

ЯЗЫКОЗНАНИЕ. ЯЗЫКИ НАРОДОВ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН ЕВРОПЫ, АЗИИ И АФРИКИ

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СОХРАНЕНИЕ И РАЗВИТИЕ ЯЗЫКОВ КОРЕННЫХ НАРОДОВ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ ГАНА

Д.Р. Сабирова, Р. Тенкоранг

Diana. Sabirova@kpfu.ru

Казанский (Приволжский) Федеральный Университет, г. Казань, Россия

Аннотация. Поликультурное пространство Республики Гана отражает языковую ситуацию, сложившуюся в большинстве африканских стран, и проблема многоязычия в таком контексте представляет большой интерес не только для лингвистов, но и для представителей большинства гуманитарных и социальных наук. В последнее время повышается интерес носителей других культур к африканскому континенту, благодаря чему появляется значительное количество англоязычных описаний экзотических лингвокультур африканских народов. Исторические нарративы доказывают особенность африканского континента как примера мирового региона с наибольшим количеством представленных языков в мире. Настоящее исследование направлено на описание текущей языковой ситуации в Республике Гана с опорой на анализ состояния, функционирования и взаимоотношения языков и культур коренных народов в условиях англоизации африканского континента, выявление степени воздействия языковой ситуации в стране на формирование английского языка как языка межкультурного общения, направленного на описание культуры Ганы.

Осуществленный исторический экскурс позволяет акцентировать меры, которые были предприняты для развития и сохранения языков коренных народов, предотвращения их вымирания (обязательное изучение местных языков в школах; возможности диалога культур в полилингвальной коммуникативной среде; активизация внеклассной работы с целью устойчивого развития локальных языков; начало реализации ряда языковых проектов по обучению грамоте родного языка и т.д.).

Ключевые слова: английский язык, лингвокультура, язык коренных народов, взаимоотношения языка и культуры, языковая ситуация, диалог культур, коммуникативные среды.

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PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Sabirova D.R., Tenkorang R.

Diana. Sabirova@kpfu.ru

Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia

Abstract. The multicultural space of the Republic of Ghana is a reflection of the linguistic situation, which prevails in most African countries, and the question of multilingualism in the

African context is of great interest, not only to linguists but to the representatives of other humanitarian and social sciences as well.

Recently, the interest of people from other cultural backgrounds in the African continent has increased, and as a result, a significant number of English-language descriptions of the exotic African linguistic cultures has appeared. Historical narratives have proven the uniqueness of the African continent as the region with the highest number of languages in the world. This study is aimed at describing the current language situation in the Republic of Ghana, by analyzing the state, functioning and language and culture interconnection of the indigenous languages in the context of anglicizing the African continent, identifying the degree at which the language situation in the country has influenced the formation of the English language as the language of intercultural communication describing the Ghanaian culture.

The historical analysis helps accentuate the measures which have been taken for the development and preservation of the indigenous languages in order to prevent their extinction (the compulsory study of the indigenous languages in schools; opportunities for dialogue between cultures in a multilingual communication environment; activation of the extracurricular activities aimed at the sustainable development of the local languages; the start of a number of language projects to enhance the provision of literacy in the indigenous language, etc).

Keywords: English language, linguistic culture, indigenous language, language and culture interconnection, language situation, dialogue between cultures, communication environment.

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Located in the western region of the African continent, Ghana is a country which was once known as the Gold Coast before attaining independence, and since July 1960 has officially been known as the Republic of Ghana. Like other African countries, the Republic of Ghana was under colonial rule, until the 6th of March 1957, when under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the country's first prime minister and president, it received independence. Ghana is the first country in the West African region to have attained independence from colonial power [5]. However, just like most former colonies, Ghana even after colonization had long ended, did not completely sever colonial ties and almost 64 years after independence, still maintains the language of its former colonial past, the British as the official language. Thus, in spite of the fact that there are over 80 indigenous languages spoken by the Ghanaian population, the English language is the official language of governance and administration in all sectors and hence, it is the language of instruction in all levels of education as well.

