.7 LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION IN THE MEDIA	104
2.7.1 Newspapers	104
2.7.2 Television and Radio	105
2.7.3 Rural Radio Broadcasting	107
CHAPTER 3 TECHNOLOGY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES	110
3.1 GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR AFRICAN "CYBERLANGUAGES"	111
3.2 HUMAN LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGIES	115
3.2.1 African Languages Technology Initiative	116
3.2.2 Programming	117
3.2.2.1 Fonts	117
3.2.2.2 Keyboard	118

3.2.3 Machine Translation and Machine-aided Human Translation	120
3.3 LEXICOGRAPHY	122
3.3.1 Terminology Development	123
3.3.2 Dictionary Production	124
3.4 FILM	127
3.5 THE INTERNET AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB	128
3.6 LOCALIZATION/AFRICANIZATION	131
3.6.1 Is localization (L10n) always necessary?	133
3.7 CAN TECHNOLOGY RAISE THE PRESTIGE LEVEL OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES?	136
 CHAPTER 4 LANGUAGE INSTITUTIONS IN A GLOBALIZED AFRICA	 140
4.1 PAN-AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS	141
4.1.1 African Academy of Languages (ACALAN)	143
4.1.2 PanAfrican Localisation (PAL)	149
4.1.3 Publishing Houses for African Content and Languages	151
4.1.3.1 African Publishers Network (APNET)	151
4.1.3.2 African Books Collective	151
4.1.3.3 Rüdiger Köppe Verlag	152
4.2 NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	153
4.2.1 Bureau of Ghanaian Languages	154
4.2.2 The Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Language and Bible Translation (GILLBT)	155
4.2.3 National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees	157
4.2.4 The Ghana Institute Language (GIL)	158
4.3 INTERPRETATION CONFERENCES	161
4.4 TRANSLATION CONFERENCES	164
 CONCLUSION	 169

BIBLIOGRAPHY	174
APPENDIX 1 MAP OF AFRICA IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY	185
APPENDIX 2 POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA	186
APPENDIX 3 MAP OF WEST AFRICAN LANGUAGES	187
APPENDIX 4 AFRICAN COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AND THEIR USE IN EDUCATION	188
APPENDIX 5 UNOWA WEST AFRICAN POLITICAL MAP	189
APPENDIX 6 SYNOPSIS OF CAMEROON	190
APPENDIX 7 SYNOPSIS OF THE GAMBIA AND SENEGAL	191
The Gambia	191
Senegal	192
APPENDIX 8 SYNOPSIS OF TANZANIA(JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA)	193
APPENDIX 9 SYNOPSIS OF TOGO	194
APPENDIX 10 SYNOPSIS OF SOUTH AFRICA	195
APPENDIX 11 LANGUAGE MAP OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE	197
APPENDIX 12 LANGUAGE MAP OF GHANA	198

APPENDIX 13 LANGUAGE MAP OF NIGERIA

199

ABSTRACT

Socio-economic development of Africa's human resources is tied to language policies that are undergoing global pressures. Though the languages of colonization are the official and dominant languages of education and communication, African countries recognize the importance of promoting their indigenous languages. This descriptive study is an overview of cross-language communication as it relates first to the colonial heritage and then to changes brought about by globalization. Themes explored include literacy, democratization, evangelization, judicial processes and media. Information was compiled from literature on translation and multilingualism in Africa, recent conferences and personal experiences. The focus is on Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, which are representative of the language situation in West Africa. A few references are also made to other sub-Saharan African countries so as to show the intertwined regional phenomena of translation and interpretation. Currently, technology is being applied to linguistics, translation and terminology of indigenous languages to build knowledge societies. Translation and terminology development are empowering speakers of African languages to participate fully in the development of their communities.

RÉSUMÉ

Le développement socio-économique de l'Afrique dépend en partie des politiques linguistiques sur lesquelles s'exerce la pression de la mondialisation. Dans les pays africains, les politiques linguistiques ont un retentissement sur le développement des ressources humaines – aussi bien que sur l'exercice de la démocratie. S'il est vrai que les langues de la colonisation demeurent les langues officielles et, en tant que telles, les langues dominantes de l'éducation et de la communication, en revanche les pays africains reconnaissent l'importance de promouvoir leurs langues indigènes. De nature descriptive, notre étude présente une vue générale de la communication interlinguistique en Afrique dans son double rapport avec l'héritage colonial et avec les changements induits par la mondialisation. Elle porte principalement sur la Côte d'Ivoire, le Ghana et le Nigéria, trois pays parmi les plus représentatifs de la situation linguistique de l'Afrique occidentale. Des exemples sont empruntés à d'autres pays pour montrer l'imbrication régionale de la traduction et de l'interprétation en Afrique sub-saharienne. Les sujets abordés englobent l'alphabétisation, la démocratisation, l'évangélisation, le domaine judiciaire et les médias. La technologie sert aujourd'hui à codifier les langues indigènes et à en développer la terminologie afin que ces langues puissent nommer et traduire la modernité dans tous les domaines nécessaires à la communication des groupes humains qui les utilisent. Les données qui ont servi à cette étude proviennent de publications et communications récentes sur le multilinguisme et la traduction en Afrique ainsi que d'expériences personnelles. Nous avons voulu montrer que la traduction, qui prend des formes diverses et se nourrit du développement terminologique,

permet progressivement aux locuteurs des langues africaines de participer plus pleinement au développement de leurs collectivités.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A12n	<i>A</i> and <i>n</i> are the first and last letters of “Africanization” and there are 12 letters in between (also spelt Africanisation)
Acacia	Communities and the Information Society in Africa
ACALAN	African Academy of Languages
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AISI	African Information Society Initiative
ALAF	Alignement des Langues Africaines et du Français
ALLEX	African Languages Lexicon Project
API	African Publishing Institute
APNET	African Publishers Network
APR	African Publishing Review
ARN	Academic Research Network
ARP	Action de Recherche Partagée
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
AU	African Union (formerly known as Organisation of African Unity)
BASAL	Basic Standardization of all African Languages
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BECE	Basic Certificate Education Examination
CASAS	Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSO	African Civil Society Organisations
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DICOPRO	On-line dictionary consultation via Intranet
ECOMIL	ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOWAS Monitoring Group in Liberia)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FCBH	Faith Comes by Healing
FCUBE	Free Basic Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FESPACO	Festival Panafricain du Cinéma et de la Télévision de Ouagadougou
FM	Frequency Modulation
GIL	Ghana Institute of Languages
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HLT	Human Language Technologies
I18n	Internationalization of the Internet and computer hardware; <i>I</i> and <i>n</i> are the first and last letters of “Internationalization” and there are 18 letters in between (also spelt Internationalisation)
IATIS	International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies
ICT	Information and communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre

IICD	International Institute for Communication and Development
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JSS	Junior Secondary School
L1	First language a child learns to speak; sometimes called native language, mother tongue
L10n	Localization of content and computer software; spelt localisation in titles of African projects. <i>L</i> and <i>n</i> are the first and last letters of “Localization” and there are 10 letters in between
LWC	Language of Wider communication
MT	Machine Translation
MULTEXT	Multilingual Text Tools and Corpora
NACALCO	National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NPE	Nigeria National Policy on Education
OAU	Organisation of African Unity (presently known as African Union)
OCA	Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIF	Organisation de la Francophonie
OLAC	Open Language Archives Community
PAL	PanAfrican Localisation (not Localization)
PmWiki	Wiki-based system for collaborative creation and maintenance of Web sites
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa
QWERTY	Keyboard layout for English language computers and typewriters
RCI	République de la Côte d’Ivoire (formerly known as Ivory Coast)
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics (presently known as SIL International)
SSCE	Senior Secondary Certificate of Education
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Committee
UCEW	University of Education Winneba, Ghana
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICODE	Standard designed for consistent representation and manipulation of text and symbols by computers
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNOWA	United Nations Office for West Africa
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WALA	West African Language Archive
WALC	West African Language Congress
WAMZ	West African Monetary Zone
Wiki	Hawaiian word “wiki wiki” meaning “quick”. It is a Web site that operates in an open environment where page editing is open to the public or restricted to a small group of authors.
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society

XML Extensible Markup Language formats

TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1:	DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY FROM THE PRE-COLONIAL ERA TO THE PRESENT (1925-2002)	46
TABLE 2:	TRANSFRONTIER LANGUAGES	75
FIGURE 1:	LANGUAGES IN WEST AFRICA	37
FIGURE 2:	POLITICAL MAP OF WEST AFRICA	76
FIGURE 3:	UNESCO GENDER BREAKDOWN OF ILLITERACY RATES	85
FIGURE 4:	SCREEN SHOT OF <i>kasahorow</i> ON-LINE AKAN DICTIONARY	126

INTRODUCTION

The language situation in Africa with regard to its planning, management, policies and politics continues to fascinate researchers around the world—not only linguists but also politicians, sociologists, educationists, development economists, anthropologists, translators, lexicographers and terminologists. The African continent is a typical example of what Asad in his description of anthropology, calls

[...] an unequal power encounter between the West and Third World which goes back to the emergence of bourgeois Europe, an encounter in which colonialism is merely one historical moment. It is this encounter that gives the West access to cultural and historical information about societies it has progressively dominated, and thus not only generates a certain kind of universal understanding, but also re-enforces the inequalities in capacity between the European and the non-European worlds (and [derivatively], between the Europeanized elites and the ‘traditional’ masses in the Third World). (1973:16)

Educated Africans of the 21st century will not necessarily regard themselves as “Europeanized elites”, nor will ordinary people describe themselves as “traditional” as they might have done at the time Asad made this statement in the post-independence era. But this idea of *Europeanized* versus *traditional* still prevails and is reinforced with the continued use of the official national languages that were the languages of colonial governments. Based on personal observation, the predominant languages of communication used by educated African elites are the official languages. Though indigenous languages are not often used on formal occasions, they are very much used in an African’s day-to-day life. Linguistic divides have always existed among Africans on the basis of indigenous languages. But the divide between official and indigenous languages has a complex attached to it: a superiority complex for those who can communicate fluently in official languages and an inferiority complex for those who cannot. The United Nations Educational, Scientific

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has noted on its Web site that “the negative attitudes that impede the use of African languages for teaching and learning are shown to be unwarranted, particularly when it is demonstrated in practice that many African countries are either already using or planning to use them by embarking on experiments and pilot projects.”¹ The purpose of these references to anthropology, cultural translation, history and politics is to show that, in this study, translation is not discussed as a watertight discipline but rather as part of cross-language communication in the context of modern Africa, which is a linguistically diverse continent.

Cross-language communication involves the use of translation and interpretation skills. Translation is discussed as part of a broader intercultural network of cultural anthropology, development discourse, ethnography and linguistics. Bachmann-Medick (2003) gives an apt definition of translation: “The term *translation* can be defined as a dynamic term of cultural encounter, as a negotiation of differences as well as a difficult process of transformation” (pp. 33-42).² This description of translation, upon which my study is based, is appropriate for the sub-region of West Africa, which is home to many different cultures. Most, if not all, academic disciplines—translation included—are shaped by the social context in which they are practised. This study will look at some historical and contemporary dimensions of indigenous, colonial and international languages in West Africa.

¹ This statement is from a write-up on “Language of instruction policy and practice in Africa”, an article produced as part of UNESCO’s promotional activities on bilingual and multilingual education.

² Doris Bachmann-Medick of Georg-August University of Göttingen is an independent scholar in intercultural studies, including cultural anthropology, translation and ethnography.

Political colonization of Africa, post-colonial coups d'état and border conflicts have led to the re-demarcation or renaming of parts of the continent into the countries we see today (see Appendix 1: *Africa in the Early Twentieth Century Map* and Appendix 2: *Political Map of Africa*). With the exception of Liberia, West African countries were colonies of France (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger), Germany (Cameroon, Togo), Portugal (Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau) and the United Kingdom (Cameroon, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria).³ The presence of these colonial powers with their varying cultures, language policies and administrative practices has had a lasting impact on these countries. Bamgböse (1991), a leading expert in African languages, explores this phenomenon from *nationalist* and *nationist* perspectives.⁴ These perspectives are concepts that heads of states grapple with in their quest to make their countries autonomous. In spite of their political independence, West Africans are still searching for ways to develop their local languages as they continue to use, in an official capacity, the languages of their former colonial governments. For the most part, African countries keep on redefining themselves in the face of changes in world political and economic forces and even more rapid advances in technology. Several African countries are now part of the global village in terms of modifying their political and economic systems in response to the forces of the global free market economy. In every country across Africa, the American and European way of life (for example in music and use of American English) is being increasingly imitated. Globalization, through communication technology advancement,

³Liberia was founded in 1822. The American Colonization Society, whose primary aim was to return freed African American slaves to Africa, purchased land (later called Liberia) from local chiefs for the settlement of these freed slaves.

⁴ "Claims of authenticity correspond to the quest for nationalism, while the claims of efficiency correspond to nationism. In terms of language choice, nationalism, which involves socio-cultural integration and authenticity, calls for the adoption of an indigenous language, while nationism, which is concerned with political integration and efficiency, calls for any language that can perform these functions. It would not matter at all if the language is not indigenous." Bamgböse (1991: 20)

integration of market economies, evolving political ideologies, is rapidly changing indigenous African culture and possibly leading to more shifts in use and status of languages on the continent.

The *Map of West African Languages* (Appendix 3) shows the main language families in the sub-region. This map and that of *African Community Languages and their Use in Education* (Appendix 4) depict the multiplicity of indigenous languages currently in use in the sub-region. With this multiplicity in mind, the declaration of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003 to 2012) brings global focus to the interplay of indigenous languages and official languages in multilingual communities. West Africa is a complex example of a region whose peoples are trying to be part of the global village without losing their ethnic, national and regional identities. This study describes the current language situation and some of the roles translation plays as a literacy and communication tool.

The study was motivated by my personal and academic experiences. I come from the Guan and Akan language families of Ghana. My mother is Fante from Egyaa on the central coastline of Ghana. My father is from Larteh, a town on the Akwapim-Togo Ranges in Ghana. He grew up speaking, reading and writing Larteh, a Guan language, and Twi, the Akan language spoken in neighbouring towns surrounding Larteh. He is also fluent in Fante which is the main language of communication in our home. I grew up in this home in a predominately Twi-speaking town where the dominant language is a dialect of Twi that is different from the one spoken in the Larteh town. I picked up other languages as I made friends from different language groups and lived in different linguistic communities. As a student in Ghana, I experienced the implementation of different language policies. I later had

to put into practice similar policies as a teacher. An experience that stands out for me as cross-language communication occurred after high school when I had to take over the teaching of a Grade 1 class as part of my National Service because the class teacher went on sick leave.⁵ The language policy of education at that time was to use the language of the community as the medium of instruction. My teaching language was therefore Ga. After a couple of days, it was obvious that my proficiency in Ga was not enough for me to teach continuously in only that language. I also realized that quite a significant proportion of the class was from a nearby migrant community that spoke Hausa. I neither spoke nor understood Hausa. With the valuable help of some self-appointed six- and seven-year old interpreters, I led the class to achieve its set curriculum goals via a combination of languages—English, Twi, Ga and Hausa— coupled with different teaching and learning strategies. It was a wonderful teaching and life experience for me.

I also recall the use of translated Christian documents, from English into local languages, in church. I remember the Babel of languages everywhere and how natural it seemed to switch between different languages during conversations. I remember how studying written Ghanaian languages in high school was not taken for granted by even the most fluent speaker because most students found studying these languages quite difficult. Those who took the option of further studies in their community languages were secretly admired. Those who read Ghanaian languages for their university degrees were teased by friends, albeit gently.

⁵ The National Service Scheme focuses on “the deployment of human resources to institutions ... to support all spheres of national development policies.” (Objectives of the National Service Scheme Ghana). It was a two-year compulsory job posting for young people. I served my first year as a teacher’s aide to lower primary classes.

I had the chance to attend a Red Cross regional camp meeting in Wa, Ghana. University students and young adults from Ghana, Togo and Benin attended this camp. I was selected as the camp interpreter because it turned out that I was the only one who understood and spoke French. At that time, I was studying French as part of my undergraduate program. I had no idea about consecutive or simultaneous or escort interpretation, but that is what I had to do. Though I enjoyed the experience, it was not easy to interpret, on the spur of the moment, talks given by speakers on first aid, fire prevention etc. It was somehow easier to serve as the interpreter to my new Francophone friends when we went shopping or sight-seeing. I did not speak or understand the indigenous languages spoken in Wa but luckily for me, Twi is a trade language there. So I spoke in either Twi or English to traders and I relayed the information back to my friends in French.

Living in Canada, a bilingual federation, has afforded me some insight into the complexities of language coexistence that I had taken for granted in my home country. Having lived in a multilingual Ghana where I also began studies in French, English, pedagogy and educational administration, I appreciate the ongoing efforts to promote different languages and cultures in Canada. My studies in terminology and translation here in Canada have drawn my attention to translation studies as an integral part of intercultural and development studies. I have been introduced to several translation concepts including foreignization/domestication of translation (Schleiermacher, Venuti), functionalist models, socio-critical analysis of translation and cultural norms of translation (Brisset, Toury), socio-historical “horizons” (Berman), Bible translation and equivalence in translation (Nida) and types of translation (Jakobson). I did not find a lot of translation research done on the theories of translation of

West African languages. These different experiences gave me the idea of choosing a topic closer to home—an exploration of the general language situation as well as evidence of translation and interpretation in the West African sub-region.

I found it difficult to apply the theory of translating to fit in with the norms of *one* target culture in Ghana. In general, different ethnic groups have different cultures and different languages. But even with the Akan cultural groups, there are several distinct cultural groupings that are intertwined at the same time. Most models of translation that I studied seemed to focus on one source language/culture to one target language/culture. I did not see how I could apply these models to the West African language situations; certainly not in situations where it may be impractical and unrealistic for a person to belong to only one culture and to have only one mother tongue. Domestication of translation might have been possible to analyze if I followed the theory that African literature in a different type of French or English is a form of translation. Nor was it possible to analyze specific translation projects from West African indigenous languages into either French or English due to my inability to find professors knowledgeable in the desired language combinations and my inability to travel to Ghana to get pertinent information. So, I moved away from a more restrained approach with a specific topic on translation analysis to a broader method of studying the socio-historical ‘horizons’ that West African translation and interpretation incur. When I started writing the thesis, I realized that the more I found out about the role of translation and interpretation in the media, the more I realized that they are supporting the spread of religion and democratization. Consequently, I designed the study to describe the interplay of official and indigenous languages in four major areas of socio-economic development: education, democratization, media and religion. Rather than discussing

translation per se, I present the growth of some languages and their assigned roles as well as the part translation plays in the development of a society. The study will cover the general status of two sets of languages (European and indigenous) in West Africa and their relationship from the post-colonial era to the present.

The scope of the study is in its geographical limitations. Though it would have been ideal to provide an in-depth case study of one country, preferably Ghana, the country I know best, my preliminary research showed that many relevant documents are not readily available. A comparison between countries with similar colonial backgrounds and heritages should yield a more accurate representation of language issues. The choice of West Africa helps to focus on language issues as a sub-regional phenomenon. Examples drawn from at least one country with English as the official language and others with French as the official language serve as a window on the ever-changing language politics of Africa.

In order to get a geographical region that shares similar language politics but is heterogeneous in culture and in politics, I selected West Africa. The designation “West Africa” will refer to the political and geographical region as mapped out by the United Nations Office for West Africa (Appendix 5: *UNOWA West African Political Map*).⁶ My being a West African was certainly a strong motivational factor. I continue to discover more information about Africa than I ever knew, but then, my having grown up in the sub-region

⁶UNOWA has the general mandate of reinforcing UN efforts in maintaining peace and security in the following 15 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

gives me relevant previous knowledge to understand the language situation and a better chance to provide some insight into the languages of my people.

I chose the following criteria to limit my target countries within West Africa: be a former colony of either Great Britain or France; have either French or English as the only official language; be a coastal country; be a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and have relevant up-to-date literature available on the country.⁷ The criterion of being a coastal country was adopted because the seaports served as the initial route for the British, French and Portuguese colonizers who entered the sub-region from the Atlantic Ocean. Seaports of these countries are also essential parts of the trade routes of their landlocked neighbours and are points of cultural and language mixing. The criteria of belonging to ECOWAS and NEPAD were chosen because the economic integration of the member countries influence the political, financial and language policies across the sub-region.

Three countries that meet the above criteria and for which I have included ample references are the following: one Francophone country, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast); one Anglophone country with a unitary system of governance, Ghana; and one federal Anglophone country, Nigeria.⁸ These criteria notwithstanding, specific language situations in other African countries are also discussed. The references to other countries, unfortunately, expand the

⁷To quote from the official NEPAD website, "The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa."

⁸ I will use the French name Côte d'Ivoire. The country is listed as such on the websites of international organizations including CIA Factbook, CIDA, UN and UNESCO.

study further. But, the impact of sub-regional economic policies is continental in scope and continent-wide language initiatives are also being implemented. Some language projects that are initiated in other sub-regions of the continent affect the language situation in the three target countries. Furthermore, some of the language information from these other countries is more widely publicized in the media and linguistic studies. For that reason, readers might be better able to link these more commonly known situations to the West African language situation. Therefore, references are made to current translation, interpretation and other cross-language situational contexts in these other African countries (listed in alphabetical order): Cameroon, The Gambia (commonly known as Gambia), Tanzania, Togo and South Africa. Brief background information on these countries is presented in appendices 6 to 10.

The following is a brief description of the political and linguistic background of the three target countries.

1. Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire (RCI or Ivory Coast) has 78 living and two extinct Ivorian languages (*SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition).⁹ All languages spoken in RCI are shown in the *Language Map of Côte d'Ivoire* (Appendix 11). Leclerc (2006) lists the following constitutional provisions for languages in Côte d'Ivoire: Article 1 of the 1963 constitution states that French is the official language. He also mentions that, in 1977, the Ivorian Parliament adopted Article 67-68 that called for the establishment of the Institut de linguistique

9 From SIL description of types of individual languages: In the code table for ISO 639-3, a language is listed as "extinct" if it has gone extinct in recent times. (e.g. in the last few centuries). Extinct (or dead) languages have no native speakers. A language is listed as "living" if there are people still living who learned it as a first language. (<http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/types.asp>)

SIL International, formerly known as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, is a Christian faith-based organization that studies, documents and assists in developing lesser-known languages. Ethnologue is an encyclopedic catalogue of the world's known living languages. The SIL International-owned database is an active research project that publishes new editions every four years.

appliquée, which would be responsible for the use of national languages in education. The 2000 constitution included the development and promotion of national languages in Article 29.

Côte d'Ivoire gained independence from France on August 7, 1960. The language of the colonial government was French and independent Côte d'Ivoire uses the same official language. Its first president, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, represents the leading role Côte d'Ivoire has played in Francophone West Africa. He was one of the founders of the *Rassemblement démocratique africain* (RDA), the leading pre-independence, inter-territorial political party in French West African territories (excluding Mauritania). Houphouët-Boigny was also a leading member of the Conseil d'Entente, a regional organization of Francophone West Africa. At the time of his death in 1993, Houphouët-Boigny was Africa's longest-serving president. His death led to the country's first change of government in the 33 years since it had gained independence. The resulting political upheaval has led to ongoing civil strife. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, the estimated population of Côte d'Ivoire as of July 2006 was 17,654,843. Literacy levels were estimated at 50.9% of those aged 15 years and older being able to read and write.¹⁰ Côte d'Ivoire's closest neighbour to the east is Ghana.

¹⁰ Adult literacy rate is defined as the percentage of population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Adult illiteracy is defined as the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who cannot both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. UNESCO Institute of Statistics (http://www.uis.unesco.org/i_pages/indspec/TecSpe_literacy.htm)

2. Ghana

Countries that have French as their official language border Ghana: Côte d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north and Togo to the east. The Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) lies to the south. French is therefore the first foreign language (excluding English) that is taught from the primary to the tertiary levels of education in Ghana. The *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition reports that Ghana has 70 living languages (Appendix 12: *Language Map of Ghana*). Unlike what is found in the Ivorian constitution, there are no language provisions in the 1992 constitution. English is, however, the official language, the language of government, instruction, legislation, and state-owned media. Oral communication in local languages is prevalent in all these institutions.

Ghana was the first country in Africa to gain independence from colonial rule. It was formerly known as the Gold Coast. The adjoining territory, British Togoland, was merged with and administered as part of the Gold Coast. The country became independent from the United Kingdom on March 5, 1957. The name *Ghana* was chosen in honour of the Ghana Empire, a Sahelian kingdom and an economic empire in northwest Africa at the end of the eighth century. The first president, Kwame Nkrumah, was a founding member of the pan-African movement. One of his pan-African objectives was the establishment of a "United States of Africa," a federation of all countries in Africa. The current president, John Agyekum Kufuor, was elected in January 2007 as president of the African Union. In June 2007, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas of Ghana, previously the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, was sworn in as the President of the newly formed ECOWAS Commission. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, Ghana's estimated 2006

population was 22,409,572; 74.8% of which are able to read and write. Ghana's closest English-speaking neighbour to the east, three countries away, is Nigeria.

3. Nigeria

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, a country rich in crude oil, gained independence from the United Kingdom on October 1, 1960. *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition indicates that Nigeria has 510 living languages, two languages that are second languages without any mother-tongue speakers, and nine extinct languages (Appendix 13: *Language Map of Nigeria*). This federal country has English as its official language, with each state developing additional unique language policies. Leclerc (2006) identified three categories of Nigerian languages: majority (Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba), regional (state languages) and local (spoken in the municipalities and villages). He identified English as the language of the National Parliament even though the 1999 Nigeria constitution made provisions for quadrilingual debates. The House of Assembly has similar provisions as can be seen in the following quote of language provisions for the House of Assembly:

Article 55: The business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English, and in Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made thereof.

Article 97: The business of a House of Assembly shall be conducted in English, but the House may in addition to English conduct the business of the House in one or more other languages spoken in the State as the House may by resolution approve.

Leclerc, Jacques (2006) *L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde*
(<http://www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/axl/afrique/>)

Nigeria is one of the five-initiating countries of NEPAD. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, Nigeria is the most populous country on the continent. The country's estimated July 2006 population is 131,859,731 of which 68% is literate.

The study follows a descriptive methodology in gathering and synthesizing information. I describe and discuss translation and the language situation using situational contexts as I have experienced them and as described by linguists, indigenous language and translation experts. Sources of my information are official websites and printed documents of governments and institutions, conference proceedings, reviews, books and articles of eminent translation theorists, linguists and language experts. As much as possible, I tried to use peer-reviewed and edited sources and I identified the area of expertise of all the experts I referred to.

The study revolves around the following questions:

1. What are the roles of colonial languages versus West African languages in education, media, politics and religion?
 - Identification of status of various national and government-sponsored African languages and former official colonial languages
2. What are the governmental policies and continental or international pressures that influence the status of European languages and West African languages?
 - Examination of political, social and economic impact of language policies
3. What role does translation (including interpretation and terminology) play in literacy and governance?
 - Discussion of translation practices in sub-Saharan Africa, including interpretation, lexicography, terminology development and application of technology to these practices.

The three questions above are linked in the following manner:

Since our official languages are the same languages that were used by our colonial governments, current language policies have evolved from the colonial language policies. Though the role and status of English and French have not changed as the official languages, those of the indigenous languages have risen. Translation and interpretation play a major role in this transformation. The second question is a follow-up of the identification of political and historical roles of the two groups of languages. There are economic, political, linguistic and cultural pressures that are brought to bear on the sub-region from governmental, continental and international authorities. The last question dwells on how, as a result of these pressures, translation has become important in governance and literacy (as a tool of socio-economic and religious development).

These questions are answered in four chapters, not including introductory and concluding chapters. The first chapter gives a historical background of language, translation and language politics on the continent. The second chapter discusses the contemporary view of language as an economic index and how this notion can be applied to the West African language situation. The chapter also describes the part translation and interpretation play in peacekeeping operations, formal and non-formal education, religious activities, parliamentary process, law courts and in the media. The third chapter addresses the application of communication technology to African languages and how this is helping to build knowledge societies in Africa. Mention is also made of continent-wide plans to use technology to promote translation, lexicography and terminology development. The final chapter examines specific language and translation institutions in Ghana and continent-wide projects in Cameroon and the African Union. These projects are the success stories of all the discussions and planning by several agencies that were discussed in Chapters Two and

Three. Current discussions at conferences on translation and interpretation on the continent are also considered in the final chapter as a sign of the academic future of cross-language communication in Africa.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Language researchers have always had to deal with cultural and political issues arising from the coexistence of indigenous and foreign languages. Language planners, educationists, politicians and missionaries have been implementing measures that either promote or dissuade official usage of indigenous languages. Some of these measures are geared towards raising the level of usage of indigenous languages and placing them on an equal footing with their adopted European languages. Chapter One is a discussion of political and religious measures that led to the introduction of European languages to West Africa, the categorization and codification of indigenous African languages and a brief history of translation on the continent.

Translation is an activity that is inextricably linked to the use and promotion of any language. Steiner (1998) observes that a historical analysis of translation and interpretation is a study of language and culture; culture includes schooling that directly impinges on the sustainable development of the society. The discussion in this study will not be restricted to translation per se, given that “literature, linguistics and translation constitute an indivisible trinity in the analysis of any historical or theoretical aspects of translation and interpretation” (Nama 1993: 420). Discussing literature and linguistics during a historical review of translation is inevitable. Literary translations that are written to conform to the target language, structure and culture open up that culture to the outside world. Translation is one way of telling the stories of a culture to other people speaking a different language in another

culture. The process of translation, including the work involved in trying to present hitherto undescribed concepts in a target language, results in terminology development. Later on in this chapter there will be a discussion of African literature as a form of translation.

Chapter One provides the historical background information in my overview of the general development of languages (European and indigenous) and the role of translation within the coastal West African multilingual educational and cultural setting. To begin the overview, a classification of the African language families will help the reader situate our discussion of language development within its broader multilingual context.

1.1 CLASSIFICATION OF WEST AFRICAN LANGUAGE PHYLA

There seems to be no consensus on the number of African languages; Alexandre (1972) put the number at 800 while Grimes (2000) counted about 2000. Grenoble and Whaley (2006) declare: “30 percent of the world’s languages are spoken in Africa” (p. 36). The fuzziness of these numbers may be due to the grouping of languages in the same geographic area as dialects despite the fact that they may be linguistically different. Placements of nodes on genetic language trees are often a matter of contention (Kenneth Olson 2004).

Alexandre (1972) reports that beginning in 1910, a German scholar of African languages by the name of Carl Meinhof and his student Diedrich Westermann worked on eastern and western African languages. Westermann specialized in languages extending east from the Senegal River to the upper banks of the Nile River. From the 1950s the American Joseph H. Greenberg also began classifying African languages. He specialized in the structure of

languages and their relationship. His 16-language phyla classification of African languages in 1950 was based on linguistic and genetic principles. In 1963, Greenberg regrouped these into four phyla. He continued reviewing his sub-classification of African languages until the 1970s. His classifications are still one of the main references used by African linguists when developing new categories. Greenberg classified African languages into four major language phyla: Afro-Asiatic, Niger-Kordofanian, Nilo-Saharan and Khoisan. This classification has changed over the years. For example, Westermann had divided Mande into 10 separate languages, but an ethnographer, Maurice Delafosse (in Alexandre 1972), classified Mande or Mandingo as a single language. The languages of different ethnic groups were classified as dialects of one language. As an example, Efutu, Fante, Twi (Ghana) and Baule (Côte d'Ivoire) are now grouped together as dialects of the Akan language.

Language reference maps for target countries in this study (appendices 6 to 13) have been selected from *SIL Ethnologue*.¹¹ The terminology used by *SIL Ethnologue* is what is commonly found in the literature reviewed and its classification retains many of Greenberg's categories. *The West African Languages Map* (Appendix 3) shows the major indigenous languages (with at least one million speakers). Linkages between the various languages and where they are spoken can be briefly described as follows:

1. Afro-Asiatic is spoken in the northern part of the continent and extends into Asia.
2. Niger-Kordofanian is spoken in sub-Saharan Africa.
 - Niger-Congo, one of the two primary branches of the Niger-Kordofanian phylum, is the family to which the vast majority of West African languages belong. The Niger-Congo language phylum has 1,436 languages (Grimes 2000).
3. Nilo-Saharan is mostly found in the central and east-central parts of the continent,

¹¹ SIL Ethnologue is an encyclopedic catalogue of the world's known living languages. It is an active research project that publishes new editions every four years.

- with Songhai being the only Nilo-Saharan language spoken in West Africa.
4. Khoisan phyla are found in southern Africa.

