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Multilingualism in Ghana: A blessing or a curse?

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Director/a: María Dolores Rueda Montero

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Fdo. María Soler Camús



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D^a: M^a Dolores Rueda

DNI:

Profesora de la Facultad de Educación y Humanidades de la UFV

AUTORIZA a:

D/D^a: María Soler Camús

DNI: 21657703Y

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to answer questions about the phenomenon of diglossia (Ferguson, 1959) applied to the African country of Ghana. Diglossia, being worldwide spread no matter the languages, societies or ethnicity of the peoples that coexist within these societies, has a diverse impact depending on the countries in which it takes place. Ghana is a multiethnic country accounting for almost eighty languages that exist together with English as an imported world language. This proposal delves on the one hand, into possible reluctancies towards English and, on the other hand into the looking upon this language from the perspective of the community. The theoretical grounds of this dissertation will be used to provide evidence as to whether the linguistic situation in Ghana is following the correct steps towards ethnic languages integration and their consideration in schools. To this respect, language policies will be presented. Questions of the kind: *Is the government investing in the maintenance of a specific language, promoting it/them at schools and, disregarding others? Is there any underlying economic interest?*, will inevitably arise. Other likely questions will be: *Is English treated as the sole language of prestige? Are ethnic languages considered as belonging to a lower status in daily transactions? And at schools? How do families perceive the phenomenon?* The ultimate goal of this dissertation will be to determine whether the education authorities have taken ownership of organising a strong form of education for bilingualism or it is not one of their priorities

KEY WORDS: Ghana, triglossia, multilingualism, language attitude, government policies

RESUMEN

Este estudio pretende responder preguntas acerca del fenómeno de diglosia (Ferguson, 1959), aplicado al país africano de Ghana. La diglosia, difundida por todo el planeta sin importar las lenguas, sociedades o etnias de los pueblos que conviven dentro de estas sociedades, tiene un impacto distinto según en qué país se lleve a cabo este fenómeno. Ghana es un país multilingüe que cuenta con casi ochenta lenguas que conviven con el inglés como lengua internacional importada. Esta revisión bibliográfica profundiza en las posibles reticencias hacia el inglés, por un lado y por otro en el también posible sentimiento de reconocimiento hacia dicho idioma. Los fundamentos teóricos de esta investigación se utilizarán para argumentar si la situación lingüística de Ghana está siguiendo los pasos correctos hacia la integración de sus lenguas étnicas y su consideración en la escuela. A este respecto, se presentarán las políticas gubernamentales en materia educativa. El tipo de preguntas que surgen al abordar este fenómeno son del tipo: ¿está el gobierno invirtiendo en conservar una lengua específica mientras que está dejando de lado otra? ¿subyace algún interés económico? Otras posibles preguntas se cuestionan: ¿es el inglés tratado como única lengua de prestigio? ¿se considera que las lenguas étnicas pertenecen a un estatus inferior en situaciones comunicativas diarias? ¿y en las escuelas? ¿cómo perciben las familias el fenómeno? El objetivo final será concluir si las autoridades educativas se han planteado organizar un sistema bilingüe sólido en las escuelas o más bien, no está entre sus prioridades.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Ghana, diglosia, multilingüismo, actitud hacia la lengua, políticas gubernamentales.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVIEW

Many years have passed since my visit to the country of Ghana. In those years, I could perceive in the ordinary citizen an innate necessity to communicate in their ethnic language among their relatives and friends. Hardly could you hear people using English as the vehicular language in the streets. Notwithstanding the establishment of this latter language at schools had been standardized decades ago. However straightforward this claim might seem, it does not account for the average citizen being content with the language imposed. By expressing themselves in their Ghanaian language, they keep the bonds to their roots alive, they are able to convey a message that is tainted with cultural identification. Conversely to prejudice about stigmatization for not speaking English, what the people in Ghana are doing is, by all means, prioritising in maintaining their heritage. All in all, it must be admitted that the population have come to terms with using different languages in different settings and for varied purposes.

Progressively, as I scrutinize the subject, my expectations are not excessively high as to finding striking data. Furthermore, I am doubtful about being in with a chance to find evidence papers that reflect the attitudes of the speakers of the manifold languages present in this territory. In order to find an answer to an interesting range of questions, namely: *Has there been any kind of oppression towards any ethnical group and their language? Have these languages been transmitted from parents to children in a completely unstructured way?* one must trace as far back as colonial times. Seizing and understanding the origin of their sentiment may only then be plausible. In the process of research, intentional active refuse to learn a majority language could be encountered (being English considered one of them but not the only one). However, more often than not, the ordinary citizen seems to have declined Ghanaian languages for the sake of greater career opportunities with English. This will be commented focusing mainly on parent's opinions.

1.2. THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

Ghana is an African country that has been suffering waves of colonialism since the 15th century. It was first the Portuguese Empire, then came other European forces. Eventually, the British Empire established control by the late 19th century. For over a century there were fights from the side of the natives. They intended to maintain their ancient territories. Initially, the territory was divided into four distinctive areas, namely: Gold Coast, Asanti, Northern Territories and British Togoland. It was not until March 6, 1957 that the country was unified and achieved independency within the Commonwealth of Nations.

The years of British ruling during the 20th century of what was previously called the Gold Coast were a time of outstanding progress socially, economically and in educational advances. However, allowing locals to exercise their power over their people in terms of administration, was not but a devil in disguise since the real aim of the British government was not other but to minimise opposition from the local population to their ruling. While it is true that the system failed to provide significant opportunities for the considerable number of educated Ghanaians, this does not account for the attempts to preserving traditional power sources and other fashions of exercising authority.

Since prehistoric times, Ghana has been dwelled by Negroid peoples. These peoples have been organising themselves into tribes for centuries. At the core of the tribal life there is, needless to say, a tribal language. These languages were conformed according to tribal sectors, with the related Akan languages of Twi and Fanti being the most overly spoken and thus dominant. Of some significance is MoshiDagomba, Ewe and Ga. English has always been the official language. It has been implemented in schools as the vehicular instruction language over the years. Side by side with English, eleven Ghanaian languages officially supplement the former under the category of government-sponsored.

Therefore, it is undeniably gratifying that the territory accounts for a myriad of indigenous languages and dialects. On balance, the big picture as shown by Boateng

et al. (2021), would be as follows: the speech community of the Akan family languages which would include the varieties of Twi or Ashanti, account for almost 44% of the population. These latter communities are settled around the Ashanti Region and central Ghana. Another key tribal community are the Fanti, inhabiting the coastal areas for over centuries. Although placed in the southwest, The Nzima, Ahanta or Evalue among other tribes, speak varieties that are related to Twi and Fanti. In less number but still of great importance is the Moshi-Dagomba, constituting about 16% of the population. Also of great significance, and specifically spoken in the area around the capital of the country is both the Ewe 13% and the Ga 8%. In minor number, the Gurma 3%, and the Yoruba 1% are to be mentioned. The Accra plains are populated by tribes which language are dialects of Ga. The major number of Ewe tribes are located east of the Volta River in what used to be called Togoland which was British-governed.

1.3. THE HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

An important concern regarding education is that the colonial era marked a turning point in Ghana. In pre-colonial times, education was not perceived as formally as it was in years to come. Wisdom and competencies were transferred in an oral way and through guidance and tutelage. It was with the arrival of Europeans that new forms of apprenticeship saw the light. The concept that we have nowadays of formal schools was born at that time. Schools frequented by locals in which all the knowledge was studied with books started to spring. The school population consisted of the sons of tribal chiefs side by side with newly traders into the commerce. They were located in colonial forts built to establish regional boundaries. In those years, there were continuous fights within the Ghanaian territories.

The Fante tribe were particularly belligerent, they were located in the coasts and they were a society in harmony with religion. As illustrated by their schools' motto, written in one of their dialects, Fante: "Nyansa ahyese ne Nyamesuro", i.e., "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom." (Proverbs 9:10), they wanted to prosper and become a thriving society. Their intention was to move to the south where the British

had their main power over the commerce in the coast. It cannot be argued that throughout the passing of the centuries, they achieved their goal as nowadays the Fante dialect together with Twi, Bono and Akuapem constitute the officially recognised dialects of Akan in Ghana.

