Language, education and identity in Africa

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4. African Languages in Higher Education

This study is oriented on the historical analysis of Vansina, who has shown that in precolonial times, several distinct cultural 'traditions' existed in Africa, traditions that were essentially destroyed by colonialism, in ways that are unique to Africa. I have taken up Vansina's prediction that neo-African traditions will appear, based in part in African languages. With Vansina, I have argued that such neo-African traditions will be key to reshaping new forms of cultural autonomy or autonomies, healing the wounds that were caused by the colonial period and creating conditions for a development process that is Africa-centred.

I have demonstrated how cross-cultural psychology, a method used widely in other parts of the world but not very much in Africa, offers a way of tentatively mapping these new cultural traditions. I have shown how diverse Africa is in this sense: in some countries, new national cultural identities seem to be emerging. In others, this is not happening, in spite of the massive efforts at 'nation building' over the past 60 years or so. At any rate, it is clear that language, as transmitted in the home but also as used in education can play a crucial role in the process of building new cultural autonomies.

In this chapter, I will focus on the area of language in education. I hope to answer my second research question:

- Why are African languages currently not being used more in higher education as medium of instruction?

The first section gives a more general treatment at the conceptual level, building on the starting points outlined in chapter 1.4. It looks at the theory of languages and languoids and proposes a new conceptual distinction between 'discerned' and 'designed' languages. It examines existing explanations of why African languages are currently not being used more in higher education. The second section offers a new explanation, inspired by Bourdieu and based on an examination of what education systems in various countries are able to deliver, given specific levels of enrolment in education. This will lead to my answer to the question of why African languages are not currently being used more in higher education. I will also argue why this is likely to change in the coming decade or so, at least in some countries.

4.1. The position of African languages

4.1.1 Language or languoid?

There is a school of thought in linguistics, with Pennycook as its best-known proponent, which questions the utility of seeing languages as 'bounded objects' altogether. Instead, these linguists argue in favour of taking language repertoires or language registers as actually used by speakers as the starting point; they prefer to talk about 'languoids' rather than languages.

A very well-developed example of this type of thinking and what it leads to is provided in the work of Lüpke and Storch (2013). Their starting point is a description of the linguistic situation in the Casamance region of Southern Senegal. They show that the linguistic situation in that region is very different from that in Europe or the Americas.[1] In Europe or the Americas, young people are brought up in one language (their mother tongue) and they typically learn additional languages in school. In this part of Africa, though, young people are typically brought up in several languages and they learn to use those languages (or 'registers') in different social situations, depending on the circumstances. They argue that it makes little sense to introduce formal literacy training in standardized local languages under those circumstances. In day to day use, people need more than one language; linguistic variation within every 'language' is considerable; people have little opportunities and little utility for using formal written forms. Instead, they favour an approach that valorises the multilingual abilities of speakers and takes that as a starting point, also in classroom situations.[2] These kinds of multilingualisms, they argue, are rare in other parts of the world, but common in Africa. Therefore, they call for "the adoption of an emic perspective by providing the 'thick description' called for by Geertz (1973) for the related field of anthropology" (p 229).

The approach advocated by Lüpke and Storch has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages operate mostly at the level of languages as spoken. I agree with Lüpke and Storch where they point out that the differences construed by foreign observers may not

[1] Note, though, that recently they have come under criticism for over-generalizing the experience from one particular area of the Casamance to the rest of the region and indeed to Africa as a whole: see Sagna and Hantgan (2021, forthcoming).

[2] This has given rise to the LILIEMA project, https://soascrossroads.org/2018/01/11/liliema-phase-two-bringing-language-independent-literacies-to-an-international-forum-by-friederike-lupke/ retrieved 4 October 2019.

correspond to the differences perceived by speakers and I also agree that those differences may be much more situational and much less absolute than what the terminology may lead one to believe. Lüpke and Storch criticize the common linkages that are made between languages and ethnic or 'tribal' entities. This criticism is shared by me, as described in chapter three. In addition, a teaching approach that takes the actual linguistic repertoires of learners as its starting point and values them all as resources seems to make eminent sense.

The disadvantages, on the other hand, are mostly at the level of language policy, but they are also related to the general problem I have with some anthropological approaches, as outlined in chapter 1.7. The approach by Lüpke and Storch leads to an exclusive focus on 'what language *actually* is to speakers and hearers' (p 347) and blinds them to the role (implicit or explicit) of language policy and language planning. In a way, they 'otherize' Africa and Africans by situating them in a type of reserve where they live their natural lives, only marginally influenced or affected by governmental or institutional policies (for example in the area of language). These policies are relegated to a vague 'context' that they seem to accept as unchanging and not subject to being influenced by Africans as actors at that level. Where some would see harmonized and standardized languages as a form of social innovation that has its benefits, they see them as a colonial imposition.[3] Even though Lüpke and Storch themselves unquestioningly make use of the advantages offered to them by a conventionalized use of the English language and take these for granted, they seem to deny the utility of conventionalized language to African languages. Yet conventionalized languages are the medium of instruction at the levels of secondary and higher education. Following the analytical framework of Lüpke and Storch would lead to a neglect of language policy and language planning and would lead to an unquestioning acceptance of the political choice to use French and other international languages as medium of instruction in secondary and higher education. As Bamgbose (2011: 6) remarked: 'absence of a policy is indeed a policy, for whenever there is no declared policy in any domain, what happens is a continuation of the *status quo*.' The same could be said of neglect of the policy element in linguistic research: the absence of such research is a policy choice, for neglect of this field means an unquestioning acceptance of the status quo.

My approach has no issue with the analysis of multilingual situations that Lüpke and Storch make for certain areas in Africa and with the recommendations for teaching that they draw from it. However, for a

[3] Of course, language harmonization and standardization are not European inventions: these processes were around in other parts of the world long before they became commonplace in Europe.

discussion of the role of policy, the approach of Lüpke and Storch is inadequate and, I would argue, dangerous. An example of how this type of thinking can in fact be disempowering and can confuse even the brightest minds can be seen in Heugh (2016: 253). She writes:
'From a theoretical perspective, acceptance of diversity and its inevitability requires a different trajectory from one based [on] the diminishing of variability. This last perspective dovetails with a third possibly more profound consideration, an emerging debate which questions the very foundations of nineteenth and twentieth century colonial linguistics.'
This creates a false contradiction. In my view, it is perfectly possible to combine a standard form of language as used in instruction with a great diversity of speech forms (as is indeed the case for the English language). If the result of 'questioning the foundations of colonial linguistics' means that language policies are rejected as irrelevant and going against 'inevitable' diversity, then this leaves African languages worse off than they were before and inevitably will lead to a strengthening of the position of international languages, English first of all. A stark example of such a development is provided by Chebanne (2016a: 295), who shows that the Khoisan languages are threatened because of 'the lack of an adequate language development policy'. In his analysis, '[i]t is important that Khoisan languages go beyond the insular and idiosyncratic developments that have been promoted under the guise of preserving ethnic and linguistic identity. Pursuing this separate, narrow, and myopic approach can only further marginalize these beleaguered languages.' In fact, the same holds true for almost all African languages - more on this in section 6.5.2.

4.1.2 On discerned and designed languages.[4]

There is a well-known maxim[5] saying that a language is a dialect with an army and a navy. For Africa, one might paraphrase this to say that a language is a dialect with a missionary and a linguist, pointing to the large role that missionaries have played in mapping and naming African languages. In any case, this maxim points to the idea that languages are not purely naturally occurring phenomena, but that what is called a language and what not can be and is contested. Conceptually my ideas on what to call a language and on how and why choices can be made here are inspired by proposals put forward as far back as

[4] The ideas in this section were first presented at the Colloquium on African Languages and Linguistics, Leiden, Netherlands, 2 September 2020.
[5] Attributed to the Yiddish linguist Max Weinreich in 1945.

1952 by the German sociolinguist Heinz Kloss.[6] They were published by him in English in 1967.

Kloss (1967) introduces a distinction between what he calls 'Abstand' and 'Ausbau' languages. These words have not been translated into English in the sociolinguistic literature, giving me the freedom to propose the terms of 'discerned' versus 'designed' languages as English approximations. The term 'discerned' (or 'Abstand') languages is, according to Kloss, a *linguistic* concept that refers to all languages, whether they have a developed writing system and grammar or not. He assumes that linguists have a way of determining the 'intrinsic distance' between languages and to decide on the borders between languages using those criteria (p 30). The concept of 'designed' (or 'Ausbau') languages, on the other hand, is not a linguistic concept: it is *sociological*. It refers only to those languages that have been deliberately shaped and built to become standardized vehicles of literary and scientific expression (which could include oral cultures). Many language names are used for both: these are languages for which the same name is used for their discernible form as spoken language and for their literary form. But this is not always the case. Kloss gives the example of Czech and Slovak: at the spoken level, he sees them as one language,[7] encompassing a number of different dialects. However, at the literary level, they have developed different standardized forms and here we have therefore one 'Abstand' (discerned) language at the spoken level but two 'Ausbau' languages at the formal, literary level. The way Kloss describes his concept of 'Ausbau' languages is very similar to the concept of 'intellectualisation'. Prah (2017: 216) quotes the definition of Sibayan from 1999: an intellectualised language is a 'language which can be used for educating a person in any field of knowledge from kindergarten to the university and beyond'. This terminology is also used by Kaschula and Nkomo (2019: 604), who quote Havránek in making a distinction between 'folk and standard

[6] Kloss started his career as a young scientist in Nazi Germany. His main body of work concerned minority languages in the USA. There is some disagreement about whether or not he distanced himself sufficiently from his earlier thinking after the war – see for example Wiley (2002). My proposals for English-language terms are inspired by Kloss, but the change of emphasis I propose and their application to Africa represents a novel development that bears no relationship to the rest of the ideas or writing of Kloss.

[7] The Ethnologue would disagree with Kloss here, and sees these as two languages, denoted by the ISO 693-3 codes <ces> for Czech and <slk> for Slovak. However, the Ethnologue also asserts: 'All Czech and Slovak dialects [are] mutually inherently intelligible'. https://www-ethnologue-com/language/ces accessed 30 March 2020.

languages' and Sibayan in making a distinction between 'intellectually modernized' and 'popularly modernized' languages. They see intellectualization of languages 'as a counterhegemonic process that seeks to empower communities through language' (p 606). I agree with this approach, but prefer the terminology of 'discerned' and 'designed' languages. The term 'intellectualisation' could be seen as implying a value judgement on those languages that have not been 'intellectualised' and does not help us understand the importance of distinguishing between the linguistic and the sociological aspects of language.

Kloss points out that there is a certain degree of freedom here: forming of designed languages is a historical process that can be sped up or in fact reversed as a result either of shifts in power relationships or of changes in policy or (as will most often be the case) of both. Djité (2008: x) asks: '[I]sn't it the case that some languages have simply not been *allowed* to develop as others have? Isn't it the case that evidence of literacy tradition in some languages has intentionally been destroyed (…), forbidden (…) or ignored (…)?' Kaschula and Nkomo (2019: 607) also make this point:

'The arrival of foreign traders, explorers, missionaries, and colonial settlers resulted in cross-cultural encounters and the transformation of economic, cultural, religious, and political domains, which devalued indigenous knowledge and African thought systems. This not only alienated indigenous people from the socioeconomic and political organizational structures of the new societies, but also de-intellectualized their languages.'

