



HAL
open science

Review article: Chimbutane, Feliciano 2011. Rethinking Bilingual Education in Postcolonial Contexts. N. H. Hornberger and C. Baker ed Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters. 183p.

Michel Lafon

► **To cite this version:**

Michel Lafon. Review article: Chimbutane, Feliciano 2011. Rethinking Bilingual Education in Postcolonial Contexts. N. H. Hornberger and C. Baker ed Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters. 183p.. 2011. halshs-00686226

HAL Id: halshs-00686226

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00686226>

Preprint submitted on 8 Apr 2014

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Chimbutane, Feliciano 2011. Rethinking Bilingual Education in Postcolonial Contexts. N. H. Hornberger and C. Baker ed Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters. 183p.¹

MICHEL LAFON,

IFAS (Cnrs UMIFRE 8135), Johannesburg South Africa

Research Fellow, Center for Research on the Politics of Language, University of Pretoria

Lafon@vjf.cnrs.fr & michel.lafon@up.ac.za

It is no new finding (see inter alia Amy Tsui 2004) that, in post-colonial countries, political considerations weights decisively on the choice of school Medium of Instruction (Moi). As is well known, particularly in Africa, most countries with no literate tradition of their own,² with the possible exception of Tanzania (and onetime Madagascar), have maintained the former colonial language all throughout the education cycle to the exclusion of any local one. Experiments in bilingual education involving local languages at the most consider the early years only and, for various reasons, remain highly controversial among all stakeholders.

Mozambique offers the situation, by all means original in Southern Africa, whereby an experiment in bilingual education where local languages are used as Moi in the early grades, offered in rural schools since 2003 after a 1997 education seminar defined a new curriculum of which a bilingual education stream was part (see Lafon 2008 and in press), has proven popular to the extent that communities outside the planned scope of the experiment have requested it for their children: thus, from the start the experiment has embraced 16 or 17 languages instead of the 7 initially considered and consequently circa twice more classrooms and pupils. Moreover, the effects of the programme are felt far beyond the educational field into society at large, leading the political leadership to change its ideological stance. Whereas African languages had little space in public discourse, linguistic diversity is now part of an entirely revamped concept of Mozambicanhood, to paraphrase an extract of the

1 Unisa Professor Sozinho Matsinhe, presently ACALAN secretary general, was kind enough to comment on an earlier version. His insightful contribution is gladly appreciated.

2 This contrasts sharply with Northern African countries, which could claim a tradition of Arabic literacy and find inspiration in existing systems of education in Arabic in Middle East countries. However, in their efforts to break away from the colonial language, these countries, particularly Algeria (Benrabah 2007) have often overlooked local multilingual realities with dire consequences on the performance of the system.

author's conclusion (p161) which appears as a mix where modernity blends with what Stroud (2007:42, quoted here p126) aptly calls a "retraditionalisation" of society.

These two main angles are reflected in Chimbutane's book: one focuses on education proper and consists of an implicit assessment of the experiment, drawing its argument from field work in two sites of the same southern Gaza province, the other relates to broader societal issues, such as ethnic identity, self-pride, etc, wrought by the programme and illustrating its 'emancipatory force' (p167), as Chimbutane locates the debate in the history of language policy in Mozambique. It is one of Chimbutane's insights that, in the situation he considers, both aspects are intrinsically linked and it is this dynamism that the book highlights and that I will comment on, leaving educational aspects for another opportunity. Overall, Chimbutane has succeeded in turning an academic degree – the book is based on a PhD elaborated at Birmingham in Great-Britain - into a readable and most useful volume, avoiding the heaviness that sometimes comes with the process.

Let me start by a disclaimer which befits a review article. I am well conscious that, as the French say, criticism is easier than art. The observations below must be read in that light.

Preliminaries

A first point is that the book's cover is somewhat misleading: as it takes Mozambique as a case study, one would have expected Mozambique to be mentioned somewhere. Presumably this absence serves to emphasize that lessons from Mozambique have value in the broader debate on bilingual education in post-colonial countries. Still, it may lead to the book being overlooked by those with an interest in the country, which would be regrettable as it offers many insights in aspects of modern-day rural Mozambique and, as well, disappoint scholars committed to theory, as it is more concerned with practical issues.

