

Ukolonia in African Language Policies and Practices

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1. Introduction

Several sociolinguistic theories, including “rationalization” necessitated by pervasive multilingualism (Bamgbose 1991, among others), “elite closure” (Myers-Scotton 1993), “strategic game theory” (Laitin 1992), and “*ukolonia*” (Bokamba 2007), have been proposed in the African sociolinguistic literature to account for the current neo-colonialist African language policies. To my knowledge, there has not been a critical evaluation of these theories to ascertain their validity and explanatory power relative to each other in accounting for the facts of African language policy practices. For example, which of them accounts best for the African language outcomes and why? Are there independent pieces of evidence within or external to most of these policies to support some or any of the postulated “theories”, or are most of them based on mere assumptions?

This paper¹ considers these questions, among others, and offers a critical analysis of most of these theories by examining each of them and demonstrating their weaknesses. The evaluation draws on, among others, selected historical documents from the colonial era in justification of colonialist policies, an examination of the actual language planning process, and of other socio-political decisions taken by a sample of African politicians. For the latter the paper draws on recent social sciences research that Africanist linguists generally do not take into consideration in their analyses. Based on this cross-disciplinary research, the paper demonstrates that rationalization and elite closure have no explanatory power for the prevailing African language policies and actual practices: They represent, instead, outcomes of political inaction informed by the syndrome of *ukolonia* generally that is equally applicable in other African spheres of governance. In addition, it is argued that while strategic game theory is potentially applicable to African language policies in general, there is no evidence of its actual application to the status quo states. In conclusion, the paper presents *ukolonia* or *kasumba*² as the best theory to account for the existing exogenous and endogenous African language policies.

The paper is organized into four main sections in addition to this introduction and the conclusion. Section (2) provides an overview of the current language policies in the continent to account for these outcomes. Section (3) summarizes the elite closure and strategic game theories. Section (4) reviews African language ecologies and the ideological underpinnings that created the language policies of the day. It then critiques the above-mentioned theories by showing their limited strengths and major empirical weaknesses as explanatory theories. After this demonstration, the *ukolonia* theory is presented and defended as the most likely best explanation for the continent’s currently prevailing language policies and practices.

¹ This paper combines my presentation at ACAL 40 with a previous one delivered as a keynote address at the ACAL 39 banquet at the University of Georgia, Athens, the previous year.

² *Kasumba*, from Kiswahili, means ‘brainwashing’ in general without attribution to the source of that outcome. In this paper the term *ukolonia*, also from Kiswahili, is preferred as it captures in our mind the combination of colonization and brainwashing. In this respect it is used to indicate the colonization of the mind.

2. Overview of Language and Current Explanations

2.1. Research overview

In the interest of argumentation, let me begin with an overview of the familiar continent's language policies in public domains. Most African states, from Casablanca to Cape Town, officially achieved political independence in the early 1960s. From a decolonization or liberation perspective, one of the surprising outcomes of the continent is that the language policies in 34 out of the 54 African states³, excluding the newest state, South Sudan, remain to-date characteristically static in the sense that they have maintained the legacies of the former colonial powers. Typically in these cases the languages of the colonial masters, viz., English, French, and Portuguese, are utilized as the exclusive media of governance, education, mass media, and international communication (Bokamba 1976, 1984a, 1984b, 1995, 2007, Gorman 1974, Bamgbose 1991, 2000, and also in this volume). In contrast, major African languages, which are the daily media of communication for the overwhelming majority of the citizens, are largely relegated to inter-group, in-group communication and limited to nominal communicative roles such as use in experimental basic education (i.e., 1st to 3rd grade) and in the same grades in regular elementary programs mainly in rural communities, in educational programs on radio and television for a few hours per day, in urban centers' marketplaces, in commercial advertisement in such centers and in worship services.

In contrast to these prevailing exoglossic policies, six countries in northern Africa (viz., Algeria, Djibuti, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, and Morocco) and fifteen in Sub-Saharan Africa (Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Tanzania) have adopted language policies that advocate the utilization of selected African and European languages.

It must be pointed out here that most of these language policies, with the exception of that of the Republic of South Africa (RSA), and to a limited extent those of DRC, Tanzania, Kenya, and Nigeria, are declared, rather than formulated and debated policies. The RSA's language policy was formulated by a language task force during the constitutional negotiations during the interim post-Apartheid government, and received considerable debate in the RSA's parliament before its final adoption as Article 6 of the 1996 Constitution (LANGTAG 1996). The Tanzanian nationalist policy, which used to be viewed as a model policy until it retrograded in 1980, was declared and adopted by the Tanzanian liberation party (TANU – Tanganyika African National Union) led by the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. To our knowledge, the policy did not undergo the kind of parliamentary scrutiny that characterized the RSA's policy. While the Kenyan's language policy was formulated by a series of duly appointed educational reform commissions during Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's administration, its adoption, again, was at the level KANU (Kenya African National Union), the then dominant political party, and accepted in the Kenyan Parliament by declaration of President Kenyatta in 1974 (Gorman 1971, Myers-Scotton 1978, Roy-Campbell 2001, Bokamba 2007). That of DRC represents by and large the continuation of pre-decolonization policies formulated by church missions that dominated public education during the colonial period (1908-1960). The policy underwent major revisions in May 1974 at the first conference of Congolese linguists held at what was then called the National University of Zaire at the Lubumbashi campus. Its adoption and eventual sporadic implementation by the Mobutu's administration received no debate in the Congolese parliament (Bokamba 1976, 2008). This type of language planning and policy adoption by declaration or mere transfer of colonial-era policies into a national constitutions without due debate approach is replicated in most other African states, including Ethiopia (where Amharic was decreed as the sole national and official by Emperor Menelik), Ghana, Morocco, and Nigeria.

³ South Sudan, which became independent this summer by a negotiated cessation from Northern Sudan, brings the continent's total to 55 states.

2.2. Policies assessment

These policies that privilege the former colonist languages at the detriment of African *linguae francae* have yielded very poor results in education in general with high attrition rates (cf., e.g., Rideout, et al. 1969, Bolibaugh 1972, Bokamba 1984a, b, and Roy-Campbell 2001) and continuing high illiteracy for most of the countries in the continent, as indicated in part in Table 1 where Africa ranks at the bottom of all continents.

Table 1. Adult (15+) Literacy Rates by Region and Gender for 2000-2004

Region	Adult Literacy Rate (%): 2000-2004		
	Total	Male	Female
UNESCO Regions			
World	82	87	77
<i>Africa</i>	63	72	54
Americas:	94	94	93
North America	96	96	95
South America	91	91	90
Asia	79	86	73
Europe	99	99	99
Oceania	93	94	93
Education For All (EFA) Regions			
World:	82	87	77
Developed Countries	99	99	99
Countries in Transition	99	100	99
Developing Countries	77	84	70
Arab States	66	77	55
Central and Eastern Europe	97	99	96
Central Asia	99	100	99
East Asia and the Pacific:	92	95	88
East Asia	92	95	88
The Pacific	93	94	93
Latin America and the Caribbean:	90	91	89
Caribbean	70	70	70
Latin America	90	91	90
North America and Western Europe	99	99	99
South and West Asia	59	71	46
<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	61	70	53

Source: <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/tableviewer/document.aspx?FileId=179>

The extent of the illiteracy in the official languages becomes even more striking when one surveys the statistics on a state-by-state basis, as Table 2 below shows:

Table 2. Adult (15+) Literacy rates by sex per African states, 1990 – 2004

Country	1990			1995			2000 - 2004		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Algeria	55	68	41	62	74	49	70	80	60
Benin	30	42	19	37	49	26	35	48	23
Botswana	65	78	55	70	81	60	81	80	82
Burkina Faso	16	26	7	19	29	9	22	29	15
Burundi	31	45	19	35	49	22	59	67	52
Cameroon	57	70	44	63	75	52	68	77	60
C. African Rep	50	60	41	60	68	52	49	65	33
Chad	43	57	29	48	62	35	26	41	13
Congo	68	78	59	75	83	67	...	...	...
Côte d'Ivoire	34	44	24	40	50	30	49	61	39
D.R. Congo	72	83	61	77	87	68	67	81	54
Egypt	48	60	34	51	64	39	71	83	59
Ethiopia	31	41	21	35	46	25	...	...	...
Ghana	58	71	46	65	76	54	58	66	50
Guinea	31	45	18	36	50	22	29	43	18
Kenya	72	82	62	78	86	70	74	78	70
Lesotho	67	78	57	71	81	62	82	74	90
Malawi	52	69	37	56	72	42	64	75	54
Mali	25	32	17	31	39	23	19	27	12
Mauritania	35	47	24	38	50	26	51	60	43
Mauritius	80	85	75	83	87	79	84	88	81
Morocco	...	...	...	...	...	...	52	66	40
Namibia	...	...	...	...	...	...	85	87	83
Niger	12	18	5	14	21	7	29	43	15
Nigeria	49	61	39	57	67	47	...	...	...
Rwanda	54	65	44	61	70	52	65	71	60
Senegal	29	39	19	33	43	23	39	51	29
Sierra Leone	27	40	14	31	45	18	35	47	24
South Africa	80	80	79	82	82	82	82	84	81
Sudan	40	53	28	46	58	35	61	71	52
Swaziland	72	74	71	77	78	76	80	81	78
Togo	45	61	30	52	67	37	53	69	38
Tunisia	60	73	47	67	79	55	74	83	65
Uganda	57	70	44	62	74	50	67	77	58
Tanzania	62	75	49	68	79	57	69	78	62
Zambia	73	82	65	78	86	71	68	76	60

Sources: CIA: The World Factbook. 2003:

<http://www.umsl.edu/services/govdocs/wofact2003/fields/2098.html>.UNESCO 2005: <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/tableviewer/document.aspx?FileId=177>

Admittedly, most of the states have made dramatic progress since the early 1990, and even more so since the 1960s with regard to the aggregated population literacy; but many others remain stagnant, while a few have retrograded within the period surveyed above. Further, with a few exceptions, the literacy rates for women continue to lag far behind those of their male counterparts in most of the states, as shown in Table 2. This is a most unfortunate outcome considering that women, in most

societies, including African, constitute fifty to fifty one percent of any population; and that they are the parents who play the critical role of raising their school-age children. To the extent that the ability to write and read is a key factor in personal and national development, how can African states justify the continuation of these low literacy rates after over a half a century of political independence and in a global economy where industrialized states boast literacy rates in the 90 percentiles?.

To return to the policies that have contributed to outcomes such as those in Table 1 and 2, especially for individuals who are not familiar with the language planning literature in Africa, a contextualizing summary is in order here. In Ethiopia, Amharic has served as the national language for centuries, with Tigrinya, and Oromo having been recognized in the 1980s as national languages for the purpose of literacy and provincial administration. Tanzania adopted Kiswahili as its national and official language in 1967, after being designated by the government as the national language in 1962, with English serving as a *de facto* co-official language in the judicial system (Roy-Campbell 2001). The recognition of Kiswahili as a national language reflects the historical roles it played during the successive German and British colonization, and during the liberation struggle from the late 1950s against the latter. In 1980 this nationalistic policy that privileged Kiswahili over the other 127 indigenous languages suffered a setback when English, which was to be phased out of secondary education by then as the exclusive medium of instruction, was reinstated as one of its media on the putative grounds that students were becoming less proficient in English (Roy-Campbell 2001). This reversal in the language policy was adopted, reportedly, under pressure from the World Bank and Britain, in spite of the great successes that the national and liberation struggle movement inspired policy achieved by 1980 (Roy-Campbell 2001).

The establishment of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in Nigeria in 1977 promoted Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba to the status of national languages, while maintaining English as the sole official language (Bamgbose 1991, Adebija 1994). This policy was strengthened when the 1979 Nigerian Constitution authorized the use of these three languages as official media, along with English, of debates in the State and National assemblies (Adebija 2004, Simpson and Oyètádé 2008). Similarly, the new constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo adopted in December 2005 recognizes Kikongo, Kiswahili, Lingala, and Tshiluba as “national languages” in its Section 1, Article 1, but grants French the exclusive official language status.

Initially at the advent of Kagame to power in Rwanda (1994), Kinyarwanda was firmly established as the national and official language with the customary functional attributions in the public domains, with French as the co-official language that served as the medium of post-primary education. In 2003, however, this policy underwent a major declarative change when English not only replaced French as the main co-official language, but also both Kinyarwanda and French became marginalized by reduction of their functional allocations in the public domains. A similar policy has been adopted by Burundi where Kirundi, a variety of Kinyarwanda, functions as the national/official language with French as its co-official counterpart.

Zambia has declared a total of eight languages, consisting of seven indigenous languages (*viz.*, Bemba, Nyanja-Chewa, Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Kaonde, Luvale), and English as official languages. As in most other states, however, English functions as the dominant medium in all the public domains, including the written press (Marten and Kula 2008, CIA World Facts Book 2010). Similarly, the Republic of South Africa, that has the most ambitious language policy, has recognized nine indigenous and two transplanted languages as official languages: Ndebele, Xhosa, Zulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Siswati, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitonga, Afrikaans, and English in its 1996 national constitution (Webb 2002, Kamwangamalu 2004). This policy is the result of arduous debates that occurred prior to and subsequent to the adoption of the 1996 constitution (*cf.* LANGTAG 1996). It has emerged as one of the most thoughtful language legislations, with an established bureau, called PANSALB (Pan South African Language Board), located initially in the Ministry of Arts and Cultures and then transferred to the President’s office in 2000 to assist the provinces with the implementation of the policy at that level by selecting a provincial language *à la* India. Since its adoption, however, the provinces have been criticized for being too slow in developing appropriate language policies; as a result, English has emerged in practice or *de facto* as the pan-South African official and national language in most of the key public domains, while the other ten official languages play important roles in regional

communication, in broadcast media, utilization in some school systems, and publicity (Webb 2002, Kamwangamalu 2004, Mesthrie 2008).

2.3. *Potential theoretical explanations*

As stated earlier in this study, the practice of privileging the former colonial languages in national and international communicative functions at the exclusion of indigenous African languages was described variously as "status quo" by various researchers in the 1970-80s, as "elite closure" by Myers-Scotton (1993), and as "language exclusion" by Bamgbose (2000). A number of hypotheses have been advanced in the past to account for this state of affairs, with the most common being the obstacles of pervasive multilingualism in much of the continent, the underdevelopment of African languages, and their implications for the national, cost effective, and expedient implementation of appropriate language policies (See also Bamgbose in this volume). More specifically, the lack of endogenous language policies in much of Africa has been blamed largely on the so-called problems of multilingualism and the underdevelopment state of African languages. These two facts have in turn been used to support the status quo on the inherited colonial language policies. Four main arguments, which Ansre (1976) correctly characterizes as "rationalizations," were advanced by past political leaders in the 1960s through the mid-1980s to justify their inaction in this respect: (1) national unity, (2) national development/progress, (3) efficiency of European languages, and (4) cost effectiveness (Spencer 1971, Whiteley 1971, Ansre 1976, Bokamba and Tlou 1977, Mateene 1975, Bokamba 1984a, 1984b, 1995, 2007, Bamgbose 1991).