This analysis ties in closely with the assessment of Vansina on the destruction of cultural autonomy as quoted in chapter 2.1. It also means that there may be some scope for reclaiming or re-intellectualizing languages, for example by preparing new renderings of old and perhaps partially forgotten literary texts in African languages. An interesting resource in this regard may be the Verba Africana website.[8]

Kloss stresses that in order to master a designed language a certain amount of formalized learning is always required. This is what Lo Bianco (2008: 114) refers to as 'secondary lingual socialization'. It also helps to explain why in countries that use an indigenous language as medium of instruction this language is also taught as a subject in its own right, usually up to the end of secondary school. Kloss gives the example of German (p35): linguists might disagree as to whether spoken high German *('Hochdeutsch')* and lower Saxon *('Plattdeutsch')* are in fact part of one 'discerned' language or indeed two languages (it

[8] http://www.verbafricana.org, accessed 15 September 2020.

will come as no surprise that the Ethnologue is of the latter opinion). However, speakers of both forms of German use Standard written German as their common 'designed' language, but this standardized version is different from both spoken languages and requires learning in order to master it. However, learning standard written German is easier for speakers of high German and of lower Saxon than it would be for speakers of, for example, French.

It is interesting to tie these concepts to the distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), introduced by Cummins (1979).[9] Cummins points out that these are two relatively unrelated skill sets and that CALP only becomes fully developed in the late teens. He points out that higher proficiency in CALP in L1 makes it easier to develop the same in L2, especially if the two languages are not too different. He defines semilingualism as low CALP in any language. With this concept, it becomes easy to understand how people can have basic communication skills (BICS) in a number of languages and are still unable to function at a more academic level. It is also obvious that developing CALP requires a language that has been 'designed' or intellectualized to a certain degree.

Now that the concepts have been clarified, a further explanation of my shift of emphasis compared to Kloss is in order. The most straightforward translation of 'Abstand' into English is distance. Kloss proposes to use this term for dialects or speech registers that are so distant from one another that it is justified to speak of different languages. The word 'discerned' places a slightly different emphasis, pointing to the act of discerning – the political and social act of pronouncing a dialect to be a language. The word 'Ausbau' means extension or expansion in English. Kloss thus refers to the act of extending a spoken language into a standardized language, including its written form. The word 'designed' in a way reinforces this meaning, again pointing to the social process that is involved here. This reinforcement is intentional. Many languages (including French, German, Italian, but certainly also Bahasa Indonesia or Turkish) have an explicit and strong design element to them. In the Anglo-Saxon world, this design element is much less explicit and remains to a certain extent hidden below the surface. An equivalent of the Académie Française, with its strong mandate of protecting the French language,[10] does not

[9] The concepts of Cummins have been quite influential. Although they have been criticized, for example for being difficult to operationalize in practice, they have also led to important new insights and research.

[10] http://www.academie-francaise.fr/linstitution/les-missions accessed 8 June 2020.

exist in the Anglo-Saxon world (McGroarty, 2008). Yet, the "Queen's English" or "BBC English" is in fact a form of standardized language developed in elite institutions in the UK and actually spoken and used in that form by only a small minority of the UK population.[11] Thus, even if there is no official body 'designing' the language in the Anglo-Saxon world, English as a designed language is (re)produced just as effectively as what happens with other languages. This process can easily be mistaken for a 'natural' development and can create a type of myopia, causing some linguists to overlook the fact that both American and British standard English are created, designed, through social, power-structure mediated processes (in Bourdieu's terms: through a *habitus* that is part of the s*ocial capital* of the English-speaking world) using different mechanisms but with the same effects as with the majority of other designed languages of the world.

The concepts of discerned and designed languages allow us to look differently at the issue raised by the Pennycook school, which prefers to look at language as something people 'do' rather than as something people 'possess'[12] – this may again be related to the peculiar Anglo-Saxon myopia referred to above. At the level of discerned languages, their way of describing things may have some level of descriptive or analytical value: it is certainly true that people use different language 'registers' in different ways and in different situations and that analysing these can help in understanding different social contexts. On the other hand, at the level of designed languages, their concepts fail, because they elide the institutionalized roles and functions of languages. This criticism is in line with the critique of Lecercle as discussed by Ives (2008: 163). Lecercle criticises philosophies of language to the extent that they share a methodological individualism that reduces language to a communicative function. In Lecercle's vision, language should be seen as a form of *praxis*, that understands language as historical, social, material and political.

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[11] In a curious form of English idiom this is referred to as the 'received pronunciation'. Trudgill (2002: 171) claims that it is spoken by around 3% of the British population. Many a bright youngster who has studied English as a foreign language and who has little difficulty in watching for example the BBC World TV station will find to his or her surprise on a first visit to England that he or she has great difficulty in understanding the ordinary English person. Adichie describes a similar phenomenon for her Nigerian characters in their encounters with U.S. English. For an overview of different varieties of spoken English, see the electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English, https://ewave-atlas.org/, accessed 19 June 2020.

[12] Pennycook, 2010: 2.

Using the Pennycook school as a way of looking at languages in Africa is tempting, because there is so little institutionalization of African languages. Yet this hides sight of the extent to which colonial and imperialist power structures are pervading the domain of language and language policy in Africa. Thus, the Pennycook approach actually hides the structural features of current language regimes from sight under the guise of analysing linguistic imperialism. (See Wolff (2008b) for a nuanced but slightly different approach to the same problem.)

Unfortunately, the assumption by Kloss that linguists would find objective and clear ways of distinguishing various 'discerned' languages has never come true. Maybe this is part of the reason why later linguists have sought to re-interpret his concepts in ways that are not necessarily helpful. An example of this is Fishman (1974), quoted in Alexander (1998: 271), who interprets 'Ausbau' languages as artificially separated from larger languages so as to *create* difference – Alexander uses this to describe the separation between closely related language varieties in South Africa. However, this is only one way in which the term can be applied. In a later contribution, Fishman (2008) proposes to rethink the concepts and to move towards a 'continuous and multivariate system'. Fishman starts by building a strawman argument: he posits that Kloss proposed a dichotomy, but that his two concepts are not really on one and the same dimension (p18). In doing so, he chooses to ignore that Kloss himself stressed that his concepts have their usefulness on different levels. Fishman then proceeds to throw away the child with the bathwater, stating that really, the concept of 'discerned' languages 'is entirely unneeded in any language planning typology'. Instead, he advocates to look at the degree of design: from more similar ('Einbau') to more different ('Ausbau'). This allows him to consider different forms in which people actually use languages: more or less informal, more or less puritan, more or less code switching, etc. However, just looking at that element does not give a complete picture either, and Fishman therefore proposes a number of additional dichotomies, such as Vernacularization versus Purification (p 24), thereby bringing back the child into the bath, albeit into waters that have now been considerably muddled, conceptually speaking.

The simpler concepts of discerned and designed languages are therefore helpful in thinking about the different functions of language in different social domains.

In Africa, there are some 'designed' languages. However, their number is relatively small, including such languages as Arabic, Afrikaans, Amharic, Somali and Swahili.

There is a large number of languages where attempts at designing a standardized variety have taken place, but that have not taken off. This

means that in Africa, there is a huge potential for language planning and engineering. For many forms of speech, the borderline between what is a dialect and what is a language is unclear. That means that it would be conceivable to develop 'designed' languages that can serve a number of spoken languages, in the same way that standard written German serves as the designed language for a number of spoken German-like languages. The concepts of discerned and designed languages allow us to see these possibilities more clearly.

Language planning, language design or language development is an area of work on which much work has been done; it cannot be discussed in full here. However, it is possible to briefly examine some issues that are of relevance to this study. Language planning is generally considered to be comprised of three areas: status planning (also known as prestige planning – for Africa, see for example Kamwangamalu, 2016)[13]; corpus planning; and acquisition planning (Kaschula and Nkomo 2019: 602). The latter area deals specifically with language-in-education. Taylor-Leech and Liddicoat (2014) provide a useful overview of the main issues and models for what they call 'Macro-language planning'.[14] They point to the importance of language-in-education, because '[n]ot only are educational institutions the formal transmitters of languages but they also transmit and perpetuate culture' (p 354). What is more, 'language planning decisions in multilingual educational settings are often rooted in wider power relationships and the social, economic, and political interests of dominant groups. The outcomes of these decisions can advance the educational and life opportunities of some, while restricting those of others.'

The problem of the multitude of discerned languages and their relationship to designed languages is not treated as such by them, but they do point out how this problem is handled in practice in many countries: governments and policy makers deliberately decide to use a limited number of languages as 'mother tongues' spoken in the country, ignoring the existence of other discerned languages, or

[13] In Europe, language prestige is made visible through numerous bits of legislation, permeating all spheres of life – for example, the requirement to list ingredients on labels of foodstuffs in languages that are 'easy to understand' for the customer is given in EU regulation no. 1169/2011. This regulation itself has been published in 24 languages. See https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32011R1169 accessed 23 September 2020.

[14] Macro-language here refers to the macro- or societal level, not to the term 'macrolanguage' as used by SIL for some languages it discerns that nevertheless have much in common. An example is Akan, used to cover the discerned languages of Fante and Twi. See https://iso639-3.sil.org/code_tables/macrolanguage_mappings/data, accessed 15 June 2020.

relegating them to an inferior position (p 356). Clearly, those decisions are often based on the prevailing power relationships in countries, rather than on any considerations of inclusivity or of human rights. However, this need not always be the case. Thus, Taylor-Leech and Liddicoat cite the example of Slovenia, where schools in minority areas use either Hungarian or Italian as medium of instruction, in some cases combined with Slovenian. These are all very different languages. These models, although not identical in their outcomes, are presented as examples that 'demonstrate that well-resourced, additive approaches to bilingual education can result from language planning that recognises minority language rights.' (p 358) They conclude that a bottom-up approach, rooted in the communities, works best. This issue of *how* language design or language harmonization should be done is largely outside the scope of this work, even though it is important in itself. Suffice it here to point to Makoni (2016), who posits a distinction between language *unification*, as an artificial exercise attempted for example by missionaries, and language *harmonization*, which he describes as more rooted in African approaches. He cautions that community involvement in harmonization projects is necessary, but 'does not necessarily result in successful uptake of the projects in the long term' (p 232).

Unfortunately, community-based examples such as those of Slovenia are hard to come by in Africa. Bamgbose (2011: 5) says:

'Ideally, proper language planning should ensure that all languages have a definite status and specified roles in a multilingual setting. The situation in most African countries, however, is that language planning processes are defective. Commonly encountered situations include policy deficit (usually referred to as absence of policy), propaganda policy, non-implementation, and lack of political will.'

