Language Sciences 35 (2013) 87–96

Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

Language Sciences

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/langsci

An integrationist perspective on colonial linguistics

Sinfree B. Makoni *

Department of Applied Linguistics & Program in African Studies, Pennsylvania State University, College of the Liberal Arts, State College, PA 16801, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 19 March 2012
Received in revised form 28 May 2012
Accepted 11 June 2012
Available online 16 October 2012

Keywords:
Integrationist
Colonialism
Indigeneity
Invention
'Fixing' languages

ABSTRACT

In this article, I explore the relevance of integrationism as a prism through which one can examine the construction of languages within colonial linguistics (CLs). I examine the complex legacy that CL has left and that is still apparent in language labels, practices, and ideologies. In addressing the construction of languages within CL, I argue that terms such as *indigenous languages* misrepresent the time-and locale-specific nature of linguistic communication. In a real sense, indigenous languages are a product of prolonged interaction between colonialists and colonized Africans. The emergence of languages as products of colonial encounters radically changes pre-existing language practices and beliefs about the nature of language and communication. However, I also note that some strands of CL are in consonant with integrational positions. Yet the relationship between integrationism and CL is complicated: On the one hand, CL analyzes the making and remaking of languages within specific political and historical politics, unlike integrationism wherein the historical specificity and locale of the contexts where creativity is constructed are insignificant. On the other hand, the centrality of the role of lay person-oriented linguistics in integrationism, as an alternative to professional linguists, can be aligned with colonial and postcolonial linguistics, which seeks to replace colonialism and African elites with more lay-oriented participation in civil society.

© 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Prolegomena

Notwithstanding the growing body of literature on the study of various aspects of language using integrationist perspectives, there is as yet no integrationist investigation that has focused on colonial linguistics (CL from henceforth) in an African context. Although past studies have explored political dimensions of integrational scholarship, none has developed a CL in Africa from an integrationist perspective. The aim of this article is to contribute to the growing literature on integrationist linguistics by looking critically at colonial perspectives in African linguistics and to a historical and integrationist perspective of the study of African languages. The article starts from the premise that language myth is one of the central concepts within Harris' (1987, 1989, 2006, 2009) work on integrationism. Drawing insight from the concept of 'language myth' as used in integrationism, it appears that the dominant modes of framing languages as structures and indigenous African languages as natural are products of Western philosophy that subscribe to the idea of 'language myth.'

CL, which is defined as the study of the construction of languages within a universalizing/totalizing colonial framework, has left a very complex legacy in language scholarship in Africa. Part of the complexity lies in its culture-centrism, which Grace (2002) neatly captured. According to Grace, *culture-centrism* is

the assumption (whether conscious or not) that characteristics of one's own culture are in fact characteristics of human nature. It is the assumption that what is done within this culture is natural, whereas what others do differently requires a cultural

* Tel.: +1 8148632431.
E-mail address: sbm12@psu.edu

0388-0001/$ - see front matter © 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2012.06.001

explanation... Linguistic theory has become culture-centric to a disturbing degree. It has come to view human language as a whole from the perspective of a particular category of speaker—those who are most adept in composing and analyzing autonomous texts. And this of, course, is a category of which linguists are representatives.

While a relatively large body of colonial studies literature exists in disciplines closely related to linguistics (e.g., literary theory, history, and cultural studies), writing about CL is relatively new, perhaps because of a philosophical orientation towards language scholarship that idealizes language and conceptualizes it as 'discrete, rule-governed systems... with an emphasis on... classification and the resolution of categorical ambiguity' (Bolton and Hutton, 2000, p. 1). Thus, my primary objective is to analyze CL through the prism of integrationism in order to contribute to the development of a political approach to integrationism. Together with other critical approaches to language, a political orientation that underpins CL challenges the 'language 'myth' (Harris, 2006; Makoni, 2011). At face value, a juxtaposition of CL and integrationism may appear counter-intuitive because integrationism is apolitical as a project, while CL is a highly political enterprise. In order to analyze CL through an integrationistic prism and thereby develop a politicized perspective, I investigate a very specific orientation toward colonialism. A local, bottom-up perspective best captures the ambivalent, ambiguous impact of colonialism on African cultural formations, with language and ethnicity being the most salient. A local perspective also enables me to capture the 'idiosyncrasies' in the workings of colonial agents, the complexity of agency, the 'linguistic responsibility' and distinctions between languages (Harris, 1987:171), especially indigenous and colonial languages.

2. Introduction

Interest in 19th century African linguistics is based on an attempt to understand the nature of contemporary epistemology and the genealogy of African languages. Although interest in the nature of CL and epistemologies of African languages has increased over the years (Errington, 2008; Gilmour, 2006; Makoni, 2011) none (that I am aware of) has examined such epistemologies or the nature of CL of African languages from an integrationist perspective. As a result, this paper begins an academic conversation and argues that an integrationist study of CL is needed. The article explores the relevance of integrationism to CL in an attempt to contribute to the development of a political dimension to integrationism, which includes investigating the impact of colonial categories on contemporary sociolinguistics. In an attempt to explore the applicability of integrationism to CL, I analyze the epistemology of African languages (and, indeed, the construct of language itself and the notion of a linguistic speaker) by investigating the constraints and space colonialism created for reflection on languages through a critique of the micro-genesis of African languages and the manner in which these languages have been conceptualized. Through the lens of integrationism, I address the following specific questions:

(i) What are the politics and epistemologies of African languages, and what is their relevance to integrationism?
(ii) What different genres are used in the representation of African languages in colonialism, and what is the potential significance of integrationism?