The weaknesses and fallacies of these rationalizations have been amply demonstrated in several studies, including Bamgbose (1991), Bokamba (1995, 2007) and more recently in Djité (2008), and also Bamgbose (in this volume). It is, therefore, unnecessary to repeat that analysis here. Suffice it to point out that none of them warrants the conclusions that have excluded the formulation and implementation of endogenous language policies in most of the African 54 states. Given this fact, what alternative explanations are there to account for the prevailing neo-colonial African language policies summarized above? For example, are these policies informed by ideological, rather than factual consideration? The paper takes up these questions.

3. "Theories" Regarding African Language Outcomes

A fundamental question that arises after reviewing African language policies is why African states, after approximately 60 years of supposedly political independence, have continued to privilege European languages as official media in public domains at the expense of African languages. A number of explanations, often referred to as "theories", have been proposed in the African language planning literature to address this question. The two best known and often cited in the African sociolinguistic literature are Myers-Scotton's (1990/1993) "elite closure" theory and Laitin's (1992) "critical game theory". Let us review and critically evaluate each of them in turn.

3.1. *Elite closure hypothesis*

Myers-Scotton, in a paper presented initially at the 30th ACAL at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1990 and subsequently published in 1993, attempts to analyze the ideological underpinnings of the exclusive exoglossic policies of African states after over three decades of decolonization then, and to highlight the effects of these policies in Africa. She claims that African political elites have refused to change the inherited language policies, because they serve as a boundary marker between them and the masses, and thus enable the elite to retain exclusionary access to the kind of upward mobility that these policies facilitate. According to Myers-Scotton (1993: 149),

1. Elite closure is a type of social mobilization strategy by which those persons in power establish or maintain powers and privileges via linguistic choices. ... elite closure is accomplished when the

elite successfully employs official language policies and their own non-formalized language usage patterns to limit access of non-elite groups to political position and socio-economic advancement.

She maintains that elite closure is driven by the following three sociolinguistic universals that facilitate its onset and retention until the language use circumstances change:

2. Sociolinguistic universals:

- a. not all people in the same community speak the same linguistic varieties;
- b. the linguistic varieties in use in any community are generally allocated to different situational uses;
- c. [and] all varieties are either positively or negatively evaluated by community members, according to their use in a specific type of interaction (Myers-Scotton 1993: 149).

Myers-Scotton (1993: 150) argues that these sociolinguistic universals make elite closure “a powerful language strategy” through the demonstration of their mastery of the varieties of official language(s) that are distinct from those used by the non-elite, the selections of registers in public situations, and the valorization of their register(s).

Myers-Scotton makes a persuasive case in her study by drawing data not only from African languages, but also from other regions where elite closure appears to be attested. Further, she offers an extensive analysis of the different aspects of the elite closure phenomenon by observing, among other things, that there are “ ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ versions of elite closure” that involve the conjunction of different sociolinguistic parameters, and that speakers’ aspirations for the benefits to be gained via the mastery and utilization of an official language greatly enhance the power of elite closure as a linguistic strategy (Myers-Scotton 1993).

Although Myers-Scotton (1993: 160) does not explicitly claim “elite closure” to be an explanation for the status quo on language planning in Africa, she suggests that her analysis “seems compatible with either a psychologically or an economically based model, or both”. If I interpret her correctly, as maintained in Bokamba (2007), this statement means that the concept of “elite closure” characterizes both a socio-psychological phenomenon, and serves as an explanatory tool or a model through which scholars can understand language policy decisions, on one hand, and language policy practices⁴, on the other hand in Africa. But is this conclusion accurate? We shall return to this question in section (4) below. In the meantime, let us examine Laitin’s (1992) “strategic game theory”.

3.2. *Strategic Game Theory*

According to Laitin (1992), “strategic game theory” assumes that decisions concerning policies in nation building are like a game involving two players or teams whereby each of them brings a strategy or a series thereof to maximize its success over its opponent(s). The game is said to involve a series of strategic “moves” to achieve maximum success. If both players or teams are similarly skillful, they may reach a level of “equilibrium” whereby each of them “wins” something; if not, the most skillful or strategic player(s)/team(s) defeat(s) its/their opponent (Laitin 1992: 34ff). In Laitin’s own words,

3. Game theory assumes that individuals, groups, or organizations (‘players’) have a variety of goals that can be ordered in terms of their desirability. (Such an ordering is called a ‘preference function’.) The attainment of their goals depends, however, on the choices made by other players. Players must therefore choose a course of action (‘strategy’) that takes into account the likely

⁴ We are distinguishing here the outcome of language planning, which is a language policy or legislation, versus the actual practice or implementation of that policy. This distinction is important because, as discussed above, most African states *declare* language policies, with some of them being grandiose for national propaganda purposes (such a declaring all languages in a nation to be ‘national languages’), but they often do not follow through on the implementation of such policies. Thus, as Bamgbose correctly argues in his paper in this volume, such language policies are vacuous as they are only paper policies, not implementable legislations.

decisions of other players. When both players choose a strategy, the confluence of their choices is the 'strategic outcome'. We say that the outcome is in 'equilibrium when each player looks at the outcome and realizes that one could do no better by unilaterally changing one's strategy.

It is to be noted here, however, that Laitin also envisions an apparent default strategy that he refers to as "a dominant strategy" (Laitin 1992: 167):

4. *By a 'dominant strategy' [in Strategic Game Theory] is meant that a player will do equally well or better by making a specific choice, no matter what the other player chooses. [Added emphasis, EGB]*

In advancing this theory as an explanation for African language outcomes, Laitin (1992) assumes, but does not demonstrate, that African politicians have played strategically or not the game of language planning against their former colonizers. Under this scenario, the retention of the colonial language policies in most of the states indicates that the former colonial powers won by playing more strategically than the African politicians, or that the former applied "the dominant strategy" to defeat the latter who presumably could not counter them.

On the basis of the published literature, we can state with little hesitation that this theory applies to the case of RSA where selected representatives of the ruling Afrikaners and the subjugated black South Africans (inclusive of Indians) met in the language task force to formulate and debate the country's language policy that eventually resulted in equilibrium: The former managed to retain Afrikaans and English, while the latter elevated the indigenous Bantu languages to the status of official, not "tribal" languages (LANGTAG 1996). The strategic game theory seems to apply also to Algeria where a significant French settlers population participated as citizens in the establishment of the initial policy that advocated the use of Arabic as the official language immediately after the advent of independence in 1962, instead of retaining French during Algeria's era of heightened nationalism symbolized by Arabic (Benrabah 2007). A similar situation obtained four years earlier in Tunisia, another French settler colony, upon its advent to independence in 1958 when Arabic was recognized as the national and official language (Daoud 2007), with French as a co-official language that underwent a phase-out of its role as the language of education in the school system from that period until 1997. Arabisation was applied also to public administration and continues today (Daoud 2007), while French is being taught as an obligatory subject.