The distinction between languages as discerned (in a linguistic way) versus languages as designed (as institutionalised, sociological phenomena) would have helped Ameka (2017), who discusses the problems of the difference between the standardized or official language and the languages as spoken. He calls for a form of language standardization that takes the differences in spoken language into account; this plea can be accommodated and understood using the discerned-designed distinction. Likewise, these concepts could have served Banda (2009) in developing a more clearly articulated perspective on language planning and policy in Africa. Banda contrasts monolingualism – which he sees as the normal situation in Europe – with multilingualism – which he sees as the normal situation in Africa. He then argues in favour of promoting Africa's already existing multilingual repertoires as a resource for development – so far, so

good. However, Banda is silent on what this would mean in practice, for example for his home country of Zambia. I have two problems with this analysis. The first is that in reality, the distinction between Africa and Europe, in my view, is one of degree, rather than being qualitative. Speakers in a country like Slovenia may have a language repertoire that includes Croatian, English, German and Italian, besides one or more Slovenian dialects (of which there are many). What makes the difference is that Slovenian itself is not only a discerned, but also a designed language: there is an accepted Standard Slovene that is taught in schools. What is more, the neighbouring countries also have standard designed languages and these are also being taught (as subjects or in some regions as medium of instruction) in Slovenian schools. This is where Europe is different from Africa: in Africa, African designed languages are often not used as medium of instruction except for the first few years and the languages of the neighbours are usually not officially taught at all.

My second problem is that just saying that 'multilingual repertoires' need to be taken as a starting point does not lead to a practical application. For that, the distinction between discerned and designed languages is helpful and indeed necessary. In a country like South Africa, it would be possible (as Banda himself points out) to use a standardized form of Nguni as a designed language as medium of instruction for speakers of the discerned languages Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele. In addition, Sotho and English (for example) could be taught as subjects (also as designed languages). This means using a limited set of designed languages. Such a strategy would obviously work to the advantage of students who already have a diverse repertoire of discerned languages that they speak (and would disadvantage monolingual speakers) and therefore would work to the benefit of most South Africans – in the same way that this would work in Slovenia. Still, it could be that South Africans have an even richer spoken language repertoire, including for example youth languages or Afrikaans; these languages would not all be used as taught designed languages, even though students and teachers might use them to their advantage for spoken communication in a school setting. This type of debate is made easier using the discerned – designed terminology as proposed by me and therefore takes off where Banda's proposal ends. As Joswig (2020: 96) rightly points out: 'A language standard adds a written variety to a complex dialect situation, but in itself it does not remove any diversity. Spoken language diversity has proven to be very resilient in the face of written standards.'

Clearly, there is a complex relationship between discerned and designed languages. In that sense, the claim by Kloss that 'Ausbau'

language is a sociological concept, although correct, is not complete. If we accept that linguistics as a discipline also looks at language as written and codified, then studying designed languages can also be an object of linguistic study. It might be possible to maintain that spoken languages cannot be seen as 'bounded and countable objects'; however, for designed languages, the statement is clearly untenable: the fact that they are bounded and countable forms a defining element of what constitutes designed languages.

If an African language would be developed as a designed language and would be used as a medium of instruction up to tertiary level, that would influence the way related discerned languages are used. It would also have an influence on the status and thus on the choices people make for using or not using international languages, for example with their children – and of course this would be worth studying from a linguistic, as well as a sociological perspective. In this context, it is useful to point to the possibility of reverse language shift – the process whereby people revert to using a language that had previously suffered from diminishing use. Discussing the theory of reverse language shift as developed among others by Fishman is outside the scope of this work but see Stroud (2004) for a discussion of reverse language shift theory in African settings.

One of the things this discussion of discerned and designed languages has shown is that learning a designed language requires some form of formal education. But how does that help us to answer the research question? In order to discuss that, it is necessary to examine the issue of 'mother tongue' education next.

4.1.3 Is education in the mother tongue useful – and for who?

Sustainable Development Goal 4 calls for education opportunities for all (UN, 2015). It is perhaps good to stress that this goal itself represents a clear break with education the way it was in colonial times: in colonial times, there was never any attempt at providing education for all. Once we do consider education for all, there is no escaping the overwhelming scientific consensus that yes, education in a designed language that is close to the discerned language spoken by the learners (the 'mother tongue'[15] gives best results at the lowest cost. This has

[15] The term 'mother tongue' or 'L1' as used by me may refer to a discerned language that is different from the one spoken by the mother of the child – in Africa, there are situations where the first language that a child becomes fluent in is not the language spoken by the mother. There may also be children who are fluent from an early age in more than one discerned language; these have more than one mother tongue or L1 in their repertoire.

been the consensus at least since a UNESCO report from 1953, which already recommended education in the mother tongue in Africa. Experts point to a number of advantages (see, for example, the overview by Skuttnab-Kangas (2012), but also Ouane and Glanz (2010), Heugh (2011, 2019), Benson (2015), the Education Commission Report, nd-2016[16] or the impassioned plea by Wolff (2018a)):

- It makes for livelier classroom interaction.
- Children perform better and learn faster.
- It is more efficient, especially if teachers can use their mother tongue for teaching children in that same language (Walter, 2008, 2014).
- It reduces the gap between home culture and school culture.
- Giving children a sound foundation in their mother tongue helps them in acquiring foreign language skills more easily and helps them attain a better level.
- Skills requiring abstract thinking, including arithmetic and mathematical skills are better grounded and will develop more easily.

It is important to point out that formal education in a specific language always involves teaching children to use a language that is different from the spoken word: it involves teaching a designed language in the sense meant above, that is related to but still different from the discerned language spoken at home.[17] Educational systems the world over manage this for most children, but not for all. According to a meta-analysis by McKenzie et al (2016), about 1% of all children are estimated to suffer from intellectual disability (although there is quite a bit of uncertainty about this figure). Intellectual disability means that educational systems to not manage to teach these children to read or write or if so, only to a very limited level. This means that around 99% of all children can be taught basic reading and writing skills. The number of people who can be taught to a high enough level to be considered 'literate' in the sense that they can no longer be considered 'functionally illiterate' is smaller. Functional illiterates, according to Schlechty (2004: 7) are those people who have reading and writing skills that are inadequate 'to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level'. According to the UK National Literacy Trust, the educational system there does not teach all to a high enough level: one out of six (16.4%) of all adults in England

[16] https://report.educationcommission.org/ retrieved 12 July 2019

[17] Parts of this discussion have also been published in Pinxteren, Bert van (2020b), part 4.3.

are functionally illiterate.[18] In 2019, the World Bank launched a new indicator, dubbed 'learning poverty': 'Learning poverty means being unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10' (World Bank 2019: 6). Even in high-income countries, there is a percentage of children in this category though fewer than 10%; so even with the best education available, not all children can be taught to such a level that they are able to read and understand a simple text.

The inconvenient truth is that learning abilities are not equally divided over the population: some people are more intelligent than others. Tests have been calibrated so that the average IQ is 100 – 50% of all children are supposed to have 'average' intelligence.[19] At the upper extreme, just over 2% of the population score 130 or above. So, some children learn more quickly than others.

For language learning, it is important to note that this division of learning abilities is not one-dimensional: there are different, although interrelated, forms of intelligence. Li (2016) has shown that language aptitude is a valid construct.[20] This construct is related to, but independent of general intelligence. What this means is that some children may be good at language, but hopeless in math. For others, it may be the other way around. Then also, of course, some children are good at both.

Two variables are relevant here from an education system perspective: the percentage of the population that receives formal education to a specific level and the distance between the discerned and the designed language. If an education system needs to reach a large *percentage of the population*, then at a given level of input, it will be most efficient if it can use a medium of instruction (a designed language) that is *as close as possible* to the discerned language(s) that children are already familiar with. So there are two differentials here: teaching more children requires more effort because aptitudes for learning a designed language are not distributed equally over the population; and teaching children in a designed language becomes more difficult as the distance between discerned and designed language increases. How exactly this works in general I do not know; however, below I will examine how it works in actual educational systems.

As argued above, for those who are less gifted in languages, language of instruction matters. Almost everybody is able to master some words in a language he or she is not familiar with; many people can reach

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[18] https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/adult-literacy/ retrieved 8 October 2019.

[19] IQ testing in cross-cultural settings is no simple matter. See, for example, Van de Vijver and Hambleton (1996).

[20] See also Wen, Biedroń and Skehan (2017).

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) in that language, at least for some domains. However, learning a designed language to a level high enough to be able to profit from more and more advanced instruction in that language takes time and effort. It requires reaching Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in that language. Lower language aptitude means more effort is required. Under colonial education systems, this was not really relevant: education was aimed at selecting those most talented and reached only a minor proportion of the population. Therefore, under colonial education systems, it was not necessary to worry about the language of instruction – any language of convenience could serve equally well. As is well-known, decolonization also brought expansion of educational opportunities – so one would naturally expect a shift to African languages. Albaugh (2014) has shown that this has happened to some extent in primary education, especially since 1990. She shows that this expansion was most marked in Francophone countries, and attributes it to a large extent to the work of Chaudenson and his colleagues, who managed to convince both the French authorities and authorities in Francophone Africa that learning French as a second language works better if there is a better foundation in the mother tongue.[21] Yet in secondary and higher education, such a shift has not happened. Why?

4.1.4 Why have attempts at using mother-tongue education been unsuccessful?

The literature offers many explanations. Djité (2008) discusses this in terms of old and new myths about language and development in Africa. Chaudenson (2006) also provides a useful overview.[22] Reasons include:

- Low status.

Language status is of course man-made, but it provides a powerful discourse. There are many examples of how African languages have been derided and portrayed as backward, undeveloped, old-fashioned, clumsy and unscientific.

- Neo-colonialism.

Former colonial powers still wield power and influence in Africa. The fact that their languages still enjoy official prestige and are still spoken in Africa adds to the prestige and feeling of self-esteem of these former

[21] Note that Djité (2008: 43) feels this analysis is too generous to the French and denies the role of Africans in bringing about these changes.
[22] For another discussion, see Muthwii (2002).

colonial powers. Therefore, they actively seek to preserve the status quo in Africa.[23]

- Low communicative value.

Especially in relation to Africa, the point is often made that some countries are linguistically just too diverse. The Ethnologue, for example, discerns 517 living languages for Nigeria alone.[24] These types of arguments are used to point out that it would be very impractical to set up education systems in hundreds of languages, especially for countries that are not rich anyway.
Related to the point raised above: it is claimed that there are many languages that have only a limited number of speakers. Developing educational materials for them would not be cost-effective and would anyway be of little use, it is argued, because in our globalized world teaching children a language they can only use in their own village will be a disservice to them.

- People want the best for their children – colonial languages as passport to prosperity.

In the current situation, colonial languages are the passports to success and upward social mobility and this is also what parents see and know. As De Swaan (2001) has shown, this has a powerful effect on the choices parents make: they will go to any length to provide their children with the best possible starting position in life. If foreign language mastery is seen as key to a good starting position, parents will do whatever they can to ensure that children learn that foreign language. Thus, parents may choose not to use their own language(s) with their children but to use their second or third language instead. In some cases, this may backfire, in the sense that 'linguistic stunting' may occur: children do not learn any language well enough so that they can easily and adequately express their thoughts, as described for Nigeria by Christopher (2008).