Sociolinguists Grenoble and Whaley estimate that “at least half of the world’s 6,000-7,000 languages will disappear or be on the verge of disappearing by the next century” (2006: 1). Sommer (1992), a linguist at the University of Bayreuth, estimates 140 languages on the continent are either extinct or have fewer than 500 speakers. Grimes (2000) gives an approximation of 37 African languages in danger of extinction. Language shift is a major factor in language loss, and the official status bestowed on European languages in Africa could have led to a loss in official usage of most African languages with the languages of colonial administrations becoming the preferred mode of communication in most domains. In some cases, there is a shift from one indigenous language to another of wider communication. Since the criteria for determining language endangerment differ, UNESCO hopes researchers will contribute to an on-line *Interactive Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger of Disappearing* in order to update information on endangered and new languages. Currently, the atlas indicates 97 endangered African languages, of which 33 belong to the Niger-Congo phylum. Nigeria has the most seriously endangered and moribund languages in the sub-region.

Several organizations are working on reviving and revalorizing indigenous languages on the continent. These include the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa and the African Union. The work done by these and other institutions on the development of terminology, translation, interpretation and education in African languages will be discussed in the last chapter. For an understanding of the language mix in the West African sub-region and the progress of translation in that mix,

the next sub-section of this study examines the changes in language and related policies from the pre-colonial to post-colonial era.

1.2 FROM THE PRE-COLONIAL TO POST-COLONIAL ERA

Before the arrival of Western merchants, missionaries and philanthropists, written literature in African languages was already in existence. *African Language Literatures: an introduction to the literary history of sub-Saharan Africa* (Gérard 1981) supports this assertion with references to several translated documents. Gérard also refers to the language Ge'ez used in Ethiopian religious and didactic writings of the 13th century. By the 14th century, Ge'ez had become an esoteric language, and Old Amharic developed into the secular language used for praise songs in honour of Ethiopian rulers. Muslim conquests in Black Africa introduced the Arabic language and script to the continent. Rahman I. Doi (1979), a professor at Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg South Africa, writes that when early followers of the Prophet Muhammed were being persecuted in Mecca, the Prophet advised them to seek refuge elsewhere. It is interesting to note that their place of refuge in 615 C.E. was with al-Najashi, the black African Christian king of Abyssinia in Ethiopia. Literature written about the spread of Islam in West Africa often refers to the Dya'ogo dynasty's acceptance of Islam as early as 850 CE. In the 11th century, the Berber dynasty converted to Islam. With Arabic as the language of scholarly writings, Timbuktu was a highly acclaimed centre of Islam from the 14th to the 16th century. These references to Islam are made to show that European languages were not the only languages introduced to West Africa; Arabic was also added to the language mix and influenced the development of some indigenous languages. Gérard (1981) narrates that, beginning in the 18th century, the

Arabic script was used in the production of literature in non-Arabic languages. Some of these languages, including Fulani, Hausa and Wolof, are still spoken in parts of West Africa. The arrival of Portuguese sailing ships in West Africa in the 1470s was a strong indication of Europe's business interest in the continent. The ongoing trade resulted in multilingual exchanges between different African ethnic groups and Europeans.

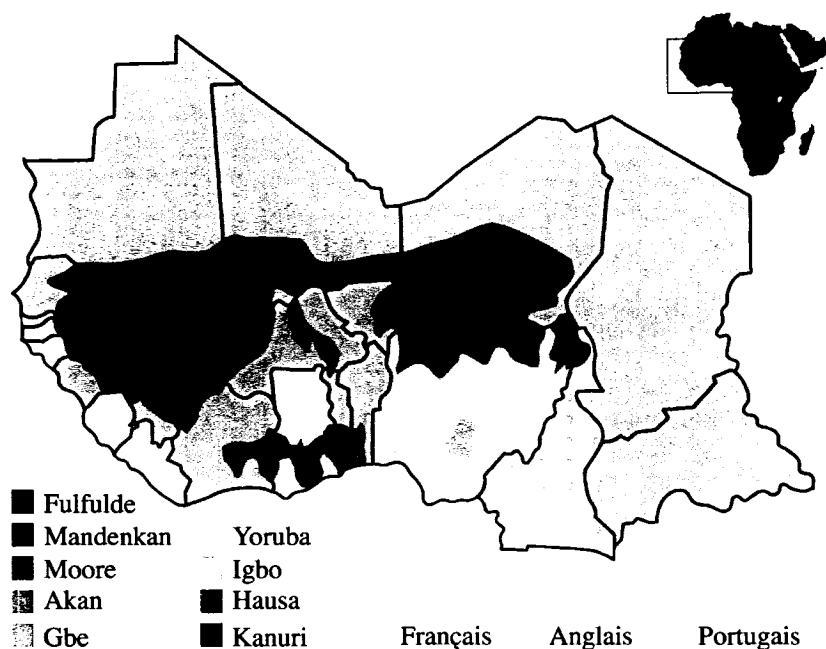
It was rare to find Europeans who learned African languages (Alexandre 1972). Slave traders' communication with African dealers was limited to interpretation by individuals (called language masters) who had picked up different languages from living at various ports. A few European traders stayed long enough at the ports to settle and marry Africans. They became Africanized and passed on some of their culture to their families, as can be seen from the presence of African family names such as d'Almeida, da Rocha, Olympio, Rawlings, Sutherlands, Vandepuije and Vanheim-Wallace along the West African coastlands. Commercial and land acquisition operations of the Europeans were later overshadowed by their missionary zeal. Proselytization, trade, ethnic migration and inter-ethnic and slavery-induced wars led to widespread displacement of language communities. Colonization introduced new languages to Africa; local languages continued to thrive and absorb some of the new languages. This sub-section continues with a brief description of the geographical mapping out of both indigenous and European languages in West Africa.

1.2.1 Languages across Political Boundaries

The partitioning of the continent by the colonizers and post-independence wars led to the formation of countries that can be classified into three official language groupings: English,

French and Portuguese. In some cases, colonization split ethnic groups and language communities across different countries. In general, each ethnic group in West Africa has its own language. Nigeria, with a total space of 923,768 sq km and a population of about 135,031,164 (July 2007 est.) has more than 250 ethnic groups that collectively use 510 languages. The Gambia, with about 1,688,359 people (July 2007 est.) living in a total space of 11,300 sq km, has nine ethnic groups and nine living languages. The following map shows some of the indigenous languages and the three official languages in use across the West African sub-region:

FIGURE 1: LANGUAGES IN WEST AFRICA



The map above is an approximation of Appendix 3: *Map of West African Languages* showing only languages with at least 5 million speakers in West Africa. This map clearly reflects the spread of indigenous and non-indigenous languages; the number of shared languages makes it important for language developers in the West African sub-region to work co-operatively on joint language projects and publishing. The spread of the languages

also supports the need to discuss language and cross-communication as a regional not national issue in this study.

German was also a colonial language in Togo and Cameroon. It was, however, not included in this map because it is not an official language in these countries. From Figure 1, it is clear that English, French and Portuguese are minority languages in West Africa but they have the highest official status in the sub-region and on the continent as a whole. The hegemonic power of these three European languages is traced in this study from the era of Christian missionaries, through colonization to that of 21st century African politicians and educationalists to achieve many objectives.

1.2.2 Missionary Activity

Early documentation of African languages in the literature included the compilations of grammars and dictionaries: Coptic in 1636, Nubian in 1638 and Kongo in 1652 (Ruhlen 1987). Until the arrival of missionaries, not much research was done in West- and Central-African languages in what was then “Negroland” or “Mid-Africa.” Colonization got missionaries deeply involved in the development of indigenous languages. Evangelization was an integral part of the “civilization” process. In the late 18th century, the following missions started intensive evangelization on the West African coast: the Basel Mission, the Bremen Evangelical Mission (aka the German Mission Society), the British Wesleyans (aka the Methodist Mission), the Catholic Church and the Church of England (aka the Anglican Church). These Christian groups played (and still play) a significant role in documenting religious texts and translating them into indigenous languages.

Christianity entered the sub-region by sea from the south while Islam arrived by land from across the Sahara in the north. Both Muslims and Christians made acquisition of literacy skills part of their religious "indoctrination". Most Muslim missionaries were not only religious leaders but also merchants or political figures. The Yoruba and Hausa Muslim missionaries doubled as merchants, spreading their religion to coastal countries such as Benin, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. For the most part, Christian missionaries engaged only in religious work, though a few provided medical care as well. Qur'anic and Christian schools were important tools in promoting literacy in various languages and, at the same time, the schools were important in imparting Christian and Islamic education to Africans.

In a bid to advance church growth, missionaries had to know the language of their future converts. This led to some of the earliest-known coding of African languages into written form. Some missionaries noted down the vocabulary and grammar of languages of the communities in which they worked. In 1854, Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle, a missionary with the Christian Missionary Society in Sierra Leone, compiled phrases and words, gathered from freed slaves, and published them in his *Polyglotta Africana or a Comparative Vocabulary of nearly 300 Words and Phrases in more than 100 Distinct African Languages* (Alexandre 1972). In western Nigeria, Crowther, an Anglican bishop, wrote one of the earliest transcriptions of Yoruba (Alexandre 1972). Diedrich Westermann was a German missionary and linguist who worked in Togo. In 1927, he published his *Practical Orthography of African Languages*, which later became known as the Westermann script. The development of local languages has been linked to the missionaries' attempts to convert the indigenous people to the Christian faith through their own language. They believed that

language is part of the innermost being of any man, that “the vernacular ... is the vessel in which the whole national life is contained and through which it finds expression” (Laitin 1992: 87). To widen their mission zones, they gave training in the “vehicular language” or *lingua franca*. Figure 1: *Languages in West Africa* and Appendix 3: *Map of West African Languages* show the many vehicular languages that the missionaries had at their disposal. Christian missionaries in the Gambia who were working in English switched to Wolof when they realized the Muslim missions were getting more converts through the use of Wolof in their teachings. In the Gambia, it was judged better to evangelize in Wolof the *lingua franca*, which extended beyond the borders of the Gambia, rather than Joola, which was spoken mostly within the borders.

Codification of African languages by missionaries was instrumental in developing the written form of West African languages that hitherto had only been spoken languages. In the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and in Togoland (now split into Togo and the Volta region of Ghana), the German-speaking Basel missionaries worked hard to bring both Christianity and language development to the eastern part of the sub-region. They built schools and documented the linguistic and phonetic development of the local languages. The Basel and Bremen missionaries codified Éwé and Akan languages. Akan is within the Kwa sub-family of the Niger-Congo language phyla. Éwé is in the Gbe cluster of the Niger-Congo phyla. Alexandre refers to some mission schools that were required to provide basic education in the language of colonial government in order to get financial aid. Regardless of this constraint, they concentrated on providing education and evangelization in the local dialects of the community.

Different Christian groups codified various languages, which were later considered dialects. For example, the *Guide to the Basel Mission's Ghana Archive* made mention of the Wesleyans compiling the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer in the Fante language with the assistance of native converts. It was during their transcription of Fante that the Wesleyans realized Fante had traits similar to those of the Twi language already transcribed by Basel missionaries. Basel missionaries codified the Akwapim Twi dialect and this dialect later became *the* language taught in schools in Akan communities of Ghana in the early 1960s. Other missionaries also produced religious documents, adult literacy primers and language-teaching materials in different local languages. Akwapim Twi, Akyem Twi and Fante are now classified as dialects of the Ghana branch of the Akan language family. Standardization of Akan was based on initial language studies of Wesleyan and Basel missionaries. Specific institutions of the Church's continued involvement in translation, language, educational and intercultural work in Ghana are Ghana Institute of Languages, Linguistics and Bible Translation, Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology. The roles these institutions play in the development of translation between indigenous and official languages and the related benefits of this development are discussed later on in Chapter Four. The colonial government emphasized the importance of their languages not only for their governance but also in the daily lives of the educated African. The next subsection reviews political decisions made on language by colonial governments.

1.2.3 Colonial Government

Colonial governments that came to Africa in the wake of the missionaries did not adopt all the pro-indigenous language policies used by Christian missions. European colonization of Africa started in the 1880s and came to an end between 1957 and 1965 (except for the apartheid regime in South Africa, which ended in the early 1990s). Colonization led to the imposition of Eurocentric language policies. Different language policies of the British, Germans and French led to a difference in the status of African languages in the colonies. In the French assimilation system, French was the only language taught in schools and used by administration and the law courts. In the 1930s, the only medium of instruction was French, even for private education. Alexandre (1972) notes that one of the few times when administrators were encouraged to learn local languages was when new recruits for the army in Senegal came from the Mossi and Lobi ethnic groups living beyond the Senegalese borders. These ethnic groups were not under French rule. They therefore had to be addressed in their local language, Bambara. Another reason the administrators needed a knowledge of the local language was to help them check the faithfulness of their interpreters for fear that they (the interpreters) might acquire too much influence over their people. The French discouraged the teaching of African languages for, in Alexandre's words, "the Frenchman was the standard for universal man ... his language was the language, France was offering the Africans everything that was best in culture ... the Culture" (Alexandre 1972: 79). The Académie française and the minister of public education ensured that the schools followed the stipulated language policy. "All other languages belong to the realm of folklore, dancing around the maypole, and riding hobbyhorses and are signs of disintegration of the French

Republic.” (Alexandre 1972:77). Thankfully, this perception no longer holds, but knowledge of French is still a marker of social prestige and opens up economic opportunities that make some parents agree and demand that their children be taught in French.

Unlike the French, British and German colonial governments used an indirect ruling system in which indigenous languages were used in schools. African languages were taught in private schools staffed by Christian organizations. Primary school instruction was in the local language or language of wider communication. The language of the colonizers was used by the central administration. Local administration, education and native courts were administered in African languages. It was at this time that Africans who had had some schooling served as interpreters. Just a small number of English-speaking staff was needed to oversee the indirect rule of local administration. Language training and administrative costs were thus reduced (Alexandre 1972; Laitin 1992). Before their defeat in World War I, the Germans were inclined to use German as the medium of instruction in their colonies in West Africa but less so in East Africa. Swahili was fast becoming the *lingua franca* in their colonies in East Africa. Laitin mentions that the British/German/Belgian policy smacked of “intrinsic superiority” while that of the French was “cultural imperialism”.

The official suppression of local languages during the colonial era played a minor role in political upheavals. For example, from 1946 to 1950, Éwés in Ghana and Togo wished to regroup and to form an *Éwéland*. Political propaganda in local languages (unknown to the French police) was sometimes used in secret codes in insurrectionist movements in Cameroon (Laitin 1992). Nevertheless, French and English served as a means of communication among political leaders across West Africa. Though not everyone had the

chance to go to school, those who learnt the language of the colonizers became the elites. English and/or French opened up secure jobs in the civil service. Ali Mazrui (1975), writer, sociologist and political scientist, quotes Mensah Sarbah, a politician of the Gold Coast, in describing the position of the colonial educated African:

For all practical purposes, definite public opinions about the acts of government and legislature emanate from the educated classes and whatever the untaught masses study and examine political questions which directly affect them, such as the Lands Bill of 1897 and the Town Councils Ordinance, they gain a great deal of their knowledge and ideas from what their privileged educated brethren tell them.
(1975: 93)

The description given above reflects how some Africans, the “privileged educated brethren”, rose through the ranks of society just by virtue of following the colonial European educational system in the languages of government. These languages are still indispensable to economic, scientific and technical development in modern-day Africa but from the quotation above, how the “untaught masses” received information implies subservience on their part. Maintenance of this language separation of society did not promote official translation of textbooks and government publications into different languages. Translation would have changed the “untaught masses” to “educated.” Banishing indigenous languages from the colonial educational system did not allow those languages to develop terminology related to new scientific and educational concepts. This led to the notion that African languages do not have what it takes to be used as languages of instruction and of governance. A brief look at the oscillating nature of Ghana’s language in education policy gives an insight into the difficulties African politicians, linguists and education professionals face in trying to create and maintain a modern efficient language culture.

1.2.3.1 History of Language in Education Policies

The splitting up of the sub-region under the rule of different colonial powers led to unequal development of the same language across borders. For example, Mandingo was written in the Gambia but not in Senegal or Sudan though all three countries shared the same Mandingo language community. Éwé was spoken in the Gold Coast, (now Ghana), in Togo and in Dahomey (now Benin) but was studied only in Gold Coast schools. A cultural effect of this mentioned in the literature is that Africans who had a French-style policy of education were more alienated from their African society than those who had British-style education. The literature mentioned high school graduates in French colonies being very proficient in the colonial language unlike their counterparts in the British colony, who were comparatively less proficient in English but far more versatile in their African languages. On both sides of the language divide, a social and cultural gap resulted from the separation of the language of schooling and authority from the language of home and community. The widening of this gap is one of the consequences Owu-Ewie (2006) foresees for Ghana with an English-only language of education policy.

At the 39th Annual Conference on African Linguistics held in 2006 at Somerville, Massachusetts, Charles Owu-Ewie presented a paper on “The Language Policy of Education in Ghana: a Critical Look at the English-only Language of Education”. He gave a historical overview of the irregular implementation of indigenous language policies from the post-independence period to the present. The varied nature of the implementation is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 1: DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY FROM THE PRE-COLONIAL ERA TO THE PRESENT (1925-2002)

Period	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year +
	-	-	-	-
	+	+	+	-
1925-1951	+	+	+	-
1951- 1955	+	-	-	-
1956- 1966	-	-	-	-
1967- 1969	+	-	-	-
1970- 1973	+	+	+	+
1974-2002 (Sept)	+	+	+	-
Present	-	-	-	-

(Owu-Ewie 2006: <http://www.lingref.com/cpp/acal/35/paper1298.pdf>)

+ A Ghanaian language (from the school's locality) was used as the medium of instruction.

- Ghanaian language was not used

He also reported that in August 2002, the government of Ghana approved the implementation of the current policy of English as the medium of instruction from primary Year One with one Ghanaian language as one of the compulsory subjects. This policy continues to be the source of debate among stakeholders in education and culture. Some Ghanaians argue that this new policy relegates our cultural heritage to the background and makes nonsense of Ghana's first president, Nkrumah's advocacy for the African personality. In addition, they argue that English can never become an L1 in this multilingual context. On the other side of the coin, others argue that it is best to have a neutral language in a context of inadequate logistics for implementation of multilingual and bilingual policies. Other reasons supporting the English-only policy are inadequate language teachers, inadequate teaching and learning materials and poor English skills leading to underachievement in school. Owu-Ewie finds these complaints to be invalid; he proposes "late-exit transitional bilingual education" as a solution ¹² (*op. cit.*). Currently, quite a significant number of

¹²Late-exit transitional bilingual education, according to the authors, allows for about forty percent (40%) use of the mother

national media reports on national high school examinations by the West African Examination Board show a discontent of policymakers about the low performance of public high school graduates in their national examinations, especially in English language. Their performance is often seen as a consequence of inconsistent implementation of language in education policies.

Some African linguists want their governments to provide a high level constitutional backing for indigenous languages, as has been done in the 1996 constitution of South Africa. It is hoped that such a high level political promotion of indigenous languages could lead to the empowerment of national language establishments to run publishing companies that will translate and publish textbooks and general reading materials in indigenous languages. This would resolve the problem of inadequate teaching and learning materials. Limited marketability of indigenous language materials is an important financial factor that dissuades most profit-oriented publishing houses from working in the indigenous language market. Since most African languages are shared by different countries, co-operative planning of language policies in the various countries would lead to better management of resources for indigenous language development through translations and publishing. A sense of African language identity could then be used as an economic advantage and channelled into language research.

tongue in teaching until the sixth year (Grade 6) of schooling. In the Ghanaian context, this means the mother tongue would be used as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 to Primary 4 while English is gradually introduced into the system as the medium of instruction from Primary 5 and finally becomes the medium of instruction from Primary 6 onwards. Owu-Ewie (Ibid.: 81).

1.2.4 The African political identity and indigenous languages

The formation of a collective African identity after colonization led to the promotion and use of indigenous languages. Continental pressures and colonization shaped West African political identity. Politics often dictates how a society thinks, in what language it thinks and conducts itself. Translation and interpretation thrive at a national level when national politics make multilingualism a governmental priority. This section looks at the development of the African identity, political influences on monolingual writings in official and indigenous languages.

From the 1950s, when African countries geared up for independence, African novels such as *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe (1958) reflected the upheaval that European culture had wrought in African society. *L'Enfant noir* by Camara Laye (1953), *L'Aventure ambiguë* by Cheikh Hamidou Kane (1961) and *Les Soleils des indépendances* by Ahmadou Kourouma (1967) all mirror the dualistic, ambivalent African that emerged from post-independence Africa. The wave of independence began with Ghana in 1957. In 1958, pan-Africanism, an Afrocentric political ideology and intergovernmental movement, was born. By 1965, West African countries had become independent politically from their colonial masters. However, they remained tied linguistically and economically to the former colonial powers. An example of the economic hold France has over her former colonies continues to be the French Treasury's control over the CFA franc monetary system. The existence of this control was confirmed by Jacqueline Irving (1999) of the Department of Information of the United Nations in her analysis of the impact of the European single currency, the euro, on

the African economies. She found that “the CFA franc used by 14 African countries will be pegged to the euro instead of the French franc—to which it has been tied since 1948—and that 65 per cent of these countries' external reserves will continue to be kept in an account held by the French Treasury” (*op. cit.*).¹³

To assert national identity, national and official languages had to be chosen. Africa did not have the language riots of India but African governments wavered over which language policies to implement. Various factors are considered when choosing a national language' such as acceptability of language choice, ability to integrate the elitist society with the rest of society, nationalistic tendencies and the need for international communication. There were arguments for the continual use of European languages as official languages and there were counter arguments that the negative colonial baggage of these languages far outweighed any usefulness—that the use of European languages reflected anti-African tendencies.

Some political leaders were resentful of languages that they saw as associated with oppression and/or colonialism. This resentment was still evident in post-apartheid South Africa, when the issue of Afrikaans as a national language was contemplated. Alamin Mazrui, an academic and political writer on Islamic and African Studies, calls for a “linguistic quest for liberation” that will, first of all, remove the oppressive nuances linked to the use of European languages in former colonies and then “promote African languages as one of the strategies for promoting greater intellectual and scientific independence from the West” (Mazrui 1998:65). To promote the use of African languages, some writers published their writings in their local languages. For example, Ngugi wa Thiong'o published in Kikuyu

¹³ Africa Recovery, United Nations Vol. 12, 4 (April 1999) (<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol12no4/euro.htm>)

and Chiek Alio Ndao in Wolof. The wave of “*back to our roots; I’m Black and proud*” sentiments led to the replacement of European names with African ones. Here are some examples: former President Joseph Désiré Mobutu of the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Belgian Congo or Zaire) changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga and the country Haute Volta (Upper Volta) became Burkina Faso. The importance of the language of names in relation to cultural and political sensitivities on the continent is still important. In 2005, the British Broadcasting Corporation reported on rising demands to change the name of Pretoria in South Africa:

Pretoria was named after a settler and folk hero from the Afrikaner group, which went on to create the apartheid system. It is now expected to take the name Tshwane, after a black tribal leader who ruled long before white colonisation. The name also means, “we are the same” in the Tswana language. Ironically, South Africa's last apartheid President FW de Klerk has argued that Pretoria remains a proud name because of its anti-colonial association - with the Dutch Boer struggle against British rule.

(“City names mark changing time” Thursday, 26 May, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4579905.stm>)

On the other hand, there are other African writers and politicians who do not view the inherited use of European languages as a sign of continued oppression. Mazrui (1975) quoted Léopold Senghor, former president of Senegal, the country that was considered to be the seat of French West Africa, as saying:

I am not claiming that French is superior to these other languages, either in beauty or in richness, but I do say that it is the supreme language of communication: a language of politeness and honesty: a language of beauty and clarity... (*Op. cit.*, 50)

Senghor was a prolific poet, who used his love for the French language to create and promote literature that rejected Western domination and at the same time emphasized the value of African culture. The dilemma most independent African nations find themselves in is echoed in the words of Uganda’s former president Milton Obote:

Uganda finds difficulties in identifying herself, and [...] Uganda has a serious language problem... our policy to teach more English could in the long run just develop more power in the hands of those who speak English, and better economic status for those who know English. ...

In spite of this reasoning, we find no alternative to English in Uganda's present position. ... We do also see that [those] 'amongst us in Uganda who speak English and have obtained important positions because of the power of English are liable to be regarded ... as perpetrators of colonialism and imperialism... I have to, like all my colleagues in Africa, think in a foreign language in order to express myself to Africans on problems affecting Africans ...

Why do we need an African language as a national language? ... for political purposes, for addressing public meetings, for talking in Councils, as a language for workers, for intellectual purposes, to cover every aspect of our lives intellectually, politically, economically? (ibid.: 210-212)

The new politically enlightened Africans that Obote describes used translation and interpretation as a way of bringing together their Europeanized self and African identity. The study continues with a discussion on translation in Africa as a continental phenomenon. The next section begins with the history of translation, goes on to name selected translation projects and literature and ends with the role of literary translations in the African society.

1.3 HISTORY OF TRANSLATION IN AFRICA

The literary theorist and linguist, Roman Jakobson (1966: 232-239) defines three types of translation as intralingual (rewording in the same language), interlingual (rewording in another language) and intersemiotic or transmutation (rewording in another code altogether). Some cross-communication activities in West Africa can be selected as examples of these translation types: the specialized language often used by chiefs, traditional priests, elders, and traditional medical specialists is a form of intralingual translation. This language is replete with proverbs and metaphors. It may not be clearly understood by the general public.

Whenever pronouncements are made with this proverbial language, an interpreter relays the message to the community in ordinary language. The interpretation given during the traditional societal meetings is unidirectional and intralingual. In most cases, speakers interpret themselves; they “do not leave out the first form of the language but must first use it before saying what it means” (Amechi Ihenacho (1979: 62). Interpretation serves to bridge two different classes of society, royal and ordinary. Interlingual interpretation occurs in situations such as marriage between families of different linguistic origin, land claim litigations and inter-group commercial endeavours. These classifications and definitions serve as background information for the discussion of the history of translation from pre-literate to modern Africa. The history of translation goes hand in hand with the history of literature. In the 1990s, a UNESCO project under the auspices of the International Federation of Translators set out to elaborate a general history of translation across the world. The project was *Les traducteurs dans l’histoire* by Delisle and Woodsworth (1995). However, this project makes little reference to Africa. The African gap is partially filled by such authors as Ihenacho (*The role of translation and interpretation in West Africa*, 1979), Charles Nama (*Historical, theoretical and terminological perspectives of translation in Africa*, 1993) and Paul Bandia (*Esquisse d’une histoire de la traduction en Afrique*, 2005 and *African European-Language Literature and Writing as Translation: Some Ethical Issues*, 2002) In subsequent sections of this study, a summary of the above-mentioned articles will serve as the foundation for a description of the history and development of translation and related language activities in Africa.

1.3.1 Oral Tradition (Interpretation)

Both Nama (1993) and Bandia (2005) stress that Africa's oral tradition and its associated translation and interpretation skills preceded the arrival of Europeans on the continent. Since knowledge was passed on orally from generation to generation, linguists (called "linguistes professionnels" by Bandia, "griots" by the Francophone and "okyeame" by the Akans) were the gifted orators, translators and interpreters. They were the multilingual spokesmen who eloquently transmitted their ruler's words to the general public and vice-versa. They interpreted the proverbial language of the rulers in accordance with strict oral styles and discourse protocol. The example of intralingual translation mentioned by Ihenacho in the previous section is an example of the discourse protocol that an "okyeame" follows. There are some specific appellations and epithets that can be used to emphasize the ruler's decisions. There are also specific phrases used at the beginning and end of the interpretation. These linguists did not necessarily translate accurately; they adapted and transmitted what they heard in a diplomatic fashion suitable for the occasion and audience. They were highly valued in the politics of ancient African empires such as those of Ghana, Mali and Zimbabwe. These linguists were interpreters; they also served as mediators between the ruling royal class and the rest of society. The linguists were also interpreters of drum language. Drums "spoke" with the tone and rhythm of the human voice and served as effective long-distance communication tools. Nowadays, the drums "speak" mainly during traditional performances.

Research conducted by Nama (1993) with interpreters who worked during the colonial period shows that the status of the “*okyeame*” and “*griots*” started to fall with the arrival of the Arabs and Europeans. The linguists gained temporary positions with the government after taking crash courses in European languages. The main criteria for their selection and placement were the level and proficiency in their native languages, their knowledge of communities and their ability to withstand long journeys. Gradually, however, they lost the privileged position they had enjoyed in pre-colonial times. Though there are still such traditional interpreters, they no longer play a key role in modern politics. They can still be seen in action during festivals (for example, interpreting drum language), cultural activities and official ceremonies in which the traditional ethnic rulers engage in dialogue with members of their communities. For example, the government of Ghana has a chief linguist who takes part in several national functions such as the opening of Parliament. Furthermore, according to Hasty (2005), an anthropology professor at Pacific Lutheran University in Washington, 21st century Ghanaian journalists have incorporated the interpretative function of the *okyeame*, adapting it to suit the objectives of modern journalism.

Bandia (2005) concludes that the arrival of European anthropologists, most of whom were also colonial administrators, led to “*la traduction anthropologique*”. Africans served as translators and interpreters. They were also sometimes called upon to perform oral narratives for the anthropologists to understand the nuances in oral discourse in their recording and transcriptions. These translator-performers could be said to be the predecessors of broadcasters in the media.

1.3.2 Translations (Written Texts)

The colonial era, from the 15th century to mid-20th century, marked the arrival of Europeans. Their arrival boosted commerce between Africans, Europeans and Arabs who had arrived on the continent earlier. Trade necessitated the use of translators and interpreters. According to the literature reviewed, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive and the first translations of African texts into European languages were in Portuguese. Bandia (2005) and Nama (1993) refer to some early Portuguese/Kimbundu translations that were published in a bilingual journal *O Echo de Angola (The Echo of Angola)* by a literary movement known as “Groupe de 1880.” Aside from dictionaries and lexicons produced in Angola, translations of religious texts helped spread indigenous languages and certain ideologies across the continent.

1.3.2.1 Religious Texts

Translated Christian texts, from European into African languages, were major tools in evangelization. As far back as the 15th century, “Doctrina Cristiana”, a manual for missionaries, was translated into Ge (alternate name Gbe), a language spoken by the Éwés in Benin (Bandia 2005). There is little additional reference to translations until the 19th century, when the return of freed slaves to the continent saw a rise in the publication of the Bible in different African languages. Another Christian text that gained popularity through translation and helped spread Christianity was *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, written by John Bunyan and published in 1678.

The story is an allegory about the journeys of a man called Christian, his family and friends from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. *The Portable Bunyan* by Isabel Hofmeyr

(2004) is pertinent to this study because it dwells on the translation and spread of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in British black colonies, especially those in Africa. She conducts a broad examination of the 80 translations of the book (then a substitute Bible for many readers) that were done in Africa “as part of a broader diasporic and imperial history in Protestant Atlantic” (*op. cit.*: 3). Regarding the notion of translatability of a text, she notes, “when books travel, they change shape. They are excised, summarized, abridged, and bowdlerized by the new intellectual formations into which they migrate” (*ibid.*). Translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress* went through these transformations as its readership base increased. She discusses mission translation, how it focuses attention on “evangelicalism” and how it was “shaped in a negotiation, agreement and contradiction ... less about the technologies of colonial domination than about opening up fields of manoeuvre ... [having] a transnational and transcontinental orientation” (*ibid.*: 19-23).

Mission translation is described as an activity fraught with tensions and paradoxes. There is the tension of the parent mission's ideologies that might come into conflict with the translator's, especially when the translator's perspectives change with time in the target culture. There was also the assumption that translated texts could cross time, space and culture to transfer the same form of belief and faith in a particular kind of God. So to make the translated texts more relevant to the target readers, mission translation came to depend on converts who could layer translations with their evangelical thinking. “Layering” is understood to mean new converts applying biblical messages to their native culture; they appropriate the Bible into their personal religious and ethnic contexts. As translators, these converts would put in cultural undertones that may not necessarily be found in translations by European missionaries. For example, Jesus was referred to as “Christ's medicine man”

and Charles Wesley was called an “ancestor in the tribe of Christ” (op.cit.: 108). There were also the contradictions involved in navigating through different languages, different dialects, orthographical choices, local politics, competing with different theological viewpoints etc. These are some of the challenges translators faced during the early days of Christian mission expansion.

Hofmeyr examines interpretive and reading strategies used by the missionaries. An example was the “Congo parable technique”, which involved the application of Christian exegesis to a folk story or de-Westernizing a foreign story by making it “native” (ibid.). Another strategy was to make the story more allegorical by cutting out the didactic discussions in the original texts. Hofmeyer found this strategy used by the Kongo and Kele Protestants (ibid.) One of the de-Westernization strategies used to make *The Pilgrim’s Progress* look familiar was the use of illustrations depicting the pilgrims as Africans in an African setting. A reading strategy that was employed was the dramatic reading in which the reader “became” a character in the text. Hofmeyr also recounts the journey of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* from England to the American South, to Jamaica and then to various parts of Africa. It is paradoxical that Bunyan became a popular figure in England as his book gained popularity in the black colonies. The portability of Bunyan’s work seemed to lie in what a reviewer of Hofmeyr’s book, Simon Lewis (2005) sees as the ability to adequately retain the “intended meanings” of translators and also that the text lent itself to the translation of key episodes which were put in physically portable abridged editions (H-Net.org on-line review). The allegorical form of the text also facilitated transcultural translations though they were not always compatible with the original.

