

Africa and its Quest for a Linguistic Integration

Mohamed Belamghari¹

¹ Mohamed I, Oujda/Morocco

Received: 8 April 2015 Accepted: 5 May 2015 Published: 15 May 2015

Abstract

Language has been a vast field of study in which many brains have been functioning so as to demystify the different predicaments it poses to its speakers and hearers. Since language is taken to be the haven of identities and global integration, it has always been a priority for a country to maintain a unifying language via which all its people would be identified and develop a sense of nationhood. A case in point is Africa, which is still facing a host of challenges appertaining to either the national or regional integration of its multilingual people. Because Africa is teeming with hundreds of languages, the languages of the ex-colonizers (English, French or Portuguese... etc) have played major roles in bringing, to some extent, the Africans together. Still, many Africans have been concerned with the fact that the ex-colonial languages constitute nothing but unifying linguistic options made at the disposal of only the African elites rather than the masses. In this sense, African leaders sensed the necessity of holding a unified African world which would endure the outside economic and political challenges, especially after the era of colonialism. In this respect, this paper is an attempt to prescribe some antidotes for such African linguistic alchemy.

Index terms— horizontal integration “” vertical integration “” linguistic alchemy.

1 I. Introduction

It is a markedly phenomenal feature how language has come to nestle quite finely in synonymy with a plethora of social, political or economic issues. Its omnipresence and causality in different fields of research has been triggering a host of debates and disputes. In so doing, the question of language, as a whole, has been a vast field of study in which many brains have been functioning so as to demystify the different predicaments it poses to its speakers and hearers. Many linguists have agreed upon the fact that a language is the haven of identities, cultures and global integration. In this regard, it has always been a must for a country to maintain a unifying language via which all its people would be identified and develop a sense of nationhood. Therefore, a country without a common spoken language, which is recognized and made use of by all its social strata, is always bumping into walls of disruption, national disintegration and lack of social intimacy maintenance.

A case in point is Africa, which is still facing a host of challenges appertaining to either the national or regional integration of its multilingual people. Many attempts have been conducted so far as to come up with a unifying language with which processes of development (economic, political or social) would be carried out. In such a context, because Africa is teeming with hundreds of languages, the languages of the ex-colonizers (English, French or Portuguese... etc) have played major roles in bringing, to some extent, the Africans together and have opened a channel of communication among all the African ethnic groups. Still, many Africans have been concerned with the fact that the ex-colonial languages constitute nothing but unifying linguistic options made at the disposal of only the African elites rather than the masses. These languages have been limited only to the intelligentsia, whereas laymen could not have access to such colonial languages due to many reasons.

After the era of colonialism, African leaders sensed the necessity of holding a unified African world which would endure the outside economic and political challenges. The call for global development and economic progress

44 are some of the reasons which presupposed solving the linguistic problem and then creating the united states of
45 Africa, as some Africans would have it. In this respect and in an attempt to prescribe some antidotes for such
46 African linguistic alchemy, this paper adopts the following road-map consisting of two parts. The first part brings
47 into the fore front the conundrum of language in Africa and how this controversy over language has culminated in
48 having two opposing camps of people: the ones who prefer an excolonial language as a unifying linguistic device in
49 the African context, and those who call for purifying Africa from the residuals of the ex-colonial dominance, one
50 manifestation of which is the continuous presence of excolonial languages with their tight grip being maintained
51 on all the social, political and economic African affairs. In so doing, such decolonising process is considered as a
52 continuation of the struggle against the colonial presence with all its materializations. Furthermore, the second
53 part of this paper questions the possibilities of having an African integration, be it horizontal or vertical. Lastly,
54 the paper endeavours to solve or even propose some solutions which would contribute to settling this African
55 linguistic puzzle.

56 2 II. The African Languages Controversy

57 The call for an all-containing language for the African national or regional integration has been occupying the
58 attention of decision makers for many decades, especially after independence. The puzzle of the African linguistic
59 integration has caused a huge fuss and stimulated many linguists so as to solve such a multi-lingual brainteaser.
60 The African context is laden with thousands of dialects which are in opposition to each other and each of which
61 strives to control one another. It is mainly the need for social, economic, political or cultural development which
62 incentivized the Africans so as to settle the predicament of language which will later on bring the Africans together
63 under one single camp. Historically, the Africans were colonized by different European countries, especially France
64 and England. This period of colonialism has paved the way to some foreign languages, such as French, English,
65 and Spanish in order to gain access to the realm of the African languages and take control over them. This, on the
66 one hand, helped with, at least, creating a channel of communication between all the Africans whose languages
67 differ from one another at huge rates. And on the other hand, the ex-colonial languages have contributed to the
68 rejection and denial of the African linguistic heritage and have sought only the maintenance of their hegemony
69 and dominance over the rest of the African dialects and languages. Consequently, even after independence,
70 Africans have retained the use of the ex-colonial languages as official or second foreign languages. And this is
71 what has stirred up the jealousy and sense of nationhood of the Africans who long for the banishment of the
72 disparity that exists between the African ethnic groups as well as their languages.