- Ingrained false ideas on language in education.

The popular belief is that in order to teach a child a foreign language, you must start early and in as radical a way as possible. This is one reason why parents seek foreign-language education for their children

[23] It would be interesting to see if constitutional provisions that African states had at independence sought to cement this position and if any changes have been adopted since. For an overview of the types of language regimes included in national constitutions around the world, see Faingold (2004). For a discussion of the Great Lakes region, see Gilbert (2013).
[24] https://www.ethnologue.com/country/NG accessed 17 July 2019

from an early age or even use only their second or third language when raising their children. However, this belief is largely mistaken. It is true that it is possible to raise children to be bi- or perhaps even multilingual from an early age on. However, this works only if caregivers speak their ***native*** language (and only their native language and not their L2) to the children in their care. In all other situations, multilingual environments serve to hinder, rather than to help children in their language development (Barac and Bialystok, 2012). As Walter (2008) has shown, it is generally better if children first develop Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in a designed language that is reasonably close to the discerned language of the learner – this usually happens only in the teenage years (Skuttnab-Kangas, 2012). A well-developed CALP in one language helps the development of similar competences in another language. This borne out not only by research, but also by comparing the results obtained by educational systems, as discussed further down in section 4.2.2.

- Elite closure: elites safeguard their position.

The colonial inheritance has built a system were elites were formed on the basis of possession of a scarce resource – foreign language knowledge. This enabled them to justify (in their own eyes and to the larger population) a lifestyle that was (and is) far more comfortable than that of their fellow citizens. This means that even in the few countries in Africa that are practically monolingual (Botswana, Burundi, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Rwanda) foreign languages are maintained as the official languages as elites are reluctant to give up their positions.

- Multilingual environments.

In many urban and urbanizing areas, harbouring an ever-increasing part of the population in many African countries, people live in mixed areas; many different languages are used. Sometimes, a creole, pidgin or other lingua franca is used; sometimes, this does not happen. How to handle these situations is a real problem.

De Swaan (2001) shows that it is rational for people (including parents, when they make choices for their children's education) to choose languages that have the greatest communication value. He points out how rational choices at the individual level inevitably lead to a strengthening of the dominant languages, especially of English. He also describes the mechanism of elite closure and shows how even in relatively homogeneous countries like Botswana and Madagascar elites have a vested interest in foreign language use. In his 2004 article, he criticizes the idea that linguistic and cultural diversity are tied together

and criticizes linguists for their inclination to want to protect each and every language, calling this 'linguistic sentimentalism'. In his analysis, the net effect of this is only to strengthen the position of English.

What this means is that attempts at introducing mother-tongue education have often been resisted, undermined and abandoned. Partly, this may have been due to reforms that were introduced suddenly and without proper preparation. Bamgbose (2000) describes the common feature that reforms are discussed and proclaimed but never implemented. Altinyelken et al (2014) describe how in Uganda, local languages were introduced as medium of instruction in the rural areas, but English was kept in the cities – naturally leading parents in rural areas to assume that their children would only be receiving second-rate education (p 93/4). In other countries such as Madagascar, foreign languages were kept as medium of instruction in expensive private schools, which were then frequented by the children of the elite – leading to the same consequence (Chaudenson 2006: 29).

What these reasons have in common is that they paint a picture of Africa that in its essence is both *undifferentiated* and *static* and that denies African agency: the reasons given in the literature all point to an unchanging situation that policies will not be able to fundamentally influence or change and that is set in stone for now and the foreseeable future.

However, in my view there is another reason that explains why African languages are not being used more, one that has not yet been pointed out in the literature. It is related to the question of what one can expect an educational system to achieve, given the unequal distribution of language abilities that was pointed out above. This explanation is rooted in an analysis of the dynamics of education in Africa and in the differences that can be seen on the continent and points to a need for planning and for wise policies to be put in place.

The literature about language learning in Africa, including the works mentioned above generally seems to subscribe to an implicit assumption: the assumption that the average effort it takes to teach children to learn a designed language to a specific level does not increase if enrolment increases.[25] If, as argued above, learning abilities

[25] Another implicit but erroneous assumption is that the difference between the L1 and L2 language does not matter. Thus, Heugh (2006: 120), also quoted in Ouane and Glanz (2010) reports: 'First language speakers of Afrikaans in South Africa have become highly proficient in English, i.e. they achieve high levels of bilingual proficiency, where English is taught only as a subject for one lesson per day.' With this she seems to imply that the same result could be reached with a similar programme for, for example, first language speakers of Xhosa – ignoring the fact that Afrikaans and English are much closer to one another

are not distributed equally across the population, then this assumption cannot be true. The following theoretical question needs to be asked: **is the number of people an education system is expected to educate up to tertiary level higher than, equal to, or lower than the number of people an education system can reasonably be expected to teach a designed language to the level needed for such education?** Obviously, the answer to this question may be different depending on the distance between the discerned and the designed languages at play. In Germany, which uses standard German as the designed language of higher education, a language that is close to the discerned languages spoken by most Germans, the answer will be different from the answer in Nigeria, which uses English as the designed language of higher education, a language not close to the discerned languages spoken by Nigerians.

It is possible to ask this question in another way, namely in terms of what one can realistically expect an educational system to achieve. In theory, given infinite resources, it might be possible to teach almost anybody almost anything. However, in practice resources are never infinite. The question what to expect of an educational system can be broken down into two questions: [26]

A) What percentage of the population can an education system educate to a reasonable level of proficiency in a 'foreign' designed language?
B) What percentage of the population is an education system expected to provide with tertiary education?

If percentage 'A' is greater than percentage 'B' there will be no problem in providing tertiary education in a 'foreign' designed language. If, on the other hand, percentage 'B' is greater than percentage 'A', foreign-language tertiary education will not be an option for all of tertiary education. This point is so important that it merits repeating the same in different words: if an education system will educate **fewer** people than the number of people it can teach a foreign language to the required level, then it can use that foreign language as medium of instruction. However, as soon as an education system is expected to educate **more** people than the number it can teach a foreign language, then it can no longer make exclusive use of that foreign language as medium of instruction.

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than Xhosa and English are. This type of problem is discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.3 and (for South Africa) section 6.5.4.

[26] This discussion has been published in Pinxteren, Bert van (2020b: 144).

This theoretical question has never been asked, in part probably because for most parts of the world, it is not relevant; most developed countries have developed tertiary education systems that offer at least parts of the curriculum in a designed language that is close to the discerned language(s) of that country. Another reason why it has not been asked is probably because finding the answer to the question may not be straightforward. Yet, for Africa, a continent that uniformly relies in its tertiary education system on 'foreign' designed languages that are very different from the discerned languages people speak, this is a key question. The position developed in this study is that indeed the number of people intelligent enough to take tertiary education is significantly higher than the number of people able to learn a foreign language at the required level. However, this number is lower than the number of people actually enrolled at the moment in tertiary education in Africa. In other words, the position of this study is that the problem that could theoretically arise in Africa, as outlined above, does not yet occur in practice. Generally speaking, at the moment, there are not enough places in higher education to accommodate everybody who has the required language level. But in future, the situation may be reversed. The next section will show why this is a plausible conclusion by looking at selected educational systems and what they are actually able to achieve.

If, as argued above, not everybody is able to attain a level of proficiency in a foreign language (CALP) that is sufficient for them to follow tertiary education and if for some people it comes easier than for others, then it seems reasonable to assume that the amount of time and effort it takes (both on the part of teachers and of learners) to reach that level increases with declining aptitude. People less apt at learning a foreign language will take longer than those more apt. At some point, the effort required will become so large as to be unrealistic. In general, it is safe to assume that training 10% more children to master a foreign language to a certain level costs more than 10% extra, because language abilities are not divided equally over the population. Again, there will therefore be a natural 'language barrier':[27] at a certain moment, training more students in a foreign language will become more expensive than training them in an indigenous language.

[27] The term 'language barrier' has also been used by Benson (2015: 70), who writes: 'An estimated 2.3 billion people, nearly 40% of the world's population, lack access to education in their own language—a clear stumbling block to their learning that will not be removed by getting more children into the classroom.'

4.2 Enrolment and language –Africa and the world

In section 1.4, I pointed out that there is a link between the participation rate in education (the enrolment) and the medium of instruction and in the section above, I explained this idea in greater depth. This section goes further into detail, looking at available statistical material and comparing developments in selected countries in Africa, Europe and Asia.[28]

Before examining the data, though, a short explanation is needed of what is meant by the various levels of education and what is meant by 'higher' education. This section follows the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011 scheme, as developed by UNESCO (2012). According to this scheme, 'tertiary education' is comprised of ISCED levels 5 through to 8. Level 8 stands for 'doctoral or equivalent level', whereas level 5 stands for 'short cycle tertiary education', not to be confused with level 4, which stands for 'post-secondary non-tertiary education'. It is important to note that in this scheme, 'tertiary education' refers to more than what is commonly understood as university education: it also includes education for example by polytechnics at the higher vocational level.

Secondary education comprises ISCED levels 2 and 3 – in some countries, this corresponds to a distinction between two phases of secondary education. Primary education then corresponds to ISCED level 1.

The indicator used here is the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). This ratio is the total enrolment within a country 'in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education' (UNESCO 2009: 9). It is important to realize that in theory, the GER can be above 100: this can happen if more people are enrolled at a certain educational level than there are people in that specific age bracket. A second indicator is the Completion rate at a given level of education: the percentage of the school-age population that completes the education.

As a shorthand for characterizing the functions of education, I will follow the rule of thumb that has been developed by Trow (in Cloete and Maassen 2015: 3): education that is accessible to less than 15% of the population is elite education. Education accessible to between 15

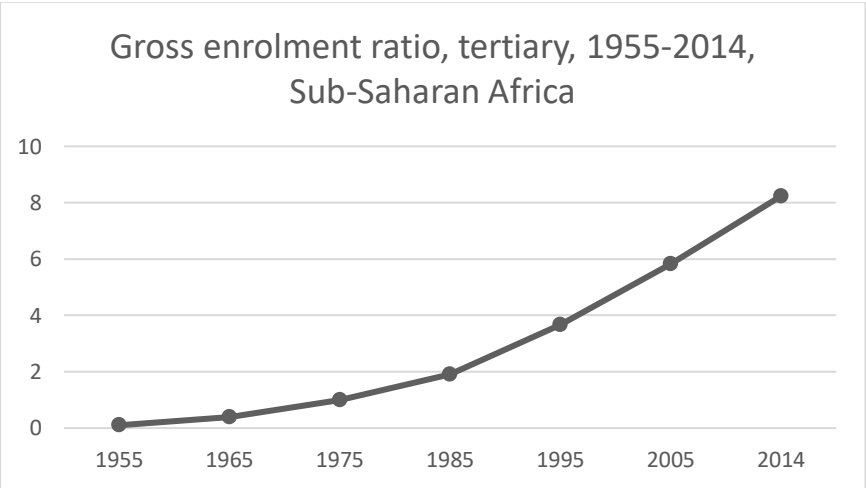
[28] This section was adapted from: Bert van Pinxteren (2018a): What Do Enrolment Data Say About Education? In: A. Breedveld and J. Jansen (Eds.), *Education for Life in Africa*, 35-50. Leiden (Netherlands): African Studies Centre. http://hdl.handle.net/1887/67229

and 40% of the population is mass education. Education accessible to more than 40% of the population is called universal education.