It was the labour of the missions to spread the word of indoctrination. As a consequence, according to Meyer et al. (2020), the Wesleyan mission settled on the coasts using the English language as their main one whereas the Basel mission were more concentrated inland and were the ones to use tribal languages. By the year 1909 the government of the country opened a technical school and a teachers' training college in the present capital city of Accra. In those years, the missions had the goal of opening secondary schools and so they did, in combination with the state schools that were flourishing promoted by the government's financial aid. Even a higher learning centre was set up in 1948; it was the University College.

As Boateng et al. (2021) correctly state, education indicators in Ghana reflect great inequalities between areas considered rural and those from cities considered urban. This very same imbalance is also noticeable between the Southern and Northern regions of the country. These disparities have been the force that moves public action against illiteracy as well as unfairness in access to education. For forty years, the priority of the Ghanaian government has been eliminating illiteracy. The efforts can be appreciated in the form of "Literacy centres" since over a thousand of them were already established mostly in non-urban areas.

Back in 1961, the Education Act launched the principle of free and compulsory primary education, and that was a great achievement. In subsequent years, however, the country struggled with the new scenario that was unfolding in the realms of education. There were several problems that had to be addressed, namely, a shortage of trained teachers capable to deliver lessons in vernacular languages and/or English, maintaining schools' framework and persuading families that the right thing to do was to send their children into school instead of keeping them working. All

of these events made the credibility on the curriculum stumble, let alone the economic situation that was not of any help.

The Free, Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) contributed a course of action for the period 1996–2005. Its main goal was to increase quality on teaching materials, and to enhance teachers' living conditions. Owing to the difficulties of the Ghanaian government in facing alone the costs of education, the concern became a shared enterprise between the state representatives and private institutions. In an attempt to counterbalance the financial inefficiency on the side of the government and make education accessible to all, the expenditures are partly funded by benefactors among which are the World Bank, the United States (through USAID, the United Kingdom (through DFID) and the European Union. This, nonetheless, could represent a double-edged sword in the long run.

Education in Ghana is under the control of the Ministry of Education and, as clearly stated by Boateng et al. (2021), policy implementation is granted by the above-mentioned organisations. The Ghana Education Service (GES) is in charge of the managing of the national education policy regarding pre-tertiary education. This duty is distributed among three other autonomous entities, in this case: The National Inspectorate Board (NIB), the National Teaching Council (NTC) and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). As revealed by statistic data, Ghana's budget on education tended to range around 25% of its annual financial plan in the past decade.

With all the above in mind and to get a current insight on the Education System in present days, a summary of the education stages and what they enshrine, is presented here below. As described by Boateng et al. (2021): Primary school extends over a period of six years, this period starts with children in the age of six and lasts until the age of eleven. The subjects included in the primary school are varied. Among the traditional ones, that is to say: mathematics, social and science studies and ICT, there are courses on languages. Ghanaian languages and Ghanaian culture play a vital role but not least important is the introduction of new

international languages such as French and Mandarin. Additional pre-vocational skills and pre-technical skills, religious and moral education are also offered. It is worth mentioning that among the physical activities, Ghanaian music and dance are taken into consideration. This is a striking point from the view of the culture and heritage maintenance. Upon completion of primary school, there is no certificate, thus, proceeding to junior high school proves essential in order to obtain the compulsory certificate. Junior High School (hereinafter JHS) lasts three years, that is, from ages twelve to fifteen.

JHS ends with the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which enables students the access to secondary and/or vocational training schools. The subjects to be studied are similar to the primary level although higher in difficulty and specialty. For instance: integrated science, design and technology are added to the previous stage and ICT, mathematics as well as religious and moral education are continued. International languages such as French and Mandarin become optional. It should be born in mind that the language of instruction is the official one, English.

All of the students whose desire is to proceed academic education, must enter senior high school (SHS). Among the subjects provided, English language, mathematics, integrated science (including science, ICT, and environmental studies) and social studies (economics, geography, history, and government) can be found. These subjects are compulsory, then there are other optional subjects from five available programmes: agricultural, arts or science, business, vocational and technical programmes from which the students can select three or four of them.

At university level, it is remarkable the newly available Distance Education. This via has been implemented in order to make up for the scarcity of trained teachers, especially in the rural areas. Through a four-year programme leading to the Untrained Teacher's Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE), the country guarantees that teachers in deprived areas can have access to tertiary education and to lifelong education for the sake of the school community altogether.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. FERGUSON'S CONCEPT OF DIGLOSSIA.

Charles Ferguson, an American sociolinguist, made a magnificent contribution when he used the term “diglossia” in 1959. Initially the term made reference to different varieties of the same language. He revealed that diglossia came about when one of these varieties had more prestige than another. Charles affirmed that:

Diglossia is likely to come into being when the following three conditions hold in a given speech community: (i) There is a sizable body of literature in a language closely related to (or even identical with) the natural language of the community, and this literature embodies, whether as source (e.g. divine revelation) or reinforcement, some of the fundamental values of the community. (ii) Literacy in the community is limited to a small elite. (iii) A suitable period of time, on the order of several centuries, passes from the establishment of (i) and (ii). It can probably be shown that this combination of circumstances has occurred hundreds of times in the past and has generally resulted in diglossia. Dozens of examples exist today, and it is likely that examples will occur in the future (Ferguson, 1959, p.338)

One of Ferguson's main interests was the field of socio-linguistics. In defining this new concept and situation, he desired to have detected the rule common to a general typology of this socio-linguistic domain (Ferguson, 1963).

Many decades have passed and his notion of characterizing a specific linguistic context based on sociolinguistic theories, is still at the *avant garde* when it comes to defining linguistic situations that occur at the society level. The modifications, pertinent to the subject of study, that were added by Fishman (1967) will now be summarized. Basically, he argued that the functions of H and L (high and low) are not always inherent to different varieties. The definition of H and L was extended from varieties of the same language to “functionally differentiated language varieties of whatever kind.” This means that different dialects of a single language can function as H and L in a speech community (Fishman, 1967).

Furthermore, he described diglossia as a characterization of the societal allocation of functions to different languages or varieties, thus compartmentalized social roles are directly connected to compartmentalized language varieties. In his view, any other

different use made by any other different variety which is not the expected or established one, would be seen as a real infringement on the regulations that rule the social unanimity that underlies language use and functions (Fishman, 1967)

The formal structures of the linguistic repertoires, the language functions as well as the changes in language functions must be established in order to understand the phenomenon under discuss. That is to say, the social stratum to which a speaker of a language belongs must not always be considered the sole decisive factor but others, namely the context of use may be at the core of the features given in a diglossic situation. Thus, linguistic variation that is layered by conditions of use only and not by the social status of the speaker (Halliday 1968), must be considered when studying the different cases of languages in contact that fall under the categories of diglossia.

In accordance with these ideas, Ferguson examined thoroughly some varieties, and how specific and diverse their roles were within a community. He concluded that two varieties of a language that coexist within any given speech community have clear defining boundaries as to what their roles are (Ferguson, 1959). His contribution was an attempt to help dealing with issues in the fields of not only linguistic description but in historical linguistics and in language typology likewise. Irrespective of the varieties he chose to apply his hypothesis, the main features to be taken into consideration when dealing with this linguistic situation are: function of the languages, prestige, literary prestige, acquisition, standardization, stability, grammar, lexicon and phonology. Each discipline contributes to a coherent understanding of the phenomenon. A general overview will be presented hereunder rather than a thorough analysis.

It has been plausibly suggested that a high standard of any language or a language that has been awarded the status of “official” may be regarded as the one that sounds more beautifully, more logically or it is seen as a means to convey paramount ideas and the likes. Surprisingly, this notion is sometimes seized by speakers who do not even possess the command that enables them to do so. Furthermore, in terms of prestige, on some occasions the dominance of a language is linked to religion.

Another factor to be noted is that the methods by which the speakers acquire the various languages are relevant to a particular extent, in other words, the rationale says that the level of knowledge of the mother tongue is such that it would take years for a speaker to achieve the same in the higher variety even learning it in an academic context.

