Conventions de notation pour les consonnes

/r/ consonne spirante, variante uvulaire
[w] variante non syllabique de /l/, très rarement de /r/
/y/ consonne palatale orale
/ž/ consonne palatale nasalisée
/ʒ/ consonne chuintante complexe, sourde, réalisée avec protrusion des lèvres, distincte de la chuintante à la française /S/
/z/ partenaire sonore de /ʒ/
/s/ consonne sifflante apico-alvéolaire sourde, de réalisation intermédiaire entre s et S.
/s/ partenaire sonore de ʒ

Christina THORNELL
ATTITUDES TOWARDS FRENCH AND SANGO AS LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this investigation is to study the attitudes towards French and Sango as languages of instruction in the Central African Republic (CAR). CAR, with a population of 3 million, is a multilingual nation. Besides the ethnic languages, French and the *lingua franca* Sango are used. Both French and Sango are the official languages (Sango since February 1991).

The French language was introduced in CAR when the area was colonized by the French in the late nineteenth century. CAR became independent in 1960. In new-born nations it sometimes happens that the language of the former masters is rejected, and a *lingua franca* or an ethnic language takes its place. This happened for example in Tanzania quite soon after that country gained its independence from Great Britain, where the widespread *lingua franca* Swahili replaced English. This rejection of English was an expression of nationalistic feelings. The replacement of English - a language that few mastered, by Swahili - which the majority of the population could speak, was also in accordance with the democratic policy that Tanzania adopted.

In CAR the colonists' language, French, has not been replaced by Sango, the *lingua franca*, in spite of the fact that Sango was declared to be the national language in 1960 (Samarin / Diki-Kidiri, 1978). All formal education is given in French, and only some non-formal education is given in Sango. In 1984 new directions for education at all levels were given by President Kolingba. The main directive was:

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"L'enseignement est donné en français langue officielle et en sango langue nationale" (art.36).

This guideline allows Sango to be introduced at school but nothing is said about how and to what extent.

Pedagogical institutions and linguistic institutions are setting up programmes in order to carry out the 1984 decree. However, the headmasters and teachers I have spoken to are unaware of the Sango programmes. They continue to apply the 1975 curriculum. In this curriculum, the only guideline concerning language teaching and language use is the following (Mackfoy, 1975 : 7) : it is recommended that

"les méthodes pédagogiques de l'enseignement du français soient plus étroitement adaptées aux conditions actuelles et améliorées. Elle [the guideline] précise que cet enseignement s'adresse à des enfants dont la langue maternelle n'est pas le français".

The curriculum designers seem to be conscious of the children's ignorance of French and therefore advise the teachers to adapt their methods. However, nothing is said about the use of Sango. In the classes I have observed, at the lowest level teachers explain French words and constructions in Sango. At other levels there is a minimum of Sango.

In view of my observations during ten years, work in CAR and of the background supplied in section 2., I have come to the conclusion that Central Africans in general are quite satisfied with French as the main medium of instruction. I believe that they don't want a radical change of language use. They may want children to be taught to read and write Sango, but it seems clear that they want French to continue to be the main medium of instruction at school. There are several reasons for this feeling of satisfaction with the way things are. Attitudes towards French and Sango in general appear to be consistent with the attitudes towards these languages in school. In this study I will focus on the following general attitudes towards French and Sango:

- French as the official language of the country is seen as a part of Central African culture.
- Central Africans are aware that French is a language of wider communication, that it is a language not restricted to one country, while Sango is a language at the national level.
- French is seen as a more prestigious language than Sango. By "prestigious language" I mean a language that gives a high status to the individual that masters it. Central African society is hierarchically built. In the past, it was mostly the person's age that indicated his/her position in the social system, but today it seems increasingly to be the socio-economic status of an individual that counts. The higher the socio-economic status, the higher the position in the system. To advance socially in CAR, one has to learn French.
- Knowledge and development are connected with the French language. Knowledge and development seem to be linked to formal education, which is given in French (see 2.2.).
- French is seen as a more "complete" language than Sango. That is to say, French has more functions than Sango.

These views are supported by the findings of a study I undertook in CAR in 1990, mainly in Carnot - an economically important town in the western part of the country, but similar attitudes can be found in other post-colonial societies (e.g. Haiti, Tanzania). I would like to emphasize that this study is to be seen as a preliminary investigation.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The multilingual situation

The population of CAR is divided into a large number of ethnic groups. Their languages belong to different language-families: the Niger-Congo family, the Nilo-Saharan family and Afroasiatic families. Most of them belong to the Niger-Congo family.