73 In this regard, two opposing camps have appeared on stage as a result of the disputable debate over which
74 language Africans should adopt as official in their national and regional integration. One camp argues for the
75 maintenance of the ex-colonial languages as communicational mediators among the multiple African dialects;
76 whereas the other camp contends with the necessity to do without the ex-colonial languages and try to promote
77 one African language which would further attach the Africans to their cultures and identity.

78 In an attempt to find an adequate language which can bond the whole African people together and facilitate
79 communication among them, some people, especially the élites, proposed the maintenance of the colonial
80 languages. Such proposal was made due to the claim that the ex-colonial languages are the only communicational
81 means whereby Africans can communicate and strengthen their economic relations with the outside world as well
82 as their African context. This claim has indeed its reasons which can all be summed up in the fact that African
83 countries contain more than thousands of languages, and this reality creates a huge communicational break-down
84 among the people of the same town, city or country let alone those who belong to other African countries.
85 Therefore, for many people it is of sound use to opt for the ex-colonial languages instead of engaging in divisive
86 wars as to which African language can fit in the unification of the Africans. In support of this, Braj B. Kackru
87 (2001) writes that, "for governments, English thus serves at least two purposes. First, it continues to provide a
88 linguistic tool for the administrative cohesiveness of a country (as in south Asia and parts of Africa). Second,
89 at another level, it provides a language of a wider communication (national and international)" 1 Taken to a
90 local context, disputes over which African language to use in daily communicational activities are found even
91 among people of the same multilingual town. An example is backed up here by two Cameroonian students at the
92 University of Mohamed the first in Oujda, Morocco. The Cameroonian students have drawn a picture of a complex
93 linguistic puzzle that needs huge efforts to solve. Both agreed on the importance of the French language in making
94 communication easier among all Cameroonians. However, they both expressed their frustration in saying that
95 this ex-colonial language (French) is a language of administration, and it is restricted only to the intelligentsia.
96 The masses still find it a difficulty to communicate at both local and regional levels. English has been playing,
97 for most Africans, a crucial role in fostering the administrative consistency of a multilingual country, such as
98 Africa. It was implanted by the ex-colonizers so as to run their administrative affairs in the African countries,
99 and now even the Africans themselves can't dispose of such an excolonial medium of communication, for it is
100 a tool which would keep their administrative affairs under control. Other than that, as the world is becoming
101 smaller due to space and time shortening waves of globalization, Africa is in a position that pushes it to further
102 commix in this global context. Under these new conditions, therefore, and for Africa to get connected to the
103 world out there, politically or economically, it should adopt a global language. And this language for Kackru is
104 English par excellence, since it is not only a tool of facilitating or creating a communicational channel among
105 Africans, but also among the international community towards a global development in mainly economic and

106 diplomatic relationships. This reported incident is often reacted to in a preposterous tone. African people, it
107 is believed, will never agree upon one African language or dialect, and it is again the excolonial language that
108 fits in settling such alchemy, mainly for three reasons as outlined in Robert L. This replacement was sometimes
109 difficult to implement. In the first place, elites were sometimes unwilling to surrender those personal advantages
110 won on the basis of their elite education via a colonial language. If that language were to lose its privileges, they
111 might lose their privileges as well. Second, economic and political rivalry among competing languages groups
112 sometimes made each unwilling to see the other's language instituted as a system wide medium of instruction.
113 They preferred that everyone face the same disadvantage of studying via a colonial language than that some
114 should have the advantage of studying in their own. Third, access to world commerce, science, and technology
115 demands that at least some must learn the imperial languages. An excellent way to import those languages is
116 to use them as media of instruction ³ On the other of the story, if we can speak of some people who prefer
117 the maintenance of an ex-colonial language in the African context, we can by contrast, bring into the forefront
118 the arguments of those who are Clearly, the replacement of the ex-colonial languages by an African language or
119 dialect is a lost for mainly the elites. We can speak of three reasons which are provided whenever the question
120 of language is raised in Africa. First, the elites are likely to lose their social, political or economic prestige made
121 accessible by their mastery of the ex-colonial languages, which have become the official languages made use of in
122 administration and schooling. If any African language is to be elected instead of an ex-colonial one, the masses,
123 it is believed, are then going to ask for their right to rule their countries. Hence, the elites are no longer going to
124 enjoy what they used to when they were the only ones who could speak the official and administrative language.
125 Secondly, the problem which is continuously posed in Africa, as in any other multilingual country, is that of the
126 pressure exerted by the economic groups. These groups keep competing with each other in order to have one's
127 group language as the most utilised one not only on the national level, but also on the regional one. Therefore,
128 this problem makes it harder for the Africans to opt for a unifying language to be accepted by all Africans.
129 Finally, we should note that the world has become a small village where everyone is connected to the outside
130 world economically, diplomatically or even scientifically. Under these challenges, Africa seem to be very attached
131 to the ex-colonizers' languages and cannot forsake them lest the Africans would be cut off the outside world and
132 thus lag more years behind the bandwagon of economic or technological development. Unfortunately, this cannot
133 be achieved unless Africa adopts a recognized international language which everyone can speak and understand.