Along these lines of formality, we come up against grammar. It goes without saying that the learning of “rules” and norms to be repeated is a constant in the process of acquiring proficiency in the official variety. Yet, this is not so in any native language in which the structures are learned without straightforward explanation of grammar notions. Ferguson discerned that experts in linguistics would probably agree upon the idea that the language or variety L possessed a simpler grammar than that of the variety H which was somewhat stable (Ferguson, 1959)

Grammar is thus aligned with standardization. It is important taking into consideration the amount of grammars, dictionaries, treatises on style and pronunciation that a given language seizes. There are founded pronunciation rules, established grammar and vocabulary which do not allow constant variation, equally, the orthography is fixed and has little variation (Ferguson, 1959). Contrary to these features, the indigenous varieties comprise little or non-existent normative studies. A broad variation in grammar and vocabulary as well as in pronunciation can be observed. Its orthography is frequently unsettled.

Finally, the last feature worth mentioning is that of stability. The phenomenon of diglossia (and its variant of triglossia) may seem somewhat unstable. Diglossia is a long-lasting process taking in some cases not only centuries but even thousands of years. So long as the H and L varieties maintain their use in specific fields with little overlap, a diglossic situation can continue for many generations; this is known as *stable diglossia*. However, when speakers start to use one variety in domains where the other variety had previously been used, this can indicate the end of stable diglossia. Were this situation to occur, we would be witnessing what was called by

Ferguson as *leaky diglossia*, that is to say: a variety “leaks” into the sphere previously reserved for the other variety of the language (Fishman, 1972)

Notwithstanding Fishman’s arguments in favour of clearly defining the domains of both minority and majority languages, the development of the former would be diminished or even brought at a standstill. Wölck (2008) claims that a key factor in a diglossic situation is the social status of the speech community of the L variety. That is to say, provided that this minority population social prestige does not upgrade, the reduced number of domains appropriate to their language would, however, progressively be interfered to the point of being shared by the H variety. All of these considerations would call for the implementation of a proper language policy at that stage.

It is at this juncture that a clearer definition of what diglossia means, according to Ferguson, can be set forth:

It is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified, (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is earned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson, 1959, p. 336)

The value of the socio-cultural setting in which this phenomenon is embedded, must never be overlooked. As previously mentioned, the attitudes of the speech community could have a significant impact on the process of development of any language. Apparently, this language situation seems to be accepted and not considered a “problem”. Nonetheless, this stability being able to remain for long periods of time could crumble in the event of certain trends coming into being within a given society. Namely, “(i) more widespread literacy (whether for economic, ideological or other reasons), (ii) broader communication among different regional

and social segments of the community (e.g for economic, administrative, military or ideological reasons), (iii) desire for a full-fledged standard national language as an attribute of autonomy or of sovereignty” (Ferguson, 1959, p. 338)

Were these trends not to occur, the general widely held attitudes would range from either not using the standard language as a medium of ordinary conversation in order to avoid disloyalty to the community (feeling of being pedantic and artificial) or else intentionally refusing any form of formal training in the standard language at school for the sake of preserving their ethnical language. Yet, it must be clarified that this distinction of individual use of a variety is not always so clear-cut. In fact, as Hudson (2002) explained, the ideal realization of diglossia may be considered as the maximum exponent of linguistic variation. Thus, linguistic realization confronted to language acquisition, or in other words, the use of H or L, is a capacity inherent of the social context and not of the social status of the speaker. All in all, in diglossia it is context and not social hierarchy nor group belonging that governs the use of the variety.

Consideration of Hudson’s expansion on Ferguson’s initial ideas on diglossic societies may reveal outstanding so as to take meaning in the attitudes of the speech communities towards language shifting. Additionally, one of the main factors regarded as beneficial in the maintenance of the minority languages and that was equally supported by Hudson (2002) was, in fact, that of stability. Contrary to what may seem detrimental for a specific variety L coexisting with another considered H, the stability of the former may result in avoidance of language death.

To this respect, Hudson (2002) concludes that what makes diglossia stand out from the crowd from other examples of interlingual or intralingual situational alternation or what is more specifically, the acute correspondent distribution of linguistic varieties alone is that the functional classification of codes in the diglossic situation is one that precisely protects the role of the L variety as a natively acquired. Inasmuch as avoiding language death, diglossia plays a vital role. It is not the case, however, in the fostering of multilingualism where the L variety is restrained from growing.

By and large, this concept of diglossia is at the core of the societal communities that exist in Ghana. It is no wonder that in this formerly colonized country, a scenario in which diglossia occurs irrespective of bilingualism, be the norm. Societal bilingualism can also occur in situations where a society consists of two distinct groups of people (two speech communities), each with their own speech variety, where few individuals are bilingual in both varieties. Fishman's third modification of Ferguson's definition means that a society can be diglossic, even when some (or even most) people in that society are not bilingual. In this flow of ideas, Tollefson (1983) observed that:

When language policy is examined, it can be shown that planned attempts to achieve a stable bilingualism without diglossia can be successful only when the varieties involved have major structural differences. Thus we see that there are important differences among phenomena termed diglossia, differences obscured by the use of a single term for quite distinct situations (p.8)

2.2. TRIGLOSSIA

After having explained the variables that come into play in a diglossic situation, an examination into the concept of triglossia is made necessary. Although the literature available is scarce and specific of a speech community or a country in which this phenomenon occurs, the basic concepts of this notion will be exposed. The notion is complex as it encompasses various fields. "This problem is of exceptional interest not only in terms of linguistics, but also in philosophy, psychology, ethnopsychology, and sociology". (Tsvietaieva and Pryshchepa, 2019, p.431).

If Ferguson had stated a clear division of the communicative functions of two languages (or one vernacular and another superposed variety), in triglossia this division is maintained. That is to say, in a triglossic situation we are confronted with "one vernacular language and two superposed varieties, one of which is an indigenous lingua franca and the other an introduced world language". (Johnson, 1979, p.93)

Johnson described a stable case of triglossia occurring in Larteh, Ghana. Even if the object of this paper is not to examine any specific area, or speech community in Ghana but to get a broad understanding of the phenomena at a whole societal level, it is true that the contributions Johnson made, have prevailed over the years due to the nature of these long-lasting linguistic circumstances. Following this line of thought his research on triglossia seems reliable albeit not recent. In his study, he suggested the existence of some universal dimensions of language situations.

As such, the community attitudes to the varieties, superposed varieties or world language are evidently not inherent of diglossia but they are emulated in triglossia as well. As Johnson (1979) contends, the fact that “the areas of appropriateness and utility of their mother tongue are restricted arouses little resentment” (p.97). English is universally regarded as a prestigious and useful language. It is widely known that it is a major world language and in the particular case of the country under study, it is the official one.

English is in the curriculum at all levels of the educational system and it is used as the means of delivery after the first years of primary school. Equally, the second variety, Akan, one of the Ghanaian languages recognised as government-sponsored, is the medium of instruction during the first three years of the primary school to be shifted to the category of a subject after finishing this period. There exists clear definitions on what the uses of the different varieties in the repertoires are. These functional rules are of three types: a repertoire rule, situational rules, and metaphorical rules (Johnson, 1979).

Contrary to what happens with the official varieties and the world language, the indigenous variety (sometimes used as *lingua franca*) is normally discouraged in the schools and in the church likewise. It should be noted to this respect that, sometimes we are dealing with a language repertoire that has no orthography nor any form of any written literature.