A second point is that, as so many studies on education in Africa, it takes for granted that education is coterminous with Western formal education. Obviously in this particularly case, it may be argued that it is justified by the fact that the experiment reported on occurs in (formal) schools under the official state education system. Yet, even though the study is assumedly not anthropological, a reminder, brief though it may be, that there exist or at the very least existed in Mozambique as elsewhere, indigenous forms of education, that is, not

only forms of knowledge (alluded to here p 133) but also of knowledge transmission, would have been appropriate. In pre-colonial times, education, understood broadly as the way to prepare the youth for taking on their social responsibilities, was given, as Alidou observes (2004:197), as a matter of course through the medium spoken by the community, regardless of its size. This education did not involve literacy. Language inadequacy in present-day education practices stems from the fact that in Africa South of the Sahara, apart from Ethiopia and Muslim communities, literacy and formal, closed schools are a Western import, that came stock and barrel along with the missionaries from the mid 19th century and the colonial state, and was pursued and widened ever-after in the postcolonial period. Hence the fact that reading and writing in local languages is a recent development, and that literacy as such remains largely alien to the inner workings of the local communities, especially in rural areas.

The roots of the Mozambican language scene

One of the main points of Chimbutane's exposé is to highlight the positive impact that bilingual education in Mozambique, limited though it is, has had on the speakers' own perception of the value of their language and culture, a situation he contrasts to similar educational endeavours in developed countries where it tends to lead to assimilation (p 13 & 15 & 106). This has in turn resulted in, and further nurtured, a dramatic aggiornamento of the dominant ideological discourse of legitimacy, where Africaness is now depicted in a positive light. Whether the programme itself was cause or consequence is hard to decide but I would contend that its launch was, probably unwittingly, the determining factor behind the discourse change. Once the engine was on gear, it fuelled itself by its mere momentum, going beyond language to embrace the whole social contraption.

There is little doubt for those familiar with the building of the Mozambican language political scene, that the popularity of this experiment in the countryside is due to the protracted denigration of local languages, visited upon a hapless peasantry from the 1930ies onwards during Portuguese colonial rule,³ and, less commonly in Africa, compounded by a similar attitude pursued for a good 20 years after Independence. Whereas the Portuguese

³ These languages were derogatorily called 'dog's languages' according to a testimony reported here (p110). Even today many black Mozambicans refer to African languages as dialects, thus denying them the status of a proper language.

metropolis had promoted, albeit with second thoughts (below), 'assimilation', whereby a small minority of Black and mulattoes (mixed-blood people, mestiços) were elevated above the masses (almost) to the level of the Portuguese settlers in terms of rights and benefits, including education, provided they forsook their own in favour of Portuguese (or European) Christian values and attitudes,⁴ came Independence in 1975, the Frelimo cadres saw adherence to a Marxist discourse that espoused most tenets of colonial assimilation as the only road towards national unity and 'progress'. Their view of national unity had much to do with the 19th century 'classical ideal of a centralised nation state' (Kamwangamalu 2008:174) in its Stalinist reincarnation which required one unique language for a nation to truly exist, as pinpointed by Rocha (2006:19). If 'the project of national unity' (p99) in a diverse country with no common history except that of suffering under the same colonial master as argued by Mondlane (1979:96, original quotation (1975:177) in Rocha 2006:13), is self-explanatory,⁵ the obsession with the pursuance of 'progress' and its meaning require explanation. Progress implied, in the eyes of the new leadership, the abandonment of the very same African practices deemed 'pagan' or 'barbarian' or 'backwards' in the previous age, and their replacement by so-called 'modern' - read European-centred - ones, and uniform. In the realm of language, it meant abandonment of local languages seen as divisive per nature for the newly proclaimed national idiom, Portuguese. The use of local languages were even prohibited in official places (Firmino 2006: 142). Beyond language, it included cultural features such as traditional authority that could challenge the authority of the party which set to control every aspect of life in order to ensure the advent of the 'new man'.⁶ This political strategy was obviously self-defeating: how could the new revolutionary schools attain "a rich interaction with surrounding peasant communal villages" (Mugomba 1980: 216), a condition for their sustainability, without interacting in the medium of the said

4 This is no claim to represent European traditions and practices as a coherent and unique world-view, especially before to-day globalisation with its uniformisation tendency. Each colonial power imposed on the societies it came to dominate its own set of values and attitudes, resulting in fostering significant differences in post-colonial countries. But as opposed to African, European traditions and practices showed significant commonalities, most of them brought about by (late) Christianity: monogamy, a certain gender division of tasks, real or idealized, which placed the wife in the home, belief in a God-ruled nether world, prestige afforded to formal knowledge against mere practices, greater rewards for clerical jobs over manual ones, etc.