3. Summary of key principles of integrationism relevant to European colonial linguistics

Integrationism was introduced by Harris (1987, 1989, 2006), who identified its three parameters: (i) biomechanical, (ii) macrosocial, and (iii) circumstantial. Biomechanical relates to both mental as well as physical abilities of individual participants. Macrosocial refers to well-established practices in the community or some group within the community. Circumstantial relates to the conditions that arise in specific communication situations. In general terms, integrationism is critical of (i) 'orthodox linguistics' which Harris (2006) refers to as segregationist, (ii) the autonomy of language, (iii) homogeneous communities, (iv) a sender–receiver model, and (vi) professional linguists' exclusive monopoly of knowledge about language. Harris advocates a lay person's expertise instead of that of professional linguists.

As already mentioned, the central tenet of integrationism, as articulated by Harris in his long career, is a critique of 'orthodox linguistics,' which is founded on 'language myth.' In Harris' view, the concept of 'language myth' is one of the defining features of segregationist approaches to language scholarship, which is influenced by Western philosophy. According to Harris (2009), Western philosophy is founded on a 'myth' that he defines as a 'convenient fiction... an illusion'. In explaining the basis of segregationism, Harris (2010) states that segregationism as an epistemology is founded on the mythical status of language in the sense that languages do not correspond to anything in social reality but, rather are a consequence of viewing language through the semantics of 'reocentricism' and psychocentrism (Pablé, 2010). Segregationism treats languages as discrete entities that can be distinguished from each other and postulates the existence of distinctions between internal and external aspects of language. A series of distinctions are also made between phonology and phonetics, semantics and syntax, etc. Language is a separate domain from context, history, and geography. In a segregationism framework, language use can be separated from language learning. Geography and history are treated as separate domains of analysis from language. From a psychocentric perspective, *language* can be described as a finite set of structures constructed as having external validity.

Another closely related construct Harris criticizes is telementation, which is characterized as the encoding and decoding of propositions of texts assumed to 'standalone' or to exist as 'autonomous texts' that require little or any contexts and exist in unilingual contexts. George Grace (2002) enumerated some features that might be attributed to telementation, even

though Grace was not writing with integrationism in mind over and above the encoding and decoding framework identified by Harris:

(i) The prototypical function of language is to communicate factual information.
(ii) The prototypical manifestation of human language is a form of such distinct systems 'languages.' A competent speaker is able to decode all or most of the texts produced by the system.
(iii) Each language consists of whatever is necessary to know in order to construct, and to specify the meanings of, the linguistic expressions permitted in the language

Harris has argued in a number of his publications that comprehension is much more complex than telementation suggests and that (contrary to the claims in telementation) meanings are, to a large extent, unstable and, therefore, 'created' and recreated in each interaction. In colonial and postcolonial Africa, contexts are largely plurilingual and complicated by incongruent frames of reference and contradictory episteme. If telementation is premised upon unilingual contexts, its validity in a colonial and postcolonial context is highly questionable. In fact, if integrationism is used as a prism through which one analyzes colonial and postcolonial African linguistics, two additional layers must be added to avoid a situation whereby African CL inadvertently reinforces the very segregationism from which it seeks to depart: (i) Knowledge of language should be integrated from knowledge about the world, and (ii) the formal characteristics of narratives are indistinguishable from what is being narrated. I add the last two layers because of the context embedded nature of African rhetorical and cultural practices.

4. Integrationism and the making and unmaking of language in colonial contexts

African languages were socially constructed as part of the 'invention' of Africa (Mudimbe, 1988). If African languages are 'inventions', then indigenous African languages are historical products and, therefore, a result of prolonged interaction between colonialists and Africans. In fact, if indigenous languages are a by product of continuous and prolonged interaction, then, ironically, powerful advocacy of indigenous languages is a re-inscription, of the colonial mentality they are seeking to challenge and undermine.

The prolonged exchange between Europeans and colonial 'natives' may be a powerful site of political conflict in which, because of creativity, language is *made and unmade* in both speech and writing. The political dimension of power struggle and its dialogic character are situated in historical and political contexts when integrationism is extended to colonial contexts.

Nonetheless, the term 'invention' is used in African Studies in a technical sense to 'historicize [the] development' of some of the constructs 'and explore how they were exploited, manipulated and transformed by colonial, and local authorities' (Spear, 2003, p. 4). The other most powerful account of invention was Ranger's 'Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa.'[1] Ranger argued that, to a large degree, notions about language and ethnicity were a result of colonialism and did not even exist in their current form in pre-colonial Africa. In other words, the existence of ethnicities preceded their appropriation by members ascribed to them, in some cases. For example, Ranger cited the ethnic consciousness among the Makoni as Manyikas in Zimbabwe, which only began to take place in the late 1930s. For a considerable amount of time in colonial Africa, the Manyikas and the Nubas in southern Sudan were ethnicities in search of members and languages in search of speakers. Although Ranger (1987) was one of the key architects of the notion of 'invention,' he had subsequent reservations about the conceptual validity of the term in that it downplayed the agency and 'responsibility' of local Africans in the construction of African ethnicities and language. It can be argued from an Integrationist perspective that the notion of invention underestimates the creativity of individual Africans in colonial encounters by implying a sense of homogeneous, uniform practices.

In some contexts, it is not feasible to either determine who belongs to which ethnic group or whether the notions of ethnicity and language as organizing principles are viable. The problematic nature of determining ethnicity is important because of the relationship between ethnicity and African languages (*ethnolects*). The assignment of people to ethnicities parallels the arbitrariness with which people are assigned to languages: Both reflect the enormous power of notions such as mother tongue, native language, etc., which are critical components of segregationist linguistics. In Africa, the project of assigning individuals to ethnicities and attributing native languages to them is misleading because if language is a myth, constructs such as mother tongue are irrelevant. Secondly, such constructs are misleading because they conjure a sense of uniform experience. In other words, they suggest that everyone who allegedly shares the same language has identical experiences of the language. Integrationism is critical of the implied uniformity in terms such as *native languages* and *mother tongue* because communities are extremely diverse and rarely do any two or more individuals have identical social and linguistic experiences. The overall argument is that ethnicity and African languages are both social constructs. In fact, Makoni et al. (2007) extended the argument by illustrating the degree to which notions about language (indigenous African languages, in particular) mask their politically and socially constructed nature by evoking the complex discourses of authenticity.