As stated above, there are over 80 indigenous languages which are native languages to different citizens of Ghana residing in various regions, and out of the

lot, 11 languages have written forms and are approved and sponsored by the government, to be taught in Ghanaian schools. The 11 indigenous languages of the Ghanaian population with written forms, in which formal literacy can be received are Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Mfantse, Ewe, Ga, Dangme, Dagbani, Nzema, Gonja, Dagaare and Kasem. The Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi and Mfantse are all the dialects of the Akan language. Genetically speaking, most Ghanaian languages trace their root to the Niger-Congo language family.

With the exception of the official English language and the multiple indigenous languages spoken in Ghana, mainly due to the reasons of migration and trade, there are other foreign languages spoken by a part of the Ghanaian population, these languages are Hausa, Arabic, the Chadic language, the language of the Muslim community, spoken and taught in special Islamic schools and French, which happens to be a school subject taught in Ghanaian schools, particularly in the urban centres.

The multilingual and, undoubtedly, multicultural character of the Republic of Ghana becomes clearer. Since the aim of this article is mainly to highlight the state of the indigenous languages, the following paragraphs will be focused on answering the questions pertaining to why the English language seems to dominate in spite of a large number of indigenous languages, if there is a possibility of adopting and adapting a national language out of the many indigenous languages, and also, some efforts being made generally to not only preserve the various indigenous languages from extinction, but also their further development will be discussed.

Why is the English language dominating at the expense of the indigenous languages?

The accurate answer to this question is yet to be found. However, upon observation, we have come to the understanding that the issue of English dominance is more of a political and economic nature than the linguistic one. This is so because, just as it is the case of other African countries who were once the colonies, there are multiple local languages native to the citizens but yet, the language of the former colonial power, which is native to none, remains the language of authority. The literal root for this phenomena can be traced mainly to globalization.

Globalization, according to the Cambridge online dictionary, can be defined as “the increase of trade around the world, especially by large companies producing and trading goods in many different countries” [3]. Politically and geographically, globalization can be defined as the phenomenon through which the world, as wide and diverse as it is, is gradually (if not completely) converting into a “village” and as typical of any village, there is a common language spoken by its members, and in this case, the English language is that chosen language, spoken by the members of the “global village”.

The question of the role of the English language in the globalization process has been studied by a number of social scholars, but for the purpose of this paper, a British linguist, David Crystal, and his book “English as a global language” should be mentioned. In application to the African context, contacts with the British empire introduced English to the African continent and the English dominance over the indigenous languages of anglophone African countries, in our opinion, is as a result of the position of people, fluent in the English language held from the colonial era till the present day [4].

Relating it to the Ghanaian context, we come to realize that, though there is a wide range of indigenous languages to choose from, the English language is the preferred most “prestigious” language of the masses, so much preferred that, even those who are not so fluent in the English language, would rather speak the diminutive form of the language, which is known as the pidgin English, than communicate in their own native language. Hence, though it is said that, there is power in numbers, this obviously does not apply to the indigenous languages in the Republic of Ghana, since as numerous as they are, the English language remains the dominant language. So, we came to the conclusion that, the power of the English language is not because of the number of its native or fluent speakers in Ghana, but rather, the authority possessed by a few who are literate in the language in the country. To further buttress this point, the Ghanaian parliament is a reserve of literates in the English language. There is no place for a Ghana citizen, who has no mastery of the English language in the Parliament House, regardless of how

patriotic and zealous he may be to contribute to the national development. This is because, sessions in the house of government is carried out in none other but the English language.

Amongst other reasons, not excluding the lack of the effective implementation of the language-in-education policy, after observations and studies, we may conclude, that the preference of the English language over the indigenous languages by the general Ghanaian population can be duly considered a major reason behind the inconsistency in the implementation of the language-in-education policy since its introduction.