In order to conclude this section, once again the attitudes of the speech community of the ethnical variety must be mentioned. The individuals who make use of their mother tongue have feelings of loyalty, of ethnic identity let alone of comfort when using it. However, the boundaries being well defined for long urge the speech community to be coherent and to resort to switching when is made necessary. In Johnson words:

A switch from English to any of the two vernacular varieties can convey intimacy, solidarity or levity. Switching to the local (lingua franca) variety can stress loyalty to hometown or ethnic group. A switch from the two vernacular varieties to English can stress education or affiliation to wider reference groups (1979, p. 97)

2.3. INSIGHT INTO MULTILINGUALISM

As Okal (2014) defines the term:

multilingualism is referred to as the ability of a speaker to express himself or herself in several languages with equal and native like proficiency. Multilingualism can also be regarded as the co-existence of several languages within a society. Any given country or society is generally considered as a multilingual one if its members or citizens are multilingual (p.223)

In general, within a multilingual society, the languages have a distinctive functional differentiation. This fact sometimes implies multiple ways of classification of languages, among others: mother tongue or native language which is the first language of a speaker, vernacular which is the variety spoken in a particular area or specific group of people but not generally an official, national which is frequently a government-sponsored language, official and the global or international languages which can, in the majority of the cases fall into the previous category. (Okal, 2014). Communication strategies related to cross linguistic situations, being some examples code mixing and code switching are likely to come into being when two languages

are in contact. If this is true of any language, it is even more pressing in the case of a multilingual society. Multilingualism practice entails not only linguistic consequences but also has a profound impact on the political and economic order of the society. Thereby, as previously mentioned, this situation gives rise to the appearance of minority and majority languages. Being the latter ones, in the long run, more powerful than the others.

From the perspective of the advantages, “multilingualism provides an insight into the understanding of different cultures and experiences hence a multilingual becomes multicultural in nature” (Okal, 2014, 227). As it happens, multilingualism helps in national unity, especially if it consists of learning both national languages, indigenous languages and even lingua franca. In this process, the individuals will automatically embrace the value of togetherness (Okal, 2014). Along these lines, additional benefits of multilingualism practice in education include the creation and appreciation of cultural awareness, the added value of academic education, coupled with the improvement of creativity and the adjustment in society and appreciation of local languages. Language must not only be considered from the point of view of being an established system with rules and functions, it has also added value since it is used to share identity, to establish negotiation as well as it is the means to achieve the goal of exercising authority (Okal, 2014)

As revealed by a survey conducted by Bokamba (2014), Africans residing in multilingual countries, which is the majority, whether living in isolated areas or urban ones, upon completion of primary education, will have a knowledge of three languages. This only comes to prove that in sociolinguistic terms, multilingualism is a common occurrence and that the choice of the variety the individuals use to convey their ideas is triggered by their necessity to daily communicate between individuals and groups. Given this environment in which speakers are embedded daily, becoming a multilingual person cannot be avoided. According to Bokamba (2014), finding an average African adult who encounters challenges when learning additional languages is something not very frequent. The only reason to explain it would be lack of exposure to the multiple languages already stable.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a gap to be bridged between the western and colonial notions of multilingualism and those perceived in the African countries. Wrongly enough, the former tend to draw on monolingualism as the basis of communication. Additionally, the all pervasive imported European languages keep their forefront position albeit governmental and community efforts to underpin ethnical varieties. As Banda, F. (2009) explains when citing Phillipson (1992, p.1), "The British Empire has given way to the empire of English". The present Ghanaian education models focus on one language as vehicle of instruction disregarding the other languages for this purpose. This is so much so that it is not surprising that a wide range of resources and initiatives evidencing damaging effects of the superposing of English onto the Ghanaian languages outnumber the projects devoted to enhance and propose tribal languages as the ones to be regarded as modern and not merely as traditional and heritage ones (Banda, 2009)

As mentioned above, an important concern related to the common practice of labelling certain languages as the official ones and others as the regional or the national or even any other diverse nomination of the like, i.e.: minority, majority, tribal or vernacular results in the imposing of a power and status hierarchy among the languages and among the speakers of these languages alike. It perpetuates a misconception present in African countries as to what the boundaries of the uses and/or the status of any variety really are. Furthermore, this classification of languages is not so standardized as it may be thought since it is tainted with political connotations defined in varied ways depending on the different countries of occurrence (Banda, 2009). However, not surprisingly, there is no imported language that does not enjoy the denomination of official.

The boundaries of the linguistic influence of the African languages have been clearly defined following the rules imposed by the colonial governments. These rules were, evidently, based on administrative interests of the former colonies. Over the years, African language policy planning has overlooked its possible development not only linguistically but socioeconomically. The colonial tradition of assigning to African languages the role of tradition and culture has been so engrained that nowadays

imposes a greater challenge (Banda, 2009). “Mother tongues or lingua francas were confined to informal domains of use and have been seen as handicaps rather than as vehicles for producing knowledge – for creating, encoding, sustaining, and ultimately transmitting indigenous knowledge, the cultural knowledge and patterns of behaviour of the society” (Vilhanova, 2018, p.252)

Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to clarify that in granting the official or national status to languages, Banda (2009) claims that the data suggest that taking into consideration the number of speakers of any particular language is not the only possible scenario when and that other aspects come into play. Therefore, language policies must consider additional scenarios such as: the consideration of languages spoken beyond political state borders and equally the consideration that ethnic, cultural and linguistic borders are, in reality, a social establishment. Needless to say, even if the speech communities of African languages seem to have reconciled with the situation, this has occasionally led to, according to Vilhanova (2018) to tribal agitation, political disturbances and escalating violence now and then, in multiple parts of Africa where the underlying political problems are rather ethno-linguistic to political ones.

Despite the previous statements containing some kernels of truth, one of the paramount achievements worth mentioning is that in accordance with Banda (2009) for one reason or another, very few African languages fall under the category of endangered. Therefore, there may be evidence that the speech communities that are attached to their tribal varieties but have been forced to use the imposed official national or regional languages, are not oblivious of their own variety and are not eager to abandon it. The lenient multilingualism that features the linguistic diversity of a great majority of African countries, one of the highest in the world, has hastened language policy as a vital issue in the post-colonial era. On starting to reflect on the notion of language policies, Vilhanova argues that “there have been various manifestations of willingness in imposing vernacular languages for the sake of national unity a development but that these have rarely been put into practice”. (2018, p.246)

In compliance with Vilhanova's ideas, it has been paradoxically realised that many African politicians, intellectuals, and some families would regard this ideology as a major impediment to national integration and the development of nation-states demanding too much of human and material resources. More significantly, Banda (2009) argues that the parental desire concerning the learning of languages is at odds with the notions defended by linguists. These latter ones advocate and insist on the benefits of using the African languages as medium of instruction (insisting in the early years of education) but families have other aspirational aims as of the initial stages of education. It seems that globalisation has led to the strengthening of the former colonial languages to the detriment of the African ones.

2.4. LANGUAGE POLICIES

After having had a glimpse into the notion of multilingualism, the present section examines without delay, the interconnected concept of language policies. Generally speaking, multilingualism being present in any given country, demands strongly organised language policies in order to pursue the attainment of a main goal, i.e., sociolinguistic development and integration of mother tongues. In line with these ideas and interests, language planning and language policies will be scrutinised as well as their appropriateness and their outcomes hitherto.

One major component of the notion of conscious and planned policymaking is that of being a recent discipline. Nonetheless, for many years language experts have intervened to organize and give orientation as to how to construct the proper policy for the multiple languages evidencing that their influence may be as old as the languages themselves. At the core of these policies is the communication patterns of a given speech community. As Lo Bianco (2010) explains, the main domains of study that instruct this newly created discipline are (i) applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, (ii) the individual and collective identity in terms of economic and national interests, (iii) the societal and individual heritage. A concept that must never be ignored is that the attitudes and linguistic repertoires are also at stake (Lüpke,

2010) and it is the labour of the sociolinguists, in this sense, to add contributions and to work cooperatively next to linguists.

An important concern related to the possible outcomes of language policies is that, surprisingly though it may seem, some of the failures are derived from language policies that encourage mother tongues or that support the replacement of imposed international varieties by minority languages (Lo Bianco, 2010). Among the reasons as to why this could be so, the main factor brought into play could be a misconception of what multilingualism entails which is, by no means, concentrating on monolingualism for the detriment of other languages, even being the imported ones.

These failures are true of any wrongly-planned policy but are even more pressing in the case of opposing forces of economic, technological, and political change working actively against the intentions of planners. In this sense, Lo Bianco (2010) proved that policy planners, the educational community in general and the language right activists in particular must concede that even the best-designed and most truly motivated language plans are likely to result unsuccessful on account of these predominant forces of unwillingness.