134 against an ex-colonial language as a mediator between the local dialects. When the African countries gained
135 their independence, the ex-colonizers had to implant their imperial language in the African social context. This,
136 for some Africans such as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, was a perpetuating device for the neo-colonial presence in Africa.
137 Hence, the call for decolonizing the African languages started to take place in an attempt to choose one African
138 language that can help in the African communicational process and integration. In this sense, it is argued that,

139 The process of radical decolonization proposed by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is a good demonstration of the first
140 alternative. Ngugi's programme for restoring an ethnic or national identity embedded in the mother tongue
141 involves a rejection of English, a refusal to use it for his writing, a refusal to accede to the kind of the world
142 reality it appears to name, a refusal to submit to the political dominance its use implies. This stance of rejection
143 rests upon the assumption that an essential Gikuyu identity may be regained, an identity which the language of
144 the colonizer seems to have displaced or dispersed ⁴ Empêcher une population de s'exprimer totalement dans sa
145 propre langue même a un déracinement plus ou moins grave et a une élimination de sa propre identité, dont on
146 voit ici (et ailleurs) les conséquences néfastes. En dépit des indépendances nationales, ces conséquences prenent
147 encore aujourd'hui et prolongent leurs effets dans les pays anciennement colonisés For Ngugi, there should be a
148 radical decolonization of the languages of the ex-colonizers. The purpose is a total rejection of such languages
149 which have demonised, displaced and dispersed the local African dialects. Language was the tool by which the
150 excolonizers maintained their dominance and presence in Africa. Colonial powers had tried harder to disperse
151 the African identities, such as the one Ngugi referred to as the Gikuyu identity. Thus, Africans ended up having
152 hybrid identities, languages and cultures, since they really could not express their national worriers and concerns
153 in their mother tongues but rather in the excolonisers' languages. In a review of the Moroccan history and
154 civilisation, Ouzzim Aherdan point outs to the following, ⁵ It is true that when a population is deprived from
155 expressing itself in its mother tongue, it turns out that it becomes alienated from its identity and becomes, more
156 or less, analogous with the image of the insect which keeps bumping into the four walls of a small room when
157 2015 (A)

158 light is turned off. In the African context, it is true that some people are no longer satisfied with their African
159 identity and they try, to use Shakespeare's term, to wash-white their race and be identified with their excolonizers.

160 The consequences are always unsatisfactory, since they unexpectedly and eventually get rejected by both their
161 people and the ex-colonisers with whom they seek identification. For this reason, Ngugi proposed a restoration of
162 the Gikuyu identity in the Kenyan context and a complete rejection of the excolonizer's language which carries
163 under its manifold ties the ex-colonizers' identity.

164 The opposition to the dominance of the excolonial languages in the African context has obviously been
165 stirred up within the African communities, especially after the independence. Along with Ngugi, Wa Thiong'o's
166 contentions and calls for a complete rejection of the English language and a revival of the Kenyan or the African
167 languages as representatives of a "essential" ⁶ Analysis of the forms and psychology of contemporary imperialism,
168 for instance, the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, who, in a series of fictional and philosophical writings, analyses neo-

2 II. THE AFRICAN LANGUAGES CONTROVERSY

169 colonialism in Kenya, a typical periphery-English country, and shows how English serves to uphold the domination
170 of a small elite and of the foreign interests that they are allied with African identity, many other Africans have
171 shared the same convictions and thoughts. In fact, African masses were the engines which energized the quest
172 for a suitable African language as a substitute of the ex-colonial hegemonic languages in their governments.
173 Therefore, many arguments were brought into the limelight, in addition to the above mentioned ones, in order
174 to solidify their rights in getting rid of the elites' languages which have kept them unaware of the administrative
175 affairs of their countries. In his *Linguistic Imperialism*, Robert Phillipson (1992) tacitly outlines some arguments
176 indicating protest against the dominance of English in what is now conventionally called the third world countries
177 or the formerly colonized ones. To that effect, he explicates that: 7 Ngugi, Wa Thiong'o is one of the figures
178 who called for the reconsideration of the dominance of foreign languages which are ruling in African linguistic
179 milieus alien to them. The English language in Kenya, for instance, takes the lead over the rest of the local 6
180 Though many scholars argue that there is no such thing as essential or pure. The heterogeneity of objects is
181 what we have and we can't prove otherwise. However, the use of the term essential in this context is made under
182 the pretext that there can be an opposition between what is African and non-African. 7 Robert, Phillipson.
183 *Linguistic Imperialism: "Opposition to the dominance of English."* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992),
184 p. 36 dialects. This Neo-colonialism, 8 According to different linguists or even decisionmakers, Africa has to
185 catch up with the train of progress and modernity, and this can not be achieved in a social context where we
186 have different isoglosses, each of which aims at promoting its dialect at the expense of another African dialect.
187 The solution of course, as was expected, was to opt for an African language which meets the consent of the
188 whole Africans and whose linguistic characteristics are a combination of all the African languages. In this regard,
189 making such a linguistic option possible and thereby allowing for a wider communicational possibilities, choosing
190 an all-which is carried out by the ex-colonial languages, on the one hand, does nothing but secure the interests of
191 the African élites who have mastery over these languages, and, on the other hand, it strips the African masses out
192 of their rights to rule or participate in the economic and social development of their countries. In the same vein,
193 Ngugi goes on to say that the ex-colonial powers uphold the supremacy of a small group of élites. This support
194 to the elites is necessarily a support to the imperial interests of the Western powers in the African scene. In
195 other words, such a small group of élites represents a medium of control in the hands of ex-colonial powers. This
196 group's entrenchment or implantation by the ex-colonizers in the African context is for the sake of manipulating
197 or controlling the whole population even from a very remote position. From this position, the African élites seem
198 to be unequal accomplices with the ex-colonial authorities, since control over them -especially in view of their
199 quality as the intelligentsia -is necessarily a control over all the African masses. This situation, in fact, is an
200 analogous to the some sophisticated inventions controlled from far to accomplish certain beneficial ends.