The idea of languages as constructed was aptly captured by Joseph (2006), who described languages as not only structural but also political in non-African contexts. What is striking about Joseph's proposition is not the role of language in politics or

[1] A much more sophisticated account of invention is by Briggs (1996).

the language of politics but, rather, that language itself is political and, by extension, analysis of language is as well. Dealing with issues in Southern Africa, the idea of language as political was echoed by Jeater (2007), who, considering Zimbabwe, argued that the emergence of manufactured, indigenous languages used as a principal mode of engagement may, contrary to initial assumptions, alienate the educated elite from the rest of the population. This alienation renders it harder, rather than easier, for ruling elites in African states to meaningfully communicate with their own citizens, suggesting that the wrongs of the past cannot be easily rectified through the use of constructed, indigenous languages. This also shows the limitations of language policies for making society more egalitarian.

It is against the above background that the notion of invention has been proposed. *Invention* is a postcolonial construct that challenges calcified notions of identity and linguistically structuralistic and positivistic assumptions that languages are 'fixed things' out there, static, and monolithic, a position aligned with Harris' ideas of myth and segregationalism. From an invention perspective, languages and identities are neither code-based nor rule-based but, rather, constantly evolving and dynamic. As such, they are a product of an ethnographic and, at times, asymmetrical engagement in social contexts. In short, what constitutes African languages is conditional, and consistent with lay orientation to integrationism, people may shift into and out of the languages and identities they construct (Makoni and Pennycook, 2007).

The complexity, fluidity, and density of colonial contexts are aptly captured by the famous missionary/adventurer David Livingstone, whose 19th century observations can be said to precede observations which were subsequently be the critical concepts of integrationism as an analytic and interpretive framework:

> *There is, however, quite a redundancy of words for expressing ideas in which an European mind feels little interest; there are for instance, at least a score of words each designating a different variety of walking; the slow walk of sickness, of laziness, of pride holding the head*... (David Livingstone, 1858, p. 4)

From an integrationist perspective, the continuously increasing number of words used to describe 'varieties of walking, sickness,' etc., does not mean the languages are redundant, as Livingstone argued. The continuously changing meaning of the same words used to describe a 'fool' and what Livingstone termed 'redundant' might mean, at least from an Integrationist perspective, that words like 'fool' were not fixed and the multiplicity of their meanings was, as would be expected in an integrational enterprise, negotiated in the interactional encounter. The idea of 'useless redundancy' is a well-established feature of how 'primitive' languages from the late eighteenth century. Take for instance, the Nuer language in south Sudan, which is characterized by European colonialism as having an *ad infinitum* vocabulary:

> *The Nuer language as I have found it has an extensive vocabulary. I have listed over 3.1000 words in the above mentioned dictionary, many of them not-forms only. I constantly find how limited my knowledge of the language is. One finds new words each day. It seems like an endless mine*. (Miner, 2003)

From a segregationist perspective, which echoes European colonial language formation, the Nuer language in south Sudan has an extensive, redundant vocabulary. Miner goes further and describes it as a language in which one find new words every day. Yet integrationism challenges this long-held view about redundancy in language by providing a more plausible explication of what is considered redundancy. From an integrationist standpoint, each word has a number of meanings, and nothing is either given in advance or predetermined, a perspective that challenges the ideological principles of dictionaries. If the meanings of words are variable and cannot be given in advance, then the idea of the countability of words is difficult to sustain. Put differently, inasmuch as languages are not countable, neither are words because as in integrationism, any object can potentially be labeled in an unlimited number of ways. Communicational practices shape the contexts in which they occur. Furthermore, what counts as background or relevant objects is situation dependent. There are no two individuals who contextualize in an identical way, and what constitutes words in such contexts may vary depending upon the ways in which the entextualization takes place. This means what counts as word may vary considerably depending upon the contexts in which it occurs (Harris www.royharrisonline.com/integrtionsl-linguitics/intergrstionism-introduction.html. Accessed 1.6.12).

Nonetheless, the argument that any object can be labeled and described in an 'unlimited number of ways' must be treated circumspectly. If any object can be described in *completely* unlimited ways, then communication becomes much messier than it is already is, and ironically, this article is a futile exercise. To this end, contrary to the claims of integrationism, which dismisses telementation, I must, on the one hand, accept a degree of telementation while, on the other, concede that differences will exist in how meanings are interpreted. Some meanings will remain enigmatic, even if factual and fictitious biographical details of the participants are recognized.

Yet in integrationism, 'fact' and 'fiction' are similar because both are predicated on imagination. In this regard, even though objects can be described in many ways, the range of potential descriptors and plausible interpretations attributable to an object must be at least somewhat constrained. The limited nature of the descriptors is apparent in the tendency to describe different objects using the same label, as opposed to the describing the same object in many ways (Pablé, 2010). In fact, in language scholarship, the standard language ideology (Milroy, 2002), 'meta-discursive regimes' (Bauman and Briggs, 2003, p. 15), and semiotic processes such as *erasure* and *fractal recursivity* (Irvine and Gal, 2000) create uniformity, which has the effect of constraining linguistic 'idiosyncrasy.' By imposing a semblance of uniformity in a sea of diversity, the different semiotic practices and 'meta-discursive regimes' (Makoni, 2012; Bauman and Briggs, 2003) introduce uniformity into language practices and contribute to a specific idea of language reinforced by the nature of writing. Writing creates a illusion of visual stability that is subsequently projected into language.