Moroccan language policy appears to be similar to those in Algeria and Tunisia in granting Arabic the role of national and official language, and pushing the phasing out of French in the school system altogether (Ennaji 2005, Ennaji and Sadiqi 2008) through the Arabization movement, but it is unclear from these studies how the actual planning that produced this policy transpired. We cannot, therefore, ascertain if Laitin's (1992) strategic game theory had applied here. Similarly, it is unclear from Egypt's long and complicated history of cycles of invasions/occupations and liberation, that the country had to even address the question of choosing another language besides Arabic after a given period of sovereignty recovery. Thus, we cannot ascertain if the strategic game theory was applicable to its language policy that stipulates Arabic as the national and official language.

It appears from this brief survey that RSA, Algeria and Tunisia are clearly exceptions to the dominant paradigm that has been applied elsewhere in the continent where language policy have not been planned and adopted on the basis of strategic game theory-oriented debates involving Africans and their former colonizers. Strategic game theory, therefore, does not apply to the 34 out of the 54 African states. In view of this, the theory has no empirical basis and explanatory power in accounting for such policy outcomes and practices. African politicians have not played the game either strategically or otherwise, unless one assumes that some of them in each country were proxies of the former colonial masters if and when the governments in which they participated at the time of the writing of their constitutions discussed the retention of the pre-independence language policy. To our knowledge, there is no such a published documentation of deliberate debate in any of the parliaments or language task forces outside of the RSA's case.

These conclusions leave us without an informed explanation of the language policies described above. Is such an explanation possible? The answer is a definite yes, and it is based on the theory of

ukolonia proposed and discussed in a preliminary fashion in Bokamba (2007). We now turn our attention to it, offering sample pieces of evidence from other areas of African life, beginning with an important socio-cultural background.

4. The language ecology in Africa

To gain a better appreciation of the dilemmas facing Africa, especially the Sub-Saharan region, one must understand the realities under which African and the transplanted European languages function. As discussed in Bokamba (2007, 2008), this is a dynamic and complex environment that covers not only the languages and various modern sectors, but more importantly for our purposes here, the mind set of African elites, aspiring elites, and the masses (Fanon 1967, Mabika Kalanda 1962). This section of the study summarizes the language ideologies and ecological conditions that mediate and bear upon African lives, and attempts to reveal selected aspects of the objectivization of Africans and the denigration of their cultures that have implanted *ukolonia*. Let us first return to Myers-Scotton's elite closure theory.

4.1. Language ecologies and ideologies

4.1.1. Ecologies

Myers-Scotton's (1993) elite closure theory has some merit, as suggested previously in this study. First, she has succeeded in conceptualizing a phenomenon that a number of other scholars have discussed and understood (see, e.g. Ansre 1976, Bokamba and Tlou 1977, Bokamba 1984b, Bamgbose 1991), but have never named. Second, her observations are quite useful at some level of analysis in characterizing African politicians' tepid action *vis-à-vis* language planning to reflect their respective states' sovereignty and autonomous, rather than dependent, development; as well as in capturing how this behavior benefits such politicians at the detriment of over 80% of their country's inhabitants (cf., e.g., Djité 2008). And third, her analysis could be extended to explain in part why pervasively monolingual states such as Botswana, Burundi, Djibuti, Lesotho, Rwanda, Somalia, and Swaziland have not adopted exclusively endogenous language policies in practice while teaching obligatorily, for example, their respective former colonial master's language as a subject for access to international communication. This would have been a most logical choice, since these nations do not face the complexity of multilingualism discussed earlier; but they have not (cf. Bokamba 2007).

Upon close scrutiny, however, the theory of elite closure cannot be construed as either a model or an explanation for the retention of the colonial language policies: it is, instead, an outcome of what Bourdieu (1991) terms "habitus" and "linguistic market", and that Mufwene (2001) refers to in some respects as "the ecology of language" in such multilingual nations with their respective colonial histories. Bamgbose's (2000) characterization of current African language policy practices as "exclusionary" policies is precisely that: the results of actions taken or not taken to include African languages. As a colleague, Frank Arasanyin, aptly observed in a conversation we had in 2005 on this topic, "the lack of a language policy is policy in itself," precisely because it perpetuates what is already in place.

Specifically and with the exceptions of a few countries (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Ethiopia, RSA, Tanzania, Malagasy, and to a certain extent DRC and Rwanda), the lack of African-centric language policies instantiated in the vast majority of African states is due to the confluence of ecological and ideological factors that emerged during the colonization of the continent (1879-1960s). Language-ecologically, regional and inter-regional trading by land and waterways before and during colonization facilitated the emergence of certain languages as "trade languages" or *linguae francae*. These include Arabic in North Africa and the Sahel Region; Bambara/Dyula, Hausa, varieties of Pidgin English, and Yoruba in West Africa; Wolof in Senegal, The Gambia, and Mauritania also in West Africa; Kiswahili in Eastern and East-Central Africa; Luhya in Kenya and Uganda; Luganda in Uganda; Lingala and Kikongo in DRC, Congo-Brazzaville, and Angola; SeTswana in Botswana and South Africa; Fanagalo, IsiZulu, and IsiXhosa in South Africa (Heine 1970, Kamwangamalu 2004, Djité 2007, Bokamba 2009). For practical and ideological reasons, these languages were in turn taken advantage of

by church organizations during the colonial period to facilitate their Christian evangelization and related educational objectives in the Belgian, British, and German colonies. In order to make them effective media for such objectives, missionary linguists committed them to writing; adopted them as official languages in their educational and worship services; and disseminated them to various communities and regions within, and sometimes across, their immediate operational territories (Heine 1970, Spencer 1971, Abdulaziz 1971, Meeuwis and Vinck 1999, Meeuwis 2001, Bokamba 2009).

4.1.2. Ideologies

As is generally well known in African linguistics, church organizations' language policies and practices were driven by, among other considerations, the ideology that proselytizing in African indigenous languages was the best approach to attract new converts and achieve sustainable results. The same ideology infused the educational programs and institutions they established for Africans in the former Belgian, British, and German colonies until the colonial administrations in these territories began to offer such schools subsidies after the Phelps-Stokes education commission of 1922 and 1925 when these colonial administrations required the teaching of their languages (viz., French, English, and German) as obligatory subjects of instruction. Then, increasingly by 1948 they imposed these languages on the church-crafted policies as obligatory media of instruction from the upper primary education cycle (viz., 4th grade up) through the secondary education systems that existed then, which were usually two to four-year programs to train elementary school teachers and lower level clergy (Broshnan 1963, Gorman 1974, Spencer 1971, Ansre 1978, Bokamba 1976, Bokamba and Tlou 1977, Ndoma 1977, Whiteley 1971, 1974, Abdulaziz 1971, Stumpf 1979, Yates 1981, Polomé and Hill 1980).

In the French and Portuguese colonies, in contrast, the twin ideologies of the separation of the state and church in public domains and the assimilation of African subjects to the so-called "higher civilizations" as instantiated by the respective colonizing states excluded or minimized the churches' participation in the establishment and operation of formal education. These ideologies had two major consequences in the respective colonies: (1) the imposition of French in its colonies in 1826, and Portuguese in hers; and (2) the exclusion of the African languages in the formal educational systems in these colonies and therefore the development of their writing systems (Spencer 1971, Bokamba and Tlou 1977, Bokamba 1976, 1984a, b, Turcotte 1981, Bamgbose 1991). The net effect of these ideological practices was not only the marginalization of the African languages, that was made abundantly clear in numerous decrees in the French colonies, for example, but also the stigmatization of the cultures that they embodied (Turcotte 1981, Bokamba 1984-b, Djité 2008). For the French colonial administration, the compulsory teaching and exclusive use of French in education was the best approach to achieve three inter-related colonial objectives: (1) assimilation of the so-called uncouth Africans and "fanatical" Arabs to a higher civilization; (2) the suppression, among young people, of the African and Arabic cultures that would militate against the assimilation project, viz., cultural hegemony; and (3) the training of future docile civil servants to work under their supervision in the colonization and economic exploitation projects (Turcotte 1981, Bokamba 1984-b, Benrabah 2007, Daoud 2007, Djité 2008).