Before going further, let us briefly look into the language-in-education policy mentioned above. This policy was aimed at promoting bilingual education, thus the use of both the official language and the indigenous language in the education process. Initial attempts at the implementation of this policy date back to the time between 1539 and 1925, thus the period before and during colonization. During this period, different European countries were in power in different regions of the country and hence, the education offered at all levels in the respective regions was in the indigenous language of the region and either English, Portuguese, Dutch or the Danish language, depending on the language spoken by the rulers of the region.

During the colonial period, however, the English language became the official language of education but from the first grade through to the third grade, the indigenous language of the region was used as the language of instruction and the English language was taught as a school subject.

After attaining independence, this policy has endured a lot of adjustment even to the point that, in the period after independence until 1966, the indigenous language was completely scrubbed off from the school system as the language of instruction, while the English language was maintained and happened again in May 2002 up to 2006. However, between 1957 and April 2002, the policy experienced some level of stability with the most stable period being 1970–1973, when the indigenous languages were used as languages of instruction in various regions across the country from the first grade through to the fourth grade [1].

Regardless of the instability of the language-in-education policy, with the knowledge of the necessity in maintaining and promoting literacy in the indigenous languages, and its subsequent benefit on the general human resource and national development, in the year 2009, the National Literacy Acceleration Program (NALAP) was launched to help support literacy in the indigenous languages and ensure that quality education is provided to kindergarten pupils through to grade 3 in the local language. This program in comparison with the previous attempts at promoting literacy in the indigenous languages, is the most effective, as it was not only theoretically implemented, but practical steps were taken to effect the implementation and success of the program, which includes the provision of the needed teaching and learning materials in the local languages, as well as the provision of training sessions to the teachers and school administrators, to equip them with the needed knowledge in order to adjust to the program accordingly.

In spite of the existence of the NALAP and its registered success, the Ghanaian population's preference of the English language over the use of the indigenous language weakens the essence of the program as it did with the initial language-in-education-policy.

Circling in on the issue of globalization giving the English language dominance over the indigenous languages is based on our observations. Parents are the stakeholders in the educational process and hence their cooperation or refusal to cooperate plays a key role in the success of any given educational program, regardless of how well-structured the program or policy may be. With this knowledge, we observed and realized, that most parents do not support the use of local languages in schools commenting that, there is no need in spending resources to educate their children in a language he or she may well learn from his environment, but with the knowledge and literacy in the English language, their children will be properly equipped to be able to fit into the global village.

The desire of a parent to provide his or her child with a quality future is natural and there is no reason for them to be apologetic about that. So, we suggest that, beyond providing the needed teaching and learning materials and educating teachers

on how to adopt and adapt to the NALAP scheme, in order for the program to achieve the purpose for which it was launched, there is the need to include and educate the parents on the importance of the program and what benefits it would provide for their wards. Thus, the general public must be educated and constantly reminded through the media and all possible channels, that the NALAP program is worth supporting, because it does not only aim at protecting and promoting the indigenous languages and cultures, but most importantly, it is aimed at helping their children to receive quality literacy in their native languages and subsequently transition to the use of the English language. Thus, rather than having certain unfamiliar concepts introduced and taught in an unfamiliar language to the child, the concepts in the earlier stages of education are introduced in the native language of the child, to enhance quality comprehension of the concept, before further studies in the English language. Parents must be made to understand, that, this way, their child's level of literacy in the early stages of education is not neglected but rather, it is gradually being developed, so that the general education process will not only be relatively easier on their ward, but effective.

Still on the educational sector, there are course programs offered in the indigenous languages at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. However, due to the fact that tertiary education is expensive, parents or guardians are unwilling to foot the bill involved in educating their wards in those courses because they do not see their investments yielding any "prestigious" profits in the future. Hence, a fully functional scholarship scheme, funded by the Ghanaian government would in no doubt go a long way in promoting research and knowledge acquisition in the indigenous languages.

With that said, in the following paragraphs, some ways of protection and development of the indigenous languages in Ghana will be discussed.