In sharp contrast, European colonialism and invention as strategies sought to contain diversity as a political enterprise. The linguistic equivalent in Harris' terminology is segregationism in which the messy, heteroglossic, fluid, and fuzzy language practices consistent with Harris' Integrationism (Bakhtin, 1986; Heller, 2007) are the exception rather than the norm. The diversity is partially created by transidiomatic expressions (Jacquemet, 2005) and individual styles and orientations to speech. On the other hand, the nature of these transidiomatic expressions and individual orientations to speech depend largely on the communicative activities in which the individual is engaged; thus, the degree of diversity is somewhat constrained due to a large number of factors, including individual history.

The concept of African languages as ideas 'emerged' through the application of a number of distinct but related strategies that ultimately 'fixed' African languages in specific ways. Analysts may construe 'fixing' to refer to the 'extraction' of form from fluid language practices and assignment of meaning to them. This process is based on the assumption that a stable relationship exists between meaning and form. Another strategy was the attribution of form and uniform linguistic structures to fluid semiotic practices (Irvine, 2008). Using these strategies made it possible to 'fix' languages by situating them in space and time, which generate all practices regarded as instantiations of a particular language. After African languages were 'fixed,' they were represented in linguistic form through a number of genres. These genres were not objective statements about the languages but, rather, powerful discourse procedures through which languages were represented. The 'fixing' of African languages was described in a discourse analogous to one from the 19th century that echoed positivist discourses in which phonemes (i.e., meanings of words) were 'uncovered' and not necessarily 'made' in some communicative contexts. For example, (Hartman 1905), working in the Sudan in the early 20th century, reported with pride that she uncovered three new phonemes and consequently concluded Nuer had a nearly complete set of corresponding close and open vowels-complete when analyzed from a Europen/Indo-European view of language 'system' (see Miner.edward@uiowa.accessed 1.6.12).

'Fixed' languages were described or created in texts and genres that played critical roles in shaping how African languages were to be imagined. Part of the process of imagining African languages was the use of orthography. Although orthography is technical, it is intimately related to issues about identity (Bird, 2001). In fact, Bird emphasized that orthography is both technical *and* social. The degree to which orthography shapes how languages are imagined is clearly evident in the Sudan where, prior to 1956, some African languages were written in Roman script, but after Sudanese independence, there was pressure to write them in Arabic script (Sharkey, 2008), drawing attention to the political significance of orthographies. Both scripts were motivated by a belief that the scripts were a reflection of speech. In integrationism, writing and speech are different systems, even though they mutually influence one another.

I now turn to an analysis of prefaces and forewords of grammars and dictionaries in order to illustrate how linguistic labels, language practices, and ideologies of African languages were created through colonial intervention. I use a number of cases to illustrate the various ways in which Segregated linguistic codes were created and the context within which they occurred by focusing on micro-dynamics of the activists, the ways they related to each other, their sense of their responsibilities, and their orientation towards the 'natives' whose 'language' they were inventing.

The positions of missionaries toward their linguistic enterprises were more complicated than might be assumed, as reflected in the preface to Livingstone's book *Language of the Bechuanas*, where, referring to his comments on grammar, he wrote the following:

> [This was] printed for private circulation among members of the Livingstone's Expedition, with a view of imparting a general idea of the structure of South African Languages. It was written in 1852, and no opportunity has since been enjoyed for amplification. This may possibly be done by someone engaged in the study, making such alterations and additions as may be necessary.
> David Livingstone (D.L.)
> January, 20th February, 1858

Livingstone was quite aware of the incomplete nature of his text. However, he also expressed no perturbation that it might form a basis for some 'amplification' without any full attribution of the sources and the degree to which he himself built upon previous research, as he pointed out:

> About to leave New England for Natal, in 1846. I tried in various ways and places to find something on the language of the people-Amazulu-among whom I was hoping soon to labor. [I came across] a few Kaffir words in defective orthography.[2]
> LEWIS GROUT.
> Umsunduzi Mission Station
> September, 1859

In addition, African languages were conceived in contradictory ways (Irvine, 2008), as 'primitive' but also advanced: 'They form the chief peculiarities in the structure of the language and there exists the closest relationship between the primitive and almost perfect.' Regardless of whether African languages were conceived as 'primitive' or 'perfect,' the philosophical beliefs reflected the culture-centric nature of CL. African languages are 'primitive' or 'perfect' from the perspective of 'a particular category of speaker . . . those who are most adept in composing and analyzing autonomous texts' (Grace, 2002). Unlike Integrationism, this 'culture-centric' nature of CL does not seriously take into account an individual lay person's experiences.

[2] "I came across" is my addition to render the sentence meaningful.

5. Textualization/representation of African languages

In this section, I situate critical constructs of integrationism within discourses of CL. *Discourses of Integrationism* refers to genres in which CL are situated, such as prefaces of grammars and dictionaries. In this article, *textualization/representation* (Blommaert, 2008) refers to the different genres typically used in writing African language grammars as part of the 'vernacular regimes' (Dube, 2002, p. 814) of the colonial era, with missionaries making substantial contributions. However, one must bear in mind that great variation existed among missionaries, not only among different congregations but also different individuals; thus, the idea of a uniform myth should not be taken for granted in African colonial scholarship. The same missionary might also vary his or her approach at different stages of his or her career. Most missionaries tended to move from one place to another, so the statements made below are generalizations. In spite of these differences, the following is a taxonomy of some of the genres used when languages (which were hitherto unwritten) were framed and committed to Roman script:

6. Extract one

(i) A Manual of the Chikaranga Language with Grammar, Useful Conversational Sentences and a Vocabulary.
(ii) Esquissegrammaticale (grammatical sketch).
(iii) A Shona Dictionary with an Outline Shona Grammar.
(iv) An Outline of Xhosa-Kaffir Grammar.
(v) First book in Zulu-Kaffir: An Introduction to the Study of Zulu-Kaffir Language and Kaffir Grammar.
(vi) Bud-m'bele's (Kaffir Scholar's Companion.)
(vii) Kuverenga (reading in Shona). An Introductory Shona Reader with Grammatical Sketch.
(viii) A Handbook of Chikaranga or The Language of Mashonaland.
(ix) Notes on Nambya
(x) First Elementary Grammar.