Unlike their Belgian, British, and German counterparts who appeared to be largely circumspect regarding their assimilation objectives, the French were very explicitly eloquent, with education as the means par excellence for achieving them. Consider in this respect, first, the forceful administrative directive in (5) that was issued by General-Governor E. Chaudié of the French West African colonies in a June 22, 1897 memorandum addressed to his administrators:

5. *L'école est, en effet, le moyen d'action le plus sûr qu'une nation civilisatrice ait d'acquérir à ses idées les populations encore primitives et de les élever graduellement jusqu'à elle. L'école est, en un mot, l'élément de progrès par excellence. C'est aussi l'élément de propagande de la cause et de la langue françaises le plus certain dont le Gouvernement puisse disposer. Ce ne sont pas, en effet, les vieillards imbus des préjugés anciens, ce ne sont pas même les hommes faits, pliés déjà à d'autres coütumes, que nous pouvons espérer convertir à nos principes de morale, à nos règles de droit, à nos usages nationaux. Pour accomplir avec succès cette oeuvre de transformation, c'est aux*

jeunes qu'il faut s'adresser, c'est l'esprit de la jeunesse qu'il faut pénétrer et c'est par l'école seule, que nous y arriverons.

C'est vous dire, Monsieur l'Administrateur, *quelle importance j'attache au développement de l'instruction publique, à la diffusion de la langue et des idées françaises et au bon fonctionnement des écoles.* (Turcotte 1981: 51). (Emphasis added.)

The directive emphasizes the importance of education for the spread of French to its African subjects, while with the same breath it points out how this language is a critical tool for assimilating the young people, but not the “old men” or “mature Muslims who are full of [cultural] prejudices”, to the French’s “moral principles”, “rights laws”, and “national customs”.

Now consider the related directive in (6) that was issued by General- Governor W. Ponty, Governor Chaudié’s immediate successor, in a lengthy circular No. 82c, dated August 30, 1910, that is presumably to the same administrators to maintain the policy:

6. L'école est le meilleur instrument du progrès; c'est elle qui sert le mieux les intérêts de la cause française et qui en transformant peu à peu la mentalité de nos sujets nous permettra de les acquérir à nos idées sans heurter aucune de leurs traditions. Nul n'ignore en effet que l'étude du français est le remède le plus efficace qui puisse être opposé au fanatisme et l'expérience nous apprend que les musulmans qui connaissent notre langue sont moins imbus de préjugés que leurs coreligionnaires qui ne savent que l'arabe

In this directive Governor Ponty points out that the school, presumably elementary and middle school (i.e., 7th and 8th grades), is the best “tool” for “progress” that serves best the French’s “[colonial] interests”, and that, in transforming “little by little [their] subjects” will enable France to convert them to its “[cultural] /ideas” without hurting the African subjects’ “traditions”. He maintains that French is “the most efficacious remedy that can be used against the [Muslims’] fanaticism”, because, according to the French’s experience, those who know French “are less imbued with prejudices than their co-religious fellows who only know Arabic”.

The colonial cultural assimilatory or brainwashing objectives could not be more explicit than those exemplified in the citations in 5 and 6. As argued in Bokamba (1984-b), however, those directives only touched on the means to achieve more important and fundamental objectives: Cheap African labor and other economic benefits for France (Crowther 1967, Pakenham 1991). These goals are made abundantly clear in the statements in (7) below from the same circular:

7. Même si on n'envisage que le point de vue commercial de notre colonisation, il faut reconnaître que l'instruction sert les intérêts de la Métropole plutôt que de leur nuire. Ainsi que je l'ai dit, l'instruction en transformant le goût de nos sujets augmente aussi leurs appetits, c'est-à-dire leur puissance de consommation, et les oblige à travailler. En créant des écoles nous contribuerons donc à l'accroissement de la richesse dans le pays et nous obtiendrons des indigènes une collaboration d'autant plus active que mieux renseignés sur nos intentions à leur égard (et) ils auront une confiance plus marquée dans notre autorité et deviendront moins dociles aux suggestions intéressées des marabouts ignorants ou fanatiques.

Il me paraît d'ailleurs inutile d'insister encore une fois sur les avantages de tout ordre que nous pouvons avoir à recruter sur place les fonctionnaires nécessaires à notre Administration ou les ouvriers indispensables au développement de notre outillage économique. (Turcotte 1981: 74) (Emphasis added.)

What the first sentence of the statement in (7) expresses, for instance, is that “even if one were to envision only the economic perspective of our colonization, one must acknowledge that education serves the interests of the metropolitan [country, i.e., France] rather than impede them”. The directive then insists on the importance of education as a transformative agent that will change not only the tastes and wet the appetites of the colonized by increasing their power of consumption, but will also do

many other things: Force them to work to earn the incomes with which to purchase what they desire; permit the colonies to increase their wealth and thus facilitate the active and better informed collaboration of “the natives” to their colonization; make them trust the colonialists authority more; and make them less accepting/susceptible to the vested interest suggestions by ignorant imams or fanatics. The last paragraph of (7) is even much more forceful concerning the economic advantages to be derived from the education of the “natives”, including the in-situ recruitment of civil servants for the colonial administration, and workers for the colonies’ economic development.

To be sure, missionaries and colonists in the Belgian, British, and German were not altruistic guardians of African cultures either, according to a number of published accounts (e.g., Abdulaziz 1971, Yates 1981, Campbell 2001). Consider, for example, the following statement from Yates (1981: 36) on her research on education during King Leopold’s era (1879-1908) in the Congo (now DRC) and in which she found considerable resistance by certain missionary societies to the provision of secular education to Congolese then:

8. While Protestant and Catholic missionaries differed radically on such policies as the use of constraint and force and in their views on African mind and character, they were united in their conception of what elite *not* to form. An urban, Europeanized, intellectual elite, estranged from the rural masses, was undesirable based upon missionary perceptions of the deleterious religious and political effects of academic-oriented [sic] education in “older” colonies, such as India and Sierra Leone. Recipients of such academic education were said to lose their religious interest and to acquire an anti-colonial outlook and an “arrogant” desire for assimilation. In keeping with the goals of Christianizing without Westernizing, any elite to be trained would be “better” Africans, living in their traditional, rural environment, with Christian morality supplanting pagan morality. Missionaries wanted their best pupils to become catechists, evangelists, pastors and priests, to assist in spreading the faith throughout the countryside.

It is clear from this observation, which can be applied to any other non-French and non-Portuguese colonies, that Protestant and Catholic missionaries in what was then King Leopold’s personal fiefdom, the Congo Free State, the education of their Africans was to achieve Christianity that was rooted and remained faithful in the rural communities or villages to serve the evangelization objectives. The use of African languages was unambiguously, therefore, crucial for this mission; hence the implicit rejection of the use of the colonial languages as media of instruction, lest perhaps they create a Westernized elite that was undesirable. One cannot blame them for their singular focus which, as we know today, did not quite materialize under such narrow confines as Africans, Congolese in this case, were eventually needed in other positions within and outside of the church organizations to teach in secular schools, serve as low-level civil servants in the colonial administration and in healthcare centers. In sum, the expansion of the Africans’ potential through Western education could not be stopped irrespective of the ideological constraints under which it was conceived and implemented.