5 To this adds up a fear of being overpowered by English due to the geographical and economic environment (Rothwell 2001).

6 See Mugomba (1980) for an uncritical presentation of Frelimo's educational and cultural policy plan.

communities and at the very least acknowledging the communities' own values? This scenario has been exposed in several studies, which found in such disdain for time-tested engrained and cherished practices already encroached by the colonial rule, a strong motivation for the support Renamo, an armed opposition movement initially triggered by the neighbouring racist states of Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa, managed to capture in vast expenses of the North and Central areas (see, among the first to call attention to the perilous consequences of Frelimo's high-handed attitude towards local realities, Geffray (1990), and on history the works of Cahen (1987), Newitt (1984), Isaacman (1993), Hall and Young (1997), and, specifically on language policy, Stroud (1999). I argued elsewhere (Lafon 2008 & in print) that the underlying reason for this attitude probably lies in the appropriation of the late assimilation ideology by cadres most of whom emanated per force from this very minute strata and/or were fascinated by its trappings and had longed for the status.⁷ It is only in the 1990ies after the peace agreement and the promulgation of a constitution allowing for multiparty democracy that it became permissible for local researchers to question official truths and past policies, including the attempt to erase local practices.

Chimbutane's account here seems however a bit short.

Even though he pays tribute to the important role played by Protestant churches in the instrumentalization and maintenance of African languages through biblical translation, Chimbutane places the beginning of education for Africans in the 1930ies, that is, when the state-supported Catholic Church was allowed to exercise a near monopoly on it (p46). This overlooks the fact that, in the South at least, the Protestant Missions had incepted a bilingual education of sorts by the 1880ies,⁸ which was rapidly to bear fruits. By 1896, there were already 900 'educated' Africans (Rocha 2006:99) most, we can safely assume, literate in their own language(s) and the Swiss Mission had started to publish biblical translations in local languages (Cruz e Silva 2001:50), setting a trend that soon involved local actors: from

⁷ In 1961 the separation between *assimilados* and the ordinary populace was abolished as forced labour and other vexing measures were rescinded. Still, with very few exceptions, only former *assimilados* and mulattoes had had access to secondary schooling which explains why nearly all educated Mozambicans at the time came from their midst (and that of the White and Indian communities).

⁸ See, on the Swiss Mission, Cruz e Silva (2001) and the works of Harries (especially 2007), both absent altogether from the reference list.

1890, father Robert Ndevu Mashaba published religious works in Ronga,⁹ by 1908 the Bible was translated in Tswa, etc. Moreover, Chibutane sets the inception of the assimilation policy when the status was officially promulgated from 1917 (p34); still, colonial policy at the time held promises of racial integration through what Rocha (2006:124) calls '*assimilação uniformizadora*' ('uniformising assimilation'). 'Educated' blacks and mulattoes, both referred to as Black or African Portuguese, or 'filhos da terra' (children of the soil), enjoyed theoretically the same privileges as white Portuguese. They were set apart from 'indigenes', defined inter alia by their lack of instruction and knowledge of Portuguese (Rocha 2006:41). Indeed, a significant number of non-whites – Cabo-Verdeans, Goanese, local mulattoes and assimilados - occupied relatively high offices (Rocha 2006:40, 71). This subsided gradually, after the influential Antonio Enes' 1893 report on the administration of the colony (Penvenne 1989:266), especially when the Republican administration tried to lure new settlers from Portugal whose main qualification lied in their skin colour.¹⁰ Regulations were passed to establish job privileges for white Portuguese by containing non-whites (assimilados and mulattoes), leading to the 1917 regulation compelling assimilados to carry a document that they were to exhibit at police control to confirm their status. The education endeavours of Protestant missions, suspect of instilling dangerous ideas into native minds, were curtailed from the 1920ies onward, their use of African languages being a ready excuse to target them.

However, this shortcut obliterates a unique episode in Mozambican history. From the early 1900ies, emerged, among the small group of 'filhos da terra', mostly among those who had benefited from an education normally imparted by the missions, a political movement christened 'nativismo', the best known embodiment of which being *O Gremio Africano de Lourenço Marquès* (The African Guild of LM), founded by the famous Albasini brothers, themselves mulattoes.¹¹ If Portuguese had obviously pride of place in their practices and discourse – they always pledged loyalty to Portugal (and hence to the language) even though they were harsh critics of some of its policies and were not adverse to position themselves as the voice of the Africans - they commonly and unashamedly used African languages in

9 Mashaba was eventually deported by the colonial administration for his political stance (Rocha 2006:99).

10 The Republican regime, installed in 1910 after the monarchy was abolished, was overthrown by a coup in 1917, which in turn made way for Salazar's *Estado Novo* from 1933.