Islam also played a significant role in the literary traditions of Africa. Doi (1979) examines the encounter between Islam and the Bantu civilization that led to the creation of the Swahili language spoken in East Africa. Beginning in 738 C.E., Muslim-Arab historians started recording the history of West Africa when commercial ties were established with Arab North Africa following the spread of literacy and Islam. Arabic was the primary language used in the spread of Islam on the continent. Doi tells us of the king of the Ghana Empire in 1068 having Muslim interpreters and Muslim royal officials. The Muslim ministers handled the king's correspondence with other rulers. Religious teachers also known as "malams", mastered the use of Arabic and several African languages and were involved in translations of the Qu'ran into Hausa, Yoruba and Ajani (Yoruba written in the Arabic alphabet).

1.4 TRANSLATION OF LITERATURE IN AFRICA

African literary texts are often prescribed for and read by students throughout the continent. Personal experience shows that pan-Africanism is nurtured in young Africans through the study of the same literary texts across the continent. Literature in English and French curriculum in both high school and university did not only include readings of well known classics by Shakespeare, Beckett, Molière, de Maupassant, Hugo but also literature written by Africans in Africa and those written by blacks in the Diaspora. These literary works were, more often than not, translations. This section of the study informs us of literary texts written originally in African indigenous languages, translations from and into these languages, some translation styles and the roles played by these translated literary texts.

To promote the “intellectualization” of indigenous languages, some African authors wrote in their mother tongue or produced self-translations.¹⁴ Okot p’Bitek (1960), a Ugandan poet, translated his poem, “Song of Lawino” from Luo, the original language in which it was written, into English. p’Bitek added a commentary to his English translation, noting the difficulties of translation that he encountered and giving a glossary of an analysis of Acoli expressions for which he had no equivalents in English. Both Nama (1993) and Bandia (2005) praise p’Bitek’s terminology skills and his approach to translation. The Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thio’ngo co-authored with Ngugi wa Mirii a play first written in Kikuyu, *Ngaahika Ndeenda (I Will Marry When I Want, 1977)*. After several years of writing international award-winning novels in English, Ngugi wa Thio’ngo reverted to writing only in Kikuyu and Kiswahili. He also translated some of his novels into Kikuyu (for example *Caitani Mutharaba-ini (Devil on the Cross 1980)*). Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, was a translator working from classical English into Swahili, a lingua franca in East Africa. He translated Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* and *Merchant of Venice*. L. H. Ofosu-Appiah, a lecturer in the Department of Classics, University of Ghana, translated classical Greek texts into Twi. He “discovered the possibilities of the Twi language as a medium for ... classical Greek poet[s]” (1960 p. 41) when he translated *Antigone* by Sophocles and Homer’s *Odyssey*.

1.4.1 Translation Styles

The practice of translations in Africa may not always fall into the moulds (for example equivalence, faithfulness, identity) often discussed by European and North American

¹⁴ Intellectualization of language is making a language capable of transmitting knowledge at all levels of education—from primary to university level.

translation theorists. No single theory covers the styles of translation employed in translations of African literary works. The style of mission translation and “re-allegorization” used in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* were discussed earlier on in this chapter. Michael Onwuemene (1999) describes translation styles that might be referred to as semantic translation, as “translexification” or transliteration. He defines transliteration in the African literary context as

the introduction of tropes and idioms from an African ethnic language into English through a connotation of equivalent words ... the act of thinking and conceiving in one’s first language but expressing the substance thought or conceived in one’s second language such that the second-language expressions used contain some salient linguistic and rhetorical implants from the first language (*op. cit.*: 1057-1058).

Kwaku Gyasi (1999), a professor of French language and literature at the University of Alabama (Huntsville), also discusses the unique literary styles of African writers. He analyzes the writing styles of African writers and affirms that they are actively engaged in the process of translation even as they write in their official languages. Ahmadou Kourouma, a writer from Côte d’Ivoire, describes this process as follows:

J’ai pensé en malinké et écrit en français en prenant une liberté que j’estime naturelle avec la langue classique. Qu’avais-je donc fait? Simplement donné libre cours à mon tempérament en distordant une langue classique trop rigide pour que ma pensée s’y meuve. J’ai donc traduit le malinké en français en cassant le français pour trouver et restituer le rythme africain.¹⁵

(http://www.refer.sn/ethiopiques/article.php3?id_article=988&artsuite=3)

The quotation above explains Kourouma’s translation strategy mentioned earlier on in this sub-section. Bandia discusses the ambivalent nature the African writer has in a presentation entitled “African European-Language Literature and Writing as Translation: Some Ethical

¹⁵ I thought in Malinke and taking liberties, which I presumed natural with a classical language, I wrote in French.

What had I done? I had simply given free rein to my temperament by distorting a classical language that was too rigid to convey my thoughts. So I translated Malinke into French by pulling apart the French language in order to find and recapture the African rhythm (My translation).

Issues” at the conference on Translations and Translation Theories East and West: Understanding Translations across Cultures” held in 2002 at the University College of London, U.K. He suggests:

the African writer's desire to reject the imposed/alien culture is confronted with a double and paradoxical impossibility: the impossibility of writing in the language of the oppressor with which he/she is intimately involved, as well as the impossibility of doing otherwise (i.e., of not writing in the language of the oppressor). This ambivalence is revealed in the deliberate and conscious explosive style characteristic of Euro-African writing; ...

(Bandia 2002: www.soas.ac.uk/Literatures/satranslations/Bandia.pdf)

Bandia (2002) continues to say translation is “a metaphor of transportation and relocation, a ‘carrying across’ physical, cultural or linguistic boundaries from a minority language culture into a hegemonic one.” There is hardly any translation from and into African indigenous languages but there are several African literary writings Bandia classifies as written in a hybrid language. Bandia refers to this language as the third code “by analogy with Homi Bhabha's notion of a ‘third space’.”

Some French novels written in this style are *Nouveaux contes d'Amadou Koumba* by the Senegalese writer Birago Diop (1961) and *Légendes africaines* by the Ivorian writer Bernard Dadié (1973). The first president of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor, was a poet who was also one of the initiators of the Negritude movement.¹⁶ His literary productions retained a lot of the syntagmatic structures and expressions of the source language. Some writers that followed similar writing styles in African English are Amos Tutuola (1952) from Nigeria

¹⁶ Biographie de Léopold Sédar Senghor: “La Négritude est la simple reconnaissance du fait d’être Noir, et l’acceptation de ce fait, de notre destin de Noir, de notre histoire et de notre culture.” (<http://www.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/dossiers/tetes/senghor/index.html>)

with his *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Flora Nwapa from Nigeria and Ama Ata Aidoo and Efua Sutherland from Ghana.

Other writers produced works that could be said to be “free translations” of oral African literary discourse into their official languages. One such person is the Guinean writer, D.T. Niane (1960), who wrote *Soundjata ou L'épopée mandingue*, a French translation of a Mandingo epic about Sundiata Keïta, an ancient Mali emperor. This became a recommended text in Francophone schools.

1.4.2 Role of African Literary Translations

Translation of literary texts is sometimes done for the love of sharing knowledge and sometimes this love has ulterior political, religious and racial motives. Translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress* mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter were often used not only for evangelization but also for political allegorization. This role is amply demonstrated by Hofmeyr (2004). She analyzes how John Bunyan's book was used extensively as a reference guide among South African elites in gender politics, in 1920s apartheid policies and in 1940s anti-apartheid struggles. She mentions references to Bunyan's book being used by some political activists and others who likened their struggles to that of Christian, the protagonist in the book. Portrayal of the hypocrisy of colonial rule was also made using the translation technique of “re-allegorization of the text by reconfiguring the ‘data’ of the story to render it amenable to local interpretation” (*op. cit.*: 130). The section of the text often used for this purpose was the one in which Diffidence, the wife of Giant Despair, counsels her husband to beat some prisoners. She again tells her husband to maintain a friendly disposition but, at the

same time, he should convince the prisoners to kill themselves. In the above-mentioned contexts, Hofmeyr believes translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress* played a considerable role in the education of the elite (the politicians and the highly educated Africans). Under the rule of the new apartheid government of 1948, "texts in translation could no longer be recommended for African language school syllabuses" (*ibid.*: 135). Hofmeyr sees this as the "pursuit of ethnic purity" that, with other reasons, encouraged the slow disappearance of Bunyan's book from circulation. This is not quite true since a look on Amazon.com (an on-line retailer of books and other items) shows that the book is still in circulation albeit in different formats, such as prayer books, pictorial and children versions. There is even a 72-minute DVD version released in 2006. Lewis also found references to Bunyan's book in American Baptist literature.

Hofmeyr identifies stereotyping and racialization as other roles of translation. The illustrations included in the early 1900 southern African translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress* reflected how much the translators had Africanized the text. Hofmeyr says illustrations in the Ndebele 1902 translation depicted racialization and stereotyping of spiritual authority and gender roles. There were illustrations where those who give Christian help; for example, those who help him out of the Slough of Despond, are dressed in Western-style attire and those who try to get him off "the path" are in extravagant African ritual attire. Christian is dressed in Western clothes as he leaves his village. There are "unclothed heathen", men sitting around a cooking pot with one of them shaking a stick in a threatening manner at him. The implication drawn here is that those pursuing Christianity are shown with a supposedly better appearance than those remaining in their "unchristian"

ways. These illustrations reflect a great change from the initial 1820s illustrations that showed the characters in an interior setting in English Puritan dress.

The translations can therefore be said to be a form of visual evangelization. Other forms of visual evangelization were photographic illustrations taken during dramatic performances of the text. The illustrations by C. J. Montague in the 1902 Ndebele edition reflect new martial and masculinity concepts within the society. The Ndebele society (now in present-day Zimbabwe) was a society of warriors that the British imperial power wanted to transform into labourers and converts. This, to Hofmeyr, was a way of putting in place new forms of masculinity. The Ndebele converts were also interested in new forms of masculinity since they were marginalized by their society. These warriors appreciated the determination and struggles of Christian, the protagonist. Instead of metallic shields and spears, the New Testament became their “shield” in new forms of masculinity and martial ideals developed around Protestantism.

Another role played by translations of African novels into European languages is they help increase access to critical studies of literature in African languages. Some African intellectuals believe European languages are the tools to expose the greatness of Africa to the wider world. So they favour producing original African literature in non-African languages or translating from African languages into non-African languages of wider international usage. Examples of such translations are presently taking place in Italy. *Utengan*, a Swahili novel written in 1980 by Said Ahmed Mohamed was translated into Italian, as *Separazione* by Flavio Aiello Traore in 2005. In Naples Eastern University, Traore is one of the students of Professor Bertoncini-Zúbková, who is opening up critical

studies in Swahili literature by translating Swahili literary works into Italian. Translations can thus be said to play an ambassadorial role in the cultural portrayal of the continent.

To conclude, this chapter reviewed the different aspects of the language situation of Africa in general and of West Africa in particular from the pre-colonial era to contemporary times. The fluctuating status of indigenous languages from their use as trade languages through languages of evangelization to languages of education was traced through the political history of West Africa. The rise in importance of European languages was also looked at. The co-existence of these languages led to an increase in translation and interpretation activities, especially in African literature. European languages used as official languages should no longer be considered colonial languages. These languages have been absorbed into the African cross-communication pool and translation activities are helping to cement the appropriation of these languages by Africans. Also discussed in this chapter were the political, religious and ambassadorial roles of translation into and from all languages used on the continent. This chapter has provided background information that tells the reader how far languages in Africa and their translations have come.

The next chapter continues the development of African cross-communication by studying current practices that lend economic empowerment to indigenous African languages and the impact of those practices on the social, political and economic welfare of the continent.

CHAPTER 2

CROSS-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Language issues have always been important in the political and socio-economic life of any community. Chapter One of this study presented a broad view of the historical development of languages on the African continent and various dimensions of translation and interpretation of African languages. Chapter Two continues with this discussion, centering on the interplay of languages, their translation and interpretation within a socio-economic framework of West Africa. West African languages are discussed as political, religious and cultural communication tools. Since most African countries are not economically strong enough to stand on their own, they join other countries to form regional and sub-regional groups that then coordinate economic, political and social management strategies to fit these groups within the dictates of global market forces. These groups, larger than individual countries, bring to the fore how much regional and official languages are important factors in coordinating projects that cross cultural and political divides. Paul Bandia, a professor in French Studies, translation and post-colonial African literature at Concordia University, Canada, has found “both the marginalized language culture and the postcolonial writer-translator in a context of globalization [are] characterized by a universalizing drive and a quest for homogeneity” (Bandia 2002 online). Chapter Two gives several contextual examples of how this drive for language homogeneity affects the formulation of parallel official language policies across West Africa. One effect of this homogenization is an

increase in power of the already powerful official languages to the detriment of indigenous languages. Globalization thus increases the quest for homogeneity in another direction—the political will to increase the official usage of indigenous languages in more areas. This “will” is discussed in the use of translation and interpretation in regional peacekeeping, cross-border management, language policies in Ghana’s judiciary and in education in Ghana and Nigeria. The discussion will be based on examples of on-the-ground language situations in West Africa with a focus on Ghana. Points of discussion are from sub-regional peacekeeping operations, cross-border management, and the 2004 Canadian Heritage strategic support activities. The Heritage series includes analyses of language and the economy. A key reference is Karim Karim’s paper entitled “Economic Dimensions of Minority and Foreign Language Use: an International Overview” published online.

The sequence of the chapter’s organization is as follows: Development of the continent is often retarded by wars and conflicts. Conflicts in Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and other countries in West Africa have often made worldwide media headlines. It is only after peace is established that policymakers can plan and join their fellow citizens to implement language policies. A nation at relative peace can then work on efficient economic language planning with the neighbours with whom it shares language projects. So the first section of this chapter begins with a report on regional peacekeeping in West Africa, where translation and interpretation were stated as being important peacekeeping strategies. Cross border management is also an aspect of security and peace management in the sub-region. A view of the multilingualism of a Ghanaian Immigration Service director is included in the discussion. The chapter then continues with a discussion on formal and informal education. Ways in which the promotion of translation and interpretation in literacy classes and as part

of evangelization is helping to empower Ghanaians from different walks of life are discussed. Ghanaians use their education in their everyday lives, as do most people with knowledge acquired. The knowledgeable ones become the law and policymakers who will continue the status quo or introduce new language policies. Some of these policies and their application to Ghanaian parliamentary and court proceedings and laws are discussed according to whether they promote translation and interpretation or not. Democratization and governance in multiple languages can be effective if the people involved are educated in how to use their language to their advantage. This empowerment has increased the use of indigenous languages in different aspects of social development in the sub-region. These aspects and the roles played by interpretation and translation in the West African book publishing industry, the Ghanaian media and religion are discussed at the end of the chapter.

2.1 TRANSLATION AND REGIONAL PEACEKEEPING

Some high-ranking African officials have called for an increase in translation-related activities on the continent. One such official was the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), who, in his 2000 report, called for the setting up of trilingual institutions (for countries that have English, French, or Portuguese as their main official language) to facilitate the movement of manpower within the region.¹⁷ A recommendation was also made in 2002 by the African Civil Society Organisations (CSO) that documents in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat

¹⁷ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional group of sixteen countries, was set up in 1975 to promote trade, co-operation and self-reliance in West Africa. Of the fifteen current member States, five have English as their official language, two have Portuguese and eight have French.

should be translated to as many major African languages as possible so that they reach a wide readership on the continent. Perhaps the translations should be as many as the translations of the Universal Declarations of Human Rights.¹⁸ The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has translations of this document in 24 West African languages out of a total of 100 African languages.¹⁹ Creoles (sometimes called Krio or Patois), pidgins, European official languages and even some dialects are included in the African collection. An example of a dialect that is included is Twi of the Akan language group. The active language research database Ethnologue.com has coded Twi as an individual language, one of the few dialects that have its own assigned International Organization for Standardization language code (ISO 639). The examples given above reflect the concerns of some policymakers to include African indigenous languages in official cross-language communication.

Leaders of regional organizations responsible for security and peacekeeping efforts have also indicated the vital role interpreters and translators play in their operations. For example, major problems in communication arose from Anglo- Franco- and Lusophone differences during crisis management of the prolonged Liberian war.²⁰ ECOWAS Monitoring Group in

18 The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a strategic framework. It was mandated by the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. Formal adoption of the document was in July 2000. Civil society organizations (CSO) work on a variety of issues, for example, human security, education, health, democracy, human rights, gender equality, and conflict transformation. They often furnish input for decision-making processes by regional economic and security institutions.

19 The document is available in languages from the following regions: Africa, Asia and Pacific, South and Central America, Europe, Middle East, North America and International (Esperanto, Edo, Interlingua). There are 21 listed sources of translations as well as unknown sources.

20 The Liberian crisis began in December 1989 after the first indigenous Head of State, Samuel Doe (who had come to power through a coup d'état) was executed by dissidents of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front. The anarchy after the execution resulted in a civil war that lingered for about 14 years.

Liberia (ECOMIL), deployed in August 2003, consisted of African nationals of various Member States with English, French and Portuguese as their official languages.²¹ The team of primary staff officers realized, after the planning and deployment stages, they needed interpreters and translators to publicize information in different languages, be it via radio, video, loudspeakers or in print. Lack of these language specialists was considered a major and costly challenge to the peacekeeping efforts by the head of the Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution Department at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana, Mark Malan. He wrote a report entitled “ECOWAS Peace Operations from 1990 to 2004: Synopsis of Lessons Noted and Key Recommendations.” In the following quotation from his report, Malan (2005) emphasizes how crucial the role of multilingual personnel, interpreters and translators are to peacekeeping operations:

ECOMIL did not possess the means to communicate with the Liberian people en masse. Public information capabilities are critically important (printed materials, radio, video, loudspeaker, etc.) when a force is trying to stabilize the situation. It was especially important during ECOMIL as the population was swamped with rumours, half-truths, and inaccurate statements on a daily basis. Interpreters and translators were not identified as requirements at the pledging conference. As a result, an emergency call went out for them. But none ever deployed to Liberia.

...

Challenges were handled, but not without costs. Requested interpreters and translators were never dispatched. Language training and/or making linguists available in sufficient numbers are parts of the solution. The combined/multinational training referred to above is another key part of the solution.

Some form of language training should be obligatory for earmarked elements of the ESF.²² Ideally, this should be undertaken at an early stage of training and at the lowest levels of training. Member States must take ownership of language training and use common local languages to communicate when necessary. Consideration should also be given to formulating a policy on the lowest permissible level of language mix in any ECOWAS mission. (For example a battalion should not mix languages; brigade HQ and up must have

21 ECOMIL was a multinational peacekeeping force with a full strength of about 3,500 troops from Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. In August 2003, it was deployed into Liberia by ECOWAS to help put an end to a protracted civil war from 1989. ECOMIL was integrated into the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) on 1 October 2003.

22 ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF)

bi/trilingual personnel.) A simpler approach would be to follow UN, NATO and EU practice - to stick to one official operational language.

(Online document 2005, p. 20, p. 40
<http://www.un.org/unowa/unowa/reports/ecowas110205.pdf>)

Malan's report does not say why translators and interpreters were not obtained. The quotation above, with repeated phrases on the non-availability of the language specialists required even when it was considered an emergency, seems to indicate the importance attached to the role of language specialists as peace strategists. To prevent future occurrence of similar mishaps, Malan recommends language training. This supports my view that education, especially state-organized systems of education, should be the foundation of a strong and effective cross-communication at all levels of a society. Clearly, translation and interpretation was not a priority for military training though there is a necessity to engage in peacekeeping operations with multilingual personnel, interpreters and translators—backed by relevant language policies and timely language planning. Translation of minority local languages is important not only in raising the profile of that language but also in giving help to maintain peace, which paves the way for the socio-economic development of its speakers.

Subsequent sections of this chapter look at, in the following order: some views on the economics of minority languages; some areas of regional integration that show the need for effective official intervention in multilingual training; identification of transfrontier languages that can be the focus of regional language development; formal educational language policies and the role translation and interpretation play in literacy programs.

2.2 ECONOMICS OF LANGUAGE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

In the global village that is Africa, the African's choice of language is based not only on national or cultural identity but also on the economic value speakers place on particular languages. A person who has learned another language is a more valuable form of human capital. The theoretical discussion of the economics of language in this chapter presents some of the dilemmas African leaders face in choosing official languages and formulating policies of languages in education.

The Strategic Research Branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage organized a colloquium in 2004 entitled "The Official Languages and the Economic Perspective: New Reality and New Thinking." Though presentations at this colloquium were oriented towards the language situation in Canada, theories that propounded on the economic impact of official languages versus the development of minority language regions are applicable to most multilingual contexts worldwide. A parallel can be drawn between Canada and West Africa in the arguments presented by Karim Karim, a professor at the School of Journalism, Carleton University.

Karim (2004) discusses language as an economic commodity in the article "Economic Dimensions of Minority and Foreign Language Use: an International Overview." He talks about language as a form of human capital and identifies economic aspects of language. He also refers to several international authorities on language economics, one of whom is François Grin, the chair of economics at the School of Translation and Interpretation at the

University of Geneva. Grin (1990) examines a survey of views on the economics of minority languages. Karim and Grin's arguments are relevant to Africa, where European languages, though in a minority position, have acquired a high economic and political status. An additional language is an asset in which one invests economic resources; namely, time, effort and money. Neil Ridler and Suzanne Pons-Ridler (1984), researchers in language economics of second languages, suggest that language can be viewed as a consumer good and as investment. In this model, choice of language is subject to the market economy. People and governments invest in domestic and international markets depending on cost-benefit analyses of which languages are in demand. A similar issue discussed by Karim (2004) is the impact of additional linguistic skills on an individual's income. In his on-line document, Karim quotes Ofelia Garcia and Ricardo Otheguy as saying "languages are forms of capital used to negotiate social goods and benefits." Individuals and language policymakers would abandon a minority language in favour of a majority language under the following circumstances:

sticking to one's minority language may imply the forgoing of earnings if minority language speakers are discriminated against; communication with majority language speakers may be seriously hampered; insisting on getting everything translated into the minority language also entails a money cost which will be borne indirectly by the individual. Thus a cost may theoretically be assigned to minority language use.

(Grin 1990 as quoted in Karim's on-line document
www.pch.gc.ca/offlangoff/perspectives/english/econo/part2a.htm)

Language as capital is an applicable theory to West African governments in their maintenance of colonial languages as official languages. It is also applicable to Africans living in their native countries who have decided to speak only English at home with their children. With the well-acknowledged benefits of global languages (such as English, French), it is an uphill task for most African governments to promote the development of

indigenous language use and, at the same time, efficiently cope with the cost of minority language use. This may explain why there is hardly any translation of literary texts between indigenous languages. After considerable research into African translations, Bandia (2002) states in his conference presentation entitled “African European-Language Literature and Writing as Translation: Some Ethical Issues” online that, “Even translations between African languages, which are rare, are often mediated by a European language (e.g. Christian religious texts). In other words, there is hardly any direct translation practice between African languages per se.”

The fluctuating nature of language policies in West Africa gives a clear example of how the international language market dictates the politics of language planning. Most African countries are not in good financial positions to invest more in education, let alone in indigenous language training. Grin is quoted in Karim (2004) as saying, “Just as money allows society to move beyond barter, a common language also facilitates transaction and lowers costs.” Language as a form of currency then implies that one language currency is what should be used by all. But West Africa does not have an officially identified lingua franca that is used in a wide geographical area, as Swahili is in East and Central Africa. On the other hand, as shown in Table 2, many national languages, some of which are transfrontier languages, are spoken in several countries.²³

23 ‘Transfrontier language’ is a term used by Ouedrago (2000) to mean language used for communication in bordering countries. Large immigrant populations in other countries that do not necessarily share frontiers/borders also speak some of these languages.

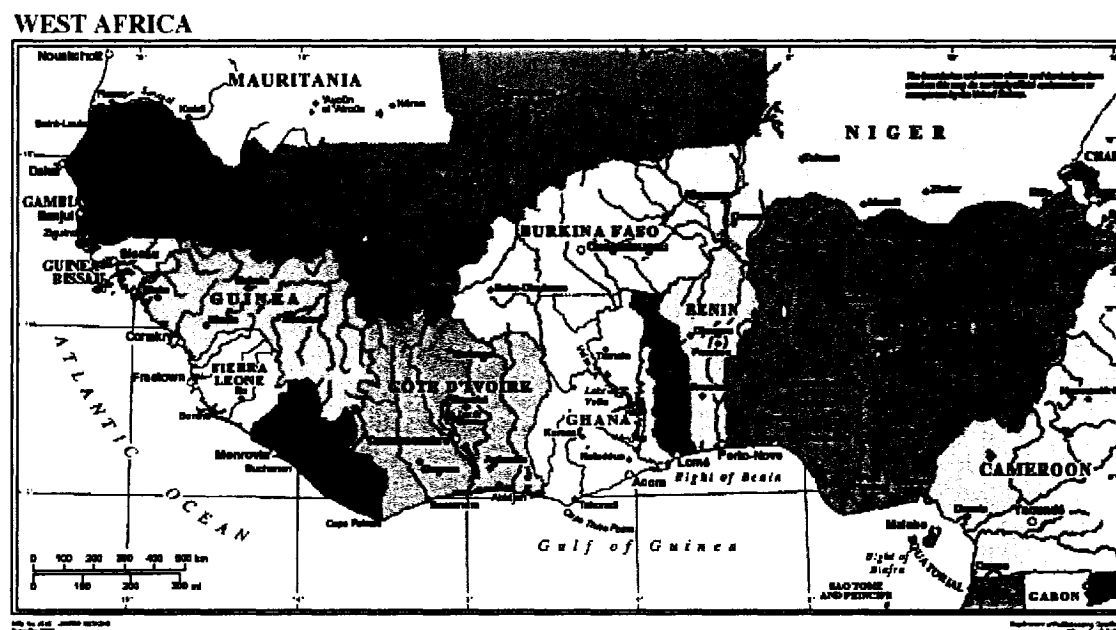
TABLE 2: TRANSFRONTIER LANGUAGES

Language	Countries
Akan/Twi	Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana,
Bambara/Jula	Benin*, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger*, Togo*
Dagaare	Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana
Dandi	Mali, Niger
Éwé	Benin, Ghana, Togo
Fulbe, Fulfulde/Pulaar	Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana*, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal
Gurancema	Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger
Hausa	Benin, Burkina Faso*, Côte d'Ivoire*, Ghana*, Guinea*, Mali, Niger, Nigeria
Kabiye	Benin, Togo
Lobiri	Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire
Moore	Burkina Faso, Benin*, Côte d'Ivoire*, Ghana*, Mali*, Niger*, Togo*
Senoufo	Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali
Soninke	The Gambia, Guinea, Senegal
Tamasheq	Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger (also spoken in Mauritania, Algeria, Libya, Chad)
Wolof	The Gambia, Guinea*, Senegal
Yoruba	Benin, Burkina Faso*, Côte d'Ivoire*, Ghana*, Niger, Nigeria, Mali*, Togo*

* West African countries in which a significantly sized immigrant population speaks the indicated language.

To show the proximity of the countries indicated in Table 2, Figure 2 is a political map of West Africa.

FIGURE 2: POLITICAL MAP OF WEST AFRICA



Figures 1 and 2 (in Chapter One) and Table 2: *Transfrontier Languages* (in this chapter) show that there are several languages that have wide coverage. Agreeing on a sub-regional indigenous lingua franca is certainly not an easy task for governments to fulfil on a continent with approximately 1500 languages across 57 countries.²⁴ In the case of West Africa, Grin's reference to "a common language" would have to change to common languages. As pointed out by Bamgböse (1991), in the face a multiplicity of languages, the concept of nationalism is what often prevails in the choice of African European languages—English, French and to a lesser extent, Portuguese.²⁵

²⁴ Statistics are from SIL International (2005)

²⁵ Bandia(2002) uses the terms African European languages, Euro-African writings to describe "indigenization of European language items by African writers." (www.soas.ac.uk/Literatures/satranslations/Bandia.pdf)

Mathieu Ouedrago of the University of Ouagadougou, who is now Minister of Basic Education and Mass Literacy in Burkina Faso, examines the use of African languages for development in selected West African countries. Ouedrago (2000) finds no coordination of language policies by governments of transfrontier languages: "... the fact of being used across several borders has not given them any particular status" (op. cit.: 14). This statement from a study he conducted on language policies and planning in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Language policies were examined within the framework of economic and political integration. In line with globalization, formation of sub-regional organizations has led to the harmonization of some intergovernmental policies, albeit with ongoing management and national differences. For example, to help create a borderless West Africa, ECOWAS has a Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment. Article 27 of the treaty that set up the organization confirms a long-term goal on the automatic acquisition of community citizenship for all Member States' nationals. Another example is the announcement made by the Ghanaian Minister of Finance in his 2006 budget statement that a common currency for the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), the Eco, would come into effect in December 2009.²⁶ A borderless West Africa would have a lot more languages to contend with, not just transfrontier ones. In 2005, the Controller of the Ghana Immigration Service realized multilingualism was a serious challenge to the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movements of Persons, Goods and Services. To facilitate trade and border management, the Controller of Anglophone Ghana recommended an amendment to the Ghanaian language policy—making French a compulsory subject at the

²⁶ WAMZ has five participating countries: The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Among other financial sector integration strategies, a WAMZ Customs Union by 2007 will be created.

secondary school level. For immigration service purposes, acquiring a second language has thus become an economic necessity. The Controller's recommendation places the responsibility of acquiring additional language skills on the Ministry of Education. The acquisition of these skills as an economic incentive is discussed in the next sub-section of the chapter as some of the reasons for the different and frequent changes in language in education policies in Ghana and Nigeria.

A solution that is often proposed by ACALAN and African language groups in Africa is regionalizing language projects. After all, as Table 2: *Transfrontier Languages* showed, some indigenous languages are spoken in several countries. Therefore, the partnering of countries with similar minority languages could be an economically efficient way of streamlining literacy programs, maximizing efficient use of resources and also minimizing duplication of language projects. An example of such collaboration has begun in Cameroon. In 1999, Maurice Tadadjeu, a Cameroon sociolinguist, set up the Basic Standardization of all African Languages (BASAL). A long-term goal of the project is to expand it continent-wide: "to see every language in Cameroon and Africa with an alphabet, primers and a dictionary in the next couple [of] decades" (on-line SIL International 2000 Report). Another regional project spearheaded by Tadadjeu is the Operational Research Project for the Teaching of Cameroonian Languages (PROPELCA). Trudell (2004) counts 30 languages in use within the PROPELCA mother-tongue education program. It is admirable to see these ambitious language projects, largely based on volunteers and mentors, take off in a country with two official languages—French and English—a brief German colonization history, and 286 indigenous languages including four extinct and three without mother-tongue speakers

(Ethnologue 2005).²⁷ However, no information on the projects after 2004 was found. PROPELCA and BASAL may have suffered the same fate as other African language projects that have become non-sustainable.

The next section of this chapter takes a look at language in education policies, how these policies reflect the development of indigenous languages and whether official translation and interpretation result from these policies.

2.3 LANGUAGE IN FORMAL EDUCATION POLICIES

Five English-only official language countries in West Africa train their youth to follow a similar curriculum and examination organized by the West African Examinations Board. A sense of sub-regional integration and pan-Africanism (on a sub-regional level) is created. But the indigenous language curriculum differs from country to country. In Ghana at the moment, core languages that are examinable at the Basic Certificate Education Examination (BECE) level are English and one out of ten Ghanaian languages. At the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (SSCE) level, English is the only examinable compulsory subject; Ghanaian languages are optional. This is in contrast to the Nigerian SSCE: in addition to English, a Nigerian language is compulsory.²⁸ Language policies such as those of the federal

27 Maurice Tadadjeu won the Linguapax 2005 award for his work with BASAL and PROPELCA. Linguapax Awards are given annually to linguists, researchers, professors and members of the civil service for their outstanding work in the fields of linguistic diversity and/or multilingual education. The Linguapax Institute is a non-governmental organization headquartered in Barcelona. It was founded in 2001 and follows up on UNESCO meetings in promoting and protecting language diversity worldwide.

28 The West African Examination Council organizes these examinations in The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra

states of Nigeria are geared towards integration across linguistic barriers within the country.

The 1981 Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE), as published in the *Fafunwa Foundation Internet Journal on Education*, includes the following details:

- (a) in primary School, which lasts six years, each child must study two languages, namely:
 - (i) his mother-tongue (if available for study) or an indigenous language of wider communication in his area of domicile, and
 - (ii) English language;
- (b) in Junior Secondary School (JSS), which is of three years' duration, the child must study three languages, viz:
 - (i) his mother-tongue (if available for study) or an indigenous language of wider communication in his area of domicile,
 - (ii) English language, and
 - (iii) any one of the three major indigenous language in the country, namely, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba, provided the language chosen is distinct from the child's mother-tongue;
- (c) in Senior Secondary School (SSS), which also lasts three years, the child must study two languages, viz:
 - (i) an indigenous language, and
 - (ii) English language.