Each ethnic group traditionally has its own geographical area. Nowadays the mobility of the population is considerable. An important part of this is in the direction of Bangui - the political, administrative, economic and educational centre, but there are even some villages where many ethnic groups are gathered because of diamond-mining, forestry or trade. This multi-ethnic situation and the multilingual situation that results from it can cause problems on different levels of the society.

*French*

The French colonizers introduced the French language into administration and education and considered they had solved the problem of communication. This is what emerges from Brel's 1918. In school education, languages other than French were forbidden. The pupils were not allowed to speak the language of their ethnic group or Sango even in the school-yard. If they did, they were punished. This was going on at least in some areas as late as in the sixties (i.e. even after independence).

In general, one does not hear much French spoken in CAR in public
places in the towns and still less in the villages. In Bangui, however, Wenezou (1981) found that 50% of her sample knew French more or less. They were people who had gone to school. It seems to me however that very few have French as their first language and few use it at home regularly. According to my observations this concerns even people with higher socio-economic status. French is used above all in the ministries and other public bodies as well as school education and as the preferred written medium (see 2.3.).

Sango

The most widespread language in CAR is the lingua franca Sango. It is a recently created language, based on a Ngbandi language. The activities of the Europeans led to the diffusion of Sango, mainly along the trade-roads and in posts of administration. Today Sango is spoken more or less by the majority of the population. But there are still people, especially older persons, who do not speak it.

Studies of language use

To my knowledge, not many studies have been made of language-use in CAR. I will mention two, namely Jacquot (1961) and Wenezou (1981). Both were undertaken in Bangui - but in different areas of the city. The conclusion of these two studies is that the importance of Sango has increased during the last twenty years in Bangui. Its function nowadays is more than that of a lingua franca.

As for the role of the ethnic languages, it seems to be diminishing, given the number of speakers and situations in which they are used. I think, however, that Arabic is an exception to this trend. There is no loss of Arabic in favor of Sango, French or any ethnic language. Arabs are very keen for their children to learn Arabic and then French. They even seem to pick up Sango with their play-mates.

2.2. School-education

There are three forms of school education in CAR, namely formal education, non-formal education e.g. literacy-classes and Koran school.

Formal education

Formal education includes primary (6 years) and secondary school (7 years). Most formal education is public. Primary school is supposed to be compulsory but in reality this isn't implemented. The percentage of children at school between 6 and 14 didn't exceed 50% for the whole of CAR until 1980. The percentage of children at school varies in different parts of the country. It's highest in the capital, more than 65%. In the district where I carried out my survey the percentage is 35-45% (Bouquet, 1984).

A considerable part of the state budget (24%) is set aside for education (Annuaire des statistiques 1987-1988). In spite of this there seem to be many difficulties basically due to lack of money. These difficulties among others affect the learning results. About 40% of pupils in the district of Carnot repeated a grade in 1989. Many children in primary school never finish school. Many drop out after 2-3 years.

On the secondary school level the total number of students is about 40000 (1987-88), which is considerably smaller than at the primary school level (280000). About 6600 go on to higher education, e.g. at the university of Bangui or at teacher-training colleges. Besides this, 740 are studying abroad, mainly in France (41%) or another French-speaking country (54%).

Non-formal education

Non-formal education or literacy classes are generally given in Sango. This form of education is intended for people who haven't had the opportunity to go to school or for those who haven't succeeded in learning to read and write in primary school. This is a considerable percentage of the population. Wenezou (1981) found that 50% of the whole sample (500 subjects) were illiterate, including 77% of the women. Among the younger women (under 25 years) literacy was more widespread than among the older (over 55 years). In the provinces the percentage of illiterate persons is higher. It's rare for illiterate people to speak French.

Literacy classes are most often organized by Christian denominations and are part of their weekly activities. There are several literacy programmes. Every major denomination has its own programme. There is also a public office of literacy in the capital Bangui (Ministère de l’Alphabétisation). This office is devising a standard programme and is revising programmes developed earlier. These programmes had adopted a functional method. This
office of literacy doesn't organize any classes at the moment.