Parallel with opposing forces are beliefs of individuality regarding indigenous languages. Both misconceptions as to what multilingualism embraces, would prove extremely detrimental for a fruitful language policy. As such, Lo Bianco (2010) elucidates that even if languages have roots and origins that may be engrained in them, they are not particular nor invariable, attached to exclusive geopolitical and cultural boundaries or to points in time. The intimacy of relations between some languages and some places is one of the primary constituents and corner stones for a policy of multilingualism.

Regarding language policies, Lo Bianco (2010) introduces the concept of “worldmindedness”, stipulating that it is through these policies that intercultural awareness is gained, intercultural competence fostered and as a result, stimulation of

the former. Conforming to him, in order to maintain the diversity of language, cultural diversity must also be shared among regions, nations and great traditions of the world. In so doing, the principles advocated by detractors of multilingualism, i.e., ideas of multilingualism being the cause of inability to communicate and thus, being the cause for social disruption and conflict, would be dismantled (Lo Bianco, 2010). However, this scenario is not always as straightforward as it seems. Unfortunately, and as Lo Bianco (2010) points out, language policies have been considered a political procedure that reflects upon power and distribution of resources and that, therefore confirms that there are manifold economic interests underlying.

Provided the resources then, are accurately distributed, language policies could be easily implemented. Thereby, it is the duty of language experts to develop writing systems for those indigenous languages which do not possess it and to develop an orthographic system and to develop terminology and expressions likewise. And yet, considering this is an ongoing endeavour, it does not automatically confer any ethnic language the status of official. Besides these two circumstances, we encounter cases in which as Lo Bianco (2010) correctly notes, the regular and frequent use of language from the side of the speakers could easily be considered as the best basis for policy making and not so much by texts, laws and regulations to be fulfilled.

It follows from the discussion above, then, that the “worldmindedness” should be regarded as essential in language education because it is from there that the path to integrate multilingualism must start. On the basis of any successful investment in cultural diversity are two notions to be found. On the one hand, language learning to develop contact and communication globally. On the other, promoting the contemporaries to foster language retention and maintenance side by side with cultural systems (Lo Bianco, 2010).

Albeit the concept of prestige derived from Ferguson’s theory on diglossia seemed to be innate to majority languages, Lo Bianco was convinced that it was not necessarily intrinsic of the former. He was convinced that both esteem and prestige refer to cultural heritage, refer to both verbal and nonverbal expressions and resources that a

user of any variety is able to convey to any given audience (Lo Bianco, 2010) regardless further language classification. In this sense, Lüpke (2010) would agree that the “linguistic profile of a speech community is disregarded” (p.2)

In consonance with the arguments commonly raised against languages policies, it is important to note that not all communities are favourable for the maintenance and continued use of ethnic languages. As elucidated by Lo Bianco (2010), there have been people proficient in multiple languages who have turned a blind eye to cultural difference or to specific cultural beliefs. This could partially be due to the assumptions based on the idea of being a cost-effective, and administratively complex endeavour. In the face of the arduous task of implementing such policies beneficial for vernacular languages, the general public ends up by preferring to choose an international language in detriment of a minority one because, as Lo Bianco (2010) explained, the mother tongues are mentally connected to the interests of older generations by younger ones. These younger people prefer and urge themselves to assimilate into the vast modern society of which they are part and look upon.

On the heels of previous assumptions, Lüpke (2010) evidences that in keeping with bilingual education whose main goal is to encourage national and/or regional languages side by side with the European official ones (let alone ethnic varieties), in truth, families, teachers and education planners alike see the mastery of the international imported language a priority whether this is acquired through planned additive bilingual planning (that is, consolidation of the national language first) or through monolingual education from the early years. In following this view, however, there are some detractors that have raised voices against some of the children’s outcomes in the field of academic life. According to them, children who can count on the previous knowledge of a first native language and who learn a second language as being their main one at school, envisage issues regarding their communications skills.

There is another scenario that is taking place more often than not which is directly related to the children's thinking skills. It may seem possible that since the child's low-order thinking skills may have been developed in their first language, then their higher-order thinking skills may have been learned through second language learning, then a mismatch takes place. This poses a challenge and even a threat, overtime, on the first language which could unfortunately lead to replacement of it by the second language (Lo Bianco, 2010)

It is of utmost importance to move all the prevailing forces in the direction of putting forward credible language policies. An instance of consciously planned policies should go beyond sub-national, intra-national and extra-national levels, encompassing languages of all kinds either being those the vernacular ones which are linked to communicative situations of intimacy, and which need to be boosted to promote mobility within the rural populations or being those the European languages that offer international exchange (Lo Bianco, 2010).

Another key aspect for succeeding in designing language planning is to resort to strategies that take into consideration language interests (Lo Bianco, 2010) thus, engaging scholars specialised in teaching international languages to perform daily side by side with individuals immersed in the spectrum of minority language interest. Evidencing ultimately that far-reaching language policies can be anything but beneficial in solving communication issues of all sorts (Lo Bianco, 2010). His revealing purposes for any language planning read:

The following six main purposes of language planning involve actions that determine the status of languages, aspects of their corpus, aspects of learning and acquisition, the domains of usage, the esteem or prestige attached to language and the discourse and attitudes that surround given languages or varieties, or issues such as multilingualism. (Lo Bianco, 2010, p.49)

As he would observe: “language policy is a conversation; a conversation about the communicative abilities, rights and opportunities of a society” (Lo Bianco, 2010, p. 62)

2.5. GLOBALIZATION AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES

In order to ascertain the extent to which these positive views on language policies expand, it deems necessary to have a glimpse on the concerns about this whole matter from the side of world organisations. It is worth mentioning that UNESCO alongside a range of NGOs manifest an ongoing unease about the influence of our globalised and changing modern society over the world’s languages (Lo Bianco, 2010). It has been suggested that the lifestyles of our era will bring about a deviation from vernacular languages towards national ones and eventually international varieties. And yet the benefits and new technologies that are available and can be enjoyed by rural and isolated communities, the Internet being the maximum example, must always be regarded as resources and instruments to resort to when it comes to support multilingualism (Lo Bianco, 2010).

To this respect, it appears that the new technologies would play a vital role in the making of a written structure for those languages that are restricted to oral domains, in accordance with Vold Alexander’s study cited by Lüpke (2010). There is evidence that, in some instances, these trends are contradictory while others are unclear. One thing is seemingly true and is that the effects of globalisation raise feelings of either attraction and response to cultural forces coming from outside influence, thus triggering localism and regionalism as a reaction to a tendency of global contacts (Lo Bianco, 2010). In this sense, striking the balance seems necessary for the benefit of all. As Roy-Campbell announced in the 36th Annual Conference on African Linguistics:

With the development and expansion of the internet, there has been increased access to African languages. On the World Wide Web there are over 3000 websites/Webpages that address some aspect of African languages, describe programs offered, provide resources and other information in and on African languages, including an Ethnologue of African languages, which provides information on all the languages of the various African countries. (Roy-Campbell, 2006, p.2)

As previously mentioned, one of the positive points about globalization is that of the expansion of African cultures to the rest of the globe. Furthermore, there is another dimension to spreading culture, one that should be seldom addressed and is to strengthen the experiences in developing and using African languages in various African countries, and to share how others envisage specific issues in their own countries within the same continent (Roy-Campbell, 2006). However, the concern here is not merely appreciate the benefits.

Of vital significance is the detrimental effect that globalization has had on the continent. Even if African languages are spoken widely and outnumber the European languages, “their respectability as conveyors of important, high status knowledge is in question”. (Roy-Campbell, 2006, p.2). By the same token, the wealth of ethnical wisdom is being sealed away and progressively being forgotten as the customary users vanish (Roy-Campbell, 2006).