The texts listed above are important because they mark the 'birth' of African languages (Blommaert, 2008). Before the 'textualization' of African languages, Africans obviously communicated but not through language as the concept is now understood. This is partly because African languages as we currently understand them are a direct construction of colonial thinking. The crystallization of African languages as ideas brought with it attitudes toward these languages, language-based identities, and attribution of rights to language, consequently creating a bizarre situation in which languages have rights but speakers of those languages are still in search of rights (Wee, 2011).

The different types of texts cited in Extract One are important examples of the genres or discourse forms used to describe African languages. The myth in African languages has to be understood with the discourses/styles in which it is situated. The list is, however, neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive. For example, the *Reader* existed separately at times but was combined with the genre *Grammatical Sketch* (see [vii]) at other times. In some cases, the texts were produced with monolingual speakers in mind; in other cases, they were explicitly designed to aid in the development of proficiency in African languages among colonialists. For example, Louw's (1915) *Manual of the Chikaranga Language* contains a concluding section that deals with direct translations from English to *Chikaranga* and conversely.

In spite of the diversity and complexity of the genres, they share one common feature: substantial prefaces. Prefaces provide autobiographical, linguistic, historical, and, at times, geographical information about speakers of the languages in question. In some cases, they also delve into controversies on names, as indicated by Springer (1905):

> It is in fact well-known to those who have extensive knowledge of the people in Mashonaland, that there is no one term which applies to the language of the whole country. Various terms have been invented by the white men, most commonly being *Chiswina*, the meaning being the language of the filthy people. As white people, whether missionaries or not, we are here to try and lift the native from his filth, so it is not fitting that we should fix on him a name of opprobrium which shall stamp him throughout the generations. Let us remember that our own forefathers were not always as fastidious as we are... (p. 3)

As the above quotation illustrates, the naming of the languages was a source of controversy among different White communities; whether naming constituted a problem worth addressing is a moot point. Nonetheless, labeling or naming these 'objects' that are now called 'languages' had sociolinguistic implications because of their ethno linguistic significance (Irvine, 2008). The naming of languages not only created a new category of identity but also created complexities in African identities, leading to the formation of the 'first glossy Lingala' (Meeuwis, 2009, p. 240). The naming of languages created puzzling questions such as, 'What languages do you speak?' 'Speaking' language X implies that a person is in control of all the varieties of that language. However, it is hard to demonstrate that an individual is in control of all the varieties falling under the rubric of language X since it is difficult to determine, from a sociolinguistic point of view, where the boundaries of each language are situated (Blommaert, 2008).

On the other hand, the act of naming was critically important because it made it possible to manage language as an object of study. Lexicographers were now able to produce dictionaries, translate Bibles, develop teaching materials, etc. In essence,

naming languages led to an ideology that produced grammars-as-text. Since languages were now named and the geographical areas in which these objects were situated were identified, these objects could now be managed more effectively. Their boundaries could be relatively 'policed' and could serve the bureaucratic interests of colonial and contemporary Africa, even though language boundaries were determined with considerable arbitrariness. For example, after the Rejaf conference in the Sudan in 1932, the British found it difficult to determine the boundaries of some of the languages (Abdelhay et al., 2011).

The ideology of one name-one referent is a product of monoglot ethnocentrisms, which is founded on 'referential stability' (Harris and Hutton, 2007, p. 208) and which, to some extent reflects 'culture-centrism.' Referential stability may account for the efforts of European missionaries to determine 'accurate' or appropriate names for African languages. A monoglot perspective runs contrary to the many names the 'same' language may have. For example, English in Zimbabwe may be referred to as *Chingezi*, *Chrungu*. *Shona* is also referred to using a generic term *Chivanhu*. The idea of Shona as a people's language implies that those who do not speak Shona are not people !

Language names (e.g., English, French, German, etc.) also consolidate the view that individuals' experiences are identical; hence, the labels refer to something that really exists. In colonial and postcolonial Africa, the idea of the same language experience renders it possible to have language planning, to count languages, and to carry out census. A language planning project would be radically different if integrationism constituted the basis on which it (integrationism) is predicated.

The policed objects are, at times, framed in terms of national or official languages. For example, in Louw's (1915) *A Handbook of Chikaranga: The Language of Mashonaland*, the place where Chikaranga could be found is identified as a region called Mashonaland. Similarly, McGregor (1905) wrote the following about the location of Kikuyu in East Africa:

> The country of Kikuyu is one of the most fertile and healthy districts of British East Africa. It is situated in the north-western position of the Protectorate, and is practically on the Equator. The Uganda Railway, from about mile 326 to mile 360, runs through the south-western position of the country, and forms almost the boundary of the same. The district over which is spoken, with few modification, stretches away in a north-easterly direction from the railway until it embraces in the folds that great landmark, Mount Kenya (McGregor, 1902, p. iv).

More importantly, missionary efforts produced a 'rewriting' of grammars, solidifying what was fluid into calcified entities (Errington, 2008; Makoni and Pennycook, 2007; Meeuwis, 2009) and 'sponsoring distinctions between linguistic objects and discourse episodes' (Harris, 1989, p. 104).

The contact between African language practices, European colonial variants, and European languages produced a complex amalgam that was to form the basis of the so-called 'urban vernaculars' (McLaughlin, 2008) and led to the formation of what came to be referred to as 'missionary languages' (*chibaba*). The *chibaba* and similar entities came to be referred to as 'indigenous languages' when, in an ironic sense, the very suppression of local speech forms led to their enhanced status, particularly in educational contexts. African elites played a key role in resisting the emergence of some of these missionary varieties, which contributed to the creation of a diglossic situation (Meeuwis, 2009).