Statements very similar to the French’s in (6) and (7) above, and in some respects to Yates’ in (8) are documented with regard to the British colonial education policy in Tanganyika (now mainland Tanzania) following the Phelps Stokes’ commission visits to the colonies (Roy-Campbell 2001: 37):

9. ...an educational system which provide for African needs and at the same time produce a virile and loyal citizen of the Empire...where character, health, industry, and a proper appreciation of the dignity of manual labour rank as of first importance...*the school...is the centre of all Government propaganda.* [Emphasis in Roy-Campbell’s original citation]

These views, and particularly those regarding the language policies in education, differed significantly from the Phelps-Stokes Commission’s report that criticized colonial practices in the colonies, as the following statement cited in Roy-Campbell (2001: 51) indicates:

10. All peoples have an inherent right to their own language. It is the means of giving expression to their own personality, *however primitive they may be.* No greater injustice can be committed

against a people than to deprive them of their own language. [Emphasis in Roy-Campbell's original citation]

Here, what are expressed are two basic ideological tenets: One that advocates the peoples' inherent rights to their language and presumably cultures; and another that evaluate them in degree of civilization or development relative to that of the colonizer. This is very interesting statement that juxtaposes ideologies that reveal the foundations of education and language policies during the colonial period. It could not be more eloquently stated on both grounds.

4.2. Lessons and interrogations

There are many more French decrees and memoranda such those in (5)-(7) in Turcotte's (1981) study that can be presented and analyzed here, but this is unnecessary as what has been sampled here suffices for one major aspect of our study. Similarly, Yates' (1981) observation in (8) and the British's in (9) that can be replicated by others from elsewhere in Africa; but it is also unnecessary to document them here for our purposes. And that is to establish, with the historical summary of the evolution of language policies in the Belgian, British, French, German and Portuguese colonies, that these policies were motivated and informed by the colonization projects and respective ideologies. It is these types of policies or near clones thereof that 34/54 African states have transferred into their post-independence constitutions without evident due debates by the target populations or their elected representatives.

Two fundamental main and related sub-questions that arise at this juncture are: First, did first generation African politicians in the status quo group know that they were adopting language policies that were formulated to facilitate their country's colonization for economic and other exploitative purposes, including the marginalization and stigmatization of their cultures? Two, if that generation was uninformed of this fact, are second-generation politicians from the same group cognizant of it? Three, if yes, why have they not acted accordingly to remedy the situation in the spirit of true uhuru/independence? And four, if not, why have they not learned this important piece of their history? A further question is whether these politicians were aware of their language "inherent rights" advocated in the Phelps-Stokes Commission statement in (10 above). These are complex questions that cannot be adequately addressed in this paper in part due to space constraints, and in part to the lack of systematic cross-nation archival research. For our purposes here it suffices to indicate that there is considerable written evidence to provide some initial answers to the questions above.

With regard to the first question, the answer is not clear-cut. For example, Ajayi's (1982: 2) statement in (11) below that was cited in Bokamba (1986: 212) points out that first generation African leaders did not have an independent vision of their own regarding the future of their countries:

11. Influenced, no doubt, by the theme of the conference, the participants expressed their expectations of independence in very abstract terms, and were much clearer about what they wanted to end than what they wanted to put in its place. They wanted to throw off the imperialist yoke, and end discrimination and the exploitation of man by man; they wanted freedom, and respect for the dignity of the black man. Beyond that, however, they had little conception of the kind of society they were striving to build outside of vague concepts of Europeanization or modernization. They had no clear goals, and nothing like a blueprint for development. They mentioned economic development, but it was low on their list of priorities, subsumed under the concept of well-being and national progress. Implicit in this abstract expression of the ends of government was the assumption that the leaders in the new [African] states would be those who most thoroughly understood the Western cultural models that were to remain the prototypes of the new structures and institutions to be established. The conferees assumed that higher studies in Western education and advanced skills in Western science and technology, such as these probable leaders possessed, would be the most important attributes one could have in gaining positions of power and influence in the new states.

Ajaji (1981:2) goes on to make a strong indictment of the continent's prospective leaders, by concluding that:

12. Here was the dilemma of the intellectuals: despite their occasional references to African institutions and ideas, their vision of freedom, equality, representative government, and democracy derived essentially from Western liberal models, they staked their claims to leadership on their superior knowledge of these Western ideals and models.

Ajaji's insightful characterization in (11) and (12) of African intellectuals and future political leaders who participated at their first and historic All-Africa conference at the University College, in Ibadan, Nigeria, in March 1959, are incontrovertible. And this is not surprising as most of them at that time had any meaningful experience in governance during the colonial era, or even had significant opportunities to meet in groups in their respective countries to discuss and strategize about their future visions as such gatherings were strictly controlled or banned by the colonial governments (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, Elkins 2005). Further, the number of intellectuals, as the histories of tertiary education in several colonies would reveal, was very small; and those handful few had been largely assimilated as described above. (Rideout, et al. 1969, Bolibaugh 1972, Bokamba 1986, Roy-Campbell 2001).

These conclusions, however, do not preclude the existence of a handful of visionary intellectuals and prospective future political leaders who had different and nationalistically oriented models of development that were informed largely by African realities, but who were prevented from initiating them through imprisonment and outright assassination. Such individuals who come readily to mind include Simon Kimbangu, Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere, Patrice E. Lumumba, Eduardo Mondlane, Tom Mboya, and Thomas Sankara. All of them, except for Kimbangu, who was imprisoned by the Belgians for 30 years and perished in prison because of his prophetic vision for pan-Africanism and against Western colonization and religious practices (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002), for Mandela who was imprisoned for 27 years for his struggle against Apartheid, and Nyerere who died of natural causes, were arguably assassinated mainly because of their visionary thinking about an independent Africa. Nyerere established a model of democracy and socio-economic development, Ujamaa, which made Tanzania the role model of self-reliance in Africa, notwithstanding the many challenges his administration encountered. As is almost universally recognized, Mandela and his key co-prisoners emerged from their long prison term focused to build one, if not the most, principled, multi-racial and participatory democracy in the continent.

We are not in a position to ascertain what the many assassinated African leaders and intellectuals would have accomplished in the different key areas of development, including education, economy, finance, healthcare, judiciary, governance, religion, and African language policies in facilitating these developments for which they are critical tools, as Djité (2008) argues persuasively, if these leaders were allowed to complete their terms as politicians. What we can glean from Prime Minister Lumumba's writings and speeches, for example, indicates clearly at least with regard to political, economic, and language policy developments that he had a significantly different vision of DRC and Africa from that ascribed to him and his peers in Ajaji's statement above. Concerning language policy in public domains, for example, Lumumba hinted at a fundamental change in a public speech that he delivered on July 6, 1960, when he stated in connection with the Africanization of the Congolese National Army (ANC) that:

13. [H]e who is today appointed chief commissioner, or commander of the 'Force Publique', even if he does not know French, will speak in Swahili or Lingala; we have our national Flemish (van Lierde 1963: 246)⁵.

This type of endogenous languages valorization and language policy change vision was also strongly pushed by the young Congolese intellectuals' association known as "l'Union Générale des Etudiants Congolais (UGEC) that operated at the country's universities, with its headquarters at Lovanium

⁵ My translation from van Lierde's French citation of Lumumba's statement.