11 Lourenço Marquès was the name of the Portuguese settlement in the Maputo area.

their political bulletins. *O Africano*, The African, *O Gremio's* mouth-piece, founded in 1908, was bi-, if not multi-lingual, as it included sections in Changana and Zulu as well as Ronga.¹² Interestingly, the 1917 regulation which the Gremio vehemently and constantly opposed, was published in Ronga in *O Africano*. A similar trend was apparent in *O Brado Africano* which continued *O Africano* from 1918, assuming a more aggressive stand against colonial restrictions.¹³ In the 1920s, a splinter group published for some time their own *Dambu dja Africana*, The African Sun, purely and simply in Ronga. As the split seems to have emerged from a cleavage between mulattoes and Africans, the language choice was probably a political statement (Honwana 1988: 12, 20, 28, 55, 96, 110 & 209; Penvenne 1989: 280; Moreira 1997: 49, 86, 96, 103; Lopes 1998:455; Rocha 2006: 26, 52, 34, 121 & 123; infopedia [http://www.infopedia.pt/\\$o-brado-africano](http://www.infopedia.pt/$o-brado-africano), accessed July 2010). Granted, given the context, the Gremio's position on language was somewhat ambiguous, demanding education and the teaching of Portuguese for all Africans as a step towards their improvement and equality with Whites, sometimes even looking down on African language literacy and criticising the Protestant missions' orientation in that regard (Cruz e Silva 2001: 61; Rocha 2006:116, 117, 139). Further, the assimilados' propaganda had little purchase on the majority black population. Still, this development contradicts statement such as the absence of "any prior tradition of bilingual education" in Mozambique (referring to the present-day one, p1), and belies the absence of allusion to the role some African languages, especially Ronga, played on the political scene (p41).

It is regrettable that this remarkable episode is overlooked, not only for the sake of setting historical records right and doing justice to this first attempt in the 'intellectualisation' of a Mozambican language, to borrow a concept from Alexander (2003), but also because there lied possibly a cue to the promotion of African languages: that was a time when some of the main non-whites intellectuals, who questioned colonial rule and are widely seen as the founding fathers of Mozambican nationalism, acted in a truly bi- or multi-

12 *O Africano's* first page exhibited a subtitle in Ronga (see facsimile of first issue in Rocha 2006:115). The presence of Zulu is explained by the paper's circulation (or intended circulation) among the numerically important Mozambican community with an experience in the South African mines, where they would have been in contact, through churches and their employers, not only with the language itself, but also with literacy and texts.

13 *O Africano*, over which the *Gremio* had lost political control, was sold. It is not evident from the facsimile of the first issue that Ronga still appeared on the cover page, but an indirect reference in Rocha indicates that *O Brado Africano* continued publishing bilingually (Rocha 2006:148, 151, 197).

lingual fashion, not shrinking from writing in their own as well as in the colonial language, regardless of their declared opinion about literacy in vernaculars.¹⁴ With to-day's situation in mind, it might be worth even looking at the options of the newspapers in terms of terminology.¹⁵ The fact that their attitude to local languages was ignored by the new rulers at Independence is no coincidence. Acknowledging it might have set the country on a different course, language-wise at least.¹⁶ But it might not be too late to emulate their example.

More crucially perhaps, Chimbutane passes very briefly (p3 & seq.) on the Frelimo pre-1990 policy of modernism which attempted to negate African practices and relegate African languages to the families (see for instance Matusse 1997:545). He conversely emphasized the anecdotal use of African languages by Samora Machel himself, possibly to entice the peasantry (p44, 160), Still this legacy is crucial to understand present attitudes in Mozambique, and indeed this inescapable reality invites itself inadvertently in a later passage (p124). It explains both the reluctance of the administration to fully embrace the programme¹⁷ and its popularity with rural communities seems at loggerheads with attitudes prevailing in many other African countries. I argue that it is precisely in the novelty that this measure of recognition from the centre represents that lies the main reason for the popularity of the programme in rural areas, illustrating what could be called the principle of contradiction – the tendency to adhere to policies adverse to what was propounded during the colonial or pre-independence period, demonstrated a contrario by the example of South Africa (see Lafon in print).