201 In general terms, Africa has been a fertile field of study, where many linguists have encountered many facts and
202 dichotomies. In fact, different points of views have been presented as to which language to choose as a substitute
203 to the ex-colonial languages. So far we have spot two opposing camps, each of which has an axe to grind as
204 to which language should be spoken among all the Africans aiming at achieving a local, regional, national and
205 international integration. These two opposing camps have argued about whether to maintain the ex-colonial
206 languages in an African context or promote a common African dialect which can unify Africans and create an
207 international channel of communication for reasons of cultural economic or political promotion. Faced with such
208 a conundrum, a third view has come into light to find a way out and thus bring both opposing camps into an
209 agreement.

210 encompassing African language is said to be possible only through two options, each one of which, of course,
211 has its own shortcomings: A horizontal integration which combines all the élites from different social contexts,
212 and vertical integration which brings together the elites and the masses.

213 On the one hand, horizontal integration aims at unifying the educated elites from the various African linguistic
214 groups. This option of horizontal integration among the élites is only possible through an ex-colonial language,
215 such as English, French or Spanish. In fact, when the élites of different African linguistic groups chose the
216 maintenance of the ex-colonizers' languages, such as English as a lingua-franca, they were going for a horizontal
217 integration which did not leave space for the masses to be integrated socially, economically or politically.
218 Just as we ask the question of whether this horizontal option is an efficient option to bring all the Africans
219 together, Ernest S. Mohochi provides an answer which goes hand in hand with the contention that horizontal
220 integration makes it possible only for the integration of 10-15 percent of the African population. 9 When colonial
221 territories became independent, the mobilized masses expect greater political and economic participation. These
222 expectations, together with rhetoric of national liberation movements, which stressed the value of indigenous
223 tradition, authenticity, and uniqueness, may have exerted pressure to replace colonial languages with indigenous
224 languages as media of instruction Still, there arises another question which is concerned with the other 75-80
225 percent which is not yet integrated. In this respect, his option, from the start, is a failure and unaccepted for
226 its partial possibilities. In his *Language Planning and Social Change*, Robert L. Cooper (1989) explains that, 10
227 This passage clearly demonstrates that after the independence of any ex-colonized country, the masses expect a
228 complete integration and participation in their countries' political, social and economic affairs. Unfortunately, this
229 integration is made inaccessible due to language mastery problems. Unlike the elites, the masses are again faced
230 with this problem of understanding and speaking the ex-colonial languages, which are now the official languages
231 of administration and foreign affairs. This situation explains the reasons why there was no sign of resistance from

232 the part of the élites against the ex-colonial languages, roots of which are, day by day, being entrenched in the
233 African 9 Ernest, S. Mohochi. "Language and Regional Integration: Foreign or African Languages for the African
234 Union?" Department of Languages and Linguistics, Edgerton University, P.O. Box 536, Njoro, KENYA, Retrieved
235 from http://www.codesria.org/Archives/ga10/Abstracts%20Ga%206-11/Regionalism_Mohochi.htm 10 Robert,
236 L. Cooper. Language Planning and Social Change: "Status Planning." (London: Cambridge University Press,
237 1989), p. 112 countries which are supposed to have their own distinctiveness in terms of language, culture or
238 identity. Yet, there were signs of resistance from the part of the masses on the ground that the maintenance of
239 the ex-colonial languages contributes to nothing the safeguarding of the colonial control on the African affairs.