(On-line report by Oladele Awobuluyi in *Fafunwa Foundation Internet Journal of Education* <http://fafunwafoundation.tripod.com/fafunwafoundation/id8.html>)

Students in Nigeria finish secondary school with proficiency in at least three Nigerian languages: their mother tongue, another major indigenous language and English. French and Arabic remain optional courses at the secondary level. Students have to study one of three major languages and their mother tongue. When Nigeria and Ghana are compared in terms of these basic language policies, one could say that Nigeria is more advanced in promoting indigenous languages in education.

Leone. The BECE is taken at the final year of a three-year Junior Secondary school education, similar to grades seven to nine in the Canadian system. The examination is for entry into senior secondary school and for certification of the nine-year compulsory basic education. SSCE is post-BECE and also lasts three years (similar to grades 10 to 12 in Canada). The examination is for certification and entry into tertiary institutions.

With swings between different policies on language of education, the Ghanaian Minister of Education in 2002 implemented an “English-only policy.” English and Mathematics are the only subjects used in Performance Monitoring Tests. The number of teaching periods at the lower primary level is 10 for English and eight for Ghanaian languages. At the upper primary level, that number has been reduced to six for Ghanaian languages. The economic functionality of the respective languages might explain this allocation of more subject teaching periods per week at the primary level to English than to Ghanaian languages.

Unlike the Ghanaian situation where mother-tongue education has been indicated in language in education policies, Côte d’Ivoire primary schools have always had a French-only policy except for two projects currently running on teaching Ivorian languages in some selected primary schools. Leclerc (2006) notes that, in 1996, a non-governmental organization, Savane Développement, set up the Centre scolaire intégré du Niéné. The school is located in Kolia in northeast Côte d’Ivoire. Preschool to primary one education is given in either Senoufo or Malinke. Subsequent grades are taught in French. After the program was evaluated in 2001, ten other languages were included to be taught at the experimental school. Several processes for developing indigenous languages are already in place. For example, the orthography of Dioula, Baoulé, Bété and Senoufo has been standardized, the Centre d’études de recherches audio-visuelles provided linguistic atlases and the University of Abidjan teaches four major Ivorian languages. In spite of these languages promotion strategies, Leclerc (2006) identifies a lack of political will to implement of mother-tongue education. He believes promoting mother-tongue education does not mean a displacement of French. Rather, it will increase literacy and schooling for the linguistically marginalized non-French-speaking members of the society. Africans

continue to strive for their use of indigenous language to be officially and internationally recognized because “the value of languages is manifested not only as economic resources but also as repositories of literature and culture, instruments of socio-political integration, and indicators of socio-psychological identity” (Karim 2004).²⁹

The diversity of African languages is no longer seen as a problem but rather as a positive tool in socio-economic development. To this end, the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) aims to give as much economic power as possible to African languages. ACALAN believes that language is an important integration factor in solving and preventing borderland disputes. On a national level, ACALAN negotiates with education experts to include some local languages in their educational systems, as was done in 2001 with a delegation from Côte d’Ivoire to discuss the introduction of national languages into the Ivorian literacy and agro-pastoral training system. According to some comments made in on-line language forums, the Ivorian initiative is viewed as a positive move for a country whose history of French language policies had limited the development of national languages. In 2002 at Abuja, Nigeria, ECOWAS Education Experts met on the ACALAN platform to discuss promoting the use of African languages in intergovernmental organizations. I find these to be great ideas that are sometimes not fully implemented. In terms of budgetary allocations, government funding places a lower economic value on local languages than on foreign official languages. The reduced mother-tongue teaching hours mentioned earlier maybe a result of such budgetary cuts. The Ghanaian government, with funding from NEPAD and other agencies, prioritizes other projects to enhance nutrition for school

²⁹ This is from Ofelia Garcia and Ricardo Otheguy 1994 as quoted by Karim (2004).

Garcia and Otheguy promote bilingual/bicultural education in the USA.

children as well as improve access, retention and quality of education. Thus, unlike Canada where considerable federal resources are pumped into French-English bilingualism and multilingualism, Ghana and most sub-Saharan African countries accept multilingualism as a way of life but not as a development priority.

Voluntary, religious, international and private organizations, however, play an important role in translating and encouraging the production of documents in local languages. Such organizations support ministries of education in the formal school system. In addition, these organizations support the development of societies by promoting indigenous language use in literacy work as part of non-formal education.

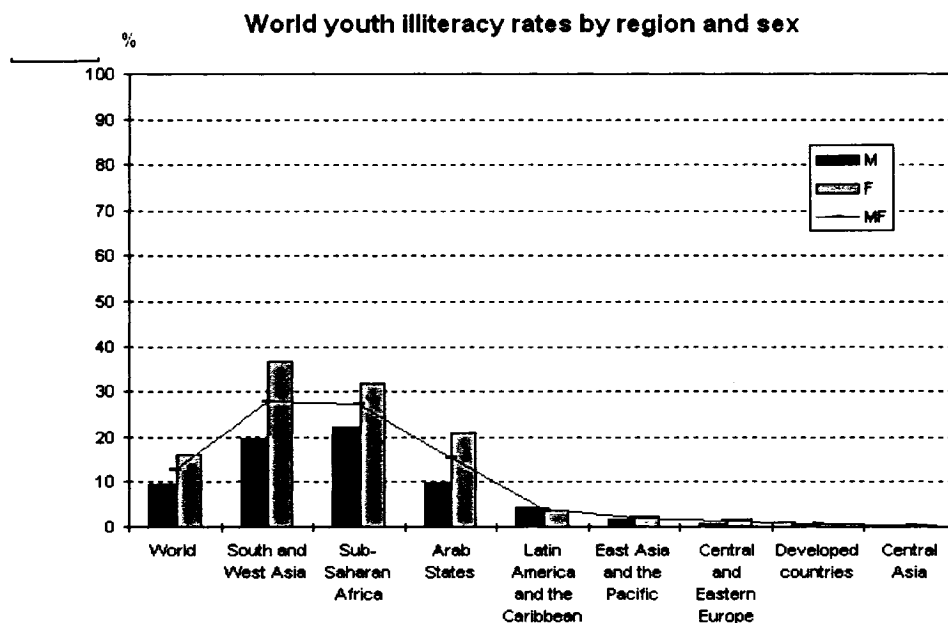
2.4 LANGUAGES, LITERACY AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

A formal education system can be defined as a structured system that allows students, a set number of years to complete a specified level of education and issues formal certifications to signal the end of a particular level of education— namely, first (primary), secondary and tertiary (postsecondary/university) levels. The curriculum, teaching and learning materials are determined and approved by a centralized national board of education. Non-formal education is a system of education that is neither mandatory nor structured as a formal education system is.³⁰ Nor are curriculum, teaching and learning materials for non-formal

³⁰ UNESCO: “Non-formal education constitutes learning opportunities for the vast majority of children, youth and adults in developing countries who are not reached by the formal education system. Non-formal Education may take place both within and outside educational institutions, and may cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational

education implemented on a large scale as they are in a formalized school board system. Non-formal education is often used to refer to functional literacy programs that are tailored to suit particular circumstances, needs and resources of groups of people for their specific literacy needs. In Ghana, the Non-Formal Education division of the Ministry of Education is in charge of Functional Literacy programs in the country. The Institute of Adult Education of the University of Ghana is closely involved in the design, organization, and implementation of the programs. Other institutions such as the Bureau of Ghana Languages and the Ghana Institute of Literacy and Bible Translation are also fully involved in literacy programs. These two institutions are presented in more detail in Chapter Four.

The world illiteracy rates in Figure 3 below depict a comparatively high level for Africa.

FIGURE 3: UNESCO GENDER BREAKDOWN OF ILLITERACY RATES³¹

The UNESCO Literacy Portal states “Literacy is an indispensable means for effective social and economic participation, contributing to human development and poverty reduction.” The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) defines literacy rate as “the number of literate persons in a given age group, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. The adult literacy rate measures literacy in persons aged 15 years and above and the youth literacy rate in persons aged between 15 and 24 years” (UIS- Glossary).

Grenoble and Whaley (2006) find that the term “literacy” is often used to refer to reading and writing skills, usually in the official European languages. But ongoing studies show that it is wrong to call anyone, especially those from multilingual environments, illiterate just because of an inability to communicate in the official European language. But in its data

31 Breakdown is by world region September 2006 (http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5020_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC)

collection of literacy rates in March 2004, UIS compiled data according to varying definitions of literacy. The following definitions selected from UIS 2004 literacy rate data explanatory notes shows that the terms “literacy” and “illiteracy” do not have the same references in terms of levels of and language(s) of proficiency:

A person is considered literate if he is able to read and write a simple sentence in his language. A person is considered illiterate if he/she has learned to read and write but cannot write his/her own name. - *Burkina Faso 1996 National Census*

Literates are the persons who declare that they can read and write in either one national language or one foreign language. - *Cameroon 2000/2001 'Deuxieme Enquête Auprès des Ménages - ECAM II'*

Literacy is the aptitude of people aged 15+ to read and write in French or in English. - *Central African Republic MICS 2000*

[A] Literate is any person with or without schooling who is able to read and write a composition concerning everyday life, that is, who is able to read and write a letter, irrespective of a language or scripture he or she reads or writes in. - *Cyprus 2001 Census*

[A] Literate is a person who can read and write; illiterate is a person who can only read or who cannot read and write- *Pakistan 1998 Census*

A person who can read a newspaper and write a simple letter in any language is treated as literate. - *Paraguay 2001 'Enquête Intégrée Ménage 2000/1 - Direction Générale de la Statistique des Enquêtes et Recensements'*³²

(UNESCO Institute for Statistics *Literacy and Non Formal Education Section Youth (15-24) and Adult (15+) Literacy Rates March 2004*)

The research unit in multiple literacies at the University of Ottawa’s Faculty of Education discusses “family and multiple literacies” and states on their Web site that the “multiple literacies perspective presents an alternative that allows us to contextualize the way the world [is] read and interpreted from the standpoint of minority communities, within national/Canadian and international societies.”³³

32 UIS Literacy Rates by Country and by Gender for 2000-2004

(http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/html/Exceltables/education/View_Table_Literacy_04March04.xls)

33 The term “literacies” has multiple meanings and goes beyond reading and writing. There are several types of literacy that can be

References are being made here to different definitions of literacy to show that literacy entails more than proficiency in particular language and it is possible to involve all members of the West African society in developmental work irrespective of their ability to read and write in the official non-indigenous languages. UNESCO and several national adult education departments speak of “functional literacy”; Grenoble and Whaley (2006) discuss different types of literacy—local, transitional and functional literacies. This specialization in literacy shows that the term “literate” has acquired a broader meaning over time. All individuals are literate in different aspects of their lives and literacy in one’s mother tongue is now applauded.

As mentioned earlier, the choice of a language as a target or source language in the translation process automatically raises the value of the language in question. Learning a new language is supposed to create additional income for the learner. How does that relate to someone who becomes literate in his or her own mother tongue? It may not be possible to place an income value on the benefits but the cost-benefit can be calculated in the sense of self-worth it develops in the learners. Literacy classes have a direct impact on community development since the neo-literates can access developmental information written in their own language and even in other languages. Some graduates of these programs have moved on to formal education—to high school, teacher training, polytechnic and university.

2.4.1 Mother-tongue literacy

Literacy in the mother tongue is an important part of language education and the basis of translation from African languages to official languages and vice-versa.³⁴ The role of literacy as a developmental tool in the modern world was emphasized in March 1990 at the “World Conference on Education for All” in Jomtien, Thailand. The basic aim of the conference was to discuss ways of universalizing primary education, broadening the scope and accessibility to education, and drastically reducing illiteracy levels by the end of the decade. Christian missions on the West African coast have couched the message of evangelization in literacy activities. Bible translation organizations have a similar objective: to develop local languages with the ultimate aim of propagating the Christian message.

Mother-tongue literacy programs in Ghana are categorized into different levels: an English class, a local language class, business accounting and other functional skills training. For example, in a functional literacy class, participants might not be able to read everything written in English in a brochure on how to use of fertilizers and herbicides but, after receiving explanations in their own language, they learn how to use these chemicals, figure out measurements, symbols of poison and from whom to seek assistance. Literacy programs cover a wide range of topics including health (communicable diseases, fertility and population growth, dietary needs, vaccinations, etc.), environmental development (for example, waste management, re-forestation, and the use of agricultural materials), civic responsibilities (as in voting, and constitutional rights and responsibilities), appreciation of

³⁴ In the document, Education in a multilingual world: UNESCO education position paper (2003), primary education in the child’s mother tongue or dominant language is recommended by UNESCO for all Member States. (unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001297/129728e.pdf)

technology, and cultural issues (e.g. the impact of cultural practices such as story telling). The Commonwealth of Learning indicated that, “in Ghana’s Northern Region, over 50,000 people who listen to functional literacy programmes have changed their attitudes towards family planning, breast-feeding, teenage pregnancy and environmental preservation.”³⁵ One major long-term goal for the Ghana National Literacy and Functional Skills program and the Non-Formal Division of the Ministry of Education is the eradication of illiteracy by 2011. The first phase of the program from 1991 to 2000 saw a reduction in national levels of illiteracy from 69% to 52%. SIL International-directed literacy programs have led to an increase in participation in formal community organizations. SIL International, as explained in Chapter One of this study, is a research organization that is very involved in literacy, translation and indigenous language research activities. The organization reported that four years after the inception of its literacy programs for the Vagla, in Northern Ghana, the Vagla language community had equal representation in their District Council Committee. Another beneficial spin-off of literacy programs is the language industry that develops: neo-literates becoming functional literacy teachers, supervisors and participants in the technical development of their language; an increasing need for translators, terminologists and writers of literacy teaching and learning materials, and field language research workers in the language development process. Using translated texts to promote literacy and using indigenous languages as a medium of instruction gives people, who are not proficient in their country’s official languages, confidence in finding solutions to life’s hurdles. Extensive literacy work and the translation and interpretation of indigenous language materials are a

35 The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education, knowledge, resources and technologies. (<http://www.id21.org/education/E4rs1g1.html> <http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/3115>)

part of evangelization by Christian organizations. Literacy programs run by these organizations will be discussed in detail in the next sub-section.

2.4.2 Literacy, Translation and Religion

Literacy as a form of non-formal education has benefited greatly from translation and terminology work done by religious organizations. There are a multitude of religions practised in Africa. Ghana is a secular state but majority of its citizens are classified as Christians. The second largest religion in the country is Islam followed by African Traditional Religion. In the reviewed literature, a lot of documentation was found on the impact that Christian groups have on terminology, interpretation, translation and significant promotion of indigenous languages. For some Ghanaian minority languages, Bible translations have helped slow down and/or reverse the trend of language shift from minority languages to languages of wider communication. This sub-section will focus on current practices of Christian institutions in the promoting of indigenous languages in non-formal education.

The Bible Society of Ghana and its affiliated committees such as the Scripture-in-Use Committee are actively involved in promoting adult literacy. As part of religious outreach, the Bible and Church documents are translated into local languages. Most of the major languages had their writing systems developed and codified by the early missionaries and African linguists. Some Bibles, already in major local languages, are being re-translated into minor languages. Presently, the focus of Bible translation in the western part of the country is on minor languages such as Esahie (spoken by the Sehwis) and Ahanta spoken by the

Ahantas in a Twi-speaking majority area.³⁶ Neither Esahie nor Ahanta is included in the nine government-sponsored languages. A 2002 survey conducted by SIL International revealed that Twi is used more in formal situations while Esahie is often used in informal situations. Wycliffe Bible Translators, a major sponsor of Ghanaian minority language literacy projects, reports in its 2005 newsletter on the near completion of the full New Testament in Esahie, Ahanta and other minority languages. From the Société biblique de la Côte d'Ivoire, we learn that translation of the New Testament into an indigenous language can take up to five years to be completed and that of the Old Testament can take up to seven years.

Religious worship is also one domain in which interpretation serves as an effective empowerment tool. From personal observation, churches, especially those in urban centres, have so expanded that some Sunday services are conducted in multiple languages. In the mosques in Ghana, the Qur'an is read in Arabic. Then the sermon and subsequent discussions are conducted in English and/or the languages of the community. Consecutive interpretation is given in as many languages as the diversity of the congregation requires. Membership in organized Christianity has grown so much that, as part of organizational and spatial management, some urban churches offer services at different times in different languages: for example, at 7 a.m. in English, at 11 a.m. in Twi and Ga, and at 1:30 p.m. in Éwé. As part of their in-house education programs, some churches offer workshops to members on civic education, adult literacy, public health, food preparation, home management and small-scale business planning.

³⁶ Ghana's 500,000 Sehwi people inhabit an area in the west of the country in a region rich in natural resources. Their language is called Esahie and it is similar to Sanvi, spoken across the border in Côte d'Ivoire. The 142,000 Ahantas live in the southwest of Ghana. Statistics from SIL 2002 survey.

Interpretation builds on the oral traditions of the African continent. A translation and interpretation religious project motivated by the traditional orality of the African culture is Faith Comes by Healing (FCBH). It is a project run by national Bible societies and is sponsored by the United Bible Society. In addition to producing written translations of the Bible in both major and minor communal languages, FCBH dramatizes parts or even the entire Bible on tape. In Ghana, the Ga audio New Testament was launched in July 2000 for the Ga ethnic group, numbering 200,000. The Bible Society of Egypt also announced, in August 2000, the release date for a complete Arabic Van Dyck Bible made up of 22 tapes. The translated scriptures are recorded with different voices for the different characters in the text. This may be classified as a dramatized form of sight translation. The listeners can play the tapes in portable tape recorders that run on either electricity or dry cell batteries. Manually operated audiocassette players are also available. Usually, listening to the tapes is a group activity, which consolidates a communal spirit. This dramatization meets the needs of all, especially participants who are orally fluent in their language but are not yet ready to read the newly translated Scriptures.

Since religion and faith is an integral part of most Ghanaians' lives, developing their confidence in their language enhances their overall sense of identity. Literacy groups organized by religious groups use the religious network to not only gain new converts but also to more motivate the majority of Ghanaians who have not had formal education or who are school drop-outs, to engage in socio-economic development projects. Projects are enriched with ideas from neo-literates who actively participate in debates and/or help in

project management. The publishing industry could benefit from an increase in clientele when literacy gives more people access to the written word. The next section takes a brief look at some aspects of publishing in local languages and by Africans.

2.5 LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION IN THE BOOK INDUSTRY

Literary work production is a very important way of not only ensuring the longevity of minor languages and local publishing but also of raising their economic status. In his on-line report, Ouedrago (2000) reiterates that “economic imperialism and linguistic imperialism appear thus as two sides of the same coin ... language development alongside global development.” He calls for the translation of laws, and political and administrative regulations into African languages, especially into transfrontier languages, for communication purposes. Publication of books written originally in local languages would certainly increase the local language reading population. Language policies in education are invariably linked to the local language book industry. School texts and literacy materials produced in local languages have a ready market.

In 2002, the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications produced a book on a review of surveys in 18 Anglophone countries in Africa and a directory of the major players involved in the book industry. In one of the reviews, “The Book Chain in Nigeria,” Chinyere Nwoga lamented that books on core subjects developed in local languages are left unsold in warehouses as a result of the government's inability to implement its indigenous language policy. Publishers therefore prefer to print first issues in

English and then translate into national languages on the basis of specific demand. The review also indicated that the book industry in the Gambia faces similar publishing constraints though it has a daily newspaper with articles in the three national languages—Mandinka, Wolof and Pulaar. The newspaper is produced in collaboration with the non-formal Education Services of the Gambian Department of State Education. In Ghana, the Curriculum Research and Development Division of the Ministry of Education produces most of the nation's pre-tertiary school textbooks. Anaba Alemna (2002), a reviewer of the book industry, reports on both the private and governmental publishing services' involvement in the export drive that has seen some Ghanaian children's books translated into Danish, Dutch, French, German, Japanese, Russian, and Swedish. The Ministry of Education set up the Ghana Literature Translation Foundation to "seek translation rights for well-known Ghanaian-authored novels and drama books." The impetus behind this move was to encourage authorship in local languages. Books are to be initially translated into three Ghanaian languages and subsequently into other widely spoken ones. The Ghana Book Development Council is another committee set up to encourage indigenous authorship and opportunities for translators and printers. The Council organizes an annual National Book Week, gives out awards for excelling members of the book industry and tries to secure initial contacts with prospective rights' buyers. An Authorship Development Fund was also set up by the Ghana government in 1973 to give financial assistance to artists, editors, illustrators and writers irrespective of the language in which they work but poor economic conditions have led to non-availability of funds.

Bandia (2002), in his analysis of African European language writings, affirms that not much translation is done between African languages. The bulk of writings or translations are in the

official languages. So pan-African support is oftentimes not limited to writings in only local languages. The African Publishers Network, a pan-African organization, is working towards bringing together publishers in countries with French, English and Portuguese as their official languages to help increase literary output in these languages. Rudiger Köppe Verlag, though it is a German publishing house, offers publications primarily on African cultural and linguistic studies in indigenous African languages as well as in non-indigenous ones. Details of these publishing houses are discussed in Chapter Four.

There is a boost in the production of literary work in minority languages when they become target languages for Bible translation. With support and implementation by the Ghana Education Service, teaching of Esahie is ongoing with materials provided by the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation. Details about this Institute, which is affiliated with the Department of Linguistics of the University of Ghana, will be discussed in Chapter Four. In spite of challenges in literacy program management, the Bible Society supplied Books 1 and 2 of the Good News Easy Reading series and other literacy and health information materials for use in public schools. In 2004, two Esahie literacy teacher-training workshops were held in the Sehwi area. Most participants went on to become organizers of literacy classes. The Bible Society continues to produce primers in other minority languages by translating existing primers into local languages of wider communication and by writing new ones.

Literacy programs open a new world of knowledge, found in written form, to neo-literates. The availability of information in people's preferred language helps them gain the

confidence they need to be more involved in national affairs. The next section discusses the role translation and interpretation play in Ghana's parliament and law courts.

2.6 TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION WITHIN PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES AND LAW COURTS

A playwright, poet and professor in the Department of African American and African Studies at Ohio State University, Alamin Mazrui (1998), finds it ironic that indigenous languages had positive political backing during the rule of former pro-socialist, seemingly “autocratic” regimes: for example, Somali in Somalia under Major General Siad Barre; Swahili in Kenya with Jomo Kenyatta; Swahili in Uganda with General Idi Amin Dada; and Swahili in Tanzania under Julius Nyerere. To explain this trend, Ouedrago (2000) suggests that the promotion of local languages and local culture is linked to the ideological development of a revolutionary, “dictatorial” era. In Ghana, district/metropolitan assemblies (within the local government system) were set up in 1988-89 as part of the decentralization process during the revolutionary regimes of Flight Lieutenant Rawlings.³⁷ Elections to these Assemblies are non-partisan and non-proficiency in English is not a disqualification. Use of community languages is encouraged and District Assembly debates were and still are held in the speaker's language of choice. During the same period, educational reforms reinforced the use of indigenous languages as mediums of instruction in primary schools. Ghanaian governments continue to rely on language as a political tool in the social development

³⁷ The Ghanaian district/metropolitan assemblies are made up of (while paying attention to gender balance) individuals, representatives of established civic or business organizations, and government appointees. The assemblies are part of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

process. On April 12, 2005, a local FM station released the news that the then Ghanaian Deputy Minister of Information, Shirley Ayorkor-Botchwey, publicized plans to re-launch publications of indigenous language newspapers as a way of increasing information flow to rural areas. She also launched the Fante translation of the State of the Nation address. These pronouncements denote the government's concern for grassroots participation in national affairs. The media did not announce the release of any other translations of the State of the Nation address into other languages. The import of these translated versions is lost if there was no simultaneity or close timing in the release of all versions; the original address in English was given in January and the Fante version came in April. Reasons for the delay in releasing the translated version, many and varied as they may have been, were not identified.

In spite of the un-availability of other translated versions, it is important to note the willingness of the government to include as many members of society in debating on national issues by producing the Fante translation. However, a question that arises is whether the target audience is capable of reading the Fante translation. Looking back at the discussion on language in education policies in Ghana where not much emphasis is placed on studying indigenous languages, it is more likely for most educated Ghanaians to be able to speak their mother tongues fluently than for them to be good at reading and writing in those languages. They would certainly be better at reading and writing English. For that matter, they would be more likely to debate national issues in their local languages but read the State of the Nation address in English. I share the concern of researchers and journalists who support indigenous language policies: the current Ghanaian education system is not geared towards producing a high number of people proficient in the written indigenous languages. This makes efforts to use indigenous languages in all official discourse seem

futile. Other conditions prevail in Ghana's Parliament that seem to add to the futility of promoting the translation and interpretation of indigenous languages at the official level. In spite of this, there are other situations in parliament and law courts that show that translation and interpretation are helping increase participation in Ghana's democratization process. Both negative and positive situations are discussed in the following sub-section.

2.6.1 Translation and Interpretation in Ghana's Parliament

Ghana does not have multiple official federal language policies, as is the case with different state parliaments of federal Nigeria. In Western Nigeria, Yoruba and English are spoken in their Parliament. In the North, it is Hausa and English; in the East, it is Igbo and English. In Cross River State, it is either Ibibio or Efik. But there have been instances where political will has led to an increased use of indigenous languages in judiciary settings. During a revolutionary era in Ghana, the Consultative Assembly that drafted the 1992 Constitution of Ghana recommended that fluency in English should no longer be a requirement for parliamentarians. Previous constitutions had made proficiency in English a requirement for parliamentarians. The 1992 recommendation was adopted. Did this lead to large-scale provision of local language interpretation and translation services in parliament? Ghanaian linguist and Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Kwesi Yankah reports otherwise.

In February 2006, Professor Kwesi Yankah lamented that freedom of speech was hampered in the current Ghanaian parliament because of certain language provisions in the Standing Orders. One of them is that Ghanaian languages are allowed on the floor on the condition

that the speaker provides an English translation. In addition, the Standing Orders limit discussions on the floor to reading of written speeches. Parliamentarians invariably debate in English, giving a false impression that they do not wish to speak in any other language. Yankah finds it unfair that members are “barred” from speaking their own language. Though much has been done to promote and train local language experts, Yankah found these language provisions a form of censorship and a violation of the right to freedom of speech; a violation that leads to minimal participation, if not the silencing of some members of the House. On the other hand, increase in the use of local languages in the media and at the district/metropolitan assembly level has led to greater contribution in national policy discussions.³⁸ But one wonders if it is worth it, managerially, economically and culturally to pursue the implementation of a multi-language debate in Parliament?

At the 2004 colloquium on *The Official Languages and the Economic Perspective: New Reality and New Thinking*, Albert Breton of the University of Toronto stated that the cost of acquiring a second language is generally borne by minority language groups. This theory can be applied to the African situation, where governments promote and pay more for its citizenry to use their official languages but do not do as much for minority ‘unofficial’ languages. Yankah gives us a relevant case of the lack of state support for translation and interpretation services in the current Parliament of Ghana. This case is the above-mentioned situation in which parliamentarians have to provide their own translation and interpretation services. Yankah mentions that the 258-member Consultative Assembly received state-provided translation services during their sittings in 1991-92. No reasons were found in the

³⁸ Yankah conducted research in which he found that the use of both English and Ghanaian languages in some district assemblies raised the level of active involvement in floor debates.

literature that specified the inability of Parliament to provide such services after the dissolution of the Consultative Assembly. It is surprising for the ordinary observer to read about Yankah's complaints. One would have thought that once the mechanism for translation and interpretation services in indigenous languages had been put in place, it would not be much of a problem to set the mechanism in motion anytime that it is needed.

Yankah recommends in-service training in English communication skills for parliamentarians who want it but he also wonders why provisions could not be made for the present 230-member Parliament to have similar translation and interpretation services. In the Ghanaian *newtimesonline.com* report, Yankah concluded his commentary on the language situation in the country in 2006 with the statement, "It is my hope that as we consolidate the democratic process, we would consider the issue of language as central, and formulate policies that liberate the mind and tongue to contribute optimally to national development"(*op.cit.*).

Debating as part of the democratization process seems to be accessible to only those fluent in English communication skills. But the situation is not as gloomy as that. In February 2006, an admirable translation and interpretation feat was achieved during a regional People's Assembly meeting with the President.³⁹ Contributions from the floor were interpreted into English and Ghanaian languages. Simultaneous interpretation was also given in sign language, which was very appropriate since a disability bill was under discussion. The

³⁹ Proceedings from this People's Assembly were published in February 2006 in an on-line newspaper, *newtimesonline.com*. The People's Assembly concept was begun in 2001 and it is expected to be held on a rotational basis in all regional capitals of the country. It is a forum that is meant to give ordinary Ghanaians access to the President to discuss national policies.

People's Assembly is an example of how the government is widening access to participatory democracy. Maybe the oral nature of Ghanaian culture favours the use of interpretation as an integral part of the democratization process.

It is hoped that the People's Assembly concept will continue. The country's courts have a better track record of using interpretation strategies to make sure every one has access to a fair trial. The next section focuses on the practice of interpretation in Ghana's courts.

2.6.2 Interpretation in Ghana's Courts

In Ghana's practice of English common law and customary law, English is generally the language used in courtrooms. In Chapter Three, Article 9.2, of Ghana's constitution, the ability to speak and understand a Ghanaian language is a requirement for citizenship registration. The right to interpretation and translation services in a court of law is provided for in the citizen's fundamental rights and freedom.

Chapter Five Fundamental Rights and Freedom

14. 2) A person who is arrested, restricted or detained shall be informed immediately; in a language that he understands, of the reasons for his arrest, restriction or detention and of his right to a lawyer of his choice.

19.2) A person charged with a criminal offence shall ...

d) be informed immediately in a language he understands, and in detail; of the nature of the offence charged; ...

(h) be permitted to have, without payment by him, the assistance of an interpreter where he cannot understand the language used at the trial;

Chapter Six: Directive Principles of State Policy

39. (3) The State shall foster the development of Ghanaian languages and pride in Ghanaian culture.

(From the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana
http://www.parliament.gh/const_constitution.php)

From the above quotation, the State underlines its commitment to provide an interpreter and service in any language of choice, at no charge to anyone standing on trial. It also promises to foster development of Ghanaian languages. In Chapter One, it was made clear that commitment to develop Ghanaian languages is being met, though not fully, perhaps due to financial and logistical constraints. There has however always been room for interpretation in local languages during court proceedings.

Proceedings are held and recorded in English even in rural areas but consecutive interpretation is a standard practice. From personal observation, it is known that court interpreters work from English into the local language of the accused person and witnesses and vice-versa. Most court interpreters are fluent in English and in at least two community languages. In 2003, Richard Cook of London's Institute of Commonwealth Studies conducted a survey of state courts. He recorded instances when judges have questioned witnesses or accused persons directly in their mother tongue. In these cases, the languages of interpretation are mutually intelligible to both parties. Sidestepping an interpreter is sometimes necessary; it speeds up the process, helps to clarify statements being made and eases the stress on witnesses and the accused. It was not stated that the direct intervention by judges is in response to poor interpretation skills of the court interpreters. But it is amusing to note cases when the use of English and its interpretation seems redundant since all parties involved in the legal case understand the community language. This raises the issue of whether it really is necessary to continue using English in such circumstances. Is the language of legislation so important that it can only be discussed in the language in which it is written—English? Or is it just a case of lack of political will or inadequate resources to incorporate indigenous languages into state policy?

A former Director of the Ghana School of Law, B.J. da Rocha, recommended establishing a high-level formal training in English and requisite Ghanaian languages for court and other paralegal staff. His suggested job classifications as indicated in an on-line report were:

The clerks will be the lowest grade and will include interpreters, bailiffs and copy typists; next come the stenographers who will be responsible for recording proceedings whether manually, by shorthand or electronically; higher up the scale will be the legal secretaries and top of the scale will be the legal executives.” (da Rocha 1999)

If it is to be assumed that da Rocha is representative of all legal professionals, then interpreters are not highly valued in the profession even though their services are very much needed for justice to be served.

Yankah provides a fitting conclusion to this section of the study with the following statement: “The learning of official language, English, should be fostered to facilitate access to the global village, but we [should] vigorously make attempts to intellectualise Ghanaian languages, to valorise and begin experimenting [with] them in high profile discourse” (2006).⁴⁰

The media is another beneficiary of the empowerment in democratization that literacy programs give to most participants. The next section takes a brief look at the role translation and indigenous languages play in West African media; that is, in newspaper production, television and radio programming.

⁴⁰ This statement is an online quote from Prof. Yankah’s speech at a public lecture in Ghana in 2006 on the topic “The Tongue, The Thumb and the Ballot Box” (<http://www.modernghana.com/GhanaHome/NewsArchive>).