The first of which is the existence of media communication platforms whose mode of transmission is the indigenous language of the citizens of Ghana. Before recent times, the English language which inhibited the majority of Ghanaians from understanding and being a part of national debates was dominantly the language

of the mass media. The main indigenous languages used by these mainly private radio and television stations are Akan, Ga, Hausa, Ewe and Dagbani. In recent years, the National Media Commission (NMC) has registered a number of indigenous radio stations, where entertainment, sport and issues of national interests are discussed in the main indigenous languages of the various ethnic groups. Not only does this boost nationwide involvement in the democratic and nation-building process, but it also helps promote literacy in the indigenous languages.

Regardless of the fact that, these media houses have experienced criticisms of media scholars and even the general public, for their work and mainly for the use of vulgar and other words which are culturally considered as linguistic taboos in various indigenous languages, they are still the choice of a majority of the Ghanaian population (regardless of their literacy in English or the lack thereof) as their primary source of information. The print media, however, continues to use the English language.

Still on the issue of how the media is playing a pivotal role in the preservation and development of indigenous languages, we would like to make examples from Ogbonu FM, Peace FM and UTV. These radio and TV stations host programs where they educate their audience on the culture of the people of Ghana. Peace FM for example, every Sunday evening, hosts a proverb competition in the Akan language, under the name “wo bu be aa, minsu mitsi be” which can be literally translated as “if you are good at speaking in proverbs, I also understand proverbs”, where guests are invited to give proverbs and the one with the highest amount of rightly spoken proverbs wins. Ogbonu FM on the other hand, hosts their programs in Ga, and promote the culture of the Ga people, whereas United TV, hosts the Heritage Ghana show, which is dedicated to the education of the public on everything pertaining to the Ghanaian cultural heritage.

We are of the opinion that, the media houses, though not ideal, considering the fact that they are still growing, are indeed helping in the sustenance of the indigenous languages, and with adequate regulations, there is the need for the support of the emergence and development of more media bodies that, that will promote the other

indigenous languages, thereby extending the number of local languages used in broadcasting.

While in the media sphere, we will be looking at the cinema and the entertainment industry in Ghana, and how it contributes to the preservation and development of indigenous languages. The Ghanaian music industry is diverse, not only linguistically but in terms of genre as well. Most religious and cultural songs are in the indigenous languages and of recent times, contemporary musicians who rap and sing in local languages are topping the charts in the country and even outside the country. Michael Owusu Addo, known in showbiz as Sarkodie is one of such contemporary musicians who sings and raps in the indigenous language.

However, there have been criticisms with regards to the use of, once again, vulgar and culturally inappropriate words especially by the Ghanaian hip life and hip-hop artists. Though, this is a setback, we are of the view point that, with the right control measures and policies put in place, this problem can be curbed and through music, the indigenous languages will be preserved from extinction. To add, considering the sector of cinematography, the local movie industry has also contributed to the sustenance of the local languages. This sector, however has suffered in recent years, due to the preference of other movies produced in the English language. But this, in our opinion is a problem that can be curbed if the quality of the local movies is improved, to match up with the other movies.

The next sector to be discussed is the sector of local governance. As stated earlier, the Republic of Ghana is divided into regions and in each region, there are arms of local governance which run through to the grassroots. Thus, every village has a chief who is responsible for governance at the village level, and at the village level, administration is done solely in the indigenous language of the members of the village. Regardless of the fact that, the chief and some members of his royal panel may have received formal education and hence are literate in the English language, their governance and decision-making procedures are done in the native language of the set region. Also, yearly festivals are organized and in this way, not only is the history and culture of the people preserved, but it is also passed on from generations

to generations and this, in our opinion plays a very important role in the preservation of the indigenous languages and cultures of the people of the Republic of Ghana.

Furthermore, the Ghanaian population is not only diverse in terms of language, but in terms of religious beliefs as well, there are three main religions popularly recognized and practiced in the Republic of Ghana, and they are; the Christian religion, the Islamic religion and the traditional religion. Though these religions are completely different in their belief systems, they unite in the Ghanaian context on the grounds that, the language they use is mainly native to their members. Thus, on a typical Sunday, when most Christians go to their various places of worship, the sermons are preached mainly in the language, native to the indigenes. In the urban context, however, sermons in some churches are offered in English, while translations are made available, mainly in either Akan and Ga, or Akan and Ewe. Whereas in the Islamic community, the language used is Arabic but in the traditional religious system, the language for rituals and rites is solely the indigenous language.