It follows from the discussion above that one of the adverse results of the disuse of African languages in education and that is a consequence of our globalized world is that the African continent is perceived as a “receiver” of knowledge, know-how and technology from developed countries and is not considered as a “contributor” of anything valuable to the global heritage. (Roy-Campbell, 2006)

3. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

3.1. DIGLOSSIA ANALYSIS.

Having presented Ferguson’s concept of diglossia (and triglossia) and its redefinition by Fishman in the theoretical framework, the connections found in Ghana’s present daily life derived from the reading of the pertinent literature will be established. It may seem that, in fact, there exists a societal allocation of functions to different languages or varieties. This is most notable in specific domains which can be observed in the table below. This summarizing chart by Fishman some decades ago, is not far from the reality perceived in the country. The main domains that have been mentioned throughout this dissertation are those related to the use of the varieties in conversation with family or friends, sermons in church, speech in Parliament and primordially that of education (university lecture in the chart).

Table 1.

DOMAINS	H variety (high)	L variety (low)
Sermon in church or mosque	X	
Instruction to servants, waiters, workmen, clerks		X
Personal letter		X
Speech in parliament, political speech	X	
University lecture	X	
Conversation with family, friends, colleagues		X
News broadcast	X	
Radio “soap opera”		X
Poetry	X	
Folk literature		X

Source: Adapted from Ferguson 1959: 329, cited in Mesthrie et al. 2009: 39

On reading the selection of the authors (viz. reference section) pertinent to this concept, English is described as not being the sole language of use at church. Rather, standard Arabic could also be encountered, however none of the vernacular languages are used for official sermons and/or ceremonies. As for the domain of

parliament speech, the following paradox is explained; when the Minister of Education discusses language policies, he always uses the official language, i.e., English. Although it is allowed to use Ghanaian varieties, there is a condition to it. This is that the facilities must be equipped with the necessary translating devices in order for all the members of the audience to understand the speech.

if Order 47 of the Standing Orders of Parliament, allows for a member to “exercise the option to address the house in either Akan or Nzema, Ga, Ewe, Hausa, Dagbani, Dagaare or in any other local language provided facilities exist in the House for its interpretation”. Even though these standing orders have been in place since the inception of the 4th Republic in 1993, it has not been practicalized as facilities and provisions for interpretation have never been provided.

Regarding additional considerations of the theoretical concept of diglossia, the conclusions reached are that in the case of Ghana it is, indeed, a stable situation. This is so much so that it could be demonstrated that the first diglossic instances occurred upon arrival of the Europeans. It is worth mentioning that in the years where the missionary priests arrived, in the majority of the cases, they were clear that every effort should be made to learn the people’s vernacular languages. This had a double intention, mere indoctrination in religion on the one hand and respect for their cultures and traditions to avoid rebellion on the other hand. As it has been discerned, multilingual African countries are prone to witness diglossic and even triglossic occurrences.

3.2. TRIGLOSSIA ANALYSIS

As confirmed by Babito (2005), the multilingual situation in the country of Ghana is seemingly a triglossic one with a minimum number of three languages being spoken in a particular speech community. These languages have distinctive and compartmentalized functions. Nonetheless, the peculiar situation of Ghana is that with such a myriad of language varieties, it is a tough task to get the full image from the onset. The literature speaks about national languages, regional or government-

sponsored, indigenous, ethnical, mother-tongues or vernacular and then, obviously, the European, international, imported or “official” to name a few names.

The evidence is inconclusive as to which language would be *lingua franca*: English? Or Akan? The labelling of the languages is more than confusing. If anything, the examples of triglossia are apparent. “A Ghanaian language in this case is the language of the locality which includes one of the following: Akan (Fante and Twi), Nzema, Ga, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, Gonja, Kasem, Dagbani, and Dagaare”. (Owu-Ewi, 2016, p.77).

Let us imagine that an individual is learning at school one of the eleven “government-sponsored” languages derived from the Akan ethnical group. He/she will follow this literacy learning at early years of school. Then, when being in primary and later in secondary, this individual will acquire English in this academic setting. Likewise, the individual will probably have the opportunity to have sporadic contacts with the international language on TV or at church. Nonetheless, this individual speaks at home a different variety because, coincidentally, his/her family belong to a different tribe from Akan, e.g.: Nkami. Nkami has not a written form but is a vigorous language, spoken by Ghanaians of all ages whose situation is not endangered. The example is conclusive and self-explanatory.

3.3. MULTILINGUALISMS ANALYSIS

As commented in the corresponding section, Okal (2014) regarded the term in high esteem since being a multilingual society is synonymous with conveying pieces of information, expressing attitudes and feelings, as well as exerting authority and identity markers within a speech community. These statements go beyond the societal level as:

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2010) reported that the loss of children's home language might result in the disruption of family communication patterns. In addition, young children lacking English language vocabulary can lose interest in education at a critical point of their life. (Taylor, 2016, p. 7)

As can be noted, at the individual level, multilingualism is a tool that should never be manipulated. Neither should any variety be regarded as the only one nor regulated as forbidden. The fact remains that, Ghana has enjoyed tradition in, at least, struggling to maintain vernacular languages invigorated. African countries under the French dominion were not that lucky. According to statistical data from UNESCO, 30% of the global languages, that is around 2000 varieties, are spoken in the African continent. Performing a selection out of the multiple optional varieties that exist is a contentious subject. Although not being of this view, Roy-Campbell (2016) echoes voices claiming that the number of languages is so high that deciding on what is the most appropriate to be labelled as "national language" and covers the functions thereby required, could entail not only a contentious debate but also tensions among the multiple tribes left aside.

Okal (2014) was clear in his mind that, in theory, multilingualism serves the purpose of national unity. Unquestionably, UNESCO has been pulling its weight in the task of positioning multilingualism and language rights as the core elements that enrich cultural heritage (Lo Bianco, 2010). Nevertheless, as mentioned in the theoretical section of multilingualism, many African politicians and intellectuals would regard this ideology as a major drawback to national integration. In practice, the only major impediment tangible in most Ghanaian urban and peri-urban classroom settings is that due to language diversity, teachers in these classrooms are not polyglots and are not able to use more than one language as a medium of instruction. "Some teachers are able to code-switch and code-mix effectively but in such instances pupils who are not proficient in the language(s) used for to code-switch and code-mix are usually at a disadvantage". (Klu et Ansre, 2018, 600). This illustration does not account for any kind of hindrance to national unification.

A final self-realisation in the realms of multilingualism has been, the divergent vision towards multilingualism given by European settlers and Africans. Apparently, except for the missionaries, the rest of the forces present in the country insisted in the predominance of English over the other varieties. As will be discussed in the language-policy analysis, the fluctuations in the policies in Ghana in terms of English-only policies being implemented now and then, only come to confirm that multiculturalism which is dependent upon multilingualism is completely dismissed for the sake of exclusively one language.

Hobsbawn, as cited in Husen et al. (2012) asserts that multiculturalism is utterly linked to multilingualism and consequently is dependent on language. Thus, the idea of selecting a particular language to be awarded the category of national is merely a political decision and not a cultural one. This could be seen as a devil in disguise for monolingualism. Again, Hobsbawn, as cited in Husen et al. (2012) is of the idea that elevating one sole language or culture knowledge to the status of uniqueness is detrimental to forge unity of nations and moreover looks like anything but a collective conscientious indoctrination. Drawing from his words, a mutual respect for all sorts of cultures co-existing in the area no matter the origin, is mandatory.

3.4. LANGUAGE POLICY ANALYSIS.

Notwithstanding the effort and time devoted to the debate of language-on-policy, Ghana, “like most African countries is still grappling with the choice of a particular medium of instruction” (Klu et Ansre, 2018, p. 596). This controversial topic which is particularly of interest at the lower basic levels, precedes the Castle Schools and Missionary Era (Owu-Ewi, 2016). After many ups and downs in policy changes (as will be seen in Table 2), the law promulgated in May, 2002: “English language should be used as the medium of instruction from primary class one onwards received criticisms from different people in academia, politics and education and some other citizens that it was reverted” (Klu et Ansre, 2018, 598). This mirrors a clear lack of political will on the part of the government.

Table 2: A diagrammatic representation of the policy from the pre-colonial era to the present

PERIOD	1 st YEAR	2 nd YEAR	3 rd YEAR	4 th YEAR
1529-1925 a. Castle Schools Era	-	-	-	-
1529-1925 b. Missionary Era	+	+	+	-
1925-1951	+	+	+	-
1951-1955	+	-	-	-
1956-1966	-	-	-	-
1967-1969	+	-	-	-
1970-1973	+	+	+	+
1974-2002 (Sept)	+	+	+	-
Present	-	-	-	-

Key: += A Ghanaian language was used as the medium of instruction

-= A Ghanaian language not used.