*Koran school*

The Koran school is of two kinds. One teaches all general subjects in Arabic and the reading and recitation of the Koran. In the other kind of Koran school only reading, writing and recitation of the Koran is taught. This latter kind is more widespread than the first. The Koran school is attended by Muslim children mainly Arabs. Arab children, at least the boys, attend the public school in addition to the Koran school.

2.3. Literature and mass media

Literature is of marginal importance in CAR as is the mass-media, except for radio broadcasts. This is not surprising considering the high percentage of illiterates in the country. The access to literature isn't great. There are bookshops, especially in the capital Bangui. In these you can find books, magazines and newspapers in French but not in Sango. In the markets and in the streets there are also "librairies du soleil" or "librairies par terre". They very often sell second-hand books.

In the provinces the situation is rather different. In Carnot, a town of 25000 inhabitants, there is no bookshop. This means that it's hard to find a schoolbook for example. As far as novels are concerned, I noticed a handful of paperback books in French at the general shop. You rarely find a newspaper or a magazine. It's easier to find literature published by Christian denominations. This literature is mostly in Sango, but there is also some imported in French. Muslim literature in Arabic is always available outside the mosques.

Radio Bangui is very popular among all Central African people. It started in 1958. At first most programmes were in French. Now, however, the broadcasts are 70% in Sango and 30% in French. The broadcasting time is 129.5 hours a week (Tchakongo, 1988). Besides Radio Bangui, Afrika n° 1 (Gaboon) and France International, which broadcast in French, are appreciated.

Television in CAR started in 1974. The programmes are given in French or Sango. Television doesn't seem to have a great impact on the Central African society for obvious reasons. It's limited to the Bangui area and to certain groups there.

2.4. The standardization of Sango

A standardized language is a language that has prescribed norms. These norms can be authorized by the government. According to Haugen (1983), standardization concerns the status of the language, codification and elaboration of the language.

As regards Sango, the official processes of standardization have just begun. Sango had no official language status since March 1991 alongside French, but the language used in government, the national assembly, ministries and public offices is still French. The laws and decrees are written in French. The intention however is to translate the laws into Sango, at least certain laws, e.g. the criminal legislation. As far as the ethnic languages are concerned, they have been promoted to national languages.

Sango has now been recognized as a medium of instruction in primary school together with French since 1984 but its role has not been specified. It seems to me that the people who work on status-planning are striving for equal status between French and Sango.

The codification and elaboration of Sango is now largely being taken care of at the Institut de Linguistique Appliquée (ILA). Some linguists at ILA have worked on the creation of a phonemic writing-system and the orthography of Sango. There was a need for this because different orthographies existed for Sango and still exist. The result of these linguists' work was used as a basis for the decree "Code de l'orthographe officielle du Sango" in 1984 by president Kolingba. This was the first serious attempt to unify the different existing orthographies.

The focus of the work at ILA is on the vocabulary of Sango. They have several ongoing projects, e.g. LEXIS, which has in view to adapt the vocabulary of Sango to a modern society and DIOR, whose aim is to devise a spelling dictionary, in order to provide a norm for written Sango.

As far as I can see, there is no project concerning the grammaticalization or stylistic development of Sango. There is no normative grammar of Sango, that is, a grammar that is officially recognized as a norm of Sango. The grammars that have been published are descriptive, e.g. Tisserant (1950), Kerux-San-Younou (1950), Samaran (1967) and Diki-Kidiri (1977).

It will take time before Sango is standardized and still more time before the language planning of Sango is implemented.
3. THEORETICAL VIEWPOINTS

In this section I will first give a definition of one of the central concepts in this study, namely the concept of "attitude". Attitudes towards language will then be discussed and finally some of their consequences.

3.1. Definition of the concept of attitude

An attitude is a relation between an individual and some phenomenon. This relation can be analysed in a cognitive, an emotive and a conative component. This is a classical definition (see for example, Allwood et al., 1988).

Thus an attitude is a complex unit. The cognitive component supplies the attitude with a factual content. The emotive component relates the attitude to the feelings of the individual. And the conative component connects an attitude with an individual's dispositions to act. An attitude contains more or less of the components just mentioned. For instance, in the attitude of belief and knowing, the cognitive component dominates, while in the attitude that expresses liking the emotive component dominates. Thus belief and liking are hyponyms to attitude. The attitudes I mentioned in the Introduction can, since the cognitive component dominates, be considered as beliefs.