To elaborate this point and how it helps promote and preserve the indigenous languages from extinction, we will be focusing on the Christian religion, because, with an approximated percentage of 71%, the Christian religion is, without a doubt the belief system of a majority of the Ghanaian population [7, p. 63]. The existence of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) is a key factor in explaining how religion has a role to play in the preservation and development of indigenous languages in the Republic of Ghana. The Christian religion, before the arrival of foreign missionaries to the shores of the Gold Coast in the early eighteenth century, was foreign to the people of Ghana. The belief system practiced then, was the traditional ancestral worship. Now, the Christian religion, which was once foreign is the most popular religion practiced in Ghana, consisting of multiple denominations. Circling in on how indigenous languages are being preserved and promoted through this belief system, we will be looking at the GILLBT mentioned earlier.

The Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation, is an organization which is affiliated with the Institute of African Studies in the University of Ghana, Legon and in the quest to spread Christianity, is involved

in translating the Bible into the minority languages, in order to make it accessible to the Ghanaian people who are not literate in the English language, but are Christians and hence have a need for the Bible for their spiritual growth. The organization, since its inception in the twentieth century, has been able to translate the Bible into 30 indigenous Ghanaian languages. This, in our opinion is a great feat, considering the fact that, it is a non-governmental organization, just like the Bible Society of Ghana, and hence is not funded by the government of Ghana. The latter, however has currently been able to translate the Bible into 8 indigenous languages. To add, the GILLBT, in collaboration with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), a body, accredited by the government for the education of Ghanaian citizens on laws and policies amongst other things, have translated the 1992 Constitution of Ghana into 30 minority languages. Also, the GILLBT, in support of the rights of women and to help curb domestic violence, collaborated with the International Federation of Women Lawyers, to translate the Rights of Ghanaian Women into minority languages, hence empowering women to be able to stand for their rites.

Considering the achievement of the GILLBT, mentioned above, and also the fact that, with the exception of Bible translation, they are also involved in providing mother tongue literacy to children who, mainly for financial reasons are not in school, we suggest the need for the Ghanaian government to adopt this organization and make it a part of the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL), support and fund it, tasking the organization in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, with the responsibility of providing teaching and learning materials in more of the indigenous languages. Though, this may come across as financially strenuous, we recommend the adoption of GILLBT as part of the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL), because, in our opinion, they are in solidarity with regards to the indigenous languages, thus they both aim at providing and promoting literacy in the indigenous languages, irrespective of the fact that, the approach of the GILLBT is religion oriented.

The process of preserving and promoting the indigenous languages, is a tedious task, financially and even theoretically, so a cooperative work between the GILLBT,

BGL and the Ministry of Education, in our opinion will go a long way in easing the strain in the attainment of the set goal, thus the preservation and development of the indigenous languages. Bearing in mind that, there is strength in numbers, we are of the opinion that, this way, with the combined forces of the various experts in the respective organizations, written and other documented materials in the indigenous languages will be made available at a relatively faster pace, and over time, they will be gradually developed and incorporated into the educational system, subsequently increasing the number of indigenous languages, in which literacy can be acquired. To add, regardless of the fact that, it may take a lot of time to be able to incorporate new languages into the educational system, there is the need for the documentation of the indigenous languages, most especially the ones that are spoken by the minority, and in this way, the language and undoubtedly, the culture of the minority is preserved and subsequently developed over time.

Is the adoption and adaptation of an indigenous language as a national language a means of redemption?

In the proceeding paragraphs, the issue of adopting and adapting an indigenous language as a national language and how it may facilitate the process of protecting and developing the indigenous languages in the Republic of Ghana is discussed. As well as some factors that may inhibit the process of selecting one of the indigenous languages as a national language.