7. Manuals and Esquisse Grammaticale

The *Manual* and *Esquisse Grammaticale* professionally developed genres that produced 'grammars-as-text' (Blommaert, 2008) and 'grammars-in-text.' 'Grammars-as-text' meant that grammars could be read as discourse and, thus, are amenable to a textual analysis, while 'grammars – in-text' meant that structures can be inferred from the text. Two different traditions exist in African linguistic scholarship: the British tradition (which is manifest in Southern Africa) and the Belgian African tradition in Central Africa. In terms of the British tradition, one of the most widely used formats in the representation of African languages is the *Manual*. For instance, Louw's (1915) grammar is referred to as *The Manual of the Chikaranga Language with Grammar, Exercises, Useful Conversational Sentences and Vocabulary* (*English-Chikaranga*, *Chikaranga-English*). It appears as if the *Manual of the Nyanja Language* by Reverend Alexander Hetherwick of the Church of Scotland (Louw, 1915, p. vii) provided a template for Louw's manual.

Interestingly enough, in the introduction of the *Chikaranga Manual*, Louw (1915) drew attention to the issue of naming languages and their geographical locale when he wrote the following:

> *Chikaranga* is the language spoken by the natives of Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia. It is known by different names in different parts of the country. In the Salisbury (now Harare) district it is called *Chiswina;* in the Umtali (Mutare, both in Zimbabwe) district it is known as *Chimanyika*, while it bears the name of *Chindau* in Gazaland. In the district of Victoria the natives call it *Chigovera, Chimali*, etc... (p. v)

The section on grammar is made up of a single section on the alphabet, phonetics, and phonology, consistent with principles of segregationism. The section on grammar is composed of 38 sections, whose prominent elements are nouns, genitive particle, verbs, adverbs, compound tenses, and the construction of sentences. The inclusion of constructs such as nouns, verbs, and adverbs, whose origins can be traced back to Latin grammars, reflects the efforts to fit African discourse practices into pre-existing templates. This seems to suggest that African discursive practices were viewed through the lenses of Latin and Indo-European languages and, in turn, yielded 'grammars-as-structure.' The use of the same Indo-European meta-discursive regimes produced notions of African 'languageness' that rendered African languages more comparable to Indo-European languages.

Besides the linguistic nature of the section on grammar, the *Manuals*, unlike the *Esquisse Grammaticale*, were written with the objective of facilitating language teaching and learning, which is also apparent from their organization in terms of lessons and exercises, a format clearly associated more with language teaching and learning materials than with linguistic grammars. In the case of the *Chikaranga Manual*, the approach to the description of *Chikaranga* linguistics involved two interrelated processes: comparing *Chikaranga* with English and reversing that same process by comparing English with *Chikaranga*. Through a strategy of 'contrastive analysis,' potential areas of difficulty were identified, particularly those in which there were major differences between African languages and English as the source language.

Take, for instance, lesson one in the *Chikaranga Manual*, which deals with the alphabet and pronunciation. This lesson compares the ways in which *Chikaranga* was pronounced with English /b, d, f…/. According to Louw (1915), these sounds were 'all pronounced as in English except the letters with diacritics' (p. 3). In other cases, the *Manual* was written not to describe how the 'natives spoke' but, rather, to accommodate how Europeans spoke: 'The aspirate is not always distinguished by Europeans, [but] we have decided to disregard it except where its omission might cause confusion' (Louw, 1915, p. 4). Yet Louw was aware of the diversity of the potential users of his *Manual*, as evident from the fact that the exercises in Part II were designed for those living in 'lonely places' while those in Part III were designed for those at an elementary stage or travelers who were in the country temporarily. The following are examples of some of the sentences taken from the *Chikaranga Manual*.

Write in Chikaranga:

1. Go to the house.
2. Look in my house and bring a chair outside.
3. Go among the trees and look for my little kitten. Louw (1915, p. 13).

All of the above sentences are instructions consistent with the format of a *Manual*. However, it is interesting to note that the teaching materials had errors that, within the code-based and rule-based theoretical framework in use at the time, might conceivably be made by non-native speakers, as demonstrated by the example below from Shona, which is spoken in southern Africa:

1. *Ndinesimbanaiwe (I am stronger than you).
2. Ndinesimbakupfuuraiwe (I have a house bigger than yours).
3. *Ndinesimba kupfuura iwe (The boy is stronger than the girl).
4. Mukomana mukuru kupfura musikana (The boy is stronger than the girl).

From a formal, structuralism perspective, sentence 1 is ungrammatical because of the use of *na*, and in sentence 3, the sequencing of the adjective *mukuru* (*big*) before the noun *musikana* (*girl*) is grammatical in English but not in African languages. It is, therefore, possible to explain within a 'contrastive analysis' that the sentences perceived as ungrammatical are, in fact, examples of interlingual transfer. It is, however, worth noting that the writers of these grammars were not oblivious to the fact that the examples in the manuals were ungrammatical:

> These notes are not 'a *Nambya* Grammar,' a complete, thoroughly checked, reliable work. A Grade One pupil cannot be a teacher, and in fact I am still in Grade One as far as *Nambya* is concerned. My notes represent only a first stage in the study of the *Nambya* language; they will have…I am sure…many mistakes. (Moreno, 1988, p. 3)

While acknowledging the non-native forms produced in the *Manuals*, the writers attributed them to the unwillingness and complete ignorance of their native-speaking informants. In fact, Louw (1915) pointed out the following:

> …many mistakes will no doubt be found as this language is known. Those, however, who know what it is to reduce a new language (emphasis mine), and what it is to search for every word, and to get the same often from very unwilling and unintelligent natives, will not be too critical in this issue.