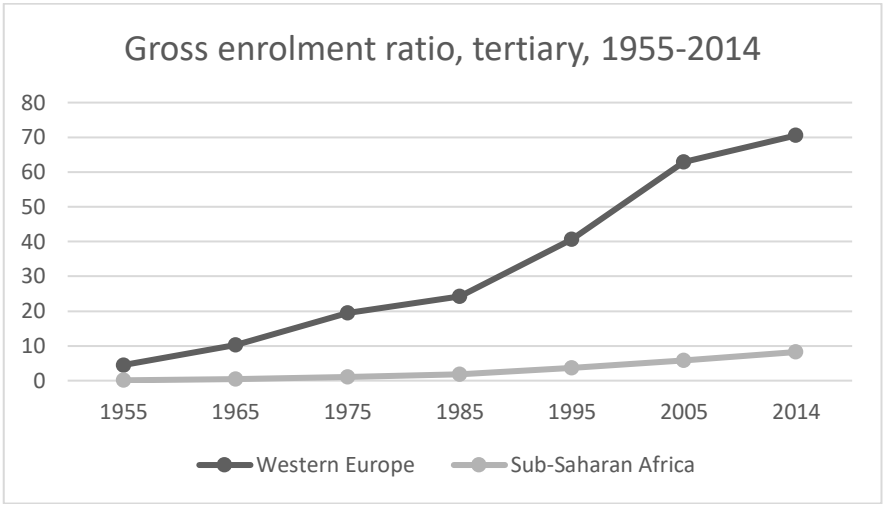
4.2.1 Evolution of Enrolment Data over Time

As shown in graph 1 below, the GER in tertiary education for Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole has greatly increased in the past sixty years, rising from 0.1% in 1955 to 8.2% in 2014. However, a similar development has taken place in Western Europe, as shown in graph 2: there, GER has risen from 4.5% in 1955 to over 70% in 2014. In South Korea, it has risen from 6.8% in 1971 to over 94% in 2017. Even though the GER has increased in both regions, the growth in tertiary education in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole has been greater than in Western Europe.

Today, the GER for Sub-Saharan Africa is approximately at the level that Western Europe had in 1965. In Europe, the function of tertiary education, especially of university education, has changed dramatically compared to the mid-1960s. This did not happen without friction: the wave of student protests that spread over most of Western Europe after 1968 is partly an expression of the changing role of tertiary education in that period. Such frictions are likely to occur in several African countries as well, as will be clear when we take a look at the statistics of individual countries.

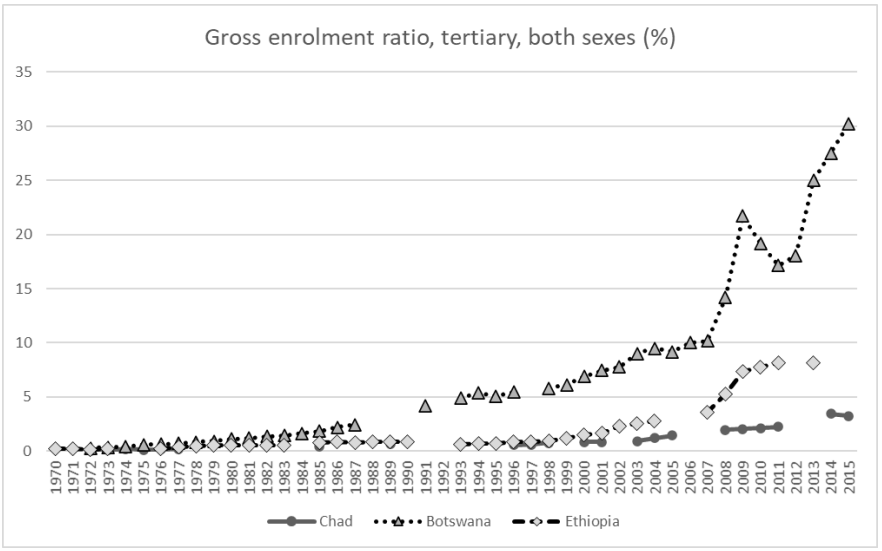


Graph 1 - GER SSA 1955-2014. Sources: Altbach (2012) and UNESCO



Graph 2 - GER Western Europe and SSA, 1955-2014. Sources: Altbach (2012) and UNESCO

Statistics that show an entire subcontinent hide the substantial differences that exist between countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Chad holds the sad position of the African country with the lowest GER in 1972 and in 2014 as well. The countries with the highest GER in Africa include Egypt and some other Arab countries as well as Mauritius. Of Sub-Saharan Africa, the country with the highest GER is Botswana. A country that is near the Sub-Saharan average is Ethiopia. The evolution in GER in these three countries since 1970 is shown in graph 3 below:



Graph 3 - GER, Botswana, Chad, Ethiopia

As is clear from the graph, the differences between countries are considerable. In 1972, Botswana had the highest GER, of 0.3%. Ethiopia stood at nearly 0.2% and Chad at a mere 0.01%. With figures this low, it seems safe to assume that most of the elites did not actually get their education in their own countries, but instead obtained their education abroad. By 2014, tertiary education had expanded in all three countries, growing to a still very low 3.4% in Chad, 8.1% in Ethiopia and nearly 28% in Botswana.

These statistics illustrate a number of key points. For some countries, such as Chad, tertiary education is still a mechanism for elite reproduction. Like in precolonial times, it is likely that these elites will be largely foreign-educated.

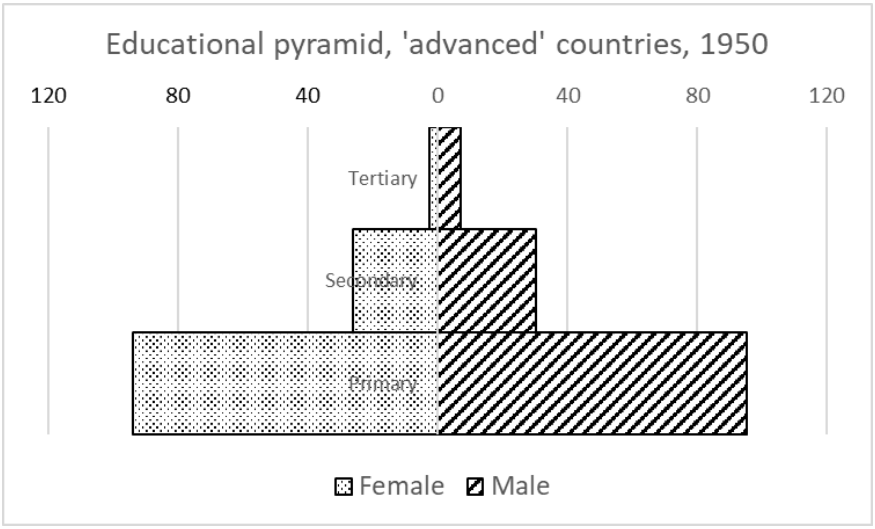
For other countries, such as Botswana but also Ghana, tertiary education is becoming more of a commodity, accessible to the middle classes. Botswana now has a GER comparable to that of Western Europe in 1975. Such countries now offer an alternative to studying abroad for a reasonable proportion of the age group – although the elite probably still invest in a foreign education.

Botswana has shown periods of rapid educational expansion, such as between 2007 and 2009, when the GER doubled. Such a rapid expansion can of course lead to a 'crisis of expectations': it is unlikely that those students who graduated in Botswana from the 2009 intake would find the same job opportunities as those who graduated from the 2007 intake.

Educational Pyramids

In addition to looking at the enrolment ratio in tertiary education, it is relevant to investigate the relationship between tertiary education and other levels of education. This relationship shows the extent to which the educational system works as a selection mechanism.

First, it is illustrative to look at the educational pyramid in the advanced countries, at the time when Bourdieu entered tertiary education, so around 1950. Graph 4 below has been constructed on the basis of the material provided by Barro and Jong-Wha (2015: 16-17). Barro and Jong-Wha give enrolment ratios for three levels of education for the population as a whole and for females. From those, I have computed the male enrolment ratios as well.



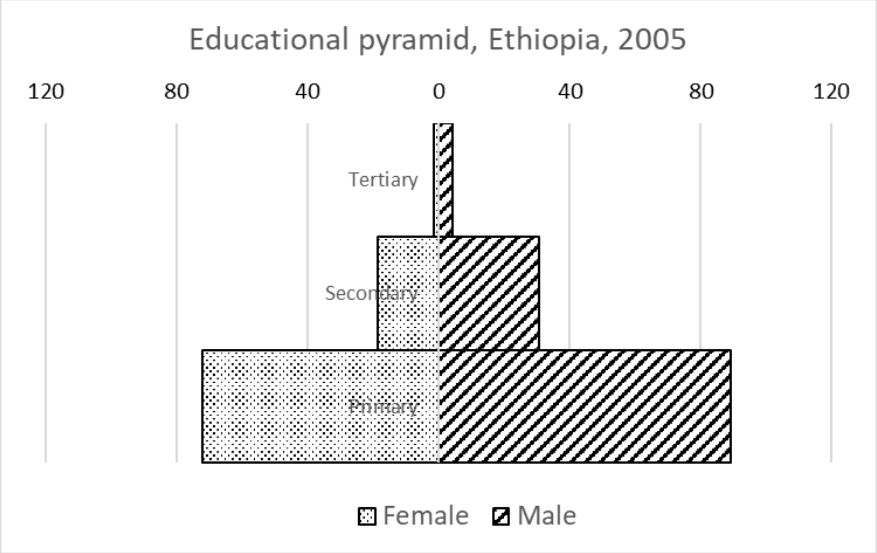
Graph 4 - Educational pyramid, 'advanced' countries, 1950

The graph shows a number of interesting characteristics:

- Primary education at that time was universal;
- Secondary education was not yet universal, but accessible to over 30% of the population, both male and female;
- Tertiary education was clearly for the elite, and considerably more accessible to men than to women.

It is relevant to look at the shape of the pyramid: selection was quite intensive: fewer than half of those who went to primary school could continue to secondary school. Less than a third of the boys and only one-tenth of the girls who went to secondary school could proceed to tertiary education. In other words, there was a large educational gap between the elite and the rest of the population.