2.7 LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION IN THE MEDIA

The importance of the mass media in promoting languages was raised at the intergovernmental conference on language policies in Africa held in Harare, Zimbabwe in March 1997. Participants at this conference were to prepare and agree on a standardized language policy that would facilitate the development of a global language policy and ease its adaptation into specific national language situations. On-line information found about this conference included the following objective: “the ideal policy should enable the African people to maintain their ethnic identity through the vernacular, but allow integration into the national community via the predominating language or through one of the major national languages and to [...] the rest of the world through the language of international communication.”⁴¹ A few examples of indigenous language use in newspapers, on television, in radio and in rural broadcasting are discussed in subsequent sub-sections.

2.7.1 Newspapers

Currently, there are no national newspapers written in Ghanaian local languages though the Ministry of Information plans to re-introduce them. In the post-independence era, missionaries, churches, local entrepreneurs and the Bureau of Ghana Languages produced newspapers in local languages. Details on the activities of this Bureau will be discussed in Chapter Four. In Côte d’Ivoire, almost all newspapers are published in French. But Leclerc (2006), in his on-line report on Côte d’Ivoire, points out the existence of two satirical

⁴¹ Quoted from a summary of the Intergovernmental conference on language policies on the *Bisharat!* website (<http://www.bisharat.net/Documents/Harare97summary.htm>).

magazines—*Y a fohi* and *Gbich*—that have been written in Nouchi, a variety of Ivorian French.

2.7.2 Television and Radio

Liberalization of the media in the 1990s brought an end to state monopoly of the Ghanaian airwaves and the printed media. Translation, dubbing and voice-over techniques increased the profile of some languages for social development purposes on television. In the field of healthcare for example, the Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing is an international program that promotes handwashing with soap as an effective means of minimizing diarrhea.⁴² This partnership, started in late 2005, broadcasts its advertisements and holds discussions in six local languages on national television. Indigenous languages are highly used on television, especially in the presentation of cultural programs. These cultural programs include talk shows, children's shows, quiz programs and political and health discussions. In Ghana, airtime is given to the government-sponsored languages that are used to relay news, entertainment-drama, game shows (e.g. *Agoro*) and public health discussions, among other programs. Chiefs and opinion leaders vie to have their community activities broadcast.

Radio reaches a wider audience than television. It is also comparatively cheaper to own than television; there are models that run on dry cell batteries or are manually operated. This makes radio a more efficient tool in the current situation of frequent power outages. Proliferation of community radio stations that favour the use of local languages and of

⁴² Diarrheal diseases are among the leading causes of child mortality in many countries all over the world.

grassroot participation in governance and civic duties created broadcast employment opportunities for multilingual speakers. Radio continues to serve an integrative tool in that many more people now engage in public debates on topics of community and national interest on call-in talk shows in local languages.⁴³ There are regional radio stations that broadcast in only the local languages. A search of Web sites of some Ghanaian radio stations did not reveal interpreters or translators on their staff lists. Presumably, journalists who perform different functions in both English and the station's designated local languages may be outsourcing the translation of their documents. But they may also be sight translating: a common practice among Ghanaians who use their local language to recount information written in English.

The state-broadcasting network now competes with private radio, television and satellite networks. The national radio station in Ghana, Radio Ghana, has two networks: Radio 1 and Radio 2. On Radio 1, broadcasting languages are only the government-sponsored national languages (nine out of more than 50 languages spoken in the country). Its broadcasts run concurrently with Radio 2 broadcasts, the English-only network. With privatization of the airwaves and resultant competition, a wide variety of programs in local languages is now available on privately-owned radio stations. Most of the private radio stations broadcast majority of their shows in the predominant language of catchment areas. In Côte d'Ivoire media, a similar unequal status of languages is maintained. Shows are broadcast in French, but the weekday evening news is broadcast in French as well as each of the major indigenous languages. Some announcements are also made in the local languages.

43 Even on English-only radio stations, some callers make their contributions in their local languages. The presenters then give a summary of the contribution in English. There are TV talk shows and game shows that are conducted solely in indigenous languages.

Community radio is also useful in promoting indigenous languages. Internet radios have now extended the catchment area. For example, Peace FM (106.3 FM) broadcasts in several Ghanaian languages and is relayed in Ghana as well as online. Other ethnic on-line radio stations broadcast either in indigenous languages only or in both official and indigenous languages. An example is thepiperadio.com, an Internet-only radio station that is broadcast in several languages from the country. So Ghanaian expatriates are able to call in to these Internet radio stations and discuss concrete ways in which they can actively contribute to national development without actually living in Ghana.

Rural broadcasting in indigenous languages is an important tool in socio-economic development. The following sub-section gives details on rural broadcasting as part of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation.

2.7.3 Rural Radio Broadcasting

The impact of rural broadcasting across the globe was discussed at the first International Workshop on Farm Radio Broadcasting held in Rome, in 2001. Samuel Abbey-Mensah, the head of the Rural Broadcasts Department of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation presented an overview of rural broadcasting in Ghana at the conference. He gave a 2001 estimate of about 219 radio receivers per 1000 Ghanaians and 13 television receivers per the same number of people concentrated in urban centres. Though television broadcasts are more pedagogically effective, radio broadcasts are more efficient in rural areas since lack of electricity does not impede their use. The initial cost of running community television stations is too expensive for small communities. Rapid growth in community radio is the

current pattern of West Africa's liberalized airwaves. In 2006, the National Media Commission in Benin issued 125 community licences and reserved 200 low-power frequency allocations for urban community stations over an area of 112,620 sq. km with a population of about seven million people.⁴⁴

In Ghana, there are community-based stations and commercial stations that broadcast in six indigenous languages. Some of the most successful programs are the Women's Forum and the Farmers' Forum. In collaboration with the regional agricultural extension officers, farmers tune in to their forum and get advice about farming practices and agricultural market information. Lack of telephones in many rural areas may hinder the interactiveness of the forum. Local transport conditions, market turnovers, prices of commodities and other information that the farming and trading communities need are discussed in local languages.⁴⁵ Some community or rural radio stations focus on specific themes and target specific groups in the community; for example, farmers, women, and religious groups.

Rural broadcasting and other forms of media, when combined with literacy in local languages, help to spread information about governance. The concrete walls of a classroom and written texts are no longer the only means by which an African can get information or effectively participate in intellectual debates. Fewer people are isolated from national decision making now that their local languages are used in both state-owned and private media. The state radio uses the languages of wider communication while minority local

44 Radio's vital role for Democratic Stability (<http://www.xs4all.nl/~jmarks/Community2006.pdf>)

45 Agriculture 21 magazine: Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department Food and Agricultural Organization (<http://www.fao.org/ag/magazine/0104sp.htm>)

languages are often used in community radio stations. These minority languages are almost forgotten since they do not receive as much research and promotional support as other state-sponsored languages. Non-governmental institutions and private Bible translation institutes are making headway for these ‘forgotten languages.’

This second chapter of the study has attempted to summarize ongoing concerns on the interplay between languages in West Africa, especially Ghana, in the domains of peacekeeping, regional integration, democratization, education, religion and media. Some of these attempts to raise the status of indigenous languages have been successful; others have not. There are no longer calls to banish European languages from the continent; European languages have become part of the language potpourri in Africa. Africans are now working on how best to use all the languages in Africa to develop the continent. The next chapter continues a discussion on how technology is being used to enhance the impact of translation and usage level of indigenous languages in a modern digitalized Africa.

CHAPTER 3

TECHNOLOGY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

I felt that I could not give an overview of cross-communication in 21st-century Africa without making reference to the effects of technological developments on African languages, spoken not only in my three target countries but also in other countries south of the Sahara. This reference is necessary because most language technology tools are designed to be applied to several languages.

If, as discussed in Chapter Two, language policies in education, religion, the judicial sector and in the media support the teaching, learning and usage of indigenous language, then Africans can use their own languages to participate in the new technological age. Discussions in this chapter refer to how indigenous African languages are being made into “cyberlanguages” through the creation or adaptation of both software and hardware. Some of these technology tools were developed to preserve extinct or nearly extinct African languages. The same tools are used as a form of survival technique to promote the widespread use of indigenous languages. This chapter gives an overview of how African countries south of the Sahara are using modern technology, including the Internet, to promote terminology development and widespread use of indigenous language. The chapter is divided into four sections: 1) global support for development of African cyberlanguages 2) different forms of technological innovation in Human Language Technologies through

adaptations to software and hardware, 3) translation, lexicography and localization and 4) technology and African culture.

3.1 GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR AFRICAN “CYBERLANGUAGES”

The eighth Millennium Development Goal of the UN Millennium Summit held in 2000 relates to global partnership in development. One of the targets of this goal is, “in cooperation with the private sector, [to] make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies.”⁴⁶ The indicators listed for determining whether the target is being met are accessibility to telephone lines, cellular phones, personal computers and the Internet. These indicators demonstrate that all countries need technological advancement to successfully partner with others in the interest of development. Oddly enough, language is not mentioned as an indicator. However, language is certainly a major component of communications technologies that needs to be considered, especially for African countries categorized as ‘developing’ or ‘underdeveloped’ In an effort to move upwards on the socio-economic scale and to take its place on the international stage, African countries are working hard to improve the accessibility of their citizenry to new technologies as hoped for in the above mentioned Millennium Goal. From personal observation of Ghanaian society, I can attest that there has been an increase in computer usage in the past five years in all government offices and private companies. There has also

⁴⁶ Achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is targeted for 2015. The Millennium Declaration was signed by 189 countries, including 147 heads of state and government, in September 2000. (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>)

been an increase in the establishment of public Internet cafés. Donations of computers and accessories are often made by non-governmental groups and by ethnic associations outside the country. One such group is Grace Canada, a Canadian Christian international development organization based in Ottawa. Grace Canada supports institutional and organizational capacity building by non-governmental organizations in rural Ghana. In 2006, Grace Canada donated computers to the Tongu district in Ghana as part of its literacy projects (Personal Communication 2006).

It is common knowledge that the languages used in international trade and commerce have more power and higher status than languages used only within small speech communities. African languages, be they majority or minority languages, are languages of limited international significance. English and French are the languages of trade in West Africa. African countries usually get ICT support and promotion packages from highly industrialized English- and French-speaking nations. I, myself, have experienced what Matthias Brenzinger, an ethnolinguist at the University of Cologne and working on the “UNESCO Red Book of Languages in Danger of Disappearing,” describes in the following quotation:

Ethno-linguistic minorities are very often not in a position to resist outside pressures, when, for example, loyalty to the nation is associated with speaking the national language. They are also confronted with the fact that, in many contexts, modernization and social upward mobility demand from them the sacrifice of their cultural and linguistic identity.

[On-line article “Language Endangerment on the African Continent: The Future of Language Diversity,” 2005, <http://www2.hi.is/id/1010391>]

Stephen A. Wurm (1999), an ethnolinguist, also involved in the UNESCO programs on multilingualism in cyberspace reports that, Brenzinger has identified

“172 languages in danger or extinct for the areas more or less properly surveyed which comprise essentially a large part of eastern Africa (i.e. Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, a small north-eastern part of Zaire, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania), much of western Africa (i.e. a south-western portion of Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal).”⁴⁷

The three target countries are included in the area surveyed for the map. A language that became extinct in Bauchi State, Nigeria was Ajawa. It became extinct from between 1920 and 1940, mainly as a result of language shift to Hausa. The fate of Ajawa could befall other African languages, especially in this digital age, if speakers are shifting to an almost exclusive use of their official languages. If the digitalized world and the languages of ICTs are the way of the future, then most African languages risk further marginalization or complete disappearance. This implies the exclusion of many unilingual mother-tongue speakers, especially the youth, from the digital revolution. UNDP and UNESCO are supporting African countries to be a strong presence in multilingualism in cyberspace.

A UNDP-organized summit with the theme, *Africans bridging the digital divide* was held in Maputo, Mozambique on September 17, 2003. At this summit, African governments were encouraged to include their ICTs in mainstream government planning.⁴⁸ They resolved to

47 In its “Red Book on Endangered Languages Project: Europe,” UNESCO categorizes endangered languages as follows:

- i) Extinct languages other than ancient ones
- ii) Nearly extinct languages with maximally tens of speakers, all elderly
- iii) Seriously endangered languages with a more substantial number of speakers but practically without children among them
- iv) Endangered languages, with some children speakers, at least in part of their range but decreasingly so
- v) Potentially endangered languages with a large number of children speakers but without an official or prestigious status
- vi) Not endangered languages with safe transmission of language to new generations

48 United Nations Development Programme, *Africans bridging the digital divide*, looking to world summit, 17 September 2003, available at (<http://www.undp.org/dpa3frontpagearchive/2003september/17sep033index.html>)

adapt ICT strategies for the developmental needs of their individual countries and their sub-regions. Several technology-enhanced methods are currently included in new strategies for promoting African languages in the 21st century.

The continuous co-existence of indigenous languages with official languages and their incorporation into globalization processes has thus become an important component of multilingualism in cyberspace. ICTs are effective tools for enhancing multilingualism in cyberspace. International backing of African languages in multilingual cyberspace could be said to stem, not only from UNESCO and UNDP but also from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). Backed by the Secretary-General of the UN and initiated by the International Telecommunications Union with the support of other UN organizations, WSIS was put in place to help the UN achieve the related Millennium Development Goals. African Information Society Initiative (AISI) is a regional group of WSIS, formed in 1996, with the objective of speeding up Africa's entry into the information society. At the 2005 WSIS conference entitled "Access—Africa's Key to an Inclusive Information Society" and held in Tunis, the following two commitments of particular interest to this study were made:

14. We also recognize that in addition to building ICT infrastructure, there should be adequate emphasis on developing human capacity and creating ICT applications and digital content in local language, where appropriate, so as to ensure a comprehensive approach to building a global Information Society. [...]

32. We further commit ourselves to promote the inclusion of all peoples in the Information Society through the development and use of local and/or indigenous languages in ICTs. We will continue our efforts to protect and promote cultural diversity, as well as cultural identities, within the Information Society.⁴⁹

(On-line document WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/7 –E)

49 World Summit on the Information Society, Document WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/7 –E
(<http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs2/tunis/off/7.doc>)

As part of the plans to improve connectivity and increase universal use and access to ICTs by 2015, the conference was committed to “enhancing the capacity of communities in all regions to develop the content in *local and / or indigenous languages*.”[*My emphasis*] The rest of this chapter looks at specific examples of how the commitments made in the quotations above have been successful. These examples are discussed in the following categories: Human Language Technologies initiatives, lexicon projects, subtitling, African languages on the Internet, and localization.

3.2 HUMAN LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGIES

Human Language Technologies (HLT) is a term that covers several aspects of research and development in language technologies. HLT include development and management of electronic language and the speech resources of natural languages.⁵⁰ Research in HLT is multidisciplinary; linguists, psychologists and engineering and computer scientists engage in the coding, recognition, interpretation, translation and generation of language. The 1997 publication *Survey of the State of the Art in Human Language Technology* by Cambridge University Press and Giardini details the various components of HLT. HLT accelerates the spread of indigenous language terminology in all domains of a society, especially in academic research for societies that were left out because of language barriers. Some of the software applications mentioned in this publication are now outdated, but the benefits of HLT have not diminished. In this chapter, the discussion of HLT will cover African

⁵⁰ In an Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers (ICT4LT), Slough, Thames Valley University, the HLT module is divided into the following content areas: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Computational Linguistics, Corpus-Driven and Corpus Linguistics, Formal Linguistics, Machine Aided Translation (MAT), Machine Translation (MT), Natural Language Interfaces, Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Theoretical Linguistics.

Languages Technology Initiative, programming and the development of cell phone terminology.

3.2.1 African Languages Technology Initiative

HLT is used in a research and development project known as the African Languages Technology Initiative (Alt-I). The African Information Society Initiative (AISII) and the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) support the Alt-I project. The Executive Director of the project, Tunde Adegbola, a linguist and computer scientist, declares that “Alt-I aims at appropriating Human Language Technologies (HLT) for use in African languages via advocacy and service projects.” To achieve this aim, the project supports the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science at the University of Ibadan.

Alt-I is also engaged in research and development for automatic speech recognition of Yoruba and text-to-speech synthesis of Yoruba. Text-to-speech is a method for converting of text into audio output and is a very useful technique in adult literacy programs. It is an important component of the digital library of the InfoCentre at Ago-Are in rural Nigeria, whose services are used predominantly by non-English and/or unschooled clients.⁵¹ Another development of Alt-I that Adegbola, the Executive Director of Alt-I mentions is interactive information kiosks from which users can obtain information on health and other developmental issues in their local languages. These kiosks are complementary to radio in that the kiosks also provide useful information on health and other pertinent issues but also collect feedback from users. Though Adegbola says the kiosks help the illiterates to receive

⁵¹ Peter A. Oyawele, a linguist, set up the InfoCentre. With the Commonwealth of Learning and the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, the Centre develops training materials for farmers.

and even input information, it is unfortunate that he does not provide further details on how these revolutionary kiosks are used, nor does he specify where these interactive information kiosks are currently located. No other information about the kiosks was found on the official Alt-I Web site.

Another application of Alt-I is programming, which includes adaptation of fonts and keyboard designs to use with African languages.

3.2.2 Programming

Through the creation of special fonts and keyboards, programming has been adapted to include African languages.

3.2.2.1 Fonts

Typing in an African language has been made easier with the introduction of Doulos SIL Unicode font. SIL International produced this product with the objective of providing a single Unicode-based font family that would contain a comprehensive inventory of glyphs needed for almost any Roman- or Cyrillic-based writing system, whether used for phonetic or orthographic needs. In addition, provisions have been made for other characters and symbols useful to linguists. This font makes use of state-of-the-art font technologies to support complex typographic issues, such as the need to position arbitrary combinations of base glyphs and diacritics optimally.¹³ Worldlanguage.com sells AfroRoman fonts for Windows and Macintosh. There are versions of Word 2003 and Microsoft Office 2003 that have been localized for African languages. I have not used these versions, but from on-line language forums, I learned that the new SIL font is an improvement of the Microsoft

¹³ Now available on-line: <http://scripts.sil.org>. March 2004.

versions.¹⁴ The creation of these fonts indicates an international effort to integrate marginalized languages, if not for the purpose of language promotion, then at least with the realization that Africa is also a viable market for language-related tools.

3.2.2.2 Keyboard

In May 2007, AfricaFocus Bulletin, an electronic publication in collaboration with e-learning Africa, published an interview with Dr. Tunde Adegbola. In the interview, he mentions that Alt-I develops “efficient and ergonomic computer keyboard layouts and mapping software” that make it easier to work in African tone languages on the computer. The Yoruba keyboard was developed at the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science in the University of Ibadan.⁵² Yoruba is a major African language spoken in southwest Nigeria, southeast Benin and in other parts of West Africa. Research on creating this keyboard included standardization of the full Yoruba character set in ASCII and UNICODE and the development of Yoruba text-to-speech software. For the invention, the Centre won the 2003 IICD Award on Local Content Applications of Information Communication Technologies.⁵³ This award is one of the incentives offered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) that acknowledges use of ICTs by local people. Such use of ICTs is seen as “the expression of the locally owned and adapted knowledge of a community” in Africa.⁵⁴ UNICODE now distinguishes between standardized letters of

¹⁴ Messages on the QuickTopic message board, 19-20 March 2004.

⁵² Adegbola is quoted as saying Yoruba was first language chosen for the keyboard project “because it is the largest spoken mother tongue language in Africa. Two, because Yoruba was Africa’s first language to be written. It was written in the 1800s, so has a matured orthography. Three being that it is the only language in the whole of Africa that has been used to write a Ph.D. thesis”. Keyboard for Africa’s Largest Spoken Mother Tongue (<http://www.thisdayonline.com/archive/2003/06/23/20030623art01.html>)

⁵³ The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) is a non-profit foundation that specializes in information and communication technologies (ICT) as a tool for development.

⁵⁴ This is the definition of local content for the Yeomans Award for Local Content which is jointly sponsored by two organizations involved in the harnessing of ICTs for sustainable development: Global Knowledge Partnership and Open Knowledge Network.

sounds that have no diacritical marks and those that do, as in “dot” or “line” under “E,e” ; “O,o” or “S,s.”⁵⁵ The Yoruba word for “man” *okunrin* has a line under the initial ‘o’ vowel.

Another keyboard design that makes it easier to type documents in an African language without resorting to the tabs “Insert\Symbols” in Microsoft Word has been created for Ghanaian languages. As reported on www.ghanaweb.com, the 2004 prototype keyboard can be used for most Ghanaian languages. The keyboard modifies the standard 101 QWERTY keyboard to include the open letters “ɔ” and “ɛ” and the “ɲ” character used in Akan, Ga-Adangbe and Éwé. Éwé is also spoken in Togo and Benin, so the adapted keyboard can be used in these countries as well as Ghana. The drop-down menu that lists availability of spellcheckers in different languages will also include English (Ghana). The inventors, two Finland-based Ghanaian software engineers, presented their design as a contribution to the ICT revolution in Ghana. The keyboard has been tested on Windows 2000 but, at the time of writing this paper in 2006, it has yet to be tested on Windows XP. Promotion and copyright discussions with Microsoft are underway. As of 2006, funding and promotion of the keyboards were being discussed with various organizations in Ghana. The Bureau of Ghana Languages was to determine the officially accepted characters in the various Ghanaian languages; the Ghana Standards Board and ICT Ghana were to assess and approve the layout of the keyboard; and the Bank of Ghana was to get an ISO code for the symbol for the Ghanaian monetary currency, the cedi. No other information has been found in the literature reviewed about further development and widespread use of the Ghanaian keyboard.

⁵⁵ In 2005, Andrew Cunningham of e-Diversity and Content Infrastructure Solutions, Australia explains the differences between what UNICODE does with diacritical marks and what should be considered orthographical issues with tone marks. His discussion is in a 12n-collaboration mailing list archive entitled “[A12n-Collab] Re: The Yoruba under-diacritic”

The next section includes a presentation of machine translation and machine-aided human translation.

3.2.3 Machine Translation and Machine-aided Human Translation

Machine translation (MT) is another component of HLT, but the literature reviewed did not reflect extensive development of machine translation for African languages. However, most machine translation systems can be used only in major European and Asian languages. However, there are other machine translation systems that operate in less well-known languages. In Africa, Martha O'Kennon has developed an MT for isiXhosa and Pulaar/Fulfulde.⁵⁶ *Bisharat!*, a discussion forum on African language encoding, fonts and keyboards, maintains a general catalogue of links to Unicode-compliant fonts, keyboard layouts, machine translation services and other tools intended to make the Internet usable by speakers of African languages.⁵⁷ Machine translation for African languages, if developed, would certainly help pique learners' interest. However poorly the translation is done, machine translation would still increase the number of documents on-line in indigenous African languages. There would also be an increasing number of possibilities for better communication within the continent, easier sharing of information among diverse African communities and fostering translation of materials for education and development.

⁵⁶ O'Kennon is a professor in computer engineering in Albion College, Michigan. Her research interest is MT of natural languages.

⁵⁷ *Bisharat!* Web site is in four different languages: English, French, Portuguese and Hausa.

Machine-aided translation tools (sometimes called computer-assisted translation tools) enhance the work of professional translators working together over a local network, allowing them to share translation memories and input and revise bilingual terminology over a server that manages multilingual lexical and terminology databases. MultiTrans, a corpus-based translation tool, includes several African languages such as Twi (an Akan language spoken in Ghana). Trados, another translation tool, has fewer listings of African languages. I have never used MultiTrans or Trados in African languages, so I cannot discuss the limitations or successes of machine-aided translation software in indigenous African languages. But the fact that these languages have even been included in the list is a big technological advancement for African languages.

I'll end this section with Tunde Adegbola's vision for Alt-I, showing that researchers in African language technologies have social development goals and are engaged in achievable projects:

Our goal, therefore, is to include such people in development processes by providing them with alternative technologies to pen-and-paper information technology. It should be possible to provide them with computer-based systems equipped with *touch-sensitive CRT, LCD, or TFT screens with attached loudspeakers, instead of the popular but exclusionary ink-stained paper*. Our ambition (among many other things) is *to redefine literacy*, changing it from the "*ability to read and write*" to the "*capacity to interact with literature*" and thereby change the condition of African adult illiterates "*from illiteracy to e-literacy*." [My emphasis]

Interview with Dr. Tunde Adegbola, African Languages Technology Initiative (Alt-I) e-Learning Africa William Minter (ed.) (<http://www.africafocus.org>)

Moving "from illiteracy to e-literacy" is quite an ambitious project that would need a lot more resources than most African governments are able to spare for education. It might take a long time for Adegbola to reach his goals, but the process of getting to those goals is

helping prepare African languages to meet the challenges of a new, technology-minded world.

The next section of this chapter discusses sub-Saharan Africa's indigenous languages in on-line dictionary projects, filmmaking, facilities for storing digital data on African languages, use of African Languages on the Internet and localization.

3.3 LEXICOGRAPHY

Documentation of indigenous languages is being done in audio, written and visual forms. Our knowledge of some extinct languages has been preserved with the help of audio formatting. Lullaby and speech samples of two extinct southern African languages *Ku|khaasi* and *!ora* that existed in the 1930s are now part of a collection of extinct languages available on CD-ROM.⁵⁸ Coding what has been saved in audio format helps in the terminology research of similar languages.

Developing dictionaries in both print and on-line form is helping to advance indigenous African languages. The languages are now grappling with new concepts such as cellular phone terminology that will be discussed in the next sub-section.

⁵⁸ They are part of a collection of recordings of extinct languages on a CD-ROM produced by Prof. Anthony Traill, Professorial Research Fellow in the Linguistics Department of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

3.3.1 Terminology Development

No information was found in the literature read on adaptation of cellular phone terminology to West African languages. But it is important to note the creation of cellular phone terminology glossaries in South African official languages. Russell Shanglee (2004) examines these terminology glossaries that have been developed by *Web lingo*, a localization company in South Africa. The terminology in Afrikaans, Sesotho, Swahili, Xhosa and Zulu was done in collaboration with some of the company's European clients.

Development of on-line localization projects and telephone terminology databases is increasing in South Africa. Kim Wallmach (2005) described an on-line terminology database for HIV/AIDS and police terminology that was set up by lecturers of the University of South Africa and the Localisation Research Centre of Ireland.

Wallmach (2005) also names some phone companies that offer the option of South African language menus: Nokia has language menus in Afrikaans, Sotho, Xhosa, Zulu and Swahili and Ericsson launched Zulu and Sotho menus on its mobile phone in 2002. There are language technology providers, such as Zi Corporation, who offer software that incorporates many different language databases for mobile devices. Though this form of HLT seems to be accommodating southern African languages only, it gives the hope that other indigenous African languages can be adapted to suit the requirements of cell phone technology.

3.3.2 Dictionary Production

A form of documentation that has now been technologically enhanced is dictionary production. The African Languages Lexicon Project (ALLEX) is involved in the production of language tools like dictionaries and research opportunities in lexicography and linguistics, especially for Zimbabwean language tools.⁵⁹ Some projects undertaken by ALLEX are general Ndebele and Shona dictionaries; a glossary of ZimSign in Shona, Ndebele and English; and dictionaries of musical terms in Shona and in Ndebele. A bilingual dictionary project sponsored by ACALAN is a Bamanankan-French dictionary organized by the Karanta Foundation in Bamako. The Karanta Foundation in Support of Non-Formal Education Policies (Fondation Karanta pour l'appui aux politiques d'éducation non formelle) is based in Ouagadougou, Mali. It was launched in 1999 to support the ministries of education in Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal in order to increase access to education for marginalized members of society.⁶⁰

Another dictionary project is the “kasahorow Localization Project”. It began as a Twi and Fante dictionary project but was later on combined with the Ghana Localization Project. *kasahorow* is a project of GhanaThink Foundation.⁶¹ The word *kasahorow* means “multiple languages.” To help achieve its main goal—“to enable local languages remain a viable form

⁵⁹ ALLEX is a joint co-operative project between the Universities of Oslo and Zimbabwe. Since 1992, ALLEX has been involved in the production of monolingual dictionaries. Projects include multilingual glossaries and dictionaries. (<http://www.edd.uio.no/allex/what%20is.html>)

⁶⁰ Karanta Foundation is supported by the International Development Research Centre, a Canadian Crown corporation. (http://www.idrc/en/ev-5192-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

⁶¹ GhanaThink describes itself as “is an Africa-focused think-tank that seeks to mobilize and deploy African diaspora talent for the primary benefit of Ghana, and consequently of Africa.” (<http://ghanathink.org/>)

of communication for all aspects of life”—, the *kasahorow* project has a variety of learning materials, discussion forum, social network activities and language research projects. Multilingual dictionary searches can be in English, standard Akan or the Fante and Twi varieties. If installed, the Akan keyboard layout can be selected from the language bar. Entries provide definitions, synonyms and sample sentences. Here is a sample of a dictionary entry:

kilomita, n- [General]
 [Twi: kilomita] [Fante: kilomita]
 SI: nsusuho a skyere beye kwansin ɔ ha-mu-eduesia-ebien
 [English synonyms: kilometer, kilometre]

Kofi nantew kilomita anan anapa biara de kɔ skuul.
Sample sentence: Every morning, Kofi walks four kilometres to school.

Notes: SI: Système International d'Unités
 (<http://kasa.ghanathink.org/akan> Press Release: March 28, 2005)

kasahorow also shows synonyms of words in other languages used in West Africa (Éwé, Hausa, Twi, Yoruba) and also in East Africa (Luo, Swahili) in addition to English synonyms. A screen shot of a *kasahorow* page is shown below:

FIGURE 4: SCREEN SHOT OF *kasahorow* ON-LINE AKAN DICTIONARY PAGE

Home » All Dictionaries » Akan

papa

|< <<Previous [Filed under General] Next>> >|

Comes from papa

Twɪ papa

Fanti papa

Related words in

English: father¹, Mister², sir³, bounty⁴, very well⁵

Luo: wuoro¹

Ewe: papa, fofɔ¹, afetɔ²

Akan: agyakɛɛ¹, agyakuma², egya³, ɔse⁴, wura⁵

Hausa: uba¹, baba²

Yoruba: ba-ba¹

Swahili (Kiswahili): bwana¹

⚠ Not reviewed for accuracy. Don't quote us on this

Citation (APA Style)

papa. (). In *kasahorow Akan Dictionary*. Retrieved 05:49 AM June 2nd, 2007, from <http://dictionary.kasahorow.com/node/7898>

Search this dictionary

General | Akan

» Embed:

Post new comment

Subject:

Users are made aware of checks done for accuracy of words and their synonyms. The public can also contribute entries that will be subject to verification by the project editor. This project is a good example of how ICT is being used in terminology and cross-communication in African indigenous languages.

3.4 FILM

Film is another medium that combines language and technology for socio-economic development. The National Film and Television Institute, located in Ghana, serves the entire sub-region. Graduates of this school have become prolific in the production and screening of documentaries, short films and feature films based on traditional cultural values. Some production houses have their own in-house translators and terminologists who work with producers to turn out films relevant to the modern African. The Mainframe Foundation uses digital cinematography. Its productions are screened in rural Nigeria and Benin. Mobile cinema units consisting of a combi bus, digital projector, DVD player, public address system and portable electricity generator are the main tools of the trade.⁶²

Broadcasting stations and film theatres across the continent swap documentaries on HIV/AIDS, female empowerment, best practices in governance and eradication of negative cultural practices. Included in Alt-I discussions is a mobile cinema project that has been used to screen the Zimbabwean film “Yellow Card” in various secondary schools in the Lagos State of Nigeria. “Yellow Card” addresses the issue of teenage sexuality and HIV/AIDS. The

⁶² The Combi bus is a Volkswagen Type 2 van. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volkswagen_Type_2

These broadcasting tools are mentioned in a 2003 article by Adegbola and Dada on African Languages Technology Initiative.

films “*Saworoide*” and “*Agogo Eewo*”, two Yoruba films (with subtitles in English), address issues of governance and conflict resolution.

Subtitling is a big component of the Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, FESPACO.⁶³ Many FESPACO films are performed in local languages with English and/or French subtitles. However, there is a dominance of films in French or with French subtitles with very little subtitling in English. Del Hornbuckle, a writer, jazz/electronica musician and librarian from Washington, DC, attended FESPACO 2007 and wrote a review on-line entitled “FESPACO 2007: the African cinema lion roars!” He commented that “the lack of a translation mechanism and financial resources for subtitling is an ongoing issue and greatly diminishes the ‘international’ perspective considerably.”

3.5 THE INTERNET AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The use of the Internet as a tool that promotes development of indigenous languages is discussed under the sub-headings of storage, education and localization. The West African Language Archive (WALA) is a multilingual resource repository that uses the Internet metadata portal Open Language Archives Community (OLAC).⁶⁴ WALA aims to promote heritage documentation, provision of language materials for local education and the teaching and training of local experts in language documentation. Of special interest is the design of an encyclopaedia of Ivorian languages, conception of a speech synthesiser for use in the pre-

63 FESPACO: Festival Panafricain du Cinéma et de la Télévision de Ouagadougou.

64 Dafydd Gibbon, Thorsten Trippel and Ben Hell discuss a database management system for archiving XML/annotated language resources.

(<http://www.linguistlist.org/emeldworkshop/2004/gibbon-paper.html>)

literate Ibibio community in Nigeria, documentation of Ega (an endangered language in the Côte d'Ivoire) and a joint Ivorian-Nigeria-German multilingual curriculum development project in language documentation.