240 On the other hand, vertical integration is believed to have offered more options than those offered by the
241 horizontal one. When we speak of vertical integration, Ernest S. Mohochi's explanation becomes pertinent. In
242 this account he explains that vertical integration allows for a possible integration of both the masses and the élites
243 but only through an African language. 11 Une fonction verticale permettant à tout Camerounais [Africain] de
244 s'intégrer dans sa communauté linguistique d'origine (ou de choix) et de participer au développement culturel de
245 cette communauté Likewise, Tadjadjeu is quoted in Thaddeus, M. Yaoundé's (2001) article, "which language(s) for
246 the African literature" in which he joins Ernest, S. Mohochi in his contention regarding the vertical integration
247 in Africa. Yaoundé writes that, 12 11 Ernest, S. Mohochi. "Language and Regional Integration: Foreign or
248 African Languages for the African Union?" Department of Languages and Linguistics, Edgerton University,
249 P.O. Box 536, Njoro, KENYA, Retrieved from http://www.codesria.org/Archives/ga10/Abstracts%20Ga%206-11/Regionalism_Mohochi.htm Tadjadjeu highlights the function of a vertical integration in the Cameroonian
250 community which should allow both masses and élites participate in the development of their country. Of course,
251 we can not speak of some integration which involves the integration of the whole social classes of some country
252 in the administration of their governmental affairs unless there is a total dismissal of the ex-colonial languages
253 and its substitution by a promoted African local tongue (this view coincides with the view of the second camp
254 discussed earlier). It is rather the choice of the African language which can pave the way to vertical integration
255 in the African continent. A case in point, Sierra Leone is an African country which consists of multiple languages
256 and ethnic groups. And one can imagine the heated disagreements that can take place among the different
257 ethnic groups over trifling matters such as which language to use when moving from a city's borders to another.
258 However, recent attempts to achieve a vertical integration were conducted in order to at least lessen the degree
259 of social conflicts in the Sierra Leonean community. The choice of the Krio language has to some extent solved
260 the communicational problem in Sierra Leone. This is clearly manifested in Sengova's following quotation:Year
261 2015 (A)

262 many would agree that krio has not only successfully bridged differences In ethnicity, language, culture,
263 and so forth among sierra Leone's many groups, it has also become a vital communicative tool creating social
264 harmony, cohesion and collaboration among the population?.the lingua franca status of krio in sierra Leone has
265 also narrowed considerably many socio-cultural and linguistic barriers that might otherwise have created greater
266 political discord than the recently witnessed in our decade-old interneccine war and carnage in the country ???
267 Analyzing for a while the governmental systems of the African countries that were once colonized, one can notice
268 that these countries cannot do without the ex-colonial languages in their management of their administrative or
269 foreign affairs. And even if an agreement is settled about which national language to communicate with in some
270 African country (like Sierra Leon), there is still the problem of whether or not the masses can participate in the
271 political It should be noted, in this sense, that it is the economic motives Sengova is very optimistic as to the
272 degree to which Krio has managed to bridge the ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences and disparities of the
273 Sierra Leoneans. Krio has managed to establish social harmony and co-existence among all the Sierra Leonean
274 social classes and has prevented the ethnic conflictsthat used to be a weak point in the social connectedness and
275 solidarity of this country -from taking place anymore. The example of Sierra Leon, therefore, has been brought
276 into light whenever this problem of integration in Africa arises. It is also this example that some African linguists
277 want to draw upon in proposing a vertical integration in a multilingual society via an African language.

278 At the first glance, it may seem that the problem of integration is solved in Sierra Leon. Still, this integration
279 concern communication only at local or levels whereas the regional and international integration is far from
280 applicable. we can not deny that Sengova's examples about the harmony to which the Sierra Leoneans have
281 arrived by settling the linguistic problems (for which they chose to speak Krio as a lingua franca in Sierra
282 Leone) are greatly pertinent to the context of vertical integration, but there is still one problem of whether or
283 not the Sierra Leoneans can get on good terms with the neighbouring African regions, or whether the masses
284 are given their chances to rule and participate in the social, economic, political or technological progress of
285 Sierra Leone. 13 Qtd. In Andrew, Simpson. "Language and National Identity in Africa." Johns Benjamins
286 Publishing Company. Retrieved from http://books.google.co.ma/books?id=I7qsTVO4IK4C&pg=PA137&lpg=PA137&dq=linguistic+integration+vertical+and+horizontal+in+africa&source=bl&ots=Nq7WdLPC5T&sig=xWZqEYRPQ9VWgH_idbYXkQ&hl=fr&ei=zQMYSvMdlpqyBqH17ZAC&sa=X&oi=book_res ult&ct=result&resnum=4
287 which, at the first place, determine if a person can rule or be ruled. In other words, high governmental positions
288 are granted only to those who own the means of production, those who have fortunes they use to influence the
289 course of action in their countries to their advantage and also those whose fathers or relatives can clear the way
290 for them to hold posts of high responsibility. It is all now about money and its corrupting desires. In support of
291 this latter idea, André Lefevre (1999) brings into light the case of the members of the High Council of the Dutch
292
293
294