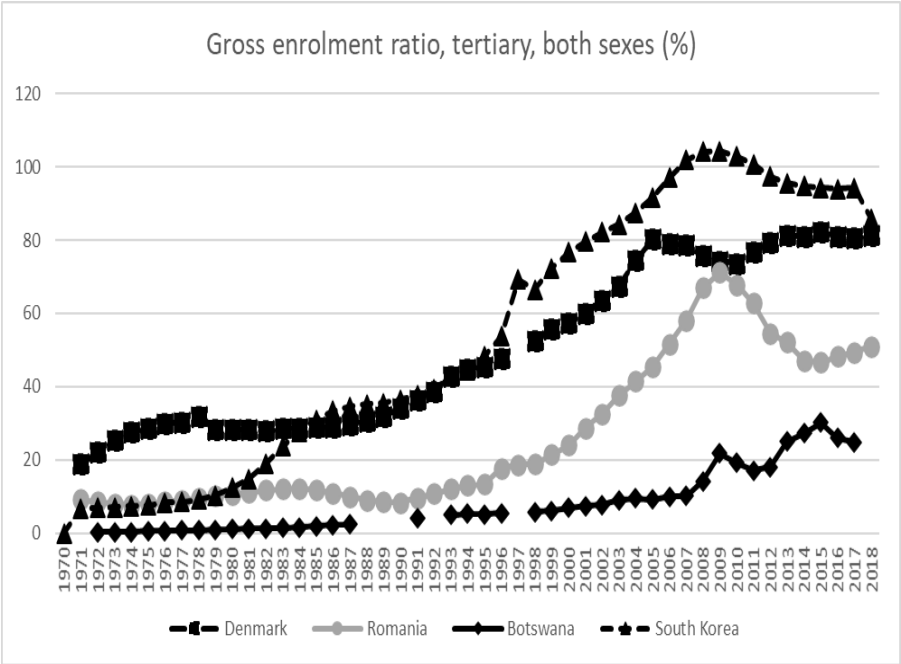
Graph 5 shows the situation for Ethiopia in 2005 . As is clear from the graph, the pyramid of Ethiopia in 2005 is similar to that in the 'advanced' world in 1950, although if anything, the pyramid is slightly steeper.



Graph 5 - Educational pyramid, Ethiopia, 2005

The purpose of this graph is not to show that Ethiopia is half a century 'behind' Europe, but to illustrate that social processes that have been at play in Europe may also be at play in Africa, although the effects and the appearances might be different.

Further insights can be gained from comparing the evolution in Sub-Saharan Africa with the evolution in Europe and South Korea. Leaving aside the European small-island states of Cyprus and Malta, which show a slightly anomalous picture, the commodification of tertiary education in Europe expanded further between 1990 and 2005, growing from an EU average tertiary education GER of 25% in 1970 to 35% in 1990 and around 70% in 2015. The GER in Denmark (the country with the highest GER of the EU) was over 80%. It was still over 50% in Romania (the country with the lowest GER in the EU). In that period, South Korea has managed to overtake the EU, growing from a level of under 7% in 1971 to over 94% in 2015, as shown in graph 6 below.

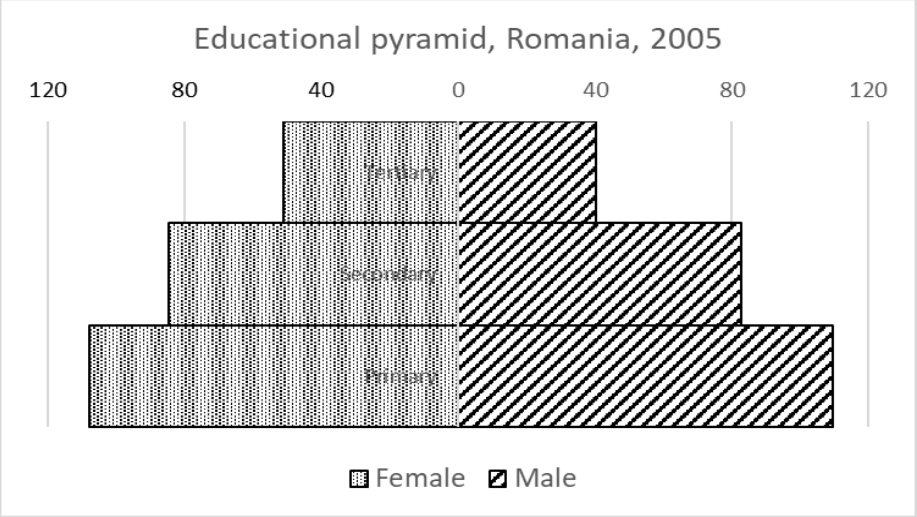


Graph 6 - GER, Botswana, Denmark, Romania, South Korea

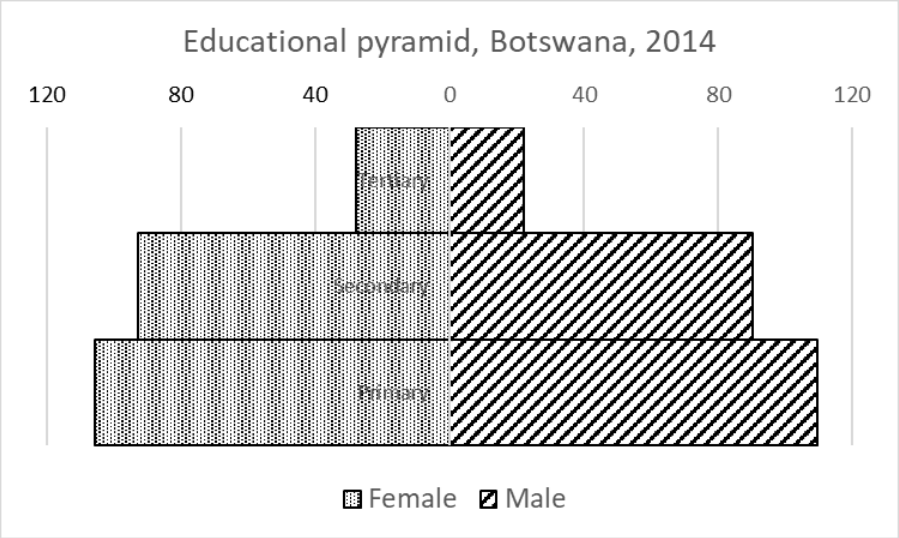
What is clear from comparing graph 3 with graph 6 is that the diversity in Africa in the tertiary education sector is far greater than that in Europe. The lines in the European graph show a much more parallel trajectory than the lines in the African graph. In 2014, the Romanian enrolment ratio stood at 65% of the Danish ratio. However, the Chadian enrolment ratio was only 12.5% of the Botswana ratio. This means that whereas it might be defensible to make general statements about the tertiary education sector in Europe, such statements about Sub-Saharan Africa have much lower validity, if any at all.

Another point is this: a country like Romania was able to double its tertiary education sector from the current level of Botswana (nearly 30%) between 2001 and 2007, so in a relatively short period of time. Even though population growth in many African countries is higher than in Europe, it is still reasonable to expect that rapid further expansion is possible and likely in Botswana and other countries in Africa, given the right political and economic environment. There is reason to expect that at least in some countries, such rapid expansions will indeed take place. This means that the social function of tertiary education in some African countries has changed since independence and is likely to change even more in the years to come. Such periods of rapid educational expansion are likely to lead to a problem of

disillusioned students and are likely to force changes in the educational 'habitus', in order to cater for the changed social function of education.
In other countries in Africa, such expansion did not happen and may not happen for some years to come – meaning, of course, that social discontent might show itself in other ways.
It is also illustrative to compare the educational pyramids of Romania and of Botswana, as is done in graphs 7 and 8 below.



Graph 7 - Educational pyramid, Romania, 2005



Graph 8 - Educational pyramid, Botswana, 2014

It is clear that these pyramids show more similarity than do the pyramids of Ethiopia (graph 5) and Botswana. In Botswana as well as in Romania, primary and secondary education can now be said to be universal. Tertiary education has become massive. In both countries, more women than men participate in tertiary education. Even though there is still a considerable gap between those who can go to secondary education and the tertiary education level, that gap is now much smaller than it was some years ago. This also means that the relationship between the elites and the rest of the population has changed: the educational gap between the most educated and the rest of the population is now smaller than it used to be. In other words, in order to be able to do its job of managing the country, the elites now, both in Romania and in Botswana, have to take account of and can rely on an educated population to a much greater degree than was the case a few decades ago. This is also happening in other countries in Africa: table 1 below shows all African countries with a gross enrolment rate in tertiary education above 15%.

African countries with a tertiary education GER > 15%		
Country	**2017**	**2018**
Algeria		51.4
Botswana	24.9	
Cabo Verde		23.6
Egypt	35.2	
Ghana		15.7
Mauritius	40.6	
Morocco		35.9
Namibia	22.9	
South Africa		23.8
Tunisia		31.7

Table 1 - African countries with a gross enrolment rate in tertiary education above 15%

Implications of GER Growth

Above, I have shown GER growth over the years, both in Africa and in Europe. Following Bourdieu and Passeron, this growth implies that as the GER changes, the social function of tertiary education also changes. As long as the GER for tertiary education remains below 15%, this education can be said to have elite reproduction as one of its main

functions. In most countries in Africa (but not in all, as table 1 shows), this is still the case. Thus, as Cloete and Maassen (2015: 6) state: 'There has been a common misconception that a major problem in African higher education is that it has massified without resources. In reality, nowhere on the continent is there a differentiated and massified system; there are only overcrowded elite systems.' The word 'nowhere' seems a slight overstatement in light of the statistics above, but on the whole, their statement seems valid.

It is to be expected that as the social function of education changes, the power relations within educational systems will also change. Change in power relations is almost never completely peaceful: it implies a certain measure of social strife. In the 'advanced' countries, the GER in tertiary education rose from 4.7% in 1950 to 24.6% in 1970 and 45.3% in 1990. It is no surprise that in that period there were also waves of student unrest and protest in a number of countries in Europe and elsewhere. It is entirely likely that such struggles will also occur in Africa. It partly explains what is happening in South Africa, struggling to increase access to tertiary education after the end of Apartheid. If GER changes rapidly, for example if it doubles in under a decade, then its effect can clearly be felt within a generation: children at the end of primary school have certain expectations of what a university education will deliver that can no longer be met by the time they reach university-going age. The same is true of parents who in many countries need to make considerable sacrifices to give their children a good education. It would be worthwhile to study these relationships more in-depth, but that is outside the scope of this analysis.

Increased enrolment rates in Africa are more difficult to achieve than in other parts of the world, because Africa has higher population growth. However, given the rate of expansion of tertiary education in other parts of the world and given the history of expansion in Africa, further phases of rapid expansion, at least in some countries, can be expected.

As indicated above, this growth is accompanied by even greater expansion especially in secondary education: the pyramid is becoming less steep. The steepness of the pyramid can be expressed as the ratio of enrolment in primary education in any particular year divided by the ratio of enrolment in tertiary education in that year. Thus, a higher value means a steeper pyramid. For the graphs given above, that yields the picture as in table 2 below:

Country	**Year**	**GER primary/GER tertiary**
Advanced countries	1950	20.1
Ethiopia	2005	29.2
Romania	2005	2.4

Botswana	2014	4.3

Table 2 - Ratio of enrolment in primary education in any particular year divided by the ratio of enrolment in tertiary education in that year

In many cases, GER growth will be achieved without commensurate budget growth. It is clear that this is likely to lead to a drop in the quality of education. However, the type of education that was offered to elites in earlier decades is perhaps not appropriate for the broader class of academics of tomorrow. In line with the ideas developed in the previous section, GER growth may also have a bearing on pressures on the language of instruction. Let us examine that issue a bit more closely in the next section.