Ironically, in this context, perhaps as in others in which the non-native speakers were more powerful than the native speakers, 'mistakes' made by the non-native speakers were attributed to the native speakers' lack of cooperation. From an Integrationist perspective, the notion of ungrammaticality is of secondary importance. Rules do not form the analytical apparatus paradigm because it is not possible to construct a systematic set of rules for something as fluid as language.

It is conceivable that colonists, therefore, used descriptions of African languages for prescriptive purposes and as a means of social control of the natives. From such a perspective, description and prescription were not separate processes but different sides of the same coin.

Nevertheless, although the *Manual* by Louw (1915) was European in perspective, serious efforts were made to capture how Africans might have perceived and experienced the world around them. Referring to Louw's *Manual*, Gaimersham commented,

> Many are the rules and demands of science. But one claim seems to me be paramount, especially for a European author of an *Ntu* grammar viz, to look upon the grammar of an *Ntu* language from the *Ntu* point of view, instead of pressing it into the frame of Indo-European languages. I do not know how far I may succeed in dealing with the Zulu grammar from the *Ntu* point of view or to be allowing the Zulu language to be master. (Gaimersham 6th January 1927).

The argument that languages could be written from an *Ntu* perspective means that even if fluid African amalgams were rule-governed, the rules had to be cognizant of individual idiosyncrasies and identities—diversity consistent with integrationism. The idiosyncrasies demonstrate the degree to which languages were closely tied to individual history, wishes, and desires in a manner that, with some exaggeration, is congruent with integrationism.

As already pointed out, the *Esquisse Grammaticale* is a 'mature,' more highly professionalized technical genre of language description (Blommaert, 2008). The *Esquisse Grammaticale*, like the *Manuals*, was important insofar as its construction led to the emergence of language as a construct. These manuals, regardless of what they were called, formed the genesis of language as a construct and served as what Blommaert (2008) called 'a birth certificate' (p. 15) for language. However, if the objective in the design of the *Manual* was to facilitate second language learning, then the major objective of *Esquisse Grammaticale* was to classify African languages into different levels, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and word lists and texts consistent with 'segregational linguistics.'

The *Esquisse Grammaticale* was not directly meant for pedagogical purposes but was part of large-scale Belgian academic efforts of the 1950s to comprehensively 'describe and classify the languages of the Congo' (Blommaert, 2008, p. 6). The descriptive tradition was fruitful in that it produced large multi-volumes (Blommaert, 2008), and classifications of African languages were produced in this framework. Unlike integrationism within an invention paradigm, the descriptions and multi-volumes facilitated various forms of social control of Africans in the Congo. It is this social and political nature of invention that differs from integrationism, which, with the exception of Hutton (2011), is to a large extent apolitical. I am, therefore, seeking to develop a political perspective of integrationism. As a rule, integrationism does not have any political orientation.

This figure refers to preliminary descriptions by Hartman 1905 (http://www.dlidaindiana.edu/collections/Nuer/verb/utx.html; Accessed 1.3.12).

It is difficult for African colonial linguistics to be completely segregationist. Although the extracts above do not exhaust the different contexts in which they are used, they reflect some awareness of potential contexts in which the expressions are used, which can be construed as a form of integrationism. For example, the meanings of the words are explained by identifying the potential contexts in which the words might be used. 'A man cannot 'bit' his brother-*gut man* he can '*lam*' him.

Even if a philosophical argument is made that each language has an independent 'grammar' designed by the powerful, both colonial and postcolonial linguists must find a way to reconcile linguistic features. The meanings that may vary considerably, depending on the nature of each inter-subjective interaction, suggesting that no linguistic features are independent of the interaction that forms the basis of the data collection. The grammars that are subsequently formalized usually refer to those people who are 'most adept in composing and analyzing 'autonomous text.' (Grace Retrieved from http://www2.hawaii.edu/~grace/elniv23.html Furthermore, 'if grammar is tailored to the needs and properties of language users (to whatever degree), and language users are not what they used to be, then it follows that grammar is probably not what it used to be' (Newmeyer, 2002, as cited in Grace, 2002).

8. Concluding reflections

In the concluding section, I now turn to answer briefly the questions I posed at the beginning of the paper. In this article, I analyzed the contexts in which African languages were constructed and the nature of social and linguistic strategies used therein. I also examined the complex role of native Africans as sources of data and their resistance to the newly created 'linguistic languages,' as Becker (1995) called them. The singular frameworks reinforced by the analytical frameworks and the exclusive grid of conversion had its limitations because it could neither capture nor contain 'the distinctive detail and the divergent dynamic of these processes' (Dube, 2002, p. 811).

Because of the particularity of each speaker's encounters and discursive practices, a separate grammar is necessary for each individual. This high degree of idiosyncrasy is elided in postcolonial African sociolinguistics because of segregationist preoccupation with establishing invariant rules and centrality of syntax. Even though each individual may have a distinct grammar, communication is still possible because, in most cases, pragmatic cues are adequate to render it feasible. However, miscommunication may be much more widespread than neat sociolinguistic projects might lead one to believe, compelling one to be critical of telementation, which is ahistorical and not cross-cultural. Regardless, miscommunication is itself a fruitful exercise as it constitutes the basis on which social advancement may take place. Theoretically, structuralism in African sociolinguistics does not account for such rampant idiosyncrasy.

References

Abdelhay, A., Busi, M., Siunfree M.,2011. The Naivasha Language Policy: the language politics and the politics of language. Language Policy (14): 1–18.

Bakhtin, M., 1986. Speech genres and other late essays. In: Holquist, M. (Ed.), C. Emmerson Trans. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.

Bauman, R., Briggs, C., 2003. Voices of Modernity: Language Ideologies and the Politics of Inequality. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Becker, A.L., 1995. Beyond Translation: Essays Toward Modern Philology. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI.