A national language, can simply be defined as a recognized language or group of languages, spoken by the majority of people in a given country and instrumental in socioeconomic activities and development.

Before any further discussions on the importance of having a national language, we would be considering the possibility of adopting a particular indigenous language as the national language of the Republic of Ghana. This issue, we are aware, bears a politically sensitive character and must be addressed with caution. This is because, delegating a particular language out of the multiple indigenous languages, indirectly means relegating power, both political and economic to the speakers of that

language. This may also imply the biased development of that selected language and the subsequent negligence of the other indigenous languages.

The Republic of Ghana is administratively divided into 16 regions and it comprises of over 70 ethnic groups. The majority of the ethnic groups, in order of size are Akan, Mole-Dagbon, Ewe, Ga-Dangme, Gurma, Guang, the Kusaasi and the Konkomba people. Since the attainment of independence, 5 population censuses have been conducted in the Republic of Ghana, and the most recent one was conducted in 2010. A summarized representation of the data accumulated from the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC), presenting the population of the Republic of Ghana according to 5 major ethnic groups, has it that, 47.5% of the total Ghanaian population belong to the Akan ethnic group, the Mole-Dagbon ethnic group with 16.6% of the total population is next, followed by the Ewe, Ga-Dangme, Gurma and Guan ethnic groups with percentages of 13.9, 5.7 and 3.7 respectively [7, p.62].

Typically, based on the data presented in the previous paragraph, one could easily suggest the Akan language as the best and indisputable candidate to be chosen as the national language out of the multiple indigenous languages, however, in reference to the previous paragraph which highlights the politically sensitive nature of this question, selecting the Akan language as the national language without adequate and careful education and preparation of the citizens has a great tendency of creating ethnic conflicts, because the other ethnic groups are without a doubt, going to express their displeasure as to why one language is preferred to theirs. And as said earlier, this selection, if not thought through properly, may lead to ethnic conflicts.

This, in our opinion is the underlying factor, explaining why most former colonies who are multilingual in nature, prefer to just stick with the language of the former colonial time, in spite of the fact that they are literally spoilt for choice with regards to languages. We hold this opinion because, institutionally, maintaining the language of the former colonial time seems to be the only viable and relatively easy way to avoid the Tower of Babel experience. Thus, this language being the official

language of administration, serves the purpose of unifying the entire nation to strive together for national development.

However, according to a study conducted by Mohammed Sadat and Abigail Ayiglo Kuwornu on the streets of Accra, most of the respondents were of the opinion that, adopting a native language and adapting it as a national language would be a good choice, and when asked which of the indigenous languages to be selected, the Akan language was the obvious choice of the majority of respondents [4]. This is to say, that, adopting a national language from the multiple choices, would be welcomed in the Republic of Ghana, but ahead of the adoption and implementation process, in order to avoid the emergence of any displeasure on the part of other ethnic groups who are speakers of different indigenous languages, there is the need for nationwide education and sensitization on the fact that, selecting a particular language does not mean that the speakers of that language are superior to the speakers of the other languages. To add, there would also be the need to assure the members of the relatively minority ethnic groups that, the fact that the language of a particular ethnic group has been selected, does not mean they are neglected. This assurance, however should not be in just words, put through the implementation and promotion of policies and programs to help develop the other languages. We suggest the development of the other indigenous languages even when Akan or any other language has been selected, because it would be historically and linguistically disappointing to concentrate on just the selected national language and just watch the rest of the indigenous languages die out.

Another option, with respect to the issue of adopting an indigenous national language, not being oblivious to the possibility of it provoking an ethnic conflict, is a theoretical pluralistic approach, known as linguistic pluralism which, in plain words can be defined as giving all languages equal rights in all spheres of life. This approach, though not exactly cost-effective, would be pivotal, not only in the protection of indigenous languages from extinction, but also in the prevention of a possible conflict that may result from the selection of just a particular language

or languages out of the multiple languages, and bestowing upon it the socioeconomically prestigious tag of a national language [2].