University, Kinshasa. UGEC, at its 2nd annual congress held in 1962 explicitly called for the replacement of French as the official language by an indigenous Congolese language. As stated in Bokamba (1976, 2008), the congress participants made two demands: (1) that the national government appoint a commission of educators, including linguistic experts, to study and propose a Congolese national/official language that should be taught in all secondary schools; and (2) that it also be granted the same weight as the teaching of French in elementary and secondary schools.

This different vision of Lumumba and Congolese intellectuals represented then in UGEC is encountered repeatedly in other key development areas, mentioned above, in Lumumba's writings and speeches before the country's independence (Lumumba 1962, van Lierde 1963). In fact, Lumumba's vision in all these domains, as exemplified at least in these documents, including his surprise speech on Independence Day that sealed his assassination, and in his government's action during his short political career, was very transformative, not just reformative.

Based on Lumumba's vision and actions, and those of his select group elsewhere in the continent who escaped assassination or suffered it (viz., Mondlane, Sankara, Nyerere, and Mandela), it can be argued that some African politicians of the 1st generation were sufficiently aware of the ideological underpinnings of the colonial language policies in their countries. It is not, therefore, a mere coincidence that in three of these five countries (DRC, Tanzania, and RSA) there emerged African-centric language policies. This fact is not evident in the status quo states. The most plausible explanation, therefore, seems to support Ajayi's observations cited in (11-12) above and noted in Yates' (8) from a prohibition perspective: These political leaders were "westernized" or assimilated, and did not discern any possible harm to retaining the colonial language policies.

Nyerere's vision of politics, education and language policy, also demonstrates a nationalistic vision imbued with African cultural pride that sought to distinguish itself against the Western's servile model, as the following statement that he made in Kiswahili in his Tanzanian Republic Day speech in Parliament on December 10, 1962, and cited and translated by Abdulaziz demonstrates (Abdulaziz 1971: 165-66):

14. The major change I have made is to get up an entirely new Ministry: The Ministry of National Culture and Youth. I have done this because I believe that its culture is the essence of any nation. A country which lacks its own culture is no more than a collection of people without the spirit which makes them a nation. *Of all the crimes of colonialism there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe we had no indigenous culture of our own; or that what we did have was worthless—something of which we should be ashamed, instead of a source of pride.* [Emphasis added, EGB]

This statement, which captures what the essence of *ukolonia* discussed here, and President Nyerere's bold action in giving his speech in Kiswahili, led one of his highly respected compatriots and intellectual colleagues, the Kiswahili scholar and poet Sheikh Amri Abedi, to declare in the House of Representative in Kiswahili thereafter that (Abdulaziz 1971: 166):

15. ...an unprecedented thing that happened on that day was that His Excellency delivered his speech in Swahili. That moment was truly the beginning of a new era in the history of the development of this country in the fields of language, national development and the running of the affairs of the government... Today we have been given the freedom to talk in our own language. *We shall now enter the field of discussion with confidence, with no doubt as to the real meaning of what we are saying, nor, whether we are being correctly understood by others ...*[Emphasis added, EGB]

Differing visions such as those exemplified in (13)-(15) answer the first part of question two. And that is that while the vast majority of the first generation of African politicians were uninformed, it appears, of the real motivations for the colonial language policies because of colonial brainwashing, or what we prefer to term *ukolonia*; there were at least a few others such as Lumumba, Nyerere, and Abedi who were keenly aware of it.

To continue with the second part of question two, the fact that the 2nd generation of African politicians have maintained the same policies or made superficial changes to them, for example,

declaring 286 indigenous languages in a country to be “national languages” as in the Cameroon (Biloa and Echou 2008), or assigning such a status to thirteen or more languages (see Zambia and Mozambique) without real functional utilization in major public domains, confirms the conclusion above. For this reason, they also cannot act in the best interest of the vast majority of their own people and true sovereignty. And finally, with respect to question four, why have these post first generations politicians not learned the negative ideologies and effects embedded in their language policies, the critical vehicles of holistic endogenous development? The answer is found in Yates (1981): “arrogant westernization” or *ukolonia* à la Bokamba (2007) and white masking à la Fanon (1963, 1967).

4.3. *Ukolonia and additional evidence thereof*

What actually is *ukolonia*, and what additional evidence is there in other African domains to support its postulation? And how does *ukolonia* theory account for the on-going language policies and practices in Africa? We consider these questions in this section by drawing on the analysis above, and additional data to attempt an explanation for what has become one of the most vexing issues not only in African sociolinguistics, but also African general development (Bamgbose 1991, Roy-Cambell 2001, Bokamba 2007, Djité 2008).

4.3.1. *Ukolonia*

In my initial discussion of this concept from an African-centric perspective against the background of colonial enculturation, I had defined *ukolonia* as “a curable mental disorder that obfuscates rational thinking and causes the patient to evaluate itself in terms of values and standards set by people from other cultures” (Bokamba 2007:41). Now I wish to refine this definition to distinguish it perhaps from similar concepts such as “brainwashing” and “inferiority complex” which are components of it, but do not necessarily have the same epistemology in that they do not embed the colonial history of cultural inculcation. In view of this,

16. *Ukolonia* is a psychological syndrome that obfuscates the rational thinking of a patient in a post-colonial society and causes him/her to evaluate himself/herself in terms of values and standards established by the former colonial masters’ culture(s). In other words, it is an internalized colonial mentality way of self-valuation.

As discussed in Bokamba (2007), *ukolonia* resulted from the long-term brainwashing that characterized the explicit or implicit policy of assimilation of Africans to Western cultures, especially through education, religious practices, and administrative practices. Through these agencies, African customs and cultures were viewed as inferior to their Western counterparts, and thus devalued and stigmatized as “backward”; while, in contrast the Western modes of life were valued, promoted, and incentivized as worthy of emulation (Mabika-Kalanda 1962, Fanon 1963, 1967, Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1986). This process was enforced in Western education throughout much of the colonial history by, among other insidious approaches, pointing out that Africa had no pre-colonial history; that had it no important achievements; and that colonialism saved it from inter-tribal wars and cannibalism (Pakenham 1991, Hochschild 1998). These putative deficiencies were invoked as pretexts not to teach Africans their own histories, cultural achievements, and the values of such accomplishments. While this type of campaign was taking place, colonialists and missionaries alike hauled away, to European museums, African arts and crafts that were supposed to be burned, because they represented witchcraft and paganism that were to be eradicated in the interest of a higher culture/civilization. This was the approach to the so-called “civilizing mission” that the colonial powers, even the then backward Portugal, claimed that they brought to Africa in exchange for forced labor and free access to African natural and human resources. It is no wonder that Rodney (1974) described these experiences as an underdevelopment of Africa by Europe, and Fanon (1963) depicted Africans as the “wretched of the earth” with inferiority complex and schizophrenic identities.

Yes, the colonial empires came, saw, and conquered only to retrieve temporarily after ensuring for nearly a century (1884-1960) the success of their missions: the linguistics and cultural assimilation of the Africans, and economic exploitation (Bokamba 1984b, Hochschild 1998, Meredith 2005). The end result is *ukolonia*. The prevalence of this syndrome in the psyche of many political elites impedes their abilities to develop and participate skillfully in strategic game theory undertakings à la Latin (1992). As a result, African states often lose when there is contestation between them and the West, as exemplified by the case of language policies in public domains discussed thus far, and in education and economic domains that are sketched below.