4.2.2 The Language Barrier

In just about all countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary education is a former colonial language that is not the L1 of the great majority of students. This is a legacy of a colonial system that was always intended to provide elite education, rather than education for the masses. Students must learn this colonial language in primary and secondary education and they should attain a level of proficiency that is sufficient for the tertiary level. But what is a sufficient level? There are three main systems used internationally for assessing foreign language ability.

In the U.S. there are two, related scales: the guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)[29] and the ILR scale. The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale has five broad levels, ranging from zero to five.[30] The Council of Europe uses the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale, which has six levels.[31] Attempts have been made to relate the U.S. and the European scales to one another, but these alignments are approximate at best. For tertiary education, a level corresponding to at least the CEFR B2 level is considered to be necessary. This level stands for 'upper intermediate' - it is the level used by many universities, although the University of Cape Town in South Africa uses the higher C1 level as its minimum requirement[32] - still below the highest 'C2'

[29] https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012 accessed 20 July 2019.
[30] https://www.govtilr.org/ accessed 20 July 2019.
[31] https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home accessed 20 July 2019.
[32] http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/applications/admission-requirements/language accessed 20 July 2019 gives the requirement as an

level. In the ILR terms, this means at least Level 3, or 'Advanced High' in the ACTFL terms.[33]

Language level and the amount of effort (both from the learner and from the educational system) are often not taken into account in economic studies looking at language learning. Thus, Athanasiou et al (2016: 214) discuss a number of economic studies and models showing that common simplifications include the assumption that an individual either 'speaks' or 'does not speak' another language and that the cost of learning another language is the same for all learners (p 216) and independent of the similarity or difference between the languages learnt. In European or U.S. situations, where foreign language learning is done by a portion of the population at best and where at best only a handful of other languages will be learned these simplifications might do. For African situations, however, where the assumption is that increasing numbers of people will learn a foreign language to a level high enough to enable them to receive tertiary education in that language, these models are inadequate.

Unfortunately, research into language levels reached in Africa and the associated cost is scarce indeed. Still, the question needs to be asked: what percentage of the population and of the secondary school population can an educational system reasonably be expected to teach to reach at least the B2 level of proficiency at the time of school completion?

Chaudenson (2006) uses his own measure for minimum language learning, SMIC[34]: 'Seuil Minimal Individuel de Competence en francais', or minimum individual threshold of competency in French. He is not explicit about the alignment between his SMIC and the DELF/CEFR levels,[35] but he does say (p 183) that the end of the second year of primary school should lead to level A1, the lowest of the CEFR levels. He adds that this level is not obtained by the great majority of pupils - yet instruction changes to French in year 3, requiring level B1 or B2 (p 184).

Given the dearth of material on Africa, another productive avenue might be to look at Europe, where the European Commission has a policy of stimulating learning of other European languages. Thus, in 2011, the European Commission for the first time investigated second-

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IELTS score of at least 7.0, which corresponds to the C1 level as outlined at https://www.ielts.org/ielts-for-organisations/common-european-framework.

[33] https://www.efset.org/english-score/ accessed 20 July 2019.

[34] This is a play of words with the more common French use of the abbreviation SMIC, which stands for minimum wage.

[35] DELF is the French language certification system, which is aligned to the CEFR.

language proficiency of secondary students in the last year before their final exams, in reading, writing and listening (European Commission, 2012).[36] They found tremendous differences in performance within Europe, ranging from Malta (60% of students at B2 level) to France (5% of students at this level). One of the best-performing countries, doing better for example than the Netherlands, was Estonia, with 41% of the secondary school students at the B2 level. Note that Estonian[37] is the designed language used as medium of instruction in secondary education in the country – English is taught as a subject. Note also that over four-fifth of all children in Estonia complete the second (upper) stage of secondary education: the completion rate in 2013 was 82.7%. This means the Estonian education system is able to educate almost 34% of its youngsters to a B2 level of proficiency in English, high enough to take tertiary education in that language. Estonian and English are very different from each other as languages - and yet Estonia manages to be among the top performers in Europe. Let us therefore take the Estonian educational system as a benchmark for what an educational system is able to achieve in terms of teaching a portion of the population a 'foreign' designed language to a level high enough to allow students to be taught in that designed language at tertiary level. As we have seen, this level is 41% of secondary school students and 34% of all Estonian 18-year olds. Where do African education systems stand in comparison?

Can Ghana, for example, match Estonia? Would it be possible that a third of all children reach B2 level in an international language by the end of their secondary school career, as Estonia has managed to achieve? How ambitious would that be?

An estimate for Ghana could be calculated by multiplying the completion rate for senior secondary education by the percentage of students that obtain a high enough examination result in English. In Ghana, the final exam at the end of secondary school is the WASSCE examination.[38] In this system, the lowest so-called 'credit pass' is the C6 pass. According to information on the sites of a number of UK Universities,[39] the WASSCE C6 level is roughly equivalent to IELTS 6.0

[36] The survey material is still available online via http://www.surveylang.org/, accessed 6 June 2020. The survey has not been repeated.

[37] The Ethnologue puts the number of L1 speakers of the two discerned Estonian-like languages at approximately 1.25 million. https://www-ethnologue-com/language/est accessed 29 March 2020.

[38] https://ghana.waecdirect.org/

[39] See for example https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/study/international/international-entry-

and this is roughly equivalent to the CEFR B2 level. According to information from the US Embassy in Ghana[40] this level is reached by 54% of those who sit for the WASSCE examination. A further 27% receive a passing grade that is lower than C6 (D7 or E8). UNESCO gives the completion rate for senior secondary education in 2018 as 35.7%. That means that currently, the Ghanaian education system is able to educate just under 20% of its youngsters to a B2 level of proficiency in English, compared to 34% for Estonia.[41] So yes, matching Estonia would be an ambitious goal indeed for a country like Ghana.

Another approximation can be found in Albaugh (2014: 221).[42] She gives estimates of the portion of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa speaking a European language. The averages vary between 37% for the 'Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking' countries and 17% for the 'English-speaking' counties. For these estimates, Albaugh bases herself on a large number of sources, using any number of definitions and methodologies. The figures for the 'francophone' nations (average: 18%) are the most comparable, because there she is able to use data collected by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

The OIF uses what it calls a common-sense definition of a francophone in Maurer (2015: 3): 'a person able to express him/herself in French, no matter what his/her level may be or his/her mastery of other competences such as writing or reading.' (My translation.)[43] It is not immediately obvious how to map this on to the CEFR levels, but it clearly includes many more people than those who are at the B2 level, which stands for an ability to 'interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.'[44] One of the interests of the OIF is clearly to make the French language look large and important.

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requirements/english-language-requirements/tier-4-qualifications retrieved 6 November 2019.

[40] https://gh.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/175/THE-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OF-GHANA-2019.pdf retrieved 6 November 2019. See also p. 88 of the Education Sector Medium-Term Development Plan 2018-2020, available online at https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2019-05-education-sector-medium-term-development-plan_2018-2021.pdf

[41] But see Stoffelsma and De Jong (2015) for a more pessimistic perspective.

[42] An abridged version of this discussion of the estimate of the number of 'francophones' in Africa has also been published in Pinxteren, Bert van (2020b).

[43] 'Revenons donc au sens commun, qui entend par « francophone » une personne capable de s'exprimer en français, quelle que soit son niveau ou sa maîtrise d'autres compétences comme l'écriture ou la lecture.'

[44] https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale retrieved 7 September 2019.

Therefore, it probably would include also those who are at the A2 level: those able to 'describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.' It is illustrative to note that in 2007, 62.4% of teachers in Mauritania had level A2 or below, a level considered in the document to be insufficient for teaching in that language (p 31). The document also recalls (p 83) that in order to become naturalized as a French citizen in France, the minimum level that is required is B1.

Albaugh estimates the average 'francophone' population in Sub-Saharan Africa at 18%. To emulate Estonia, 85% of all children should complete secondary school and 40% of those children would attain the B2 level. In that case, eventually, 35% of the entire population would attain B2 level. In order to achieve such a level, it would be necessary to give the opportunity to all children to start secondary school and to learn French there. Probably, given differences in motivation and ability, some children would not learn enough French anyway to reach the A2 level. However, it is quite likely that 35% at B2 level would mean a much larger base at A2 and B1 levels; perhaps as much as 70% altogether. Even though this line of reasoning is speculative, I think it is nevertheless reasonable to conclude that, going by the OIF definition quoted above, there is potential for quadrupling the number of 'francophones' (so going from around 18% to around 70%) in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Would it be possible for Ghana to go even further, and reach for example the level of Malta? Malta is unique in the EU, in that it was a British possession until gaining independence in 1964 and it has retained English as an official language, alongside Maltese. English and Maltese are very different languages. Yet, English is so present in Malta that Maltese children are familiar with English from a very early age. Perhaps one can argue that English is a Maltese language – the eWAVE considers Maltese English a separate variety of English.[45] Whereas in Estonia around 34% of 18-year olds speak English at the B2 level, this is almost 48% for Malta. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in tertiary education in Malta in 2013 was only 43%, as compared to 73% in Estonia.[46] Yet, Malta's College of Arts, Science and Technology does

[45] https://ewave-atlas.org/languages/12, accessed 11 June 2020. eWAVE is the Electronic Atlas of Varieties of English – see Kortmann, Lunkenheimer and Ehret (2020).

[46] The lower percentage for Malta compared to Estonia may be related to the fact that more Maltese than Estonians go abroad for their tertiary education.

teach partly in Maltese and has the possibility to allow students to present assessment work in Maltese.[47]

Perhaps one could argue that in urban areas in Ghana, English is just as prevalent as it is in Malta and indeed, eWAVE also recognizes Ghanaian English (as distinct from Ghanaian Pidgin English) as a separate English variety.[48] In addition, language learning does not stop at the end of secondary school – students continue to learn in their first year(s) in tertiary education. Therefore, it might be logical to keep (Ghanaian) English as one of the languages that is used as medium of instruction in higher education, alongside other Ghanaian languages. However, continuing to use ***only*** (Ghanaian) English and emulating the Maltese education system would mean that the Ghanaian education system would have to educate three times as many children to reach the B2 level in English as it currently does. And still: if the level of enrolment in tertiary education would approximate the levels found in Estonia and in the rest of the global North, a (partial) transition to indigenous languages would be necessary.

If enrolment rates in secondary education stay below a certain level and selection criteria are such that all students have the required language level in order to profit from teaching in whatever medium of instruction is used, then using a foreign language as medium of instruction is not a problem.