¹⁴ It would be valuable for instance to have a bilingual collection of Albasini's pieces published in Ronga, if only to assess whether he was as talented a polemist in this language as he is considered to have been in Portuguese.

¹⁵ Surprisingly, those newspapers do not appear in the list of sources in the 1996 edition of Siteo's Ronga-Portuguese dictionary.

¹⁶ There are obvious parallels to be drawn with the South African mission educated black elite of the same period, from the midst of which emerged several political leaders who expressed themselves both in English and in their own languages, among them Jabavu, Plaatje, Dube, etc. (see Ndletyana 2008).

¹⁷ Possibly there lies the explanation for Chimbutane's modesty in that domain, which would only prove my point further.

A first victory of the programme

That there is need in Mozambique to uplift the status of African languages in the eyes of their speakers, and that this can happen through national school language policy, is a given. It cannot be denied that, due to the specific history of Mozambique, by its mere introduction, the bilingual education programme has won an ideological battle. It has powerfully contributed to the rehabilitation of local languages and cultures, fostering a new definition of Mozambican-hood (p161). African linguistic and cultural realities will not again be pushed so easily under the carpet. On the contrary, an emphasis is placed on retrieving and revitalising cultural roots. For instance, the 2006-2010/11 Education plan gives emphasis on cultural aspects, in the realm of dance and artefacts, while traditions such as “Guaza Muthini” are now celebrated every year in Marracuene (S Matsinhe, pers. com. Oct 2011).

Moreover, a reflection on a new language policy that would open space for African languages has started within the Ministry of Culture after an initial seminar in February 2008. A workshop, convened in April 2010 in Maputo, was opened by no lesser mortal than the Minister himself and it seems that the matter is pursued in earnest. The change of mood was echoed at a PALOP meeting held in Maputo in 2011 where an official document, Carta de Maputo, fully acknowledged the multilingual situation of Lusophone countries and called for wide language development. Still, at the national level, nothing yet has emerged (Esteve Filimão, interviews, July 2010, October 2011; <http://www.iilp.org.cv/>; Lafon in print).¹⁸

Status, ownership, role of languages and perspectives

If, at an abstract level, all languages may be seen as equal, this does not translate directly into reality. Some are more equal than other, to paraphrase Alexander (1993) (and Orwell 1954) and this is a fact with which one must grapple. It questions the implicit assumption that local languages should, and can, be made a par with Portuguese (p58, 107, 150, 152). For instance, it is argued that the programme makes participants see their languages as “equally valid resources for education and progress” (p107, again p162). If education goes beyond primary, for the time being at least, I will risk saying that such an outcome is utterly utopian and that setting it as a goal might even be counterproductive. This is amply demonstrated by the case of South Africa, where, in spite of constitutionally-entrenched

¹⁸ A process of constitutional revision has been launched in October 2011, starting with a popular consultation, but it remains unclear whether language will be contemplated.

rights supporting the extensive use of the 9 official African languages in education and the comprehensive development the main ones can boast, English reigns supreme (see inter alia Louw 2004 and Webb 2006). More broadly, local languages in Mozambique cannot hope to even co-exist in formal domains with of the national, if not 'international' language,¹⁹ – not to mention substitute it. The crucial issue, I contend, even if that still reflects the social structure put in place by the colonial order (p150), is to find a niche for these languages to develop literacy practices, 'to transit from orality to literacy' as Praah (2011:4) puts it, which is a condition for their maintenance in to-day's over-mediatised world. This will allow for their gradual 'intellectualisation'. Even though there is no doubt that the bilingual programme has had, and has, a positive impact on research and written production on various Mozambican languages (p162),²⁰ for the time being, in Mozambique, the one domain where literacy in local languages remains portent is religion,²¹ since, as Chimbutane justly observed, the ubiquity of cell-phones has killed the need for private letters (p115, 116).²² There is probably nothing wrong for local languages, indisputable media in the informal economy, to remain foreign to the formal one. What is unfair is that, regardless of its crucial contribution to the lively-hood of many families, informal economy never ceases to be looked down upon and marginalised (p150, 163). Increasing the symbolical and monetary value of informal economy will automatically increase the capital those languages represent (p152) and, with time, influence their position in society.

It further makes a case for a balanced language architecture where languages are complementary rather than in competition, taking advantage of existing multilingualism, as is indeed advocated here. In education, from the early years of schooling, African languages could be used as co-MoI together with Portuguese in a dual-medium system, to meet concerns among both the elite and the local population and ensure the programme's long term popularity, and retained as disciplines further up the grades, not discounting the

19 Although Portuguese links Mozambique with the other PALOP countries, whether the language qualifies as an international language in this context may probably be questioned. It is primarily its value as the national language which matters.