4.3.2. *Evidence of Ukolonia elsewhere*

Ukolonia pervades most of the key development domains in post-colonial Africa, and is surpassed only by material greed among African non-statesmen. This is evident in the economic system and infrastructure where, after over a half a century of decolonization, African economic systems remain structurally colonial in that they focus largely on the commodities that were initially established by the colonial masters, and under an extractive system, rather than one that manufactures for both internal consumption and export (Ake 1981, French 2004, Kankwenda 2005). This is occurring in spite of the fact that many African states produce precious minerals, high-grade oil, and other highly valued products in different sectors (e.g., timber, cotton, coffee, and cocoa).

Similarly, educational systems in so-called Anglophone, and especially Francophone and Lusophone Africa remain largely clones of colonial system not only in the exclusive use of French, English, and Portuguese, but also in curricula and administrative organization that have only undergone peripheral Africanization (Bokamba 1986, Muaka 2008). The curricula at all levels have not been adjusted to focus on respective independent African states, and to take into consideration the realities of African needs; instead, they remain extensively bookish and Euro-centric to such an extent that Mazrui (1978) characterized universities, for example, as “multinational companies” that have an economic agenda that has nothing to do with the population in which the company is located. These structural conditions and inherent behaviors by educational administrators account for the high rate of wastage throughout all levels of education, perpetuation of high illiteracy rates, and the overall dysfunctionality of graduates from many such institutions (Rideout, et al. 1969, Bilibaugh 1972, Bokamba 1984a, 1986, Roy-Campbell 2001). That this kind of blind imitation of a key sector continues after nearly 60 years of political independence gives considerable credence not only to Ajayi’s (1981) criticism, which should not hold today as it does, but also confirms the notion of *ukolonia* defined above.

It is worthwhile to point out here that *ukolonia* among Africans in Africa itself and in the African Diaspora is frequently manifested linguistically in the preference for the frequent use of French, English, and Portuguese in communication even among speakers who share the same native or near-native language of their country; in Africa in the preference for imported, rather than domestically produced clothing items, even when these are originally designed in the importer’s own country; in the preference for other imported commodities; and in the preference for African political elite to take their vacation to Europe rather than elsewhere in Africa or a combination the former and the latter periodically.

4.3.3. *Ukolonia as a theory*

If the analysis presented above is correct, the concept of *ukolonia* can be viewed as a powerful theory of at least African language policies and practices. The essence of this theory is that African politicians in the status quo nations (the 34/54), past and present, have opted to retain the inherited language policies and practices, because they have the *ukolonia* syndrome that has obfuscated their rational reasoning as leaders of liberated and sovereign states. Politicians in the remaining states (19/54) have developed endogenously-based language policies, or ones that combine such languages and the relevant colonial languages, because they have not been affected by *ukolonia*. In fact, they exhibit nationalist vision and pride in their own languages and cultures, while appropriately valuing the

former colonial masters' languages for their roles as international languages in an increasingly globalized world economy and cultures. These leaders could have succumbed under *ukolonia*, but they evidently repulsed it successfully by planning strategically, in real or imaginary manner, à la Laitin (1992). *Ukolonia*, therefore, explains the outcome of African politicians actions or inactions in the formulation and implementation of their respective nation's language policies.

In contrast and as pointed out previously in this study, Myers-Scotton's (1993) elite closure theory simply characterizes the status quo language group policies and practices; it does neither explain empirically why they are as such, nor why the non-status quo states have opted to change theirs. Similarly, Laitin's (1992) strategic game theory is applicable only to a few states where language policies resulted from actual language planning, but not by declared political options of the countries' supposedly leaders.

5. Conclusion

This study was motivated by two main objectives: The need to explain African language policies and practices by evaluating critically two often cited major theories in African sociolinguistics (elite closure and strategic game theory), and to present and defend an alternative theory (*ukolonia*) that is empirically motivated. To deal with these objectives it was necessary to undertake a brief and critical overview of previous research on language planning in the continent in an attempt not only to situate the analysis proposed here, but also to demonstrate the inadequacies of earlier research and the fallacy of putative arguments advanced by African politicians to justify the maintenance of the exclusionary language policies inherited from the colonial era (Bamgbose 2000, Bokamba 2007).

What has emerged in the course of this analysis is unsurprising to the experienced and informed Africanist. The study has shown that most Sub-Saharan African states (34/54) have adopted the easy path to language policies by maintaining the former colonial languages as exclusive media of communication in public domains not because of any convincing arguments from African language ecologies, but rather because of *ukolonia*. In so doing and as persuasively argued in Djité (2008) and Owolabi (2011), they have lost several opportunities: First, they squandered the language resources that are critical to the development of their respective nations; second, they have thereby impeded unnecessarily and unwisely the social, political, and educational advancement of their citizens in the past five decades; third, they have subordinated themselves to their former colonial masters by marginalizing their own languages while accepting what Phillipson (1992) characterizes as "linguistic imperialism" that defines these countries as "Anglophones," "Francophone", and "Lusophone;" and fourth, that in spite of this trend, nineteen African states (or 36%) have countered this pattern by adopting language policies that incorporate African languages along with ELWC (European Languages of Wider Communication) as official languages.

Whether it is by pure inertia or political calculations, what these findings indicate are several systemic failures of historical magnitude. There are at least three major implications that flow from these findings. First, African leaders in most of these states have lacked the vision and the political courage to address the critical issue of language policy formulation in the overall development of their countries and the achievement of true sovereignty. Second, they do not perceive the retention of the colonial policies as an obstacle to educational and socio-economic advancement of their respective nations in spite of statistical data in education, unemployment, and economic production; as a result, they have deprioritized language planning. And third, politicians in countries with exclusive exogenous language policies have either a low self-esteem vis-à-vis their own *lingua francae*, or that they do not perceive the languages to be definitional of their nationalism; this is *ukolonia* pure and simple. A corollary to the first conjunct of this observation is that African languages for such politicians have no real market value à la Bourdieu (1991), but this cannot be true as Swigart (2001) has persuasively demonstrated regarding the role of (Urban) Wolof in Senegal—a case that can be replicated in dozens of other African states. (See, e.g., the cases of Arabic, Bamana, Kiswahili, Lingala, etc.).

If Africa is to reclaim its destiny and emerge from its "downward spiral" of missteps and misfortunes of the last fifty years or so (French 2004, Meredith 2005, Mkandawire 2005), the

utilization of key African languages in public domains represents not only a major rectification in the development trajectory, but also invaluable tools towards its advancement (Bokamba 2007, Djité 2008, Owolabi 2011, and Bamgbose in this volume). The time to engage this process is now, and we, Africans alone, are its captains and navigators. As argued in Bokamba (2007), if the ukolonia behavior discussed here, which is a curable syndrome via civic/cultural education, is not reversed, Africa will suffer a deeper level of marginalization, and it will certainly be trampled over by the ever encroaching globalization of English, French, and Portuguese through multinational companies that are aggressively seeking unfettered access to African natural resources.⁶ An understanding of ukolonia and its implications in Africa is a necessary condition for African intellectuals and politicians (such as those portrayed in Mkandawire 2005), who envision endogenous development for which African languages as critical tools, are to rectify the many misguided policies critiqued in this study.

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⁶ The tele-guided invasion (in 1996) and re-invasion (1998) of DRC by western clients' states is an eloquent example. For detailed discussions on this topic, see Madsen (1999), Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002), and Kankwenda (2005).

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