OLAC, the worldwide virtual library of language resources and Internet-based digital archives, is trying to create tailor-made software that would be “future-proof.” A lot of linguistic material was initially transferred from handwritten notes and wire recordings to digital recordings and computer files. Unfortunately, the rate of development of digital media is so fast that most of these original recordings are now irretrievable.⁶⁵ So much for “future-proof.” OLAC is finding ways of storing linguistic information in Extensible Markup Language formats (XML) on the Internet on the basis that the Internet is better medium for digital storage. But some indigenous communities do not trust the Internet's security as a storage medium. Public access to culturally sensitive material could lead to exploitation and abuse. According to the article “Digital Race to Save Languages,” language developers and software specialists are trying to incorporate security measures used in Internet banking from the moment linguistic data is captured.

The traditional methods of education are gradually being complemented with the use of computers. At the tertiary level, there is an African Virtual University linking several universities across the continent. As has been the case, only Africans with a high level of English- and/or French-language skills can use these high-tech tools. With a rapid

⁶⁵ “Digital race to save languages” was written by Stephen Baird, a professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia. His research interests are “computational models for linguistic structures and processes, with application to language technologies and to the documentation of endangered languages.”

development in adult literacy, there are now several educational on-line forums where educated Africans can actively participate in discussions on the development of their indigenous African languages. Such discussions revolve around technical issues of particular languages, differences in ICT policy etc. Two such forums are *Bisharat!*, a language, technology and development initiative that was mentioned earlier on in this chapter, and *A12n-forum* (to be explained in the next sub-section). Several *QuickTopic* message boards with language- or country-specific topics also facilitate the use of African languages on computers and the Internet. There are now blogs in Hausa and Xhosa. These forums provide an on-line community for professionals and other interested members of global society who work in the development of African languages and issues of socio-economic development.

African presence in a multilingual cyberspace is also indicated by the localization of Google international homepages in different African languages. They are:

Afrikaans (South Africa) <http://www.google.com/intl/af/>
 Sesotho (South Africa) <http://www.google.com/intl/st/>
 Swahili (Tanzania, East Africa) <http://www.google.com/intl/sw/>
 Twi (Ghana) <http://www.google.com/intl/tw/>
 Xhosa (Southern Africa) <http://www.google.com/intl/xh/>
 Zulu (Southern Africa) <http://www.google.com/intl/zu/>

The interfaces of these pages are in the indigenous languages. But search terms in these languages turn up only a few results since only a handful of on-line documents are in indigenous languages. The search engines invariably navigate to Web pages in major European languages regardless of the language of the interface. Localization of Google, the most widely used search engine, is certainly a good indication of the beginning of multilingualism in cyberspace.

3.6 LOCALIZATION/AFRICANIZATION

In 1997, at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, Hamburg, Germany, panellists discussing the connection between new information technologies and adult learning, said “international and national strategies for promoting the use of new technologies and media in adult learning must take into account the diversity and integrity of language and culture, and support local and vernacular content” (On-line UNESCO Institute of Adult Education). Developing and underdeveloped countries, in their haste to be part of the globalized information network, tend to become dumping grounds for a variety of foreign ideologies and concepts. Some of these lead to an erosion of local people’s belief in their own indigenous culture. The media is largely blamed for conveying these ideologies and concepts. There seems to be a one-way information flow from developed countries to developing ones and, with it, an imbalance in content. Localization or Africanization (spelt Africanisation by African countries) of on-line content has been suggested as a way to redress this imbalance.

Internationalization and globalization, much as it brings nations together, tends to be based on homogenization of all aspects of life including language. Localization (L10n) is a way of fine-tuning the products of globalization to suit target receptors. Software, computer products, web pages, programming and machine translation produced in English are localized for the target minority and endangered languages.

Presently, Africanization (A12n) is being promoted as a complement to Internationalization (I11n) and localization (L10n). *Bisharat!* is a group with a mandate to help with

Africanization of computers and African content and languages on the Internet. It has an A12n-forum and an A12n-collaboration. Webmasters and general users of computers meet on the A12n-forum to exchange ideas and practical technical information about multilingual issues. A12n-collaboration is a temporary working group established on 21 March 2002. In May 2003, A12n-forum in English and A12n-entraide in French were launched, particularly for ICT-related multilingual issues. Other software localization projects are

- Kilinux (for Swahili) - <http://www.kilinux.org>
- translate.org.za (for South African languages) - <http://www.translate.org.za>

The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) is a project of the Acacia Initiative (Communities and the Information Society in Africa). CASAS researches into identification of large African speech communities that have shared written forms. The Centre, working with donors, development agencies and the private sector, plans to produce three CD-ROMs in three content areas (soil fertility, pest control and HIV/AIDS) in local African languages. The members of the speech community are directly involved in the production. These CD-ROMs will preserve and promote the local languages and also help form knowledge societies. There is undoubtedly terminology development and translation involved in the above-named content, especially with new phenomena such as HIV/AIDS and environmental protection. With adequate funding, this project can be culturally localized for many communities across the continent.

There is also ongoing collaboration between Laboratoire Parole et Langage (from France), École Normale Supérieure du Mali and Institut National de Recherche et d'Action Pédagogiques au Congo. These institutions are working together on ARP ALAF (*Alignement*

des Langues Africaines et du Français), a project that is designed to create linguistic resources in digital format for several languages spoken in Mali, Congo and neighbouring countries, the integration of these languages on the Internet, and the sharing of linguistic engineering skills with other developing countries. ARP ALAF plans to support the use of MULTEXT applications to African languages. MULTEXT research laboratory is a European project that produces and uses software for language standardization.⁶⁶ These projects are reflections of how North and South have come together in terminology and translation development of African languages.

3.6.1 Is localization (L10n) always necessary?

Kenneth Keniston, a software localization expert at Massachusetts Institute of Technology explains that localization involves initial translation of individual words, back-translation, comparison of back-translation with original text, the addition of the corrected translation to the localized program and the changing of computer codes. Scrolling patterns, dates, icons and other computer codes increase the complexity of localization. Keniston (1999) describes two forms of localization (L10N): technical L10n and cultural L10n. Technical L10n is the superficial change made to the date format, colour, pictures, etc. Cultural L10n is about the adaptation of software written for one culture to another culture. He affirms that translation is a complex and expensive part of localization. The localizer must be thoroughly bilingual in two languages and two cultures in addition to being an experienced code writer. Software localization is not only a technical transfer of information. It is assumed that users of all

⁶⁶ MULTEXT Multilingual Text Tools and Corpora is a natural language processing project run by the University of Geneva.

software will be literate, numerate and accurate (no spelling errors) and can work in an environment where all choices are binary (yes/no, delete/retain, up/down). Management information software made in Europe or America assumes a rationale of a market-based world. The software is set up to follow how business is run in its country of origin but it might not be able to incorporate the realities of commerce in other countries. For example, the system might not allow for input of payments to facilitate intermediaries, such as tips and the haggling over prices (op. cit.: 12). How can software be written for a computer without an internal clock for a culture whose concept of time is the phases of the moon? He argued that L10n may not necessarily be desirable because multilingualism complicates the issue of localization.

There are claims that L10n creates stereotyping and destroys cultural and linguistic diversity. Reinhard Schäler of the Localisation Research Centre, Ireland, claims that L10n gives his culture quick access to and eases the penetration of this culture into other local cultures, thereby making it easier for those other cultures to be changed or destroyed. With the USA being a very technologically advanced country, a lot of electronic and digital productions are originally documented in American English and then localized to suit non-English speakers. This type of L10n is technical; the content and its ideologies remains the same. English becomes a transmission channel for American culture. Users of these technological products, especially the youth, get to know more about American culture, which is embedded in the English language, than the culture of their own neighbours. So technology of L10n does change local cultures by making them adapt to the culture of the original production language; but it seems far-fetched to say L10n “destroys” the receiving culture. Schäler (2003:8) states that “market expansion and higher revenue are the primary drivers for the

L10n effort of the large IT publishers, not language, not culture, and certainly not diversity.” He notes that culture is about diversity, but L10n that enforces globally acceptable standards leads to stereotyping, which destroys linguistic diversity. He gives the example of ideological/cultural tones of a broadcast of the events in the Gulf war relayed by BBC compared to a relay of the same events by the Al Jazeera news channel. Though it is not clear how this example relates to linguistic diversity, Schäler is right in his suggestion that it is important to maintain culture in L10n because “any culture not captured in this electronic world will eventually become obsolete”(op. cit.).

Mathias Brenzinger (2000), whom I mentioned earlier on in this chapter as an ethnolinguist whose research is on African endangered languages, raises a very interesting point on localization as a precursor to the endangerment of minority languages.⁶⁷ He considers the fact that indigenous language policies such as mother tongue education tend to preserve and promote the use of majority African languages of wider communication. The smaller, less widely spoken languages are at an increased risk of neglect and endangerment since the focus of research and funding is invariably on the languages of wider communication. I realize Brenzinger is right in expressing these fears of endangerment for smaller indigenous languages. From the literature I discussed and the examples concerning technological applications to languages, a lot of work is being done with languages such as Akan (Twi dialect mostly) and Yoruba. Minority languages such as Larteh, my father’s language spoken in (of the same name) Larteh in a Twi-dominant region of Ghana, are not included in innovative language research. It is logical to begin work on majority African languages, but

⁶⁷ Brenzinger spoke on “Language Endangerment through Marginalization and Globalization” at the International Conference on Endangered Languages held in Kyoto, Japan from 24 to 25 November 2000.

it should be noted that minority languages become more neglected in the power play of language efficiency, Africanization and globalization.

To conclude this sub-section, I would say “Yes” to the question, “Is localization always necessary? Localization is necessary in our multilingual 21st century but at the cost of minimizing the benefits of technological applications to minority indigenous languages.

3.7 CAN TECHNOLOGY RAISE THE PRESTIGE LEVEL OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES?

Sub-Saharan Africa is seen as a viable market for technology. The current language ideologies advocate preserving and promoting indigenous African languages. Socio-economic and religious life and local politics are conducted in indigenous African languages. The amount of research in indigenous languages seems to be building up. To serve the needs of the high percentage of the population that cannot communicate in the official languages, African linguists, ethnologists and computer experts (and those interested in promoting African languages) are working together to contribute to the ICT revolution. New methods of storing linguistic data are also being developed. There is continual research in effective documentation of languages on the verge of extinction and promotion of endangered and living ones. It is hoped that Africanization of technology will help raise the development level of African societies so that they can gain from globalization without losing their Africanness. In 2006, the Advisory Committee of Experts for the UNESCO World Report on Cultural Diversity met to discuss challenges to cultural diversity, the development of new forms of diversity and agents of cultural change and transfer. Its report is slated to be issued

on May 1, 2008. This report may give some insight into how language, as an aspect of culture, is undergoing change and transfer.

However, the hegemony of European languages in Africa will not be toppled with Africanization. The global economic power of the European languages is out of reach of African languages. These languages have now become Africanized in that French and English spoken on the continent have acquired some African language characteristics that are cannot be found in the “Queen’s English” and “Parisien French”. Examples of these different forms of English were mentioned in earlier chapters of the text in the sub-sections on African literature and African literature as a form of translation. The goal now is not to eradicate the inherited colonial languages, but to raise the prestige level of indigenous African languages. With the race to make cyberspace multilingual, we are excited to read about indigenous languages in use in cyberspace. But come to think of it, how many Africans will want to read the news in their local dialects when they are likely to be more proficient in their official English, French or Portuguese language? Or better still, how many Africans can actually read in these languages? One wonders about the usefulness of African language technology when a large percentage of society is unschooled and illiterate.

Given the economic mobility offered by European languages, some Africans no longer place much value on their indigenous languages. As mentioned in Chapter Two, there are African parents and governments who oppose the use of their mother tongue as a medium of instruction. To them, mother-tongue education will not enhance the economic mobility afforded by instruction in and with the official European language. These parents prefer the ideology of nationalism: choosing a common, efficient language regardless of its origins.

Those who support nationalism prefer choosing an indigenous language as an official language to enhance socio-cultural integration. Parents and governments now realize it is prudent to develop indigenous languages as well as official languages. Mother-tongue literacy programs are effective in increasing the number of citizens who participate in national development. Ministries of education and their governments need to vigorously promote education, translation and publishing in written local languages. If this is not done, there will not be enough proficient clients for services in indigenous languages in cyberspace. The development of high-status usage of indigenous languages as well as increasing literacy skills in the official languages should go on to make more Africans participate in the global economy. So the answer is both “Yes” and “No” to the question, “Can technology raise the prestige level of African languages?” Yes, it can help raise the prestige level of these languages because they can be used in modern technology-enhanced media. Yes, technology will also help in the learning, teaching and research of indigenous languages. No, technology cannot raise the prestige level that official status bestows on languages unless indigenous languages are given official or national status.

In conclusion, this chapter has been a discussion of how technology has transformed translation, lexicography and terminology development of indigenous African languages. Subtitling of African films in indigenous languages has not taken off on the continent. Trying to put both English and French subtitles in indigenous-language films is problematic enough, as seen from the review of the *Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ougadougou* (FESPACO). Furthermore, on-line information retrieval using keywords in indigenous languages has not been quite successful. Google now has international pages with the interface in some African languages. But owing to the dearth of documents on-line

in African languages, very few results are received with search terms in indigenous languages. Machine-aided translation tools, such as MultiTrans, now have African language options. But these options have not been tested. There has been success, however, in the creation of functional on-line multilingual dictionaries (*kasahorow* for example), and African Languages Technologies Initiative (Alt-I), including the Africanization of keyboards and software. As we delve more into language development, we understand other peoples' cultures better. This enhances our ability to live together peacefully in this global village. From the various projects going on in promoting indigenous languages, it is clear that African languages are no longer being sidelined (by Africans and non-Africans). So long as adults continue to speak their indigenous languages to children, educational systems teach and promote the use of these languages in all spheres of life and African languages are actively used in cyberspace, there promises to be more technological advancement in African languages.

Academic language institutions and conferences that develop and/or promote some of the technologies mentioned in this chapter will be portrayed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE INSTITUTIONS IN A GLOBALIZED AFRICA

In this chapter, I present specific national and continent-wide projects that focus on translation as part of indigenous language development. I find it a better option to put here all detailed presentations of some institutions that have developed language technologies described in Chapter Three and some institutions that promote African language policies described in Chapter Two. I did not include details about these institutions when I mentioned them in the previous chapters because I considered that option too much of a digression in already information-loaded chapters. The goals of these institutions are presented and their achievements and non-achievements of these objectives are mentioned. The chapter is divided into four sections: pan-African language institutions, national institutions, interpretation conferences and translation conferences. Included in the section of pan-African language institutions are three publishing houses, two of which are not located on the continent but are actively promoting cross-language communication of all languages used in Africa. The six conferences discussed here were selected from the many conferences on translation and interpretation in Africa. The addition of the conferences shows the academic discussions that are ongoing about cross-communication in African indigenous languages. These discussions are seen as a way of rounding off discussion on the plans of institutions set up in earlier times and discussed in the early part of the chapter.

4.1 PAN-AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS

Pan-Africanism and political independence gained by African countries in the 1960s created a demand for official interpretation and translation services. Nama (1993) notes the blossoming of translation and interpretation during the postcolonial period in the areas of foreign affairs, business, religion, administration and culture. In 1962, the formation of the Organization of African Union (now the Africa Union) raised pan-African consciousness. Multilingualism was part of that consciousness. In 1997, the Intergovernmental Conference of Ministers on Language Policy in Africa recommended that all African countries have language policies that encompass all the languages spoken in each country.⁶⁸ It also realized the need to reactivate and implement the Language Plan of Action for Africa, which was adopted in 1986. The aims and objectives and objectives of this plan were as follows:

- a . To encourage each and every Member State to have a clearly defined language policy;
- b. To ensure that all languages within the boundaries of Member States are recognised and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment;
- c. To liberate the African peoples from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as the dominant, official languages of the state in favour of the gradual take-over of appropriate and carefully selected indigenous African languages in this domain;
- d. To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotion, assume their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of each Member State, in replacement of European languages, which have hitherto played this role;
- e. To encourage the increased use [of] African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels;
- f. To ensure that all the sectors of the political and socio-economic systems of each Member State [are] mobilised in such a manner that they play their due part in ensuring that the African language(s) prescribed as official language(s) assume their intended role in the shortest time possible;
- g. To foster and promote national, regional and continental linguistic unity in Africa, in the context of the multilingualism prevailing in most African countries.⁶⁹

68 Presentation of the summary of this 1997 conference can be found on the Bisharat! Web site and at (http://ocpa.irmo.hr/resources/docs/Harare_Language-en.pdf)

69 The Language Plan of Action (<http://www.bisharat.net/Documents/OAU-LPA-86.htm>)

Here is my analysis of the above-mentioned objectives. Discussions in previous chapters of this study show that Objectives *a* and *b* have been met. I question the use of the word “liberate” in Objective *c*. As discussed in Chapter Two, non-indigenous languages are now absorbed into the language mix. In my opinion, oppression should no longer be associated with the use of English, French or Portuguese in West Africa, though they remain the dominant official languages. These languages are the first languages of some children and adults on the continent. The languages have acquired characteristics of African indigenous languages as shown in the discussion on African literature in Chapter Two. Except maybe in the case of Swahili and the official South African languages, I cannot say there has been a “gradual take-over” of some indigenous languages nor a “replacement of European languages” as indicated in Objectives *c* and *d*. I see it as a case of ongoing improvement in the status of these languages and an increase in their usage in many socio-economic domains. In Objective *c*, it is not clear what “appropriate” means and what criteria is to be used to select the languages. Another observation is that, based on discussions made in Chapter Two, Objectives *e*, *f* and *g* are being met. Examples from Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, given in Chapter Two, reflect how African languages are being used as “vehicles of instruction.” There is promotion of linguistic unity in the use of translation and interpretation in the various aspects of socio-economic development and in the adaptation of language technologies to include indigenous African languages as explained in Chapter Three.

The discussion above shows that the Language Plan of Action is not an easy plan to implement. One of the institutions that has the challenge of implementing this Plan by coordinating several language projects across the continent is the African Academy of Languages (Académie africaine des langues/ACALAN), an institution of the African Union.

ACALAN was designed to be a body that would serve as a source of expertise for member states in formulating ideas and establishing workable plans. It would also serve as a “grassroots approach through the setting up of a language commission for each language” (ACALAN 2001).

4.1.1 African Academy of Languages (ACALAN)

In 2000, the Mission for the African Academy of Languages (MACALAN) was set up by the OAU to establish the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN). ACALAN was inaugurated in September 2001 as a pan-African institution under the aegis of the OAU. It was established to address the inadequate practices of existing African groups in implementing the Language Plan of Action.

The objectives set out for the initial five-year period after establishing ACALAN were as follows:

- Disseminate information on the Academy, and, in particular, establish a website;
- Install the organs of the Academy, and hold the inaugural conference of the Assembly of Academicians;
- Organize the establishment of Language Commissions as provided for in the Statutes of the Academy;
- Document, from available sources in each country, the total number of languages, and compile a register of language experts and researchers. (Cf. UNESCO 1978, which needs to be updated);
- Compile information on language policies of member states of the African Union, with particular reference to domains of use and devise strategies that may be employed to extend use to a wider range of domains;
- Identify and compare existing instructional curricula with a view to harmonizing and adapting the language policies across states;
- Examine instructional materials with a view to improving them and sharing their use across states, particularly in the case of cross-border languages;
- Provide expertise to states that may require it, particularly in the area of language development and implementation of language policies;
- Bring to bear new technology on the use of African languages, including computer programs to facilitate typing, printing, publishing and use on the Internet;
- Document existing linguistic maps and cooperate in the production of revised, more accurate and composite maps;

- Encourage and support rewards for excellence in works in African languages by awarding prizes and conferring honours and distinctions;
- Explore areas of co-operation between African language promotion and research on imported official languages.⁷⁰
(<http://www.acalan.org/an/mission.htm>)

To comment on the above citation, my research did not produce feedback on ACALAN's achievements of all the above-mentioned objectives. However, Chapter Three of this study presented success stories that reflect an achievement of the objective of "bring[ing] to bear technologies on the use of African languages ... to facilitate ... use on the Internet." A pan-African localization centre is discussed in more detailed in this chapter. Though not in detail, publishing in African languages was presented in Chapter Two. Some rewards for excellence in works in African languages are discussed in a sub-section of this chapter, "Translation, a component of publishing." This section continues with some of ACALAN'S projects.

Within ACALAN is the National Scientific Commission, which consists of linguists, researchers and others interested in language research. UNESCO supports the publication of ACALAN's Information Bulletin with funds from its Intangible Heritage Activities Section. One of the aims of ACALAN is to collaborate with experts to valorize African languages and culture in the new information society and help implement language policies.

It has not been easy to implement continent-wide programs. An aspiration that is yet to materialize is the making of Kiswahili and/or any other indigenous language working languages of the African Union. But on a national scale mother-tongue education, translation

⁷⁰ The Mission and Vision of the African Academy of Languages were presented by Ayo Bamgböse at the launch of ACALAN activities in September 2001.

and interpretation programs are playing a vital role in the operation of courts, churches and broadcasting networks.

In 2004, as part of the process of implementing the Language Plan of Action, the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), the National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees (NACALCO) and ACALAN set up five continent-wide projects that would be the focus of ACALAN for the next decade.⁷¹ The projects are listed in no particular order as follows:

The declaration of the Year of African Languages in 2006 was done by the AU and coordinated by ACALAN to commemorate 20 years since the adoption of the original Language Plan of Action for Africa. The motto of the Year was “African Languages for Africa’s Development.” The Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA) was to help ACALAN with program implementation for the Year. OCPA is a pan-African international non-governmental institution set up with the support of the African Union, Ford Foundation and UNESCO. An important goal that the declaration of the Year was to help achieve was the publicity and mobilization of ACALAN and indigenous African language projects. Some activities, though not necessarily coordinated by ACALAN, that were held during that year in different parts of the world include the first international Linguapax conference on the promotion and safeguarding of African languages; African Language Teachers’ Association Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on the theme “African Languages in the Age of Globalization: Prospects and Challenges”; and the screening of a new documentary

⁷¹PRAESA is an independent research and development unit attached to the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape Town. NACALCO is a cultural, apolitical, non-profit organization that coordinates the activities of autonomous language committees.

entitled “African Languages and Literatures into the 21st century” during a seminar on the importance of the development of African languages and their use in ICT by the PanAfrican Localisation Project.⁷² That year, the African ICT Achiever Award in the category “Top Civil Society/NGO to bridge the digital divide in Africa” was awarded to Translate.org.za.⁷³ Translate.org.za is a non-profit organization that specializes in localization and translation into South Africa’s 11 languages using open-source software.

The second project is a joint masters and doctoral program coordinated by the University of Yaoundé in Cameroon. This program offers financial and academic support to students who serve as language professionals on the continent.

The third project is a terminology development program coordinated by the Institute of Kiswahili Research in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In addition to its Kiswahili intensive programs, the Institute also offers short courses in terminology and dictionary-making. The Terminology and Translation Unit is one of four academic sections in the Institute. The Unit has started a terminology bank and provides consulting services in both terminology and translation.

The fourth project is a translation program to be coordinated by ACALAN in Bamako, Mali. The ACALAN Web site offers no further information on this program.

⁷² The UNESCO Linguapax program aims to “promote the culture of peace via evolution of linguistic diversity and plurilingual education” (www.unescocat.org) The Linguapax Institute was set up in 2001. At the international level, seven continental networks have been established. (www.linguapax.org)

⁷³ The Awards are instituted by ForgeAhead, a majority-black, women-owned ICT research and consulting house located in South Africa.

The fifth and final project is the Stories Across Africa Programme, coordinated by PRAESA in Cape Town, South Africa. PRAESA donates storybooks to schools as part of the Free Reading in Schools Project in South Africa. PRAESA is also involved in the development of books for children in original writings and in translations into Afrikaans, Xhosa and English.

No further details on implementation of these five details have been found, either on the ACALAN Web site or anywhere else on the Internet. Lack of information on outcomes of language recommendations often gives the impression that the projects were either abandoned or that recommendations were not implemented.

In 2004, at the Academic Research Network (ARN) conference on Nurturing ICT Research and Development in Africa, one of the conclusions drawn was that “in general, there is a problem of Africans being slow in taking decisions and actions.” The ARN recommends that ACALAN and the African Union be accountable for funding the instrumentation, computerization and translation of cross-border languages. Each country is to do the same for its local languages. The President of ACALAN is the coordinator for the thematic network of “African languages and content in cyberspace.” One of his recommendations is “all citizens should be provided with the means of using ICT networks as public service.” This is a very good recommendation that might take a while to be fully implemented in the three target countries of this study; these countries continue to be plagued with energy crises that involve persistent and long power outages.

ACALAN collaborated with the Language Observatory and Linguasphere Observatory on the African Web Language Survey project.⁷⁴ The Language Observatory is an observation instrument that aims to

- raise public awareness on “Digital Language Divide” issues;
- encourage support to the processing of those languages now falling through the net. ... Although experts estimate there are more than 6,000 languages on the globe, the project will try to cover [the] 300+ languages [that] appear at [the] alphabetical listing of all translations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).⁷⁵

In 2006, ACALAN initiated and launched the African Web Language Survey project “to provide [an] accurate overview on the status of African languages in the digital world, to raise public awareness of it and to facilitate the adoption of measures to reduce the linguistic digital divide” (UNESCO portal). Language technology experts on the A12n-forum had the following expectations for the survey:

1. Language Map of African Cyberspace (Cyberspace Language Census Report): To show how many pages are written in each language, under each country domain;
 2. Web Usage Maturity Analysis Report: To show how web technology is used under each country domain. For example, web links, web maintenance, server technology, open source software usage, etc.;
 3. Web Infrastructure Report: To show network performance and geographical locations of web servers.⁷⁶
- (<http://lists.kabissa.org/lists/archives/public/a12n-forum/msg00490.html>)

No further information was found on whether any of these expectations have been met.

⁷⁴ Linguasphere was a database for the world’s languages and speech communities. It ceased operations in 2006 and access to the database is now provided by GeoLang, a key sponsor of the World Language Documentation Centre.

⁷⁵ The Language Observatory Web site (<http://gii2.nagaokaut.ac.jp/giiblog/index.php?blogid=8&catid=109>)

⁷⁶ A 12n-forum is for computer users and webmasters of all levels in Africa and interested in Africa to ask questions, share ideas & practical information, and disseminate news about multilingual African uses of ICTs.
(<http://lists.kabissa.org/mailman/listinfo/a12n-forum>)

ACALAN and the e-Africa Commission/NEPAD organized a roundtable discussion in 2005 on the theme “A multilingual cyberspace with the participation of all in the information shared knowledge society” in Tunisia. In 2006, ACALAN also collaborated with UNESCO, the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and Swiss Cooperation to organize a colloquium entitled “National Policies: The Role of Crossborder Languages and the Place for Less Spoken Languages.” The first colloquium was for West African countries and there will be four more in other regions of the continent. The ACALAN Web site offers no further information on these projects.

Another project on which ACALAN collaborates in the technological development of indigenous languages is PanAfrican Localisation.

4.1.2 PanAfrican Localisation (PAL)

PanAfrican Localisation (PAL) (spelt with an s) is a project financed by International Development Resource Centre (IDRC), administered by Kabissa, and implemented by *Bisharat!*. Kabissa is an organization that helps African civil societies apply ICTs to the development of their countries. *Bisharat!* is a language, technology and development initiative that focuses on the development of the rural poor in Africa. *Bisharat!* supports projects that create and sustain knowledge societies through the use of indigenous African languages. One such project is PAL, a resource and information centre for localizers and localization in Africa. It makes use of wiki technology to gather data and facilitate interaction within and between localization communities working on the development of

Arabic and African languages.⁷⁷ The site has information on wiki groups, localization tools, writing systems, workshops on localization and inter-African institutions in the field of localization. The site operates on a PmWiki philosophy: a wiki-based system for collaborative creation and maintenance of Web sites.⁷⁸ PAL is currently involved in building a network of researchers to conduct applied research on localization in Africa, provide a research agenda and seek the continued support of IDRC for the network and for research projects.

Localization is useful in the production of African content and languages in on-line publications. With print publications, some publishing houses on the continent, such as the African Publishers Network, are actively engaged in promoting reading of African content material written in non-indigenous official African languages. Outside the continent, there are other publishing houses such African Books Collective and Rüdiger Köppe Verlag that are marketing and distributing African literary, didactic and academic writings in both indigenous and non-indigenous African languages. Publishing of African writings, mentioned earlier in Chapter One as part of the history of translation, will be discussed further in the next sub-section with presentations of the above-named three publishing house: African Publishers Network, African Books Collective and Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

⁷⁷ Wiki is a collaborative website, an organic encyclopedia of knowledge that allows anyone to add and edit pages. A sense of community ownership of information is created. A wiki can be used as a teaching, learning or publishing tool for managing and sharing information at conferences and on the Internet. The link at the bottom of a web page that reads "Edit this page" is also called a wiki. (<http://wiki.ucalgary.ca/page/IntroToWikis>)

⁷⁸ One principle of the PmWikiPhilosophy is to only include essential features in the core engine, but make it easy for administrators to customize and add new markup (<http://www.pmwiki.org/>).

4.1.3 Publishing Houses for African Content and Languages

4.1.3.1 African Publishers Network (APNET)

With a Web site in French, English and Portuguese, APNET is a publishing house made up of national publishers from 47 African countries. Established in 1992, it is a non-profit pan-African network that coordinates the activities of several units, including the African Publishing Institute (API), the African Publishing Review (APR) and the APNET Research and Documentation Centre. API started to organize training workshops after it conducted research and found that only three universities on the continent had publishing courses.

4.1.3.2 African Books Collective

African Books Collective consists of independent and autonomous African publishers from 19 countries. Established as a self-help initiative in 1989 and based in the United Kingdom, it finances, markets and distributes African-published materials outside Africa. The Collective states on its Web site that approximately 55% of net sales are remitted to publishers, thereby contributing to the economic viability and capacity building of the publishing industry in Africa. Within the cultural context of their strategic plans, the African Books Collective has a plan that falls in line with globalization, cross-language communication and intercultural studies. Its Web states:

ABC promotes and disseminates knowledge and scholarship from Africa, and African literature in the North. Promoting cultural activities from the South to the North aims to better inform the Northern populace about aspects of the African continent. Rendering both hemispheres more sensitive to a pluralistic, culturally diverse world is achieved through better communication between North and South. Genuinely diverse global culture is located in this communication between peoples. (Strategic Plan 2002-2006 <http://www.africanbookscollective.com/index.html>)

While maintaining an emphasis on scholarly and academic literature in English, the Collective publishes a few titles in French and children's literature in Swahili. It also has a partnership with Book Aid International to promote access to African books within the continent. The Collective also promotes African literature around the globe at book fairs. It has been difficult to keep the entire production and publication on African soil. As much as the African Books Collective wants to remain an in-Africa-for-Africans-by-Africans organization, delays experienced by shipping its publications from Africa led the Collective to print them in the United States and the United Kingdom. From 2003, Michigan State University Press has been the Collective's partner in charge of marketing and distribution of publications in the USA and Canada.

4.1.3.3 Rüdiger Köppe Verlag

Rüdiger Köppe Verlag is a leading publishing house of documentation in cultural anthropology, African studies and African linguistics. Established in Cologne, Germany in 1988, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag publishes journals, conference proceedings, doctoral theses, and study materials, among other publications. Its publications are either in electronic format or in the forms of books, audio-cassettes and CD-ROMs. Though Rüdiger Köppe Verlag is a non-African publishing house, it is promoting research, learning and knowledge of indigenous African literature. To give the reader an idea of the variety of titles, here are publications on terminology, interpretation, and teaching and learning of indigenous African languages listed on Rüdiger Köppe Verlag's 2007 Web catalogue:

- A Dagaare-Cantonese-English Lexicon for Lexicographical Field Research Training
- Lexique Dendi (Songhay) (Djougou, Bénin). Avec un Index Français-Dendi
- Dictionnaire Fon-Français, avec une esquisse grammaticale
- Hausa in the Sudan. Process of Adaptation to Arabic

- Conversational Strategies in Akan. Prosodic Features and Discourse Categories
- Said Babura Ahmad: Narrator as interpreter. Stability and Variation in Hausa Tales
- Penou-Achille Somé: J'apprends le dagara. De l'écriture à la lecture (Tape Cassettes)
- Helma Pasch: Kurzgrammatik des Ewe
- Herrmann Jungraithmayr / Wilhelm J.G. Möhlig / Anne Storch: Lehrbuch der Hausa-Sprache. Grundkurs in 30 Lektionen (audio-CD)

Rüdiger Köppe Verlag deserves to be mentioned because through its selective strategy of publishing indigenous language-related documents, it is helping to fulfil some of the goals mentioned earlier in this study of indigenous African language promotion outlined by ACALAN and UNESCO.