²⁰ Ngunga's works on Yao are a good example, as they are tailored to suit the needs of the programme (Ngunga 2011).

²¹ The sociological impact of African churches might need to be taken in consideration as writing is characteristic of mainstream religions.

²² However, even with cell-phones, there might be hope: in SA, chat-rooms websites exhibit a lively recourse to African languages and the same might surge in Mozambique, provided literacy has been taught.

growing need for English as the regional cum global language (p130).²³ In a situation where a 'minority' language is spoken, it may mean that, besides Portuguese, besides the unproblematic spontaneous use of another local language of wider currency, its speakers will have to learn it formally. To claim that that *all* local languages should attain a similar level of use is mere lip-service to political correctness, as the development of Swahili in Tanzania shows. Swahili would never have reached its present position if it had been made a political prerequisite that several other languages (or even one) should follow suite at the same pace.

Not unexpectedly, the programme, through the modernisation it brings to the languages, opens to a debate on language ownership, opposing centralism to grassroots democracy. Whose voice should prevail, that of the centre, represented in the matter by the linguists from the state University (University Eduardo Mondlane, UEM), who may or may not be speakers of the language, or that of the communities concerned, embodied by its few literate members, often hailing from churches and/or the traditional leadership? The debate flares up particularly in the fields of orthography and terminology. New official spelling systems propounded by linguists are meant to harmonize conventions across the country and possibly, as the case may be, across borders, while doing away with the Europe-centred systems dating back to the days of the missionaries.²⁴ As it happens, some already literate community members object to changes. They may be altogether reluctant to alter their habits and/or motivated by ideology often covered in a linguistic shield. They claim the new system does not do justice to their language (for Chope see p135). In contexts where languages do not have well grounded and accepted standardized orthographies, such debate often expresses claims about group identity (see Cahill 2011). Occasionally, debates have been sustained, no party being prepared to cede. Chimbutane salutes the fact that linguists cannot always impose their views since, in the new dispensation, the grassroots level has also its say, even if there seems to be a priori respect and acceptance of the norm, possibly a

23 The 1997 education reform made provision for the teaching of African languages to non-speakers as a discipline from gr 7 but this has not been implemented yet. This is regrettable as it would boost their status tremendously (see Lafon 2010 for an extensive development of the same argument in South Africa).

²⁴ After a Nelimo seminar in Maputo in 2006 the idea of an harmonization of spelling conventions of all languages across the country was more or less abandoned in favour of regional ones, more apt to take into account practices of neighbouring countries (Ibis 2006). Many Mozambican languages, spoken also in neighbouring countries, have benefited from an instrumentalization there.

legacy of the centralised past (p163). But the disagreements may impact negatively on literary production, as has happened for Mwani and Nyanja (Veloso, quoted p135 and Lafon 2004).

Furthermore, the PC mantra that Africa lags behind development-wise because of the oblivion of local languages which impacts negatively on education and contributes to the disempowerment of Africans, echoed here (p31), needs, I feel, to be challenged. The overall poverty in Africa has more to do with power relations between the South and the North (or the West) than with inappropriate ideological choices of Moi or even overall poor quality education. Protracted direct exploitation during the colonial era has led to a state of neo-imperialism which dictates, much as efficiently as before if possibly less bluntly, unfavourable terms of exchange whereby resources from the South, and particularly from rural areas, are constantly undervalued. Using African languages at all levels of society cannot suffice in itself to combat a situation rooted in Western dominance, eventually buttressed on economic and military might. Mubutu's defunct politics of authenticity, where the recourse to a few local languages brought little solace to a populace otherwise left to fend for itself by a failed and corrupt state, acting much as a puppet of the former colonial master and its powerful allies, is a sobering example. However, and to end on a note of hope, the financial crisis the world is experiencing which saw African economies fare rather better than most western ones due to their limited integration in the world finance, may contribute to free African opinion from a largely self-imposed intellectual dependency as the world order influences local elites into following an unimaginative, self-depreciatory and eventually hopeless mimicking of the West. Obviously the presence of African languages in schools could ignite and fuel the process. But for this to make sense, education needs to move away from copying a foreign model in contents, pedagogy and aims, so that the cultural heritage embedded in the languages and carried by them can play its part as a resource and an inspiration for the future.²⁵ Languages need to be taken as bearers of culture and not as mere vehicles, through translation, of imported concepts. They must be regarded as useful components in the search for viable strategies to bring about a locally defined model of sustainable development.