Thus, the option of adopting and adapting an indigenous language as a national language, though nationalistic and may help highlight the importance of the indigenous languages, bears a politically sensitive nature and if not handled properly, may do more harm than the good it was intended to achieve.

Language preservation and development is a long-term project that, in our opinion has no end. It requires a lot of time and investment, mainly financial. But regardless of how strenuous it is, it is worth every iota of energy invested in it, because bearing in mind the interconnection of language and culture, the extinction of a language is not just the death of a particular language, but it implies the erosion of the history and the culture of the people that once spoke the language. In the Ghanaian context, efforts are being made to preserve the indigenous languages and as mentioned and already elaborated in the previous paragraphs, these efforts include the NALAP program, which, like the previous language-in-education policy, is aimed at promoting bilingual education, mainly at the lower primary level of education.

Some other things, mentioned in the preceding paragraphs which in our opinion have helped salvage the indigenous languages from extinction are its use in broadcasting, entertainment, local governance and for religious purposes.

The issue of adopting and adapting an indigenous language as a national language was also addressed, but the politically sensitive nature of this topic, in our opinion is a major drawback and hence we support a more pluralistic approach of giving all indigenous languages equal attention, in all spheres of life, as much as possible. This, we are aware is an expensive approach, especially considering the provision of printed materials to support literacy in all the indigenous languages. Hence, we recommend a gradual increase in the number of formal local languages, as much as it will be financially feasible.

Some recommendations made to help salvage the indigenous languages from extinction and to support their development include the provision of scholarship programs to subsidize the cost of education, mainly at the tertiary level, for students

who are pursuing course programs in any of the local languages. This way, there will be motivation of students to take up these courses and eventually graduate and become teachers of the various local languages, research personnel, or broadcasters, who will make up for the deficit of teaching staff in the educational sector, produce literature materials in the indigenous languages and promote the importance of the indigenous languages. To add, we recommend a cooperative approach on the part of all interested bodies in the promotion of literacy in the indigenous languages. And we made mention of the GILLBT, BGL and the Ministry of Education. We also recommended the need for the promotion of the private broadcasting and entertainment industries, since they also contribute to the salvation process of the indigenous languages from extinction.

Regardless of everything mentioned above, we understand that, the cooperation or the lack thereof of the Ghanaian population is pivotal in the preservation, revitalization and subsequent development of the indigenous languages and hence, we recommend a sensitization and education program of the general public on the need to protect their respective indigenous languages, because it is their identity as individuals and losing the language implies losing their identity. This, we consider is very vital because, even if all the policies are put in place administratively to support indigenous languages in education, indigenous language broadcasting and all other things mentioned above, that are aimed at the preservation and development of indigenous languages, and yet there is no mental shift on the part of the citizenry with regards to their outlook on the importance of the indigenous languages, then all the efforts would be futile. Therefore, there is the need for the Ghanaian population, to come to the realization that, bilingualism in education and even multilingualism in other spheres of life, is not a question of “either or”, hence educating children in English does not imply the need to neglect literacy in the indigenous languages, and likewise, literacy in the indigenous languages is not a synonym for illiteracy in the English language.

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Авторы публикации

Сабирова Диана Рустамовна –
 доктор педагогических наук, доцент
 декан Высшей школы
 иностранных языков и перевода
 Казанский федеральный университет
 Казань, Россия
 E-mail: Diana.Sabirova@kpfu.ru

Тенкоранг Рита –
 магистрант Высшей школы
 иностранных языков и перевода
 Казанский федеральный университет
 Казань, Россия
 E-mail: rtenkorang001@st.ug.edu.gh

Authors of the publication

Sabirova Diana Rustamovna –
 Doctor of Pedagogics, Associate Professor
 Head of the Higher School
 of Foreign Languages and Translation Studies
 Kazan Federal University
 Kazan, Russia
 E-mail: Diana.Sabirova@kpfu.ru

Tenkorang Rita –
 Master's Degree Student
 of the Higher School
 of Foreign Languages and Translation Studies
 Kazan Federal University
 Kazan, Russia
 E-mail: rtenkorang001@st.ug.edu.gh