However, if the selection mechanism is not efficient, for example because it selects students that do not have the required language level, or if the enrolment ratio becomes higher than the percentage of students that have the required language level, then using a foreign language as medium of instruction will become a problem. At that stage, children will not fully understand what the teacher says, even if in principle they have the required intellectual abilities. At that point, it will be necessary either to introduce an additional stream in which the medium of instruction is a language the children do understand sufficiently or to change to a local language for all secondary education. In both cases, the foreign language can be taught as a subject, but can no longer be used efficiently as medium of instruction for all students.

Estonia has chosen to use Estonian as medium of instruction in secondary education (Santiago et al, 2016: 55). English is taught as a

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[47] https://www.mcast.edu.mt/wp-content/uploads/DOC_003_CORP_REV_F_-PROGRAMME-REGULATIONS-MQF-LEVELS-1-3-2.pdf accessed 7 June 2020.

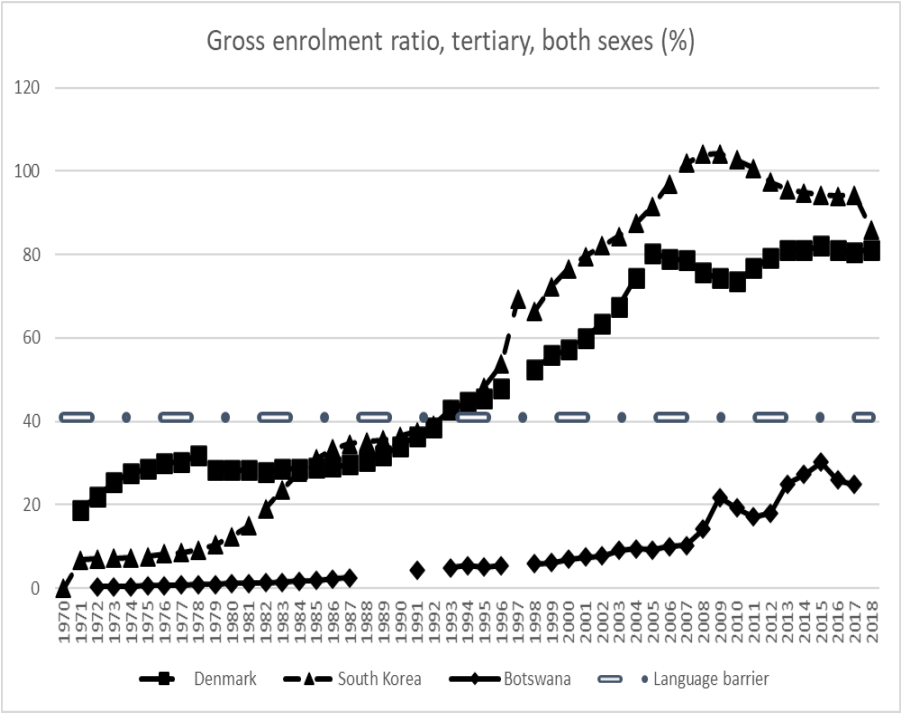
[48] https://ewave-atlas.org/languages/39, accessed 11 June 2020. I am grateful to Dr Dodzi Kpoglu for suggesting this possibility to me.

subject.[49] For Estonia, this ensures the best results not only in English, but in mathematics and other subjects as well. The Estonian system, then, offers living proof of a point that seems counter-intuitive to many Africans: not using English as the medium of instruction paradoxically leads to better English-language learning outcomes than using it as medium of instruction. Developing CALP in Estonian gives the basis for developing CALP in English in the most efficient manner. Note as well that the levels of English-language proficiency reached in Estonia are only achievable if there is a larger base of students who do not achieve this level, but still reach lower levels. This is possible because English is not used as the medium of instruction, but is taught as a subject instead.

As shown above, a level whereby 40% of all students in secondary school age reach the B2 level of competence in their second language by the end of their secondary school is a very challenging benchmark to aim for in Africa. In chapter 1.4, I argued at the theoretical level that there will exist a 'language barrier' in any educational system that uses a foreign language as medium of instruction. Due to the uneven distribution of language abilities over any population, there will be a point at which teaching high enough numbers of students to a high enough level of foreign language ability will put unsustainable demands on the system. For the time being, and until further research has shown things to be different, I propose as a ***working hypothesis*** that there is a 'language barrier' approximately at the level of a GER of 40% for the highest level of secondary education and at the start of tertiary education. Below this level of enrolment, any language can be used as medium of instruction. Above this level, a switch to a designed language that is close to (one of the) discerned mother tongue(s) becomes necessary. This is what I call the 'language barrier' in tertiary education.

If we map this level on graph 4 above, the consequences become clear, as shown in graph 9.

[49] Estonia does have a sizeable Russian-speaking minority. Therefore, a number of schools also offer a Russian-language curriculum. English and Finnish are used as medium of instruction in a few schools only.



Graph 9 – Tertiary enrolment and the language barrier

It is clear that for countries in the global North, providing tertiary education in a foreign language to all students would be almost impossible: the language barrier prevents it. It would be very costly and inefficient to bring all students that enter tertiary education up to the required level of proficiency. In fact, they would also have this problem if the language barrier would occur at 60%. African countries do not (yet) have that problem. However, it will become a problem for a country like Botswana in the next decade or so, as Botswana approaches the 'language barrier' threshold. Of course the precise level of the barrier is not fixed and can be influenced by policy choices countries make. The basic point is, however, that such a barrier does exist and will become manifest through social tensions, lower pass rates for exams, disillusioned students, parents and teachers and other ways. In Tunisia, where the Gross Enrolment Ratio in tertiary education is around 35%, this transition is indeed happening: Tunisia has embarked on a phased (and not uncontested) Arabization exercise. Most studies in Tunisian universities are currently entirely taught in

Arabic, instead of the French that was used in the colonial period (Akkari, 2008).[50]

The quantitative analysis of this section thus drives home the conclusions from the analysis presented in the previous section: if African countries aspire to providing tertiary education to their populations at levels comparable to those in the global North, then sooner or later they will have to offer at least part of the curricula in local languages. The alternative would be to dramatically lower the standard of education being offered, but doing so would be inefficient and it would mean a great disservice both to the countries and the students involved.

4.3. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have set out to answer my second research question: the question why African languages currently are not being used more in higher education as medium of instruction.

In order to discuss this issue, it was important first to clarify the conceptual framework. To do that, a distinction between discerned and designed languages was proposed as a useful way of looking at languages as spoken versus languages as used in more formal domains such as writing and writing-based activities. The term discerned refers to the human and social act of pronouncing a speech register to be a language. The term designed refers to those languages that have been deliberately shaped and built to become standardized vehicles of literary expression – languages that are protected and developed through policy and that are acquired through a process of formal learning. I call for explicit and increased attention to the role of language policy in Africa and have criticized approaches that tend to neglect or underplay the importance of this role in Africa.

I have reviewed the existing explanations for not using African languages more that are given in the literature, such as in Zsiga et al (2014), and weighed these against the compelling arguments that scientists have advanced for almost 70 years in favour of 'mother tongue' instruction. My conclusion is that the reasons given in the literature do not sufficiently explain the phenomenon and do not take account of the dynamic nature of educational systems in Africa, thus denying African agency. I have shown that there is an additional

[50] I am grateful to Dr Mirza Emirhafizović for pointing out the Tunisian experience to me.

explanation which in my view points to the need to changes in policy in the coming decade or so, at least for a number of African countries. This explanation is based on the fact that education systems will be unable to deliver language teaching to a sufficient level to sufficiently large numbers of students if enrolment levels in higher education start to approach those of the global North. If enrolment increases, a transition to local languages will become inevitable. A counter-intuitive result of such a transition is that it will also lead to improvements in the learning of international languages (taught as a subject).

I ask the question what educational systems in Africa can reasonably be expected to deliver in terms of teaching children a foreign designed language to a high enough level. I point to the example of the Estonian education system, which is one of the best-performing systems in Europe. It is able to educate a high percentage of the population to tertiary education level (in the Estonian example: 70%). This percentage is in fact much higher than the percentage of the population that the Estonian educational system is able to teach a foreign language at a level high enough to be able to take education at tertiary level (in the Estonian example: 34%). In Europe, multilingual Malta is an outlier: its educational system is able to give 48% of its 18-year olds a high level of English-language knowledge. However, in Malta only approximately 43% of 18-year olds then continue to higher or tertiary education – therefore, in Malta this education can be delivered in English. Estonia, however, with a participation rate in higher education of around 70%, is not able to do that. This means that in that country, tertiary education is for a large part in Estonian, even though there are only around 1 million native speakers of Estonian in the country. Currently, all African countries have relatively low participation rates in higher education. Therefore, this education can currently be delivered in any designed language. However, in future, Africa potentially has a big problem: it will not be able to develop its full human potential making use of non-indigenous languages; sooner or later, a shift to increased use of African designed languages will become a necessity. At the moment, however, this is not yet the case – it is possible to continue with the colonial language in education policies. This provides my explanation of why African languages are currently not used more in higher education.

My research into the achievements of education systems and into the evolution of enrolment rates in education points to idea that there must be a 'language barrier': a point at which a switch to indigenous designed languages becomes a necessity. However, more research would be needed to determine where this barrier lies in individual countries and how policy choices could influence it. For the time being,

my working hypothesis is that this barrier is at a gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education of around 40%.

It is good to stress that the consequence of such a transition, for most African countries, will be that higher education would be provided in several languages (as is currently the case in a number of countries already for primary education). At the start of the transition, the former colonial language might remain as the single medium of instruction in a large number of fields. Then gradually and over time, other languages will be added as medium of instruction for more and more fields. However, it is entirely possible that the former colonial language will be maintained as an optional or even as the sole medium of instruction for some fields of education. The end result will also not be uniform: it will be different, depending on the linguistic situation of individual countries.

Using Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) as the theoretical starting point and after examining the available data, several additional points become clear:

- No discussion on education in Africa is complete without looking at the sociological parameters of that education. Researchers should always bear enrolment statistics in mind when studying education in countries outside of their own: if not, their research is likely to be tainted because, consciously or subconsciously, they are likely to use the situation in their home country and at the time they themselves went to university as the norm. In so doing, they will assume a form of cultural capital and a habitus in the foreign educational system that does not reflect the actual situation on the ground.
- An implicitly European frame of reference when discussing higher education in Africa can lead to misleading or even false ideas and conclusions about the nature of education in Africa.
- Tertiary education in Africa is more divergent than in Europe. Analysis must start from the country level, because generalizations are more difficult to make about education in Africa than about education in Europe.
- Differences in enrolment ratios in Africa mean that the social function of tertiary education in society is different from country to country.
- Developed societies need more than an educated elite – those elites also need an educated general population. This means that if Africa is to become more developed, it needs to educate more people to a higher level (of course in an appropriate manner). In order to achieve that, it will need African languages.

Now that I have demonstrated that at some point, it will become necessary to start using designed languages that are easier to learn for most Africans than the ones currently employed in higher education, the next question becomes: what instruments do we have for making rational language choices? That is the topic of the next chapter.