Source: Owu-Ewie, C. (2006, April). The language policy of education in Ghana: A critical look at the English-only language policy of education.

Behind the changes is the Ministry of Education and their manifold ideas as to why these can be justified (viz. Appendix: Table 3 with a summary of reasons). As mentioned above in the corresponding section in the theoretical framework, proper planning in the design of the policy could make up for problems raised such as the multilingualism that features the country and that is pervasive to the schools (Owu-Ewi, 2016). To this respect, Klu et Ansre (2018) are categorically blunt asserting that:

When the linguistic composition of the classrooms are not uniform then using the pupil's first language or mother-tongue as medium of instruction is not practicable. Thus, a stable language-in-education policy is only feasible if appropriate measures are taken to address language diversity in the lower primary classrooms (p. 597)

The unsuccessful implementation on the grounds of inadequate preparation, uncooperative attitudes and insufficient supervision likewise, have resulted in a continued breach over the children rights as concerns linguistic matters and have led to an unconstitutional dismissal of the equality of educational opportunities as embraced in our Constitution.

Among the factors accountable for the major gaps between the intentions of the language-in-policy and the realities for the implementation as the government assert is the lack of trained teachers. Not surprisingly, the absence of highly qualified teachers encompasses two different schemes. On the one hand, there is a need of teachers trained enough to be able to deliver quality lessons in English as a foreign language and with sufficient pedagogical and didactic methods that show academic proficiency to serve the purpose of maximum scores. On the other hand, there also exists a lack of Ghanaian language teachers that have followed the training of specific content subjects in order to teach them in one of the languages government-sponsored (Owu-Ewie, 2006).

Nevertheless, it is particularly striking and worth noting that for many years, the teacher training colleges have been using English as medium of instruction and not Ghanaian languages (Klu et Ansre, 2018). There seems to be an erroneous assumption that “once a teacher is proficient in English or Ghanaian languages, that teacher could effectively teach using either or both of these media without any difficulty”. (Klu and Ansre, 2018, 600). Nothing could be further from reality.

Teachers themselves could be part of the problem but they, in turn, struggle in the face of adjusting to the demanding challenges of their daily deliveries in multiple fashions. To illustrate this notion, teachers see themselves having to modify their tone of voice, their speed, their articulating of words and many other techniques applied to decode meanings (Taylor, 2016). Imagine a class of fifty learners with only two English textbooks. How is it possible to enhance reading skills and proficiency in English when there are no textbooks?

The problem of low academic results in the subject of English language has been constantly attributed to possible interferences of L1 while, in truth, this eventuality is nothing more than an extra benefit for cognition. Academic performance must be scientifically researched (Owu-Ewi, 2016). According to Baker (2001) as cited in Owu-Ewi, 2016, the issue of poor results encompasses multiple factors that are directly related to each other to bring about an outcome. Furthermore, Baker suggests that the socioeconomic situation of the community plays a crucial role in understanding the correlation between the factors at play. He would then admit that underachievement must be investigated in the Ghanaian case.

As Hakuta (1990) points out, (cited in Taylor, 2016), achieving a successful second language acquisition may stem from proficiency in the mother tongue. Understanding by proficiency it is meant that the appropriate level of literacy be in accordance with age. Denying a Ghanaian child the right to use their languages was considered a “crime” and was coined accordingly “linguistic genocide” in education (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008). Neither is using English the ultimate alternative. Using it from the outset may elicit an unfair educational system that would lessen the native language of the child (Taylor, 2016). Governmental language policy abandoned the national languages in Ghana as means of instruction over the time, on the grounds of low proficiency in reading. But as Owu-Ewi (2016) remarks, low quality in performance from the side of the students is not entirely the fault of using Ghanaian languages as the medium to conduct the classes. Using this idea as scientific evidence to support the ruling out of these languages from the educational system is a deplorable and insensitive solution to this subject matter.

In keeping with Owu-Ewi’s concerns about putting the blame of students’ underachievement on the above-mentioned setting, the type of bilingual education model practiced called for revision. “Inconsistency in the transition period from mother-tongue medium of instruction to English medium of instruction only reveals another failing fact of government’s language-in-education policy” (Klu et Ansre, 2018, p. 600).

The type of bilingualism performed in the country before the change in the policy was called “the early-exit transition model”, the learners were catapulted to the learning of a foreign L2 before they were even efficient in their own L1, thus having difficulties in practising transfers from the workings of their L1 into their L2. As a result, they only achieved low levels in both languages. In Baker’s words low levels of competency in both native and second language learning generates adverse effects on the cognitive sphere of the learner (Baker 2001). A change to “the late-exit bilingual model” was proved vital. In so doing, the learners were able to become “balanced bilinguals”.

On developing the latter bilingual model, then again, a course of action needed to be taken in terms of: (i) teacher training, (ii) monitoring of the programmes, (iii) supplying the necessary educational materials, (iv) receiving family and community involvement in the whole process, and (v) elaborating meaningful language and educational policies (Owu-Ewi, 2016). Additionally to these barriers having to be franchised, there is the lack of monitoring and evaluation of the policy. Never has the government designed any similar project in the light of the frequent changes envisaged, as Klu et Ansre remarked: “there was hardly any consideration for monitoring and evaluation of a policy before another one is introduced” (2018, p. 598)

3.5. GLOBALIZATION ANALYSIS.

Considering the number of languages that have been spoken over the centuries in the African continent, in hindsight, it is undeniable to wonder why if Africans were able to express complex concepts in the era before the European settlers arrived, why would they not be so capable to contribute to technology, innovation, science and research nowadays? It is evident that the lexis develops over the years and that the complexity of the technical vocabulary would not pose any challenge to any language.

On to different matters, Roy-Campbell (2006) shows the following ideas that come as a surprise given the entity which stands for them:

Kahombo Mateene (1980) a past director of the former OAU Bureau of African languages maintained that poverty and underdevelopment of these languages is quite voluntary, they are poor because Africans do not want to enrich them by not insisting upon their use in certain fields, such as education, translation, factors of language enrichment and development. Translation involves cultural mediation which is essential in the struggle for mutual understanding and peace between nations and linguistic communities. (p.5)

Another revealing fact is that as Roy-Campbell (2006) clearly notes, there is a controversial debate over the language to be the vehicular one at schools. It is argued that the consequences of it being the mother tongue would be a disastrous isolation into linguistic enclaves and he contends that this fabrication is easily deployed by argumentation of what is taking place in other countries in which mother tongues are being used in the education realms and are not isolated whatsoever. He sustains that it is the harmonization between indigenous common heritage and global scientific knowledge that can endure and make possible the adaptation to ever-changing natural and socio-economic scenarios (Roy-Campbell, 2006)

4. CONCLUSION

By and large, I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity that, choosing this topic for the present dissertation, I have been given. Delving into the matter has provided me not only with a fervent desire to learn more about the topic but also to realise that things have really changed since the time I set foot in Ghana. The conundrums around my mind have been deciphered for better or for worse.

Let me analyse my initial questions step by step:

On answering the question concerning the Ghanaian government investing in the maintenance of a specific language and promoting it/them at school while disregarding others and the question addressing any underlying economic interest,

the answer has been clarified. The government cannot sustain the expenses of all primary, secondary and tertiary school in the country, thus, international funding is provided. In this sense, the external forces put pressure on the statistics.

The number of students enrolled in either rural and urban areas alongside with the academic results must be frequently asked questions in order to evaluate the management, efficiency and efficacy of the money donated. It is not surprising then that issues on the bilingual model to follow or the lack of trained teachers of vernacular languages or the lack of publishing materials in these latter languages, are underpinned as troublesome. Yet, the eleven Ghanaian government-sponsored varieties seem to enjoy this stable “category” and, at this juncture, I should say, that they could consider themselves lucky in view of worse times to come.