The three components which make up the attitude, are linked to each other, according to Allwood et al (1988). They influence each other, which means among other things that a person having a certain attitude tends to act in accordance with this attitude. Attitudes usually have a great influence on the behavior of an individual.

Most attitudes are learnt, some very early and others later. They are more or less conscious.

As mentioned above, an attitude is a relation between an individual and a phenomenon. In this relation we have to take into account factors in the situation of the individual, e.g. activities, needs, aims, resources. Besides this, one must consider factors in the society of the individual, e.g. social structures and ideologies. The attitudes of an individual are therefore not necessarily stable: they can vary or change as the above mentioned factors change. Another consequence of these factors is that an attitude doesn't necessarily mirror real facts. It can be a false belief:

- a belief that doesn't correspond to reality, a prejudice;
- a false belief that is deprecating or a stereotyped attitude;
- an attitude that is generalized.

3.2. Attitudes towards language

The attitudes I will focus upon are those towards language. According to the definition above, the focus is upon the relation between an individual and various languages. Many linguists, e.g. J. Fishman, W. Lambert and J. Rubin to mention but a few, have undertaken studies on this subject. Grosjean (1982) gives an overview of such studies, interesting and useful for my own purposes.

Haugen (1956) quoted by Grosjean (1982) says:

"Whatever languages are in contact, one is likely to find certain prevalent attitudes of favor and disfavor towards the languages involved".

It often seems in a bi- or multilingual society that one language is more dominant than the other. This doesn't necessarily mean that the majority of the people speak it, it can be a minority, but it is considered as a more prestigious language. This language is spoken by those who hold the political, economic and cultural power in the society in question. To advance in such a society, the individual has to learn that language. The other language is considered inferior. These attitudes are in general shared by the whole population. Such bi- or multilingual societies are very common. Peru is an example. Here, Spanish is the dominant language, spoken by the educated middle and upper classes while Quechua has less prestige and is spoken by the uneducated.

Often the dominant or prestigious language is seen by the people as more beautiful and more grammatical than the other languages in the society. They think, for example, that the vocabulary is larger and that abstract thoughts are more easily expressed in it. Such is the attitude towards classical Arabic in most Arabic countries. Dialect Arabic is considered poor and ungrammatical.

In the examples given above, the dominant languages are world-languages while the inferior languages are native languages. The dominant language was introduced into the society by conquerors or colonizers often long ago. Therefore the dominant language, even if its origin isn't native, can be considered as a part of the culture of the society in question.

Attitudes towards languages can change as a result of changes in the social structures or changes of ideologies. This has been observed concerning language-attitudes in Paraguay and Tanzania, fo example, according to Grosjean (1982).

In Paraguay there are two main languages, Spanish and Guarani. Spanish has traditionally been considered as the dominant language, while Guarani is seen as inferior in many aspects. Some years ago, however, Guarani was recognized as a national language. Rhodes (1980) reported in Grosjean (1982)
found that, since Guarani's recognition as national language, attitudes towards it have changed in a positive direction. The majority of the subjects in Rhodes' survey want it to become a language of instruction. More than half of the subjects thought that speaking Guarani was a sign of being a true Paraguayan.

In Tanzania, Grosjean (1982) points out that Swahili is now considered as more prestigious than it was before independence; however, it still isn't considered as positively as English. It seems that since that time the attitude towards Swahili has changed once more: it has lost some of its prestige according to some educated Tanzanians. This is probably due to political changes among other things.

3.3. Consequences of language-attitudes

What are the behavioral consequences of attitudes towards language? Below I'll mention some of the more important ones.

- A striving to learn the more prestigious language. If this is impossible for the individual himself, he is eager to do everything to enable his children to learn it. For example, in Tanzania parents consider it very important for their children to learn English, the most prestigious language. They are not satisfied with Swahili as the language of instruction in primary school (Rubagumya, 1986). They want Tanzanian children to advance socially. A result of this attitude may be that their children don't master their parents' first language.

- A reluctance on behalf of native speakers of the prestigious language to learn the less prestigious language. For example, in Haiti, Creole is not learnt by French-speakers.

- The prestigious language is spoken as often as possible. This can exclude those who don't master the prestigious language well from taking part in discussions etc. In the long run this can lead to the emergence of