For the publishing industry to thrive, there should be enough of a reading culture to warrant the translation and marketing of literary works. In the next sub-section, four national institutions are presented. Three of the institutions are helping to implement literacy programs, support indigenous language policies and encourage an indigenous language reading culture. The fourth institution promotes translation and interpretation in European languages including the non-indigenous languages that are dominant official languages on the continent.

4.2 NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Indigenous reading culture is being cultivated in literacy programs coordinated by institutions such as the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Languages, and Translation; the Bureau of Ghanaian Languages and the National Association of Cameroonian Language

Committees. Another institution that is included in this sub-section is the Ghana Institute of Languages. It supports cross-communication with non-indigenous official languages and other European languages. Details of these institutions are presented in the following sections:

4.2.1 Bureau of Ghanaian Languages

Institutionalization of indigenous language services became an important aspect of nation building during the pre-independence and post-independence eras in Ghana. The Bureau of Ghanaian Languages is one such representation of nation building. An Act of Parliament (Ordinance No. 44 of 1950) established the Vernacular Literature Board, now known as the Bureau of Ghanaian Languages, as an independent statutory corporation. It is now a government department. The main mission of the Bureau is to coordinate agencies that promote Ghanaian languages and to influence government policies relating to the development, promotion, learning and orthographic control of Ghanaian languages. It is also involved in the translation, writing and publishing of books on a contractual basis. The Bureau translates from English into the eleven government-sponsored Ghanaian languages and vice-versa. Its main translation clients are ministries, departments, corporations and churches. It also provides editing services for private authors, tutorials for Ghanaian language learners and vetting of Ghanaian-language publications and ensures that these publications respect standardized orthography rules. In addition, it conducts research into the customs and traditions of ethnic groups and prints its findings or saves them in audio format. As an information centre, the Bureau serves as the official source of information on Ghanaian languages and culture.

As mentioned in Chapter One, newspapers written in indigenous languages served as a rallying point for the people soon after independence. The newspapers were one way that the people could identify with each other. In the early 1960s, the Bureau published newspapers in six Ghanaian languages. These newspapers are no longer in production. The Bureau took on the responsibility of textbook production and the vetting of Ghanaian language reading materials and translations.

Another institution that promotes indigenous Ghanaian languages is the Ghana Institute of Languages.

4.2.2 The Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Language and Bible Translation (GILLBT)

GILLBT is a non-governmental organization with a vision of reaching “language communities with the Word of God in their mother tongue.” GILLBT began in 1962 as an affiliate of SIL International, a Christian-based non-governmental organization concerned with language research that was referred to in chapters two and three of this study. GILLBT is now an affiliate of the University of Ghana and of Wycliffe. 135 full-time employees and more than 2000 volunteers make up GILLBT staff. It is open to all Christians willing to be actively involved in Bible translation. Community value is attached to literacy and Bible-translation activities, since community members are active participants. GILLBT writes alphabets, grammars and reading materials in Ghanaian languages. It has provided reading materials in over 30 Ghanaian languages.

The three main areas of its operations are academic research, literacy and development, and scripture-in-use. In academic research, GILLBT partners with the University of Ghana to document research in previously unstudied languages and cultures. GILLBT improves the social, economic and spiritual development of communities through self-initiated income-generating activities, literacy education and strategic planning. The Scripture-In-Use project encourages the use of translated Christian literature in both print and non-print media. The project also helps to train church leaders and links literacy with evangelism. By 2005, GILLBT had researched 32 previously unstudied languages, promoted mother-tongue literacy in 30 language communities and produced complete Bible translations in three languages and New Testament-only translations into 15 others. It has ongoing language projects in six of the ten provinces of the country.

It was mentioned in Chapter Two that religion played an important role in terms of organizations such as GILLBT making literacy and translation in indigenous languages very important components of Christian evangelization. GILLBT's international partners include Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible translators, SIL International and Okanagan University College, Canada. Some of its local partners are the Bible Society of Ghana, School of Ghanaian Languages, affiliated to the University College of Education, Winneba (UCEW) and the Bureau of Ghana Languages, a government department. The collaboration of GILLBT with other groups makes it possible to produce public documents in local languages, either as translations or originals.

The Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation and the Bureau of Ghanaian languages provide language services in the indigenous languages. They are

helping to fulfil ACALAN's objectives of promoting the usage of indigenous languages in many domains. National Association of Cameroonian Languages is an association that offers similar services in Cameroon.

4.2.3 National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees

Established in 1989, the National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees (NACALCO) comprises Cameroonian language committees made up of native. NACALCO is a cultural, apolitical, non-governmental association that coordinates the activities of language development academies and individuals, as well as institutions involved in the development of Cameroonian and African languages. As of 2006, NACALCO had 78 language committees. It has an applied linguistics centre that was created to help the organization meet the following objectives:

- a) Promotion of literature in national languages by assisting language academies in the production of works and other useful reading materials and the production of literacy materials and local newspapers (bulletins);
- b) Promotion of the use of national languages as vectors for the education of the masses;
- c) Coordination of different literacy activities of language academies;
- d) Encouragement of the creation of new language academies;
- e) Elaboration of common programmes of activities for language academies;
- f) Translation into national languages of useful texts and works for the development of the population;
- g) Contribution to the introduction into the school system of maternal languages;
- h) Contribution to the editing and publication of periodicals and popularisation manuals on history, culture, science and technology in maternal languages;
- i) Sharing of knowledge and experience with sister organisations in Africa and the world over.

(<http://www.notrejournal.net/NACALCO.html>)

NACALCO has a publication that reports on academic research activities with respect to local languages and on ICTs. SIL International supports the association in the development

of mother-tongue education programs in primary and secondary schools. NACALCO works with the Operational Programme for the Teaching of Languages in Cameroon (PROPELCA), which focuses on the harmonization of language teaching practices and writing systems for official, foreign and national languages in Cameroon.

The three national institutions presented earlier are all contributing to sharing knowledge, technology and experience in helping Africans use their local languages as developmental tools. Much as ACALAN would like these indigenous languages to take over the dominant roles played by non-indigenous official languages, the latter languages are here to stay and to maintain their hegemonic influence over all other languages used on the continent. In order to maintain and enhance communication with the world in general, and fellow Africans in particular, there are other institutions that provide language services solely in non-indigenous languages used in Africa. The Ghana Institute of Languages is being presented as a representative institution with pan-African goals that promotes European languages.

4.2.4 The Ghana Institute Language (GIL)

The Ghana Institute of Languages (GIL) is a tertiary institution that was established in 1961. It was set up by Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, primarily as part of promoting the pan-African objective of unifying the continent. At the time, the Institute was managed by the President's Office. GIL's initial mission was to attend to the linguistic needs of Foreign Service personnel and civil servants. Control of the Institute was later given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has now been handed over to the National Council of

Tertiary Education. Its mission is now to serve the linguistic and language needs of not only the public service but also the general public.

GIL has a teaching department and a Transbureau. Translation, interpretation and secretarial services are offered by the Transbureau to the general public, especially at conferences and trade fairs. Liaison services and tour guides are also available. Teaching and research at the Institute are done in Arabic, English, French, German, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. A Bachelor of Arts (Translation) degree is awarded to GIL graduates by the University of Ghana. Professional diploma courses in bilingual secretaryship and translation are also offered. With support from concerned embassies and high commissions, GIL offers language courses leading to a diploma in various languages. Language experts at the GIL sometimes serve on interview boards for the recruitment of personnel for the public service. Currently, GIL is engaged in research for a seafarer's phrasebook.

Students come from all across the West African sub-region, and graduates help meet the professional needs of the Foreign Service, governmental agencies, international non-governmental organizations working in the country and international companies that are based in the sub-region. Language schools are often listed on the Web sites of development agencies, for example, the Web site of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Ghana, presumably to attract graduates of these schools into their employ.

This section has sampled four institutions on the continent that promote cross-language communication on the continent. Their efforts in terms of translation strategies and processes were not discussed. The objective of their being presented in this study was to provide real

institutions that are providing concrete services that correspond to recommendations made by ACALAN, UNESCO and in national language policies discussed in the three previous chapters.

This chapter continues with presentations of several conferences held round the world within the last two years that show a growing research interest in translation from and into African languages. The next two sub-sections will briefly present academic conferences on research of various aspects of interpretation and translation in Africa. To give an idea of the variety of themes discussed at these conferences as part of cross-language communication, I sampled six international conferences held from 1998 to 2006 in different parts of the world but all dealing with translation and interpretation in Africa. The conferences are grouped into two categories: interpretation and translation.

4.3 INTERPRETATION CONFERENCES

The International Conference on Interpreting in Legal, Health and Social Service Settings, held in Vancouver, Canada in 1998 but published in 2000, and Translation and Conflict II (Manchester, UK, 2006) are the two interpretation conferences presented in this sub-section.

Considering the oral nature of the African community and the enormity of interpretation services that go on in multilingual Africa, I think it is relevant to take a quick look at formalized interpretation services in an emotionally charged setting. This glimpse will be provided courtesy of Chriss Wiegand (2000) with his conference presentation entitled “Role of the Interpreter in the Healing of a Nation: an Emotional View” that was presented at the Second International Conference on Interpreting in Legal, Health and Social Service Settings, Vancouver, Canada.

Legal and community interpreting were combined to provide a multilingual interpreting service in the 11 official South African languages during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings.⁷⁹ Wiegand (2000) analyzed interpretation skills, cross-cultural influences in interpretation and the support system put in place to provide emotional and psychological counselling for interpreters. On its official Web site, TRC states that the South African Government of National Unity set it up “to deal with what happened under apartheid.” As of 2003, TRC was still active. Though Wiegand’s article might be considered

⁷⁹ In the foreword of the published conference presentations, Brian Harris (1999: 4) mentions other concepts that could be synonymous with community interpreting; public service interpreting, community based interpreting (CBI), dialogue interpreting, *interprète culturel*. The International Federation of translators defines CBI as any interpreting (paid or voluntary) where interpreters work on day-to-day life situations in the community (not including court or legal work).

old since he gave his presentation in 1999, the knowledge he shares is very informative and still relevant today especially for interpretation and translation for immigration and refugee claims.

The interpreting service was set up in April 1996 when the TRC hearings began. Wiegand describes that the communication structure of the TRC is made up of legal, logistic, media, victims and perpetrators sections. In the legal section, the commissioners ask questions in English and the victims answer in their own language. There are 19 interpreters posted at different locations throughout the country and others employed on freelance basis. The Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment coordinates the logistic component. The interpreters are involved in all arrangements from documentation to transport, accommodation and problem management.

Wiegand illustrates communication difficulties that interpreters faced as a result of victims and perpetrators having to deal with all their stages of remorse during the hearings. Interpretation was particularly stressful at such high level hearings where correctness of an interpreted version was always in question. The interpreters were deeply involved in the public healing and reconciliation process so the media was constantly in touch with them. Interpreters brought a variety of emotional, cultural and political “baggage” and different language skills. Though Wiegand found the 10-day training for the interpreters too short, he found that the debriefing service offered to the interpreters, commissioners, committee members and officials of TRC was very helpful. Interpreting at the TRC hearings was more complex than the usual legal interpretation in courts. There was an added emotional component of culture-related background of the interpreters and the stress of maintaining a

dispassionate distance when interpreting testimonies about death and torture. All those who worked with the TRC were prone to “post-traumatic stress, substance reliance, angst and panic disorders, depression and ordinary work-related stress” (Wiegand 2000: 212). To help interpreters cope, TRC put in place a support structure that included access to personal sessions with medical and health specialists. Social support usually was not readily available since most interpreters had to travel far from their relatives and friends to the hearings. Wiegand concluded that it was difficult to ascertain how much the interpreting services at the TRC helped to uncover the truth but “the telling of it [could have brought] reconciliation” (*op. cit.*, p. 217). Another contribution of the interpretation services provided at the TRC hearings was the very high status level that African languages achieved. Interpretation also received extensive media coverage. The service yielded extensive word production. From April 1996 to May 1998 when Wiegand presented his findings, 18,400 hours of hearing had been interpreted. “Converted into days... approximately 2,929 trial days ... an interpreting volume of nearly 368,000,000 words which can, in turn, be converted to 160,000 typed pages” (*ibid.*, 217).

In November 2006, there was an international conference titled “Translation and Conflict II” hosted by the University of Salford, UK, the University of Manchester, UK and Kent State University, USA. Most of the discussions dwelt on the role of translation and interpretation in conflict resolution and in democratization. The presentation by Annelie Lotriet from University of the Free State, South Africa was similar to that of Wiegand (2000): “Speaking as either a victim or the perpetrator: Interpreting at the Human Rights Violations Hearings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission.” Other topics that were explored were “Educational interpreting as a tool in conflict management in a young democracy” and

“‘If I knew enough Igbo words’ – French Journalists as Translators of the Nigerian Civil War.” The discussion of the Nigerian Civil war was about the impact of translation and interpretation by the media and the image French journalists present of a war situation in a context where none of the players in the selected Nigeria war spoke French.

The conference presentations on interpretation were chosen because they reflect the important role interpretation has played in conflict resolution and reportage of some of Africa’s most publicized conflicts. The next sub-section discusses academic discourse on translation at five conferences.

4.4 TRANSLATION CONFERENCES

The Annual Conference on African Linguistics (Massachusetts, USA, 2004); West African Languages Congress (Ibadan, Nigeria 2004; Ouidah, Benin 2006); Translation and Interculturality: Africa and the West (Groningen, the Netherlands 2004); and the Second Conference of International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (Cape Town, South Africa 2006) are the conference that will be presented in this sub-section.

The Annual Conference on African Linguistics is committed to the study of African languages and linguistics. The 35th conference took place in April 2004 at Harvard University, Massachusetts but its presentations were published online in 2006. Some presentations of interest to this study are “The Language Policy of Education in Ghana: A Critical Look at the English-Only Language Policy of Education” by Charles Owu-Ewie. He

examined language policies in Ghana and argued for the implementation of a late-exit transitional bilingual education language policy model. Owu-Ewie's findings were examined earlier on in Chapter Two. Another theme discussed at the presentation was "African Languages and Information and Communication Technologies: Literacy, Access, and the Future" by Donald Osborn. Osborn is the founder of *Bisharat!*, an African language and technology initiative that supports exchange of research information on ICT used with African languages. *Bisharat!* was mentioned earlier on in Chapter Three. At the 2006 conference in Salford, Osborn presented current use of African languages with Information and Communication Technologies. He emphasized the initiatives that promote the use of African languages on computers and the Internet. Another theme discussed at length at the conference by John P. Hutchison, African literature was "African Language Literature as a Weapon against African Language Marginalization". He discussed the empowerment of African languages through the publication of literature in these languages. He also explored the success and failure of literacy programs in indigenous languages across the continent. Other interesting topics that often come up in discussions of translation strategies, such as code-switching and use of loan words, were also discussed at the conference.

The second conference whose proceedings are discussed in this section is on "Translation and Interculturality: Africa and the West." It was held in April 2004 at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Strategies and types of translation in Africa were examined. Here is a selection of articles presented at the conference.

Emilie Sanon-Outtara, from Burkina Faso, studied code switching in translations of sermons from French to Jula (spoken in Burkina Faso). She analysed how interpreters alternate their

use of translation and code switching during interpretations of sermons. For example, when a preacher delivers his sermon in French, an interpreter transmits the same message in Jula. But sometimes, the preacher switches languages and preaches partly in Jula, partly in French. She saw this style of discourse as an extralinguistic feature of intratextual techniques of translation (omission, addition and explication). In her conclusion, Sanon-Outarra noted that translating and code switching keep the different parts of the sermon within the related culture and conventions of a particular language but in so doing, the translator highlights the “inequalities among speakers of prestigious and the local languages.”

The theme of the African postcolonial writer as a translator was also discussed. Supporting examples were drawn from examples given earlier on in Chapter Two about the self-translations of p'Bitek and Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the transliterations and transmutation strategies used by postcolonial African novelists.

Another relevant topic discussed was the use of footnotes in translations. In his presentation, entitled, “Des difficultés de traduire la littérature africaine ou défense et illustration des notes de bas de page à propos d'une première traduction en français d'un roman shona, *Ndiko Kupindana kwamazuva* de Ch. Mungoshi,” the linguist Michel Lafon described translation problems relating to cultural differences.

Translation as a political tool was discussed in a presentation entitled “Translation and nation-building in post apartheid South Africa”. Margreet de Lange of Utrecht University showed that with its 11 official languages, South Africa provides a veritable context for the practicalities of translation in supporting a functional multilingual society.

The next set of conferences to be mentioned was organized by the West African Languages Congress (WALC). WALC discusses language issues pertinent to the sub-region selected for this study. The West African Linguistic Society produces the *Journal of West African Languages* in addition to sponsoring WALC conferences. The 24th congress was held in August 2004 at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The theme for the congress was “Globalisation and the Future of African Languages.” It was co-hosted by the African Languages Technology Initiative and the National Institute of Nigerian Languages. The 25th congress was held in Ouidah, Benin in August 2006. An interesting topic discussed at this congress was dictionary-making in indigenous languages. The appropriateness of a bilingual policy of education was also questioned as well as the role of French and English loan words with specific references to the Byali language. The workshop on translation and terminology included the following presentations: “La traduction d'un texte spécialisé: recherche d'une terminologie appropriée”, and “Les problèmes de la traduction médicale: l'exemple de la langue igbo.”

The second International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies entitled, “Intervention in Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Encounters” was held in July 2006 at the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.⁸⁰ Of interest to this study was the panel discussion on “The Bible and its translations: colonial encounters with

80 IATIS was founded in Seoul, Korea, in 2004 under the aegis of UNESCO. It is “committed to the provision of an intellectual forum where scholars from different regional and disciplinary backgrounds can debate issues relating the translation and other forms of cross-cultural communication as they continue to develop in the 21st century.” (<http://www.iatis.org/content/about.php>)

the indigenous” with a contribution on “Bible translation into Ewondo as a tool of liberation.”

These conferences really showed that though translation in West Africa does not have as high a profile as it does in Canada (excluding maybe bilingual Cameroon), theoretically and practically, interpretation, translation and terminology in Africa jointly help encourage conflict resolution and nation building. The purpose of the brief presentation of these conferences was to give the reader a sample of research work that is ongoing in translation and interpretation studies and practice in Africa. Chapters One and Two referred to a lot of policies and recommendations with disappointedly, not as many implementation success stories. Though it seems as if there is a lot more talk than action about languages in Africa previous chapter—Chapter Three, and this one—Chapter Four have identified actual projects that have been successful in the fields of interpretation, translation, and language development in Africa. This chapter briefly showed specific ongoing research in African translation and interpretation; concrete results of language and translation recommendations made by African governments and ACALAN have also been presented.

CONCLUSION

Translation and interpretation link people and their activities and communities. As Annie Brisset, a founding member and current president of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS), said, "... translation as it is currently understood in its broader sense, that is, as an interface between cultures, has distinct sociological and political consequences."⁸¹ This study was an attempt to provide a bird's eye view of this sense of translation. In the introductory chapter, I described some experiences that influenced my choice of thesis topic, my research questions, my criteria for selecting target countries and the limitations of the study. In the four main chapters that followed, I presented translation and interpretation as part of cross-language communication, specifically in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, and then Africa as a whole.

A political and historical view of language (and translation) across the African continent was used as the starting block, in Chapter One, to explore the sociological, economic, judicial, religious and educational aspects of translation and languages in the West African sub-region. Literacy and translation are socio-economic development tools on the continent. There is an increase in translation, interpretation and primary use of indigenous languages in domains where communication was principally conducted in the official language—domains such as broadcasting, public debates, district assembly meetings and church

⁸¹ This quotation is from Brisset's closing address of the Second IATIS conference posted online. On its website, IATIS is described as an organization that is "committed to the provision of an intellectual forum where scholars from different regional and disciplinary backgrounds can debate issues relating [to] the translation and other forms of cross-cultural communication as they continue to develop in the 21st century." (2006) (<http://www.iatis.org>)

services. Contributions of Bible translators have gone beyond proselytization; research and terminology work on previously neglected minority languages has raised the profile of these languages and their communities. Most African language literacy programs are organized as part of income-generating workshops. Thus empowered by literacy skills and the knowledge that their language community is recognized as a valuable member of the country, neo-literates have begun to make great strides in supporting the financial development of their community and their nation as a whole. They are now able to make informed decisions on all aspects of national development—for example, education and literacy, health, agriculture, religion, cross-language communication with neighbouring communities and the democratization process. Indigenous language literacy classes often serve as bridges to formal education in official languages.

The stigma of being functionally illiterate in the official language is slowly being erased with research into multiple literacies and by the translation and interpretation of official documents into local African languages. It is unfortunate that there are not enough adult reading materials in indigenous languages to build on reading culture acquired from literacy in local languages. Globalization has led to the creation of knowledge societies, which, in turn, have led to the localization and Africanization of knowledge. In that context, I discussed some applications of technology to indigenous languages, especially in programming and on-line dictionary production. Specific examples on the inclusion of sub-Saharan African languages in cyberspace and how this inclusion might affect the culture of the African user were also discussed. The oral nature of the culture has not diminished with modernity and its heavy reliance on the written word. There are now rapid advancements in

technology and culture (e.g., information kiosks and audio translations of the Bible) that can preserve, save and promote the spoken African word in its oral form.

I focused on specific language, literacy and translation institutions in order to see how the selected institutions were contributing to pan-Africanism and promoting cross-language communication in all the languages spoken in Africa. A summary of several conferences was given to show ongoing research in cross-language and intercultural communication. The recent IATIS conference entitled “Intervention in Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Encounters”, held in July 2006, was a testimony to the growing research interest in translation as a multilingual, intercultural encounter. Significantly, the conference was held in the University of the Western Cape in South Africa.⁸² With its location, the conference assumed a symbolic value: African culture and languages are rich resources that need to be developed more. The University of the Western Cape was set up during the struggle for liberation under apartheid to promote graduate and postgraduate studies for coloured students. South Africa boasts 11 official languages including nine African languages. The designation of these African languages as official after the end of the apartheid system is a deliberate effort to promote local African languages and give them the same status as the official colonial languages. The conference had more presentations on translation of non-indigenous African languages than indigenous ones. This imbalance could indicate inadequacy of research into translation as an intercultural activity in Africa as well as

⁸² “In 1959, Parliament adopted legislation establishing the University College of the Western Cape as a constituent college of the University of South Africa for people classified as ‘Coloured’...In its mission statement of 1982, UWC Objectives, the university formally rejected the apartheid ideology on which it was established, adopting a declaration of nonracialism and ‘a firm commitment to the development of the Third World communities in South Africa’.”

In 1983, through the University of the Western Cape Act of 1983, the university finally gained its autonomy on the same terms as the established “white” institutions.” (http://www.uwc.ac.za/portal/public/about_uwc/history.htm)

insufficiency of translation projects between indigenous languages on the continent. There are quite a number of conferences that continually draw up recommendations for implementation and re-implementation of previous language recommendations. Many ambitious projects initiated by UNESCO, ACALAN and other well-meaning organizations have not achieved full implementation at the speed and depth required to enable African indigenous languages to compete successfully in a multilingual world. But terminology for modern concepts is being successfully developed in indigenous languages and these languages are being used increasingly in mainstream societal and official activities.

My study delved into various themes within the broad areas of language in education policies, peacekeeping, parliamentary and court proceedings, democratization, literacy and religion, computer-aided translation and application of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) to translation and interpretation in cross-language communication in the West African sub-region. The study has presented a broader outlook on the cross-communication situation in Africa and the part translation and terminology are playing in socio-economic development.

I do not consider my work a detailed and exhaustive description of the West African language situation but a summary of the changing roles of indigenous and non-indigenous languages. I was unable to provide in-depth knowledge of a particular country, though more detailed information on cross-communication was presented for Ghana than for any other targeted country. The thesis has been a presentation of a broad view of contexts within which translation and interpretation operate in the West African multilingual milieu. I have drawn attention to some of the continental and global factors that affect the coexistence of

languages in Africa. Attention has also been drawn to the fact that translation, interpretation and terminology are improving West Africans' participation in national development.

Further research that may develop from my study could include case studies of African translation schools and their impact on specific socio-economic development projects in their countries; analyses of translation processes of specific modern African literary and political discourse; the publication of translated African literary work and its influence on literacy; a longitudinal survey of ACALAN's five continent-wide core projects formulated in 2004; the relationship between the implementation of the African Union's Language Plan of Action and the development of the translation industry on the continent; the impact of online African language projects and the socio-economic consequence of pan-localization projects.

I believe my study is a contribution to the seldom-discussed African language component of intercultural studies and also to the translation of literary works in minority indigenous languages. I hope my study adds to what Margaret Mead, the founder of the Institute for Intercultural Studies in New York, includes in her objectives of intercultural studies: "Advancing knowledge of the various peoples and nations of the world, with special attention to those peoples and those aspects of their life which are likely to affect intercultural and international relations."⁸³

⁸³ Margaret Mead is said to be "the first anthropologist to look at human development in a cross-cultural perspective."
(<http://www.interculturalstudies.org/Mead/biography.html>)

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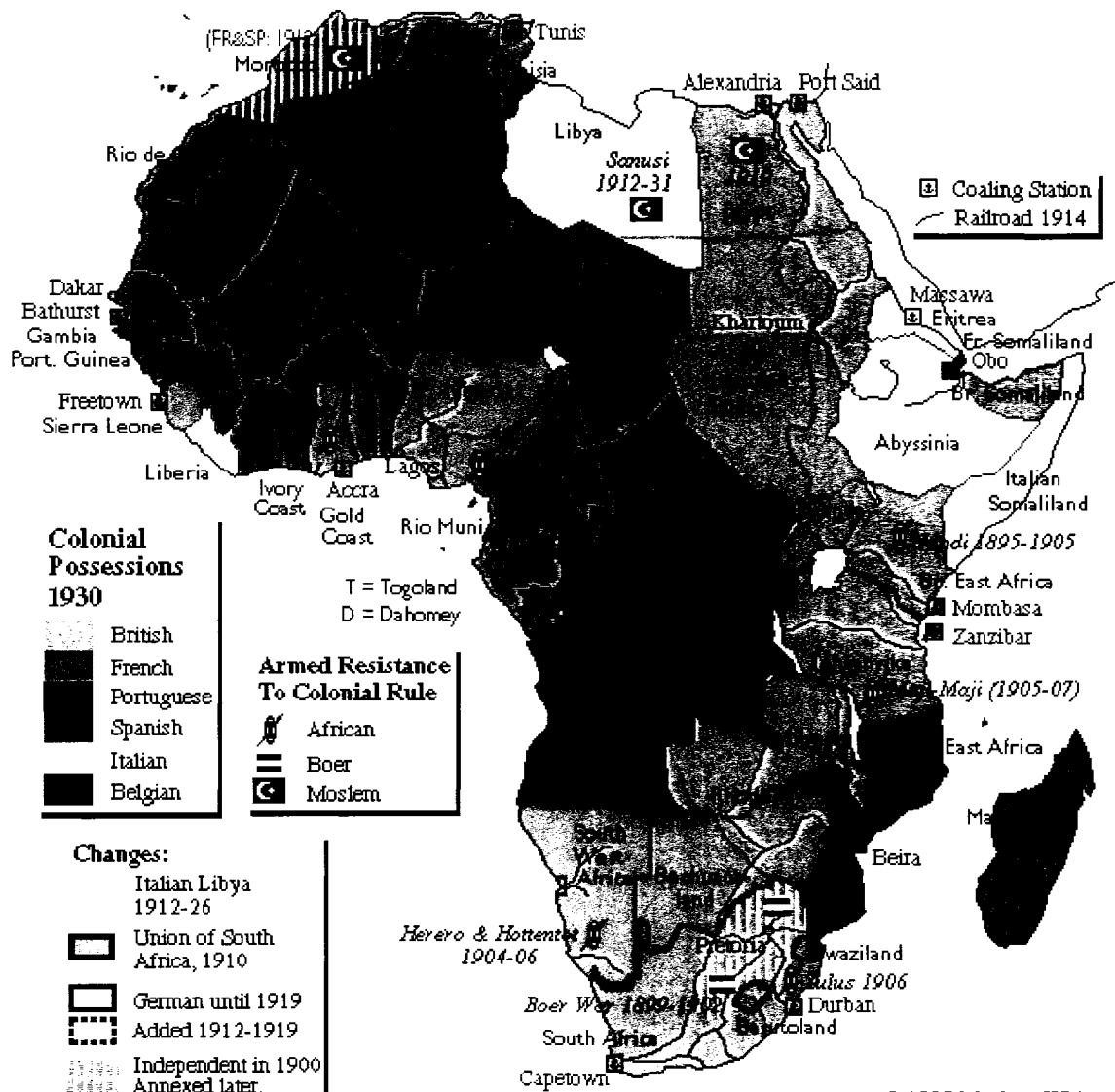
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APPENDIX 1
MAP OF AFRICA
IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Africa in the Early Twentieth Century



Contemporary Context:



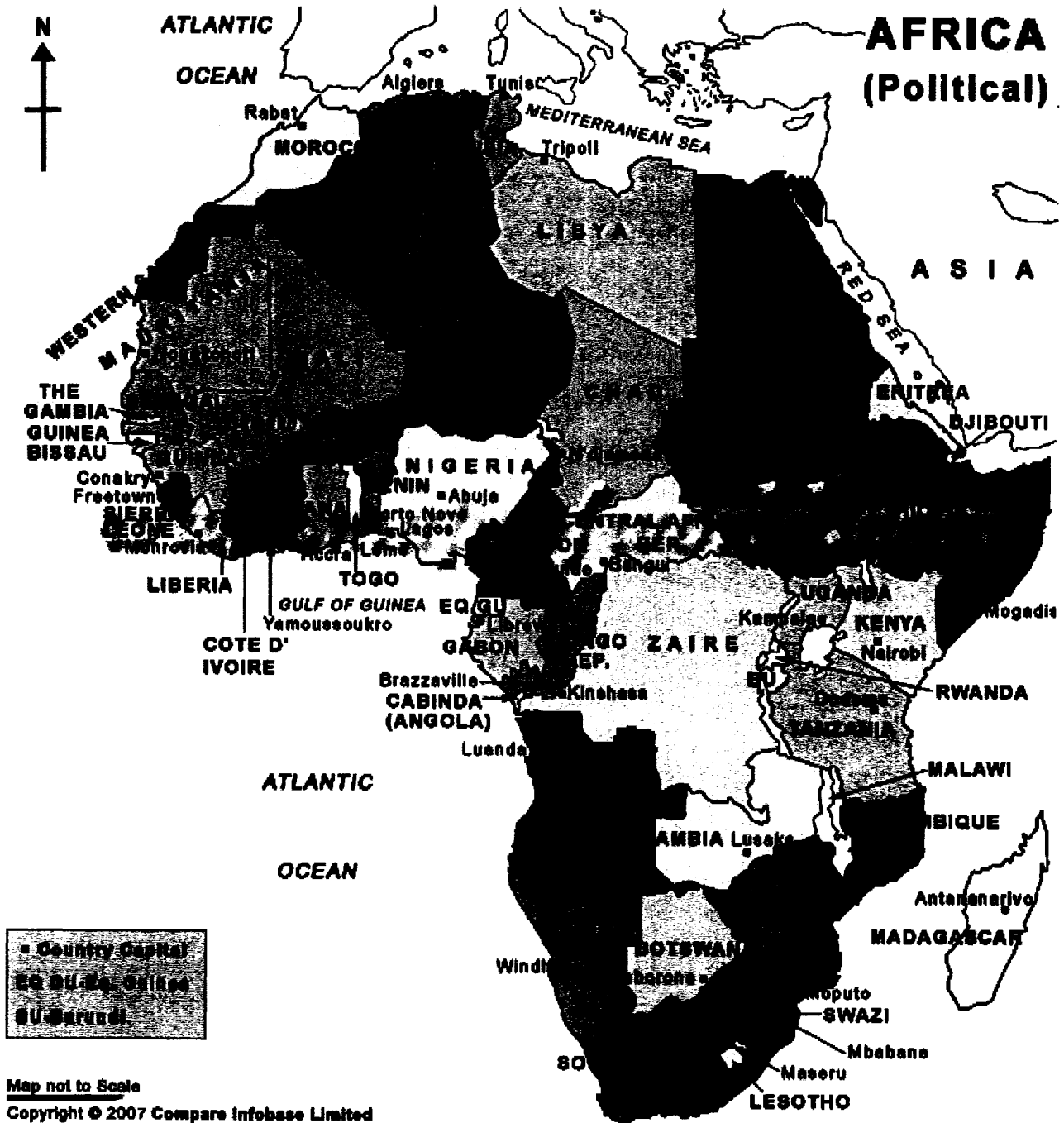
[to Table of Contents](#)