295 Indies. He states that they, "have mostly achieved this rank by means of the lowest corruption and by the money
296 they have extorted from the poor Indians in their former, subordinate positions." ???4 An OAU inter-African
297 bureau of languages was set up to assist and encourage the use of indigenous Africans languages for educational,
298 commercial and communication purposes on a national, regional and continental level. However, these goals
299 have only been realised to a very small extent. The dominance of European languages is still virtually complete.
300 With few exceptions (Swahili and Somali are the best examples, see Scotton 1981) African languages tend to
301 be marginalised and lose out in the competition with European languages. Proficiency in the latter is essential
302 for upward social mobility and privileged positions in society Furthermore, in its dealing with the outside world
303 economically, politically or diplomatically, Africa is required to use the language of those with which it trades
304 and has diplomatic relationships or can use a global language, such as English, widely recognized. Most of the
305 time, African local languages lose any competition with the ex-colonial ones when they are encouraged to be
306 used for financial or developmental purposes. In this regard, Robert Phillipson (1992) clarifies that: It is then
307 very obvious to the naked eye that any competition with the European or ex-colonized languages is lost from
308 the part of the African languages. This does not mean that it is necessary not to enter in any commercial or
309 technological challenges with those dominant languages of the west lest the African languages would be more
310 disregarded and disfavoured by its own speaking tongues. Rather, Africans themselves should work on bringing
311 on stage an agreed upon language for which much respect, value and importance would be given not just by
312 Africans but also the other foreign nations of the world. Generally speaking, the vertical integration option
313 seems to be far from possible simply because the language of administration or business is inaccessible to the
314 masses but reserved only to the élites who thrive under its privileges. Besides, even if we consider the possibility
315 of the masses as having access to the ex-colonial languages, it is still far fetched an aim to have them rule side
316 by side with the élites. This can be the case simply because in an African context we still have not heard of
317 any country which is, to a reasonable extent, democratic enough to accept its entire people to take part in
318 the development of their country. Therefore, it is only the well-to-do who have access both to the clues of the
319 ex-colonial languages and the thresholds of desks behind which governmental decisions are issued. Concretely
320 enough, if we look closely to the Moroccan ruling system, we will find that the names that are recurrent every
321 year in the government lists are the same, such as Fasi people who either have some close family ties with the
322 Idrissid dynasty or that they are economically powerful. The family names of the rich are the names which will
323 be heard until democracy reigns back or a calamity strikes some country because of its monotonous strategies
324 in dealing with its populace (think of what is now called 'the Arab Spring' that has brought the toppling of
325 long-established dictatorial regimes in some part of the Arab world, such as Egypt, Tunisia or Yemen).

326 3 Global Journal of Human Social Science

327 In effect, one may wonder about the reasons which have made integration (at national, regional or international
328 levels) in some European countries possible regardless of the multiplicity of the languages they are fraught with.
329 This case of the Europeans is usually compared to the case of the Africans who have the same exigencies as
330 Europe once had. Unfortunately, Africans have not up till now managed to create even a communicational
331 channel between a Sudani and Nigerian or between a Moroccan and Somali (except through a western language)
332 let alone achieve an economic stability and progress. The case in Africa, of course, is diametrically opposed to
333 that of Europe since Europe has managed to have a unity between the Europeans through settling the economic
334 problems. They have improved their economy and depended on themselves in order to reach, more or less,
335 an economic autonomy. In so doing, Europeans have put their linguistic differences aside and concentrated
336 on achieving an economic, scientific or technological development. Therefore, the European economic boom
337 has solved many problems related to democracy to the extent that anyone who has competency can now rule,
338 be him/her from the masses or elites. The European example is what the Africans should appropriate rather
339 than creating a fuss over which language should be used if a Senegali is addressing his cousin who happened to
340 immigrate to the other part of Senegal, which in turn speaks some different language.

341 4 III. Solving the Puzzle of the African Languages

342 As far as some African linguists are concerned, the multilingualism of Africa should be seen as signs of strength
343 rather than weakness. The reason why the United States of America is globally powerful in all spheres of life is its
344 multiple ethnicities, whose differences most of the time result in instructive competitions rather than destructive
345 ones. Africa should benefit from those differences it contains and use them to its advantage. In fact, we can
346 not deny the fact that the multiplicity of languages in Africa is a stumblingblock in Africa's way to progress.
347 Thus, there really should be some neutral language which can mediate and help ease communicational shocks
348 between all the Africans. In this regard, different languages were suggested in order to solve such linguistic
349 puzzle. The major proposals were the standardization of some African dialect to be nationally, regionally and
350 internationally recognized. Thaddeus Menang Yaounde's article, "which language (s) for the African literature"
351 quotes Towa (1976-1947) along with whom he discusses the possibility of developing some African language in
352 order to compete with international languages in all spheres of life. In this regard, Towa says:

353 L'adoption et le développement d'une ou de plusieurs langues national assureraient l'inter communication a
354 l'intérieure de chaque nation, mais non entre les différentes nations africains. À ce niveau les langues européennes

355 continueraient à s'imposer condamnant les nôtres à la marginalité. Notre problème linguistique ne sera pas résolu
356 au fond tant que ne n'aurons pas choisi une langue ou un petit nombre de langue africain come moyen d'expression
357 et de la communication à l'échelle continentale ??6 Obviously enough, the Africans do not hesitate to confess
358 the danger which the European languages are posing to the African integration. For Towa (1976-1947), if the
359 Africans try developing or adopting an African language in order to settle their communicational problems, this
360 will be possible only at the national level. Consequently, the European languages may seize the opportunity
361 of such inability of the local languages to create communicational channels between the Africans regionally or
362 even internationally, and thus they shall present themselves as linguistic intermediate agents that can help the
363 Africans with their linguistic instability Year 2015 (A)