25 Hanf et al. go as far as positing western-model education as an obstacle to development in Africa and Asia (1975:69).

Morrow, writing in 1990 about post-apartheid South Africa noted that not enough time had elapsed for a significant reshaping of the education system. In Mozambique and elsewhere, and probably in South Africa now, this surely is attainable. The twofold crucial question then is whether African countries have the means and the courage to break away from western impositions, including that of the development and education models and tread their own path, and whether, should they choose to do so, the West will let them be.²⁶ Chimbutane's contribution shows that, against all odds, it could be that this process has started, however modestly, in Mozambique.

References

- [Ibis Mozambique] 2006. Discussion paper. *International Conference on Bilingual Education* (ed): 9.
- Alexander, Neville 1993. *Some are more equal than others : essays on the transition in South Africa* Cape Town: Buchu Books.
- Alexander, Neville 2003. *The Intellectualisation of African Languages, the African Academy of Languages and the Implementation of the Language Plan of Action for Africa*. 62p.
- Alidou, Hassana 2004. *Medium of Instruction in Post-Colonial Africa*. in J. W. Tollefson and A. B. Tsui (ed): *Medium of Instruction policies: which agenda? whose agenda?:* Mahwah, NJ & Erlbaum, L. 195-213
- Benrabah, Mohamed 2007. *The Language planning and policy in Algeria*. in R. B. Baldauf and R. B. Kaplan (ed): *Language planning and policy: Africa*. Clevedon ; Buffalo: Multilingual Matters. vol 2, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Tunisia 25-148. <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/cul/resolve?clio8758310>
- Cahen, Michel 1987. *Mozambique, la révolution imposée : études sur 12 ans d'indépendance, 1975-1987* Paris: L'Harmattan. 170p.
- Cahill, Michael 2011. *Non-linguistic factors in Orthographies. Symposium on Developing Orthographies for Unwritten Languages - Annual Meeting, Linguistic Society of America* (ed): 6.
- Cruz e Silva, Teresa 2001. *Igrejas Protestantes e Consciência Política no Sul de Moçambique: O caso da Missão Suíça (1930-1974)* Maputo: Promedia. 286p.
- Firmino, Gregório 2005. *A "Questão Linguística" na África pós-colonial. O caso do Português e das línguas Autóctones em Moçambique* Maputo: Texto Editores.
- Geffray, Christian 1990. *La cause des armes au Mozambique : anthropologie d'une guerre civile* Paris; Nairobi: Karthala CRELU.
- Hall, Margaret and Tom Young 1997. *Confronting Leviathan : Mozambique since independence* Athens: Ohio University Press. x, 262 p.p.
- Hanf, Theodor , Karl Ammann, et al. 1975. *Education: An obstacle to Development? Some Remarks about the Political Functions of Education in Asia and Africa Comparative Education* 19(1): 68-87.
- Harries, Patrick 2007. *Butterflies & barbarians : Swiss missionaries & systems of knowledge in South-East Africa* Oxford: Harare, Johannesburg, Athens: James Currey ; Weaver Press ; Wits University Press ; Ohio University Press. xvii, 286p.
- Heugh, Kathleen 1999. *Languages, development and reconstructing education in South Africa. Int. J. of Educationnal Development* 19: 301-313.
- Isaacman, Allen F. and Barbara Isaacman 1983. *Mozambique : from colonialism to revolution, 1900-1982* Boulder, Colo. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Westview Press ; Gower. xii, 235 p.p.

²⁶ Many authors have signalled the part played by international organisations in the promotion of international languages, including the ambiguous role of the World Bank (Mazrui 1997, Heugh 1999).