Bird, S., 2001. Orthography and identity in Cameroon. Notes on Literacy 26 (1–2), 3–34. http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/wll.4.2.02bir.

Blommaert, J., 2008. Artefactual ideologies and the textual production of African languages. Language and Communication 28 (4), 291–307. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2008.02.003.

Bolton, K., Hutton, C., 2000. Special issue. Interventions 2 (1), 1–5.

Briggs, C., 1996. The politics of discursive authority in research on the 'invention of tradition'. Cultural Anthropology 11 (4), 435–469. http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/can.1996.11.4.02a00020.

Dube, S., 2002. Conversion and translation: colonial registers of a vernacular Christianity. The South Atlantic Quarterly 101 (4), 807–837. http://dx.doi.org/10.1215/00382876-101-4-807.

Errington, J., 2008. Linguistics in a Colonial World: A story of Language, Meaning, and Power. Blackwell, Malden, MA.

Gilmour, R., 2006. Grammars of Colonialism: Representing Languages in Colonial South Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK.

Grace, G., 2002. Collateral damage from linguistics? The role of culture-centrism. Ethnolinguistic Notes 4 (3) (retrieved from http://www2.hawaii~elniv23.html 1.06.12).

Harris, R., 1987. The Language Machine. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

Harris, R., 1989. How does writing restructure thought? Language and Communication 9 (2), 399–406. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0271-5309(89)90012-8.

Harris, R., 2006. Integrationist Notes and Papers, 2003–2005. Tree Tongue, Crediton, UK.

Harris, R., 2009. Implicit and explicit language teaching. In: Toolan, M. (Ed.), Language Teaching: Integrational Approaches. Routledge, London, UK, pp. 24–47.

Harris, R., 2010. The great debate about art. Prickly Paradigm Press, Chicago.

Hartman, A.M., 1905. English-Mashona dictionary with more phrases. cape Town, Juta Press.

Heller, M. (Ed.), 2007. Bilingualism: A Social Approach. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK.

Harris, R., Hutton, C., 2007. Definition in Theory and Practice, Lexicography and the Law. Continuum, London, UK.

Hutton, C., 2011. The politics of the language myth: reflections on the writings of Roy Harris. Language Sciences 33, 503–510.

Irvine, J., 2008. Subjected words: African linguistics and the colonial encounter. Language and Communication 28 (4), 323–343. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2008.02.001.

Irvine, J., Gal, S., 2000. Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In: Kroskity, P.V. (Ed.), Regimes of Language Ideologies, Politics and Identities. SAR, Santa Fe, NM, pp. 35–83.

Jacquemet, M., 2005. Trans idiomatic practices, language and power in the age of globalization. Language and Communication 25 (3), 257–277. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2005.05.001.

Jeater, D., 2007. Law, Language and Science. The Invention of the ‘Native Mind’ in Southern Rhodesia. Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.

Joseph, J., 2006. Language and Politics. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, UK.

Livingstone, D., 1858. Analysis of the language of the Bechuans. W.Hawes Press, London.

Louw, C.S., 1915. A manual of the Chikaranga Language with Grammar, Exercises, Useful Conversational Sentences and Vocabulary. Philpot & Collins, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Makoni, S., 2011. Sociolinguistics, colonial and postcolonial: an integrationist perspective. Language Sciences 33 (4), 680–688. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2011.04.020.

Makoni, S., 2012. Language rights discourses: African experiences. Journal of Multicultural Discourses 1 (1), 1–20. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17447143.2011.595493.

Makoni, S., Brut-Griffler, J., Mashiri, P., 2007. The use of ‘indigenous’ and urban vernaculars in Zimbabwe. Language in Society 36 (1), 25–49. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/ S0047404507070029.

Makoni, S., Pennycook, A. (Eds.), 2007. Disinventing and Reconstituting Languages. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, UK.

McGregor, A.W., 1905. A Grammar of the Kikuyu Language. Clay and Sons, London, UK.

McGregor, M., 1902. First book in Zulu-Kaffir: An introduction to the study of Zulu-Kaffir.Pietermaritsburgh and Durban, Mesr Vause Slatter and Company.

McLaughlin, F., 2008. On the Origins of Urban Wolof: Evidence from Louis Decement’s 1864 Phrase Book. Language in Society 37, 713–735.

Meeuwis, M., 2009. Involvement in language: the role of the congregation Immaculati Cordis in the history of Lingala Mariae. Catholic Historical Review 95 (2), 240–260.

Milroy, L., 2002. Investigating change and variation through dialect contact. Journal of Sociolinguistics 6 (1), 30–31.

Miner, E., 2003. The development of Nuer linguistics. Nuer field notes. <http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/cllections/nuer/edwardss/linguistics.html> (retrieved).

Moreno, A., 1988. A Nambya Dictionary Gweru. Mambo Press, Zimbabwe.

Mudimbe, M., 1988. The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN.

Newmeyer, F., 2002. Uniformitarian assumptions and language evolution research. In: Wray, Alison. (Ed.), The Transition to Language. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, pp. 359–375.

Pablé, A., 2010. Language, knowledge and reality: The integrationist on name variation. Language and Communication 30 (2), 109–122.

Ranger, T., 1987. The invention of tradition in colonial Africa. In: Hobsbawn, E., Ranger, T. (Eds.), The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 211–262.

Sharkey, H., 2008. American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary encounters in an Age of Empire. Princetown University Press, Princeton.

Spear, T., 2003. Neo-traditionalism and the limits of invention in British Colonial Africa. Journal of African History 44, 3–27. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0021853702008320.

Springer, H., 1905. A Hand-book of Chikaranga, or the Language of Mashonaland. Methodist Episcopal Mission, Rhodesia.

Wee, L., 2011. Language without Rights. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.