364 and multiplicity. The solution then, for Towa, is to choose and then promote one or many African languages
365 which can substitute the dominance of the ex-colonial languages and hence unify Africa to be ready for all the
366 developmental challenges. In this regard, Kiswahili was advanced and chosen by many Africans in order to
367 carry out the process of integrating the whole Africans into promising horizons full of progress and coexistence.
368 Likewise, Ernest S. Mohochi in his article, "Language and Regional Integration: Foreign or African Languages for
369 the African Union?" argues that, "Among all the language of African origin, Kiswahili is the only language with
370 a clear chance of emerging as a world language. It is spoken in varying degrees in Europe, America, and Asia."
371 ??? In Tanzania, English is a dominant language vis-à-vis Swahili, which in turn dominates the other languages.
372 A linguistic hierarchy of this kind is found in many other contexts, for instance French remains the language of
373 power in post-independence Mali, and the recent advance of Bambara, including widespread literacy in it, has
374 been at the expense of other Malian languages.

375 Therefore, we can say that the most probable language which can be up to the expectations of the public
376 as far as the African integration is concerned is Kiswahili. Because it is widely spoken not only at the African
377 level but also at the global one, Kiswahili has won the appeal of most Africans. Still, there is one more problem
378 related to the global reception of Kiswahili. In other words, though Kiswahili is the language most likely to be
379 accepted as a linguistic unifying tool among the Africans, English or the other ex-colonial languages still thought
380 of as global languages (mostly English) of commerce, politics, diplomacy, technology, to mention but the most
381 pertinent. This situation uncovers the existence of a linguistic hierarchy among all languages, the superior of
382 which are always the ex-colonial languages. For instance, in his *Linguistic Imperialism*, Robert Phillipson (1992)
383 advances Schiller's point of view about the linguistic hierarchy found in Africa, and hence he makes clearer the
384 idea that, 18

385 In this respect it is evident that the Africans can not do without the ex-colonial languages. Even if they
386 agreed on some local languages to replace the ex-colonial ones, it is harder for a full integration among the
387 élites and the masses to take place. Swahili, for instance, is the dominant language vis-à-vis the other African
388 languages, whereas English or any other ex-17 Ernest, S. Mohochi: "Language and Regional Integration: Foreign
389 or African Languages for the African Union?" Department of Languages and Linguistics, Edgerton University,
390 P.O. Box 536, Njoro, KENYA, Retrieved from [http://www.codesri.a.org/Archives/ga10/A_bstracts%20Ga%206-](http://www.codesri.a.org/Archives/ga10/A_bstracts%20Ga%206-11/Regionalism_Mohochi.htm)
391 [11/Regionalism_Mohochi.htm](http://www.codesri.a.org/Archives/ga10/A_bstracts%20Ga%206-11/Regionalism_Mohochi.htm) 18 Robert, Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism: "Cultural Imperialism in Science,*
392 *the Media, and Education."* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 59 colonial language is dominant or
393 superior to Swahili. Therefore, what should be retained from analyzing the multilingualism that is found in Africa
394 is that it seems an impossibility to come to a full agreement upon replacing the ex-colonial languages by some
395 local African one. This has further made the Western languages gain more access to the African social, political
396 or cultural contexts, thereby bringing the idea of the African integration come real. In support of the important
397 role of the Western languages in the African integration, Robert Phillipson (1992) To bring this discussion to an
398 end, it should be declared anew that attempts towards an Africa regional, national or international integration
399 are not new. The questions of the African linguistic integration have occupied the attention of the public for many
400 years. In Africa, it is the weak economy which presupposes an urgent quest for a local, regional and international
401 linguistic integration. In effect, the Africans constitute a powerful energy which may turn the table on the gloomy
402 and hazy horizons which have been lurking in Africa's way to progress for many centuries. The ex-colonizers have
403 implanted their languages in Africa and contributed to their dominance or hegemony vis-à-vis the African It goes
404 without saying that English is the dominant or most spoken language in the world. It is obvious that this globally
405 dominant language would dominate also the African languages. In Africa, English has two important functions:
406 internal and external. In other words, it plays an internal role when it has managed to be the neutral language
407 spoken among all the Africans for purposes of communication. Furthermore, it has an external function for it
408 connects Africa to the outside or international scale economically, diplomatically, technologically or politically.
409 Generally, the multilingualism of Africa should be perceived as a strong point which would have fruitful results
410 in any field, and the ex-colonial languages will further occupy the African territories unless the Africans develop
411 their autonomous economy by means of co-operation between all the African countries. This can not also be
412 achieved unless the Africans put their linguistic differences aside and regard development in all spheres of life as
413 the most desirable goal in their agendas. languages. Besides, even when the demands for a national and regional
414 integration among Africans have increased, African differences started to come into sight, since each group needs
415 its language to be widely spoken. Furthermore, the ex-colonial languages have granted to the African élites some
416 prestige to the extent that they supported the maintenance of the ex-colonial languages at the expense of their

6 WORKS CITED

417 own local ones. Therefore, this controversy over which language to choose for the African linguistic integration
418 has demonstrated huge disagreements which are weak points in any nation's way towards development.