- Lafon, Michel 2004. Visite de classes bilingues dans les provinces du Niassa et du cabo-Delgado - évaluation de l'ensemble du programme. Progresso Maputo: 30p. (<http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00184986/fr/>)
- Lafon, Michel 2008. Mozambique, vers la reconnaissance de la réalité plurilingue par l'introduction de l'éducation bilingue. in H. Tourneux (ed): *Langues, Cultures et Développement*. Paris: Karthala 217-250. (<http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00315939/fr/>)
- Lafon, Michel 2010. Promoting Social cum Racial Integration in South Africa by Making an African Language a National Senior Certificate Pass Requirement. Sibe simunye at last! *AlterNation, Jrnal of the Cter for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages* 17(1): 417-443.
- Lafon, Michel [in press]. Educação Bilingue em Moçambique: Interesse Popular Ultrapassa a Timidez Inicial do Programa. in F. Chimbutane and C. Stroud (ed). Maputo
- Lafon, Michel [in press]. L'Envers du Décor. Les Politiques Coloniales relatives à l'usages des Langues africaines à l'école continuent de commander les Attitudes. Contrastes entre Afrique du Sud et Mozambique, *Plurilinguisme, politique linguistique et éducative; quels éclairages pour Mayotte?*, Dzaoudzi, Mayotte.
- Lopes, Armindo Jorge 1998. Universities and research : papers from Maputo : II UEM Research Seminar, Eduardo Mondlane University Maputo, Mozambique, 28-30. IV.1998 Maputo: Livraria Universitaria.
- Louw, P.E. 2004. Anglicising post-apartheid South Africa. *Jrnal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development* 25(4): 318-332.
- Matusse, Renato 1994. The future of Portuguese in Mozambique. *African Linguistics at the Crossroads*, Kwaluseni, Swaziland.
- Mazrui, Alamin 1997 The World bank, the language questio and the future of African education. *Race and Class* 38, 35- GALE|A19159532: GALE|A19159532
http://go.galegroup.com/ps/ii.do?&id=GALE%7CA19159532&v=2.1&u=up_itw&it=r&p=AONE&sw=W
- Mondlane, Eduardo 1979. Mozambique, de la colonisation portugaise à la libération nationale P. Centre d'Information sur le Mozambique trad Paris: L'Harmattan. 258p.
- Moreira, José 1997. Os Assimilados, João Albasini e as Eleições 1900-1922 Maputo. 224p.
- Mugomba, Agrippah T. 1981. Revolutionary Development and Educational Decolonization in Mozambique. in A. T. Mugomba and M. Nyaggah (ed): *Independence without Freedom - The Political Economy of Colonial Education in Southern Africa* Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio 214-225
- Ndletyana, Mcebisi 2008. African Intellectuals in 19th and early 20th century South Africa Cape Town: HSRC.
- Newitt, Malyn D. 1995. A history of Mozambique Bloomington: Indiana University Press. xxii, 679p.
- Ngunga, Armindo 2011. Pequeno Dicionario Ciyaawo - Português Português - Ciyaawo Maputo: Progresso.
- Orwell, George 1954. Animal farm New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Penvenne, Jeanne 1989. 'We are all Portuguese!' Challenging the Political Economy of Assimilation: Lourenço Marquès, 1870-1933. in L. Vail (ed): *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* 256-281
- Praah, Kwasi Kwaa 2011. The Language of Development and the Development of Language in Contemporary Africa. *Annual Conference of the Amercian Association for Applied Linguistics* (ed): 17.
- Rocha, Aurelio 2006. Associativismo e Nativismo em Moçambique - Contribuição para o estudo das Origens do Nacionalismo Moçambicano Maputo: Texto Editores. 287p.
- Rothwell, Philip 2001. The phylomorphic linguistic tradition: or, the siege of the Portuguese in Mozambique *Hispanic Research Jrnal* 2(2): 165-176.
- Siteo, Bento 1996. Dicionario Changana-Portugès Maputo: Instituto Nacional do Desenvolvimento da Educaç~ao.
- Stroud, Christopher 1999. Portuguese as ideology and politics in Mozambique: semiotic (re)constructions of a postcolony. in J. Blommaert (ed): *Language Ideological Debates*: Mouton de Gruyter 343-380

- Stroud, Christopher 2003. Postmodernist Perspectives on Local Languages: Africa Mother-tongue Education in Times of Globalisation *Internat Jrrnal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 6(1): 17-36.
- Stroud, Christopher 2007. Bilingualism: Colonialism and postcolonialism. in M. Heller (ed): *Bilingualism: A Social Approach*. Londres: Palgrave 25-49
- Tsui, Amy B. and James W. Tollefson 2004. The Centrality of Medium-of-Instruction Policy in Sociopolitical Processes. in J. W. Tollefson and A. B. Tsui (ed): *Medium of Instruction policies: which agenda? whose agenda?:* Mahwah; Erlbaum 1-20
- Webb, Vic 2006. The non use of African languages in education in Africa. in C. Van der Walt (ed): *Living through languages - An African tribute to René Dirven*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press 131-146