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APPENDIX 2

POLITICAL MAP OF AFRICA



APPENDIX 3
MAP OF WEST AFRICAN LANGUAGES

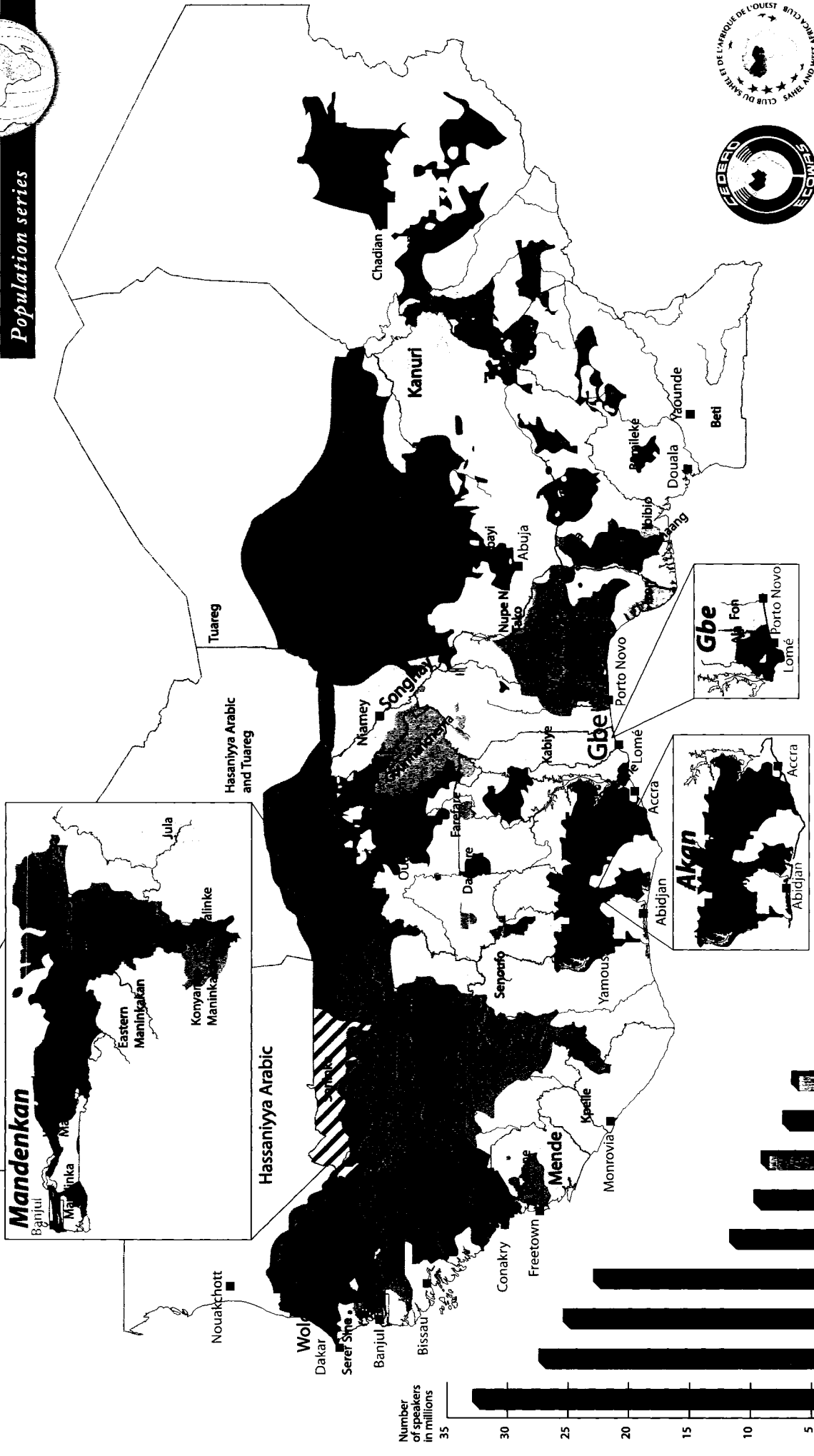


A in Regional Integration
in West Africa

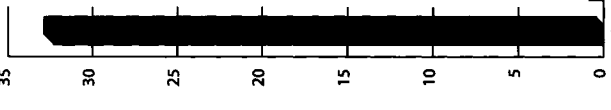
WEST AFRICAN LANGUAGES

(each language spoken by at least one million people, as estimated in 2005)
Provisional map

Population series



Number of speakers in millions



- Hausa
- Yoruba
- Fulfulde
- Igbo
- Mandenkan
- Akan
- Gbe
- Moore
- Kanuri
- Songhai
- Wolof
- Tiv
- Hassaniya Arabic
- Mende
- Ibibio
- Senoufo
- Beti
- Tuareg
- Themne
- Bamileke
- Dagaare
- Ebira
- Izon
- Soninke
- Anaang
- Dan
- Serer-Sine
- Igala
- Kpelle
- Susu
- Edo
- Chadian Arabic
- Nupe
- Gourmanchéna
- Ngambay



APPENDIX 4
AFRICAN COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AND THEIR
USE IN EDUCATION



AFRICAN COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AND THEIR USE IN EDUCATION

LES LANGUES COMMUNAUTAIRES AFRICAINES ET LEUR UTILISATION DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT

Mauritania/Mauritanie

■ Hassaniya	
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1P
■ Soninke	*3 1P
■ Wolof	*3 1P

Côte d'Ivoire

■ Baoulé	3S
■ Bété	
■ Dyula	*2 3S
■ Mandinka	*6 3S
■ Senufo	3S

Guinea/Guinée

■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1M, 2M
■ Kisi	1M, 2M
■ Kpelle	*2 1M, 2M
■ Loma	1M, 2M
■ Mandinka	*6 1M, 2M
■ Soso	1M, 2M

Senegal/Sénégal

■ Jola	1P
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1P
■ Mandinka	*6 1P
■ Seereer	1P
■ Soninke	*3 1P
■ Wolof	*3 1P, 3S

Gambia/Gambie

■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1P
■ Mandinka	*6 1P
■ Wolof	*3 1P

Guinea-Bissau/Guinée-Bissau

■ Crioulo	*4 1P
-----------	-------

Sierra Leone

■ Krio/Creole	*4 1P
■ Limba	1P
■ Mende	1P
■ Temne	1P

Cape Verde/Cap-Vert

■ Crioulo/Capverdien	*4 2S
----------------------	-------

Liberia/Libéria

■ Bassa	
■ Belle	1P
■ Kpelle	*2 1P
■ Krahin	1P
■ Mandinka	*6 1P
■ Vai	1P

Ghana

■ Akan	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Dagbani	1M
■ Dagbani	1M
■ Ewe	*2 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Ga	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Gonja	1M
■ Gurune	
■ Hausa	*3
■ Kasem	1M
■ Konkomba	
■ Kossia	
■ N'zema	1M
■ Sisala	

Togo

■ Ewe	*2 1M, 2S
■ Kabye	1M, 2S

Benin/Bénin

■ Adja	
■ Alzo	
■ Bariba	
■ Fon	
■ Gun	
■ Mahi	
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10
■ Somba	
■ Senufo	
■ Tori	
■ Wama	
■ Yoruba	*2
■ Zarma/Songhay	*4

Nigeria/Nigéria

■ Abua	
■ Aka	
■ Angas	
■ Berom	
■ Bura	
■ Chamba-Daka	
■ Dula	
■ Ebra	
■ Edo	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Efik	1M, 2S
■ Ekpeye	
■ Edo	
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Gwari	
■ Hausa	*3 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Ibibio	
■ Idoma	1M, 2S
■ Igala	1M, 2S
■ Igbo	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Igwe	
■ Ijo	1M, 2S
■ Ioko	
■ Kalabari	
■ Kanuri	
■ Kanuri	*2 1M, 2S
■ Lela	
■ Mursi	
■ Nde	1M, 2S
■ Pidgin/Creole	*4
■ Reshe	
■ Tiv	1M, 2S
■ Urhobo	
■ Yoruba	*2 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Zarma/Songhay	*4

Mali

■ Bambara	1M
■ Dogon	
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10
■ Mandinka	*6
■ Soninke	*3
■ Tamashek	*2
■ Zarma/Songhay	*4

Burkina Faso

■ Dyula	*2 1P, 3S
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Gurmantche	
■ Moore	1P, 3S

Niger

■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Hausa	*3 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Kanuri	*2 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Tamashek	*2 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Zarma/Songhay	*4 1P, 2S, 3S

Chad/Tchad

■ Barma	1P, 3S
■ Sara	1P, 3S
■ Turi	

Sudan/Soudan

■ Bari	1M, 3S
■ Dinka	1M, 3S
■ Mursi	1M, 3S
■ Nuer	
■ Zande	1M, 3S
■ Nubian	*7 3S
■ Nubian	1M, 3S

Gabon

■ Fang	*2
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Rep. of Congo/Rép. du Congo

■ Lingala	*2 3S
■ Munkutuba	*3 3S

Central African Rep./Rép. centrafricaine

■ Sango	1M, 3S
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Democratic Rep. of the Congo/Rép. démocratique du Congo

■ Cishwa	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Kikongo	*3 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Kiswahili	*7 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Lingala	*2 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Omba	

Ethiopia/Ethiopie

■ Amharic/Amharigna	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Oromo/Oromigna	
■ Tigré	
■ Tigrinya	
■ Wolaitiya	

Uganda/Ouganda

■ Ateso	1M
■ Kiswahili	*7 1P, 2S, 3S
■ Luganda	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Lugbara	1M
■ Luo	*2 1M
■ Runyankore	1M
■ Ruchiga	
■ Rutoro	1M

Somalia/Somalie

■ Somali	1M, 2M, 3S
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Kenya

■ Kalenjin	1M
■ Kikamba	1M
■ Kikuyu	1M
■ Kiswahili	*7 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Luhya	
■ Luo	*2 1M

Rwanda

■ Kinyarwanda	1M, 2M, 3S
■ Kiswahili	*7

Burundi

■ Kirundi	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Kiswahili	*7 3S

Tanzania/Tanzanie

■ Kiswahili	*7 1M, 2S, 3S
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Seychelles

■ Kreol/Seychellois	*2 1M
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Comoros/Comores

■ Ngazija/Comorien	1M
--------------------	----

Malawi

■ Chichewa	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Tumbuka	

Mozambique

■ Cusena/Cipodzo	
■ Imakha/Imvwa	
■ Kiswahili	*7
■ Shisonga	
■ Shona	*2

Mauritius/Maurice

■ Bhojpuri/Hindi	1S
■ Kreol/Mauricien	*2

Madagascar

■ Malagasy	1M, 2M, 3S
------------	------------

Zambia/Zambie

■ Bemba	1S, 2S, 3S
■ Kaonde	1S
■ Lozi	*2 1S, 2S, 3S
■ Lunda	1S
■ Luvale	1S
■ Nyanja	1S, 2S, 3S
■ Tonga	1S, 2S, 3S

Zimbabwe

■ Ndebele	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Shona	*2 1M, 2S, 3S

Swaziland

■ Swati	1M, 2S, 3S
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Botswana

■ Setswana	*2 1M, 2S, 3S
------------	---------------

Lesotho

■ Sesotho	1M, 2S, 3S
-----------	------------

Angola

■ Chokwe	1P
■ Fyote	1P
■ Kikongo	*3 1P
■ Kimbundu	1P
■ Kwanyama	1P
■ Nyanjila	1P
■ Umbundu	1P

South Africa

■ Sepedi	
■ Sesotho	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Setswana	1M, 2S, 3S
■ Stawati	
■ Tshivenda	2S, 3S
■ Xitsonga	
■ Ndebele	1P, 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Ndebele	1P, 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Ndebele	1P, 1M, 2S, 3S
■ Ndebele	1P, 1M, 2S, 3S

(1M indicates use as a medium of instruction ranging from Grades 1 to 3 in some schools formerly run by the Department of Education and Training)

Namibia/Namibie

■ Ambo	
■ Herero	
■ Kwangali	
■ Lozi	*2
■ Nama	
■ Setswana	*2

Notes

The symbol (*) indicates that the language is a community language. The figure which follows it indicates the number of countries where it is considered as a community language.

The numbers 1, 2 and 3 indicate first, second and third levels of education respectively. The letters 1M, 1S and 1P indicate respectively that a language is used as medium of instruction, as a subject of instruction only or as a pilot project.

Notes

Le symbole (*) indique que la langue est une langue communautaire dans plus d'un pays. Le chiffre qui suit l'indiquera le nombre de pays où cette langue est une langue communautaire.

Les chiffres 1, 2, 3 indiquent respectivement les niveaux primaires, secondaires et supérieurs de l'éducation. Les lettres 1M, 1S et 1P indiquent respectivement que la langue est utilisée comme moyen d'enseignement, comme matière enseignée ou dans le cadre d'un projet pilote.

São Tomé and Príncipe/ Sao Tomé et Príncipe

■ Crioulo/Saotomense	*4
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Equatorial Guinea/ Guinée équatoriale

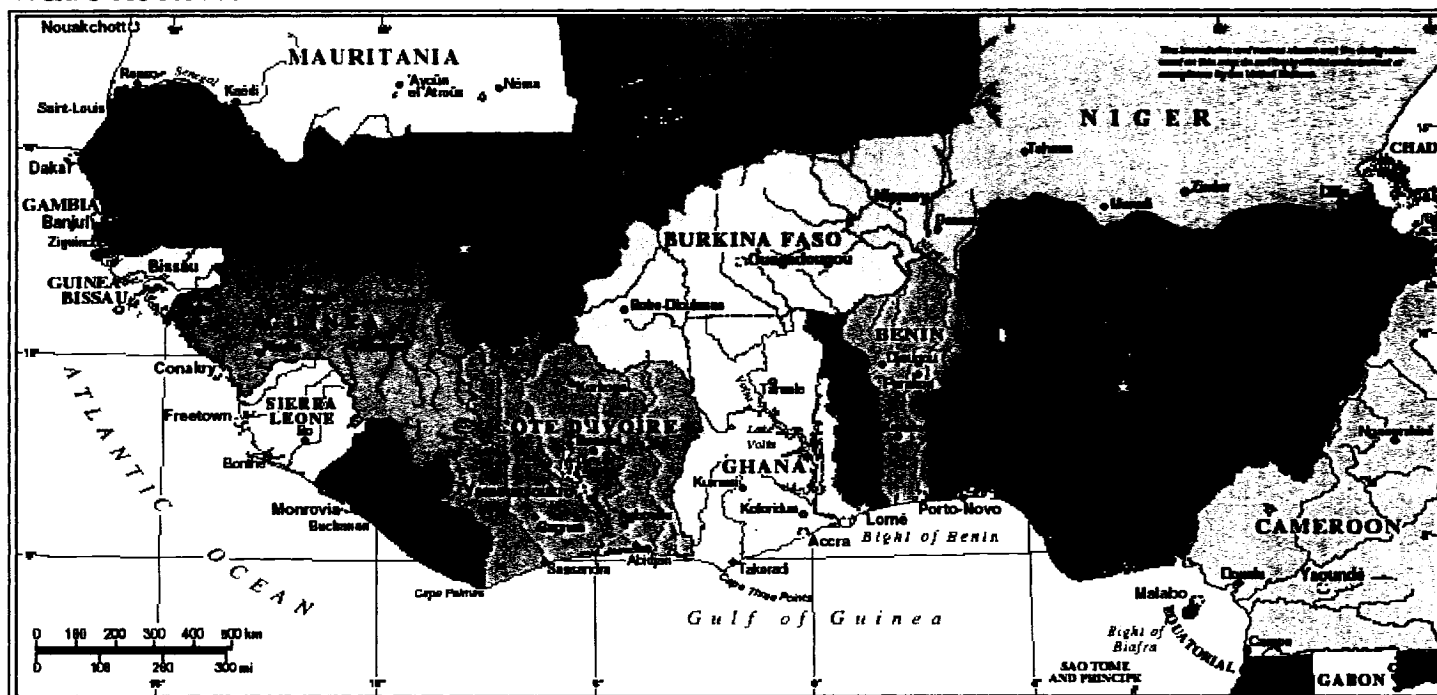
■ Creole/Fernandino	*4
■ Creole/Annobonense	*4
■ Fang	*2

Cameroon/Cameroun

■ Bamun	
■ Baka	
■ Creole	*4
■ Duala	
■ Ewondo	
■ Fefe	
■ Fulafulde/Pulaar	*10
■ Maka	
■ Mungaka/Bali	

APPENDIX 5
UNOWA WEST AFRICAN POLITICAL MAP

WEST AFRICA



Map No. 620 UNITED STATES
February 1975

Department of Personnel and Operations
Cartographic Section

APPENDIX 6

SYNOPSIS OF CAMEROON

A former colony of Germany, Cameroon gained independence from French administered UN-trusteeship on January 1, 1960. The Republic of Cameroon is a merger of French and British Cameroons. According to the *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition, Cameroon has 279 living languages, three languages that are second languages with no mother-tongue speakers and four extinct languages. Leclerc (2006) stated the Cameroonian population is made up of 78% French-speakers and 22% English-speakers. The majority of English-speaking Cameroonians live in the western provinces. Article 1 of the country's 1996 constitution indicates Cameroon has French and English as its official languages. It is the only country in Africa that has adopted such a policy. The constitution also provides for the promotion of bilingualism and national languages. Parliamentarians debate in the language of their choice and simultaneous translation is provided. Laws are published in both French and English. Cameroon has two systems of education: Francophone and Anglophone. Both systems promote bilingualism in French and English. The teaching of national languages is not prohibited, though learning a third language begins after primary school. The July 2006 estimated population of Cameroon as quoted by the *CIA World Factbook* is 17, 340,702, of which 79% is literate.

APPENDIX 7

SYNOPSIS OF THE GAMBIA AND SENEGAL

The Gambia

The smallest country on the continent is officially called the Republic of The Gambia but is simply referred to as Gambia. With a total area of 11,300 sq. km., The Gambia is embedded in Francophone Senegal except for its coastal belt at the North Atlantic Ocean. Though not categorically stated in the constitution, The Gambia's official language is English. English is also a requirement for election to Parliament. It is the language of governance and of administration. Law courts permit the use of local languages and the services of an interpreter are provided by the State (Leclerc 2006). The country has nine living languages (*SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition). It gained independence from the United Kingdom on February 18, 1965. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, the country's July 2006 population was estimated at 1,641,564. Out of this number, 40.1% is estimated to be literate.

Senegal

According to the *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition, Senegal has 36 living languages with French as its official language. It has an enclave, The Gambia, a country with English as its official language. Leclerc (2006) mentions that Articles 1 and 3 of the 2001 Senegalese constitution indicate French as the official language and the following as national languages: Diola, Malinké, Poular, Sérère, Soninké, Wolof, “and any other language that is so named.” Leclerc attributes the establishment of bilingual education (French and any of the six national languages) to the country’s first president and leading member of the pan-African Movement, Léopold Sédar Senghor.

Under the leadership of Senghor, Senegal gained independence from France on April 4, 1960. It became truly autonomous when its federation with Mali was dissolved in August 1960. The country is a founding member of NEPAD. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, Senegal had an estimated population of 11,987,121 in July 2006, of which 40.2% is literate.

APPENDIX 8

SYNOPSIS OF TANZANIA

(JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA)

The *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition indicated that the Republic of Tanzania, known in Swahili as *Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania*, has 127 living languages and one extinct language. Kiswahili (Swahili or Kiunguja as it is called in Zanzibar) is the official language. English is the second official language and is spoken by about 4.5% of the Tanzanian population (Leclerc 2006). Swahili is the main language of communication. Tanzanian children begin studying English at the end of the primary level and continue at the secondary level with English as the language of instruction. Tanzania remains one of the few countries with an African language as an official language. Arabic is studied in Koranic schools and used in the mosques, especially in Zanzibar.

Tanzania was formed from a merger of two countries, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanganyika gained independence from the UK in 1961 and Zanzibar gained independence from the UK in 1963. The *CIA World Factbook* puts Tanzania's estimated July 2006 population at 37,445,392. For those aged 15 years and older, 78% can read and write Kiswahili (Swahili), English or Arabic.

APPENDIX 9

SYNOPSIS OF TOGO

According to the *CIA World Factbook*, the estimated population of Togo as of July 2006 was 17,654,843. Literacy levels were also estimated at 50.9%. According to the *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition, Togo has 39 living languages with French as its official language. Article 3 in the 1991 Togolese constitution identifies French as the official language (Leclerc 2006). Oral communication is often in local languages in parliament, public offices and courtrooms but official pronouncements are given in French. The two national languages, Éwé and Kabiyé, are used alongside French at the primary level of education. Post-primary language of instruction is French. Acquisition of a second language (Arabic, English, German or Spanish) is compulsory at the secondary school level.

After World War One, Togo, the former German protectorate, was placed under joint British and French mandates. After World War Two, the two mandates became United Nations trust territories. British Togoland merged with Ghana, its neighbour to the west and French Togoland gained independence from France in 1960. The only subsequent change of government occurred in 2005, when President Gnassingbe Eyadema died and his son took over the reins of power. The resulting political uprisings have since been quelled.

APPENDIX 10

SYNOPSIS OF SOUTH AFRICA

At the southern tip of the continent lies South Africa. It is the African country with the most official languages: Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu. According to the *SIL Ethnologue* 2005 web edition, South Africa has 24 living languages, three that are second languages without mother-tongue speakers and four extinct languages. It is stated in the 1997 constitution that

Article 6

Languages

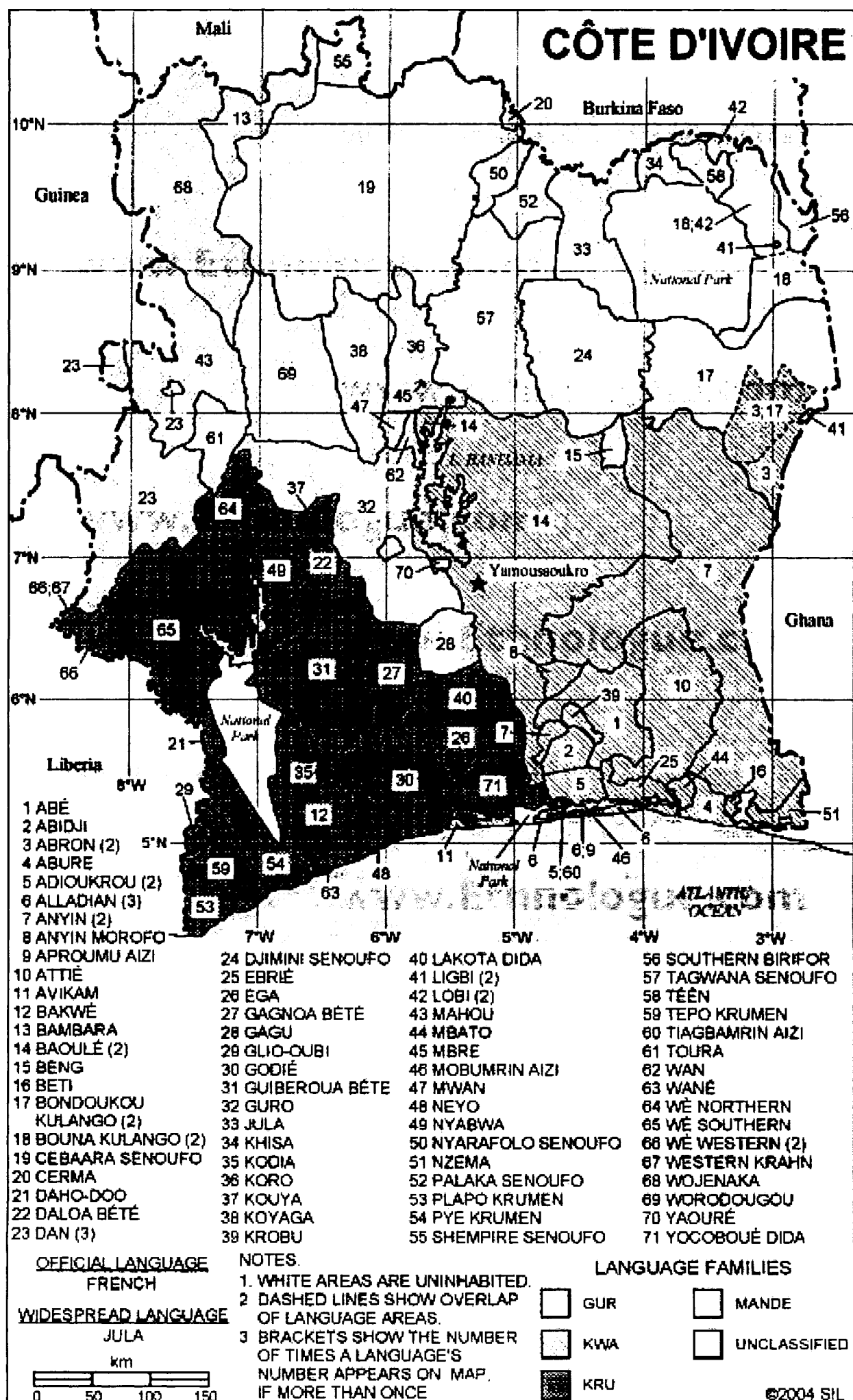
- (1) The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.
- (2) Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages.
- (3) National and provincial governments may use particular official languages for the purposes of government, taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances, and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in respective provinces; provided that no national or provincial government may use only one official language. Municipalities must take into consideration the language usage and preferences of their residents.
- (4) National and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor the use by those governments of official languages. Without detracting from the provisions of subsection (2), all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably.
- (5) The Pan South African Language Board must:
 - (a) promote and create conditions for the development and use of:
 - (i) all official languages;
 - (ii) the Khoi, Nama and San languages; and
 - (iii) sign language.
 - (b) promote and ensure respect for languages, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, and others commonly used by communities in South Africa, and Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and others used for religious purposes.

Leclerc, Jacques (2006) <http://www.tlfiq.ulaval.ca/axl/afrique/afriquesud.htm>

South Africa gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1910 but that political independence is not as celebrated as the end of its apartheid rule in 1994. It is a federal republic and an initiating member of NEPAD. The country's July 2006 population, as estimated in the *CIA World Factbook* is 44,187,637, of which 86.4% is literate.

Within South Africa are two countries: the kingdoms of Lesotho and Swaziland. Formerly called Basutoland, the Kingdom of Lesotho is a landlocked enclave within South Africa. Lesotho has English and Sesotho as its official languages. The Kingdom of Swaziland is sandwiched between South African and Mozambique. Swaziland has English and siSwati as its official languages.

APPENDIX 11
LANGUAGE MAP OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE



APPENDIX 12

LANGUAGE MAP OF GHANA

- 1 ABRON
- 2 ADANGBE
- 3 ADELE
- 4 AHANTA
- 5 AKAN (4)
- 6 AKPOSO
- 7 ANIMERE
- 8 ANUFO
- 9 ANYIN
- 10 AVATIME
- 11 AWUTU
- 12 BIMOBA
- 13 BISSA
- 14 BONDOUKOU
- KULANGO

- 15 BULI
- 16 CHAKALI
- 17 CHALA (2)
- 18 CHEREPON
- 19 CHUMBURUNG (3)
- 20 DAGBANI
- 21 DANGME (2)
- 22 DEG (2)
- 23 DELO
- 24 DWANG
- 25 ÈWÈ
- 26 FAREFARE
- 27 GA
- 28 GIKYODE
- 29 GONJA (3)
- 30 GUA
- 31 HANGA
- 32 JWIRA-PEPESA
- 33 KAMARA
- 34 KANTOSI (3)
- 35 KASEM
- 36 KONKOMBA (2)
- 37 KONNI
- 38 KPLANG
- 39 KRACHE
- 40 KUSAAL
- 41 LARTEH
- 42 LELEMI
- 43 LIGBI
- 44 LOGBA
- 45 MAMPRULI
- 46 NAFAANRA
- 47 NAWURI
- 48 NKONYA
- 49 NTCHAM
- 50 NYANGBO
- 51 NZEMA
- 52 PAASAAL
- 53 SAFALIBA
- 54 SEHWI
- 55 SEKPELE
- 56 SELEE
- 57 SIWU
- 58 SOUTHERN BIRIFOR
- 59 SOUTHERN DAGAARE

- 60 TAFI
- 61 TAMPULMA (2)
- 62 TUMULUNG
- SISAALA
- 63 TUWULI
- 64 VAGLA
- 65 WALI
- 66 WASA
- 67 WESTERN SISAALA

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

ENGLISH

LANGUAGE FAMILIES

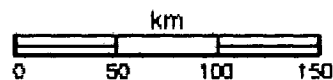


WIDESPREAD LANGUAGES

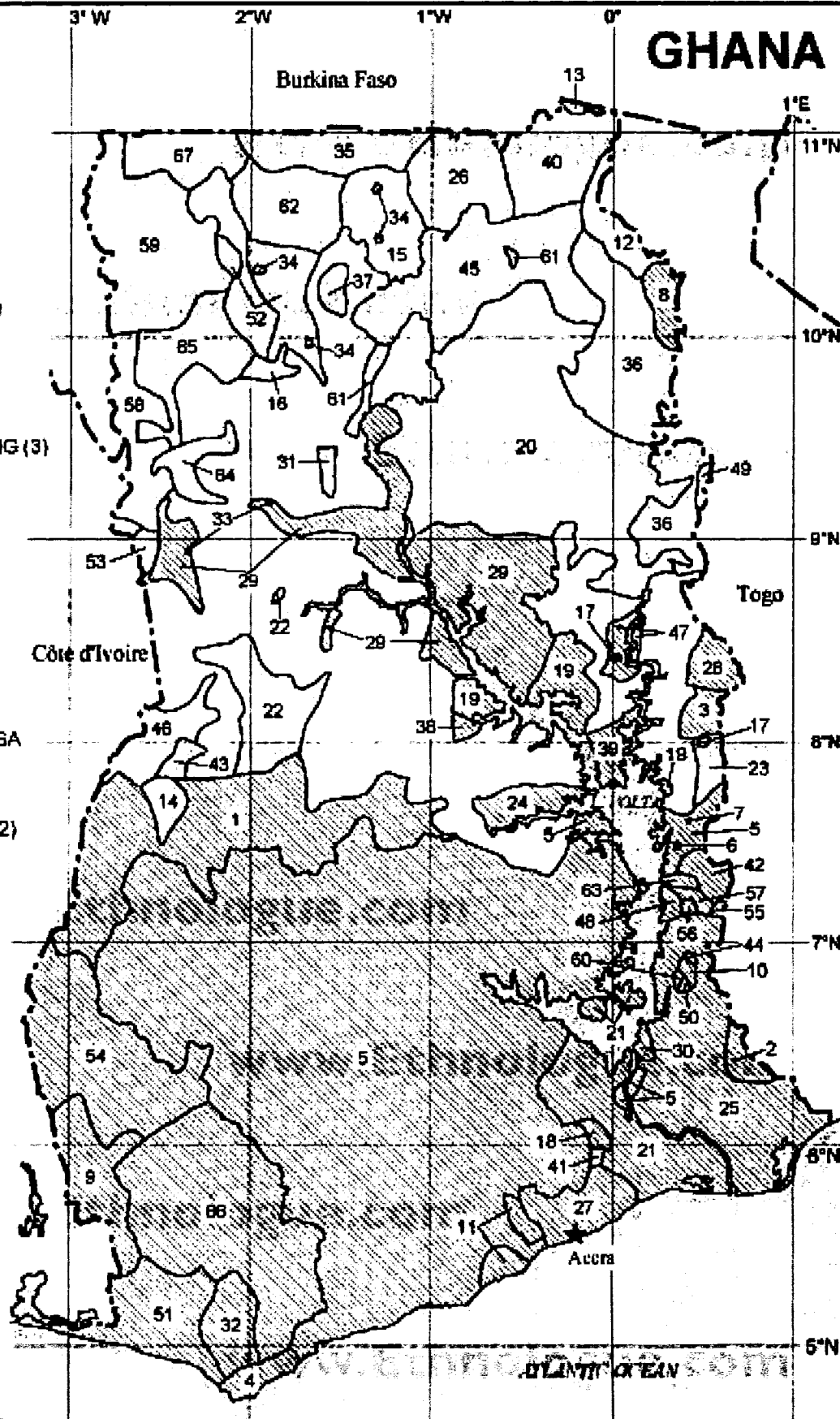
AKAN EWE
GHANAIAN SIGN LANGUAGE
HAUSA
MAASINA FULFULDE

NOTES

- 1 WHITE AREAS ARE VIRTUALLY UNINHABITED.
- 2 BRACKETS SHOW THE NUMBER OF TIMES A LANGUAGE'S NUMBER APPEARS ON MAP, IF MORE THAN ONCE



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APPENDIX 13

LANGUAGE MAP OF NIGERIA

NIGERIA INDEX MAP

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
ADAMAWA FULFULDE

EDO
EFIK
ENGLISH
HAUSA
IDOMA
IGBO
YERWA KANURI
YORUBA

LANGUAGE FAMILIES

AFRO-ASIATIC

NIGER-CONGO

NILO-SAHARAN

LANGUAGE ISOLATE

LEGEND

AREAS OF WIDESPREAD FULFULDE
LANGUAGES

AREAS WITH MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES

SPARSELY SETTLED AREAS

km



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NOTE:
DASHED LINES SHOW OVERLAP OF
LANGUAGE AREAS