419 5 Global Journal of Human Social Science

420 Obviously, it is a noticeable fact that Africa can not achieve a full integration between the élites and the masses
421 unless it tries to develop its own economy which would later on ease all the differences either the linguistic or
422 ethnic ones. And of course many questions are still open for debate and it is for the Africans to solve or answer
423 them. For instance, does really Africa have the ability to build up an autonomous economy which would later
424 on solve all the disputes and problems? What would be the future of Africa if those linguistic problems are not
425 seriously coped with? Of course the questions are many and are open for debate and anticipation. Some have
426 been answered, but the answers again brought other questions and problematized the whole African linguistic
427 status quo. In short, many pens have went out of ink when their writers started to speak their minds and try to
428 diagnose the social illnesses of Africans, but what matters is that there should be some practice to the theories
429 that are advanced by many Africans to the necessity of using their linguistic differences to their advantage instead
430 of using them in the other way around.

431 6 Works Cited

Year 2015 (A) ^{1 2 3 4 5 6 7}



Figure 1:

Figure 2:

¹Braj, B. Kachru. "The Alchemy of English." In Bill Ashcroft, et al. (Eds.) *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 291

²This is an incident which I have been reported by a friend who was an eye-witness to what happened between the Cameroonians.

²Robert, L. Cooper. *Language Planning and Social Change: "Status Planning."* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 112

³Bill, Ashcroft, et al. *The post-colonial studies reader*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 283

⁴After colonialism, Western domination over the African countries has continued throughout the West's linguistic, economic, political or cultural hegemony, among other spheres.

⁵Global Journal of Human Social Science© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US)

⁶© 2015 Global Journals Inc. (US) -

⁷Robert, Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism. "Cultural Imperialism in Science, the Media, and Education."* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 30

-
- 432 [Simpson] 'Language and National Identity in Africa'. Andrew Simpson . [http://](http://books.google.co.ma/books?id=I7qsTVO4IK4C&pg=PA137&lpg=PA137&dq=linguistic+integration+vertical+and+horizontal+in+africa&source=bl&ots=Nq7WdLPC5T&sig=xWZqEYRPQ9VsGzWgH_idbYXkQ&hl=fr&ei=zQMYSvMdlpqyBqH17ZAC&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4)
433 [books.google.co.ma/](http://books.google.co.ma/books?id=I7qsTVO4IK4C&pg=PA137&lpg=PA137&dq=linguistic+integration+vertical+and+horizontal+in+africa&source=bl&ots=Nq7WdLPC5T&sig=xWZqEYRPQ9VsGzWgH_idbYXkQ&hl=fr&ei=zQMYSvMdlpqyBqH17ZAC&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4) *books* *?id=I7qsTVO4IK4C&pg=PA137&lpg=PA137&dq=linguistic+integration+vertical+and+horizontal+in+africa&source=bl&ots=Nq7WdLPC5T&sig=xWZqEYRPQ9VsGzWgH_idbYXkQ&hl=fr&ei=zQMYSvMdlpqyBqH17ZAC&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4*, Johns Benjamins Publishing Company.
- 437 [Mohochi and Ernest] 'Language and Regional Integration: Foreign or African Languages for the African Union'.
438 S Mohochi , Ernest . [http://www.codesria.org/Archives/ga10/Abstracts%20Ga%206-11/](http://www.codesria.org/Archives/ga10/Abstracts%20Ga%206-11/Region-alism_Mohochi.htm)
439 [Region-alism_Mohochi.htm](http://www.codesria.org/Archives/ga10/Abstracts%20Ga%206-11/Region-alism_Mohochi.htm) *P.O. Box 536. Department of Languages and Linguistics, Edgerton Uni-*
440 *versity*
- 441 [Cooper and Robert ()] *Language Planning and Social Change: "Status Planning*, L Cooper , Robert . 1989.
442 *London: Cambridge University Press.*
- 443 [Phillipson ()] *Linguistic Imperialism: "Opposition to the dominance of English*, Robert Phillipson . 1992.
444 *London: Oxford University Press.*
- 445 [Aherdan and Amazigh ()] 'Multilinguisme et Préjugés colonialistes'. Ouzzim Aherdan , Amazigh . *Rabat :*
446 *Mithaq-Almaghrïb*, 1980.
- 447 [Lefevere ()] 'Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice'. André Lefevere . *Routledge* Susan, Bassnett and
448 Harish, Trivedi (ed.) 1999. London. (Composing the other)
- 449 [Ashcroft ()] 'The post-colonial studies reader'. Bill Ashcroft . *Routledge* 2001. London.
- 450 [Kackru and Braj ()] 'The Post-colonial Studies Reader'. B Kackru , Braj . *Routledge* Bill Ashcroft, et al. (ed.)
451 2001. (The Alchemy of English)
- 452 [Yaoundé and Thaddeus ()] 'Which Language(s) for African Literature'. M Yaoundé , Thaddeus . [http://www.](http://www.inst.at/trans/11Nr/menang11.htm)
453 [inst.at/trans/11Nr/menang11.htm](http://www.inst.at/trans/11Nr/menang11.htm) *A reappraisal*, 2001.