On the horizon of this first consideration would be the response to the question of whether English is treated as the sole language of prestige and/or ethnical languages are considered of a lower status. It is a fact that the cultural values that permit the unity and understanding of the peoples of, not only Ghana but surrounding nations and the world altogether, seem not to be considered connected to maintenance of indigenous languages. Evidently, linguists, sociolinguists and some members of the speech community are clear in their minds, but their voices are not heard strongly enough. It is generally stated that speaking these native languages at home can have a positive effect on children’s educational performance when their cultural heritage is not disregarded. However, as Taylor (2016) pointed out, a catastrophic consequence of the erroneous assumptions made over the use of mother tongues in the classrooms and, being responsible for the lack of proficiency in the reading skills, has been that progressively fewer educated Africans have consecrated their interests to studying their indigenous languages in school

Concerning other questions such as the detrimental effect that globalisation could instil over African languages, I would note that Vilhanova (2018) was categorical stating that it is impossible to eradicate illiteracy without empowerment of the use of African languages and without “using the forms of knowledge built on African culture

and delivered in African languages” (p. 254). An additional consideration would be that of multilingualism in Ghana and thereupon in Africa. Being gifted with manifold languages, Africans themselves should be accountable for this heritage.

Schmied (1991); Myers-Scotton (1993) as cited in Banda, described the African continent by saying that it is gifted with bilingualism and quite often multilingualism as the norm, the usual, the expected. Second languages are acquired naturalistically. The additive bilingualism model normally implies that during the early years of education, children are provided a solid base of their mother tongue, frequently accounting for up to seven years of education before a switch to the international language, used as means of instruction, can be carried out.

In a final analysis, I would tackle the question of parent’s voices and the views and attitudes of the ordinary citizen. It appears as if there would be two distinctive ideological groups of parents. On one side those who are not oblivious of their cultural values, whose pride in belonging to an ethnical group is regarded as an honour and who would make every effort to protect their languages and to foster what is known as “linguistic reproduction”. On the other hand, there are new voices raised in favour of international languages coming up in education even in detriment of the Ghanaian ones. These two big groups co-exist in the same community. This latter group of parents are of the idea that children who can speak English are more confident and this promotes interactions with other people from other language backgrounds. They are willing that their children be taught in English as soon as they start schooling.

It would be my desire to round this paper off by easily concluding that the Ghanaian government is at stake and it is up to them and only to them to transform the multilingualism in the country a “blessing” instead of a “curse”. However, there are diverse forces intervening those of which play as crucial a role as the governments. These forces being tribes, religious institutions, families, teachers, students, private enterprises, and international organizations (viz. table 4). Lo Bianco summarizes the idea:

To language policy undertaken through four characteristic modes of participation: public texts (such as laws, regulations and planning); public discourse (statements, discussion and public attitudes); and performative action (that is, role model behaviour, what powerful and significant individuals, institutions and entities actually do in practice, which provides models for linguistic and cultural behaviour) and deliberative process (facilitated discussion of policy problems, problem clarification, strategic planning and implementation). Lo Bianco (2010, p. 47)

Table 4: Fields jointly influencing the practice of cultural reproduction in Ghana.

Main Research Field: (Micro Level)	1. Education in Ghana	Actors: teachers, students, schools
Three overlapping fields:	2. Politics in Ghana (Macro level)	Actors include the Ghanaian Government, Ministry of Education (MoE), and subvented agencies, Private Enterprises in Education
	3. Indigenous community culture (Micro Level)	Actors: tribes, families, religious institutions, or groups
	4. International Development (Macro level)	Actors include multilateral and international organizations influencing Ghanaian education such as the UN, UNESCO, USAID, World Bank, DPG, DFID

Source: Husen et al. (2012, p.22)

On the flip side of the coin and as a final illustration of the efforts made notwithstanding (viz. government’s present plans in table 5).

The NALAP was introduced by the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, with USAID’s assistance. It was established in June 2006. The aim is to improve pupils’ ability to read and write in the early grades (KG to P3) using a bilingual Ghanaian and English languages approach. The national implementation of the program began during the 2009/2010 school year and includes the production and dissemination of teacher guides and instructional materials; training for national and district education staff, and workshops for all primary head teachers and lower grade teachers; and a public awareness and publicity campaign.

Table 5. Government's present plans

The Education Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (ESMTDP) 2018–2021 is informed by the National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (NMTDPF) and the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018–2030. The ESMTDP seeks to harmonise new government policies/priorities and other critical issues within the sector that have emerged out of research and studies carried out by the Ministry of Education (MOE), its agencies, and various stakeholders.

Source: MOE (2018) Education Sector Analysis 2018. MOE, Accra, Ghana.

5. PROSPECTIVE

Drawing from sources that have been examined in the literature, I suggest the following ideas which, even if they were put forward time ago, they still have a long way to go in order to achieve final and conclusive outcomes. In this sense the prospective course of action to take could be as follows:

Roy-Campbell (2006) suggested the designing of a standard computer keyboard in which the symbols of the different African varieties could be represented. As an advocate of the involvement of African languages in the scientific world for the sake of progress, the creation of glossaries of scientific and technical terms may contribute to the world and, in turn, may contribute to the development of some specialties.

As (Roy-Campbell, 2006) explained, some professionals of the sphere of science, agriculture, food industry all over the globe show interest in these fields in African countries. These experts lose their bearings when it comes to identifying traditional practices therefore, they should learn more about the indigenous practices in local communities. By doing so, they will be able to better adapt global knowledge to local conditions and thus to design activities that provide effective solutions to the needs of their society.

Lüpke (2010) contended that all the potential supplied by new technologies should be made profitable for the benefit of African languages. If this fast-changing field of

expertise is to take into consideration the research made in the field of multilingualism, then, language experts need to get involved with software developers so as to define potential challenges (character encoding issues etc) and keep moving forward in serving the needs of the speakers of the African communities.

As Taylor (2016) claimed, the cultural component must never be overlooked when teaching in multilingual societies. The lessons must be connected to the learners' cultural background so that intergenerational knowledge is not disregarded. Were these environmental circumstances not to occur, a damage to individual and societal esteem, and children's potential nonmastery of their home language or English may develop. Culture is and has always been a cornerstone in education.

Additionally, as Johnson et al. (1994) commented regarding recent studies of CLIL implemented in some African countries, side by side with the cultural aspect there is cooperative learning and its five essential elements: positive interdependence, individual accountability, interpersonal and small group skills, face-to-face interaction, and group processing. All of this compendium would benefit African schools for good.

“Other suggestions included a future consideration to make Ghanaian language one of the subject requirements for the national middle school leaving certificate examination”. (Klu et Ansre, 2018, p. 596)

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7. APPENDIX

Table 3. Summary of reasons given to change language policy (source: *The Statesman*, Thursday July 16, 2002):

1. The previous policy of using a Ghanaian language as medium of instruction in the lower primary level was abused, especially in rural schools. Teachers never spoke English in class even in primary six.
2. Students are unable to speak and write 'good' English sentences even by the time they complete the Senior Secondary School (High School).
3. The multilingual situation in the country especially in urban schools has made instruction in a Ghanaian language very difficult. The source added that a study conducted by the Ministry of Education showed that 50 to 60 percent of children in each class in the urban area speak a different language. "It is therefore problematic if we insist that all the children be instructed in Ga, Twi, or Dagbani depending on whether it is Accra, Kumasi or Tamale".
4. There is a lack of materials in the Ghanaian languages to be used in teaching. The minister of Education declared that "Only five, out of the languages that are spoken by our major ethnic groups, have material developed on them. Certainly, we cannot impose these five languages on the entire nation and people of other ethnic origins".
5. There is a lack of Ghanaian language teachers specifically trained to teach content subjects in the Ghanaian language. The minister added "merely being able to speak a Ghanaian language does not mean one can teach in it".
6. There is no standard written form of the Ghanaian languages. He says, "For nearly all the languages that we have, there is hardly any standard written form".
7. The minister in order to support the claim for the use of English as the medium of instruction from primary one cited an experiment by Rockwell (1989) and indicated that children transfer from L2 to L1 better.
8. The minister pointed out that English is the lingua franca of the state and that all effort must be put in to ensure that children acquire the right level of competence in both the spoken and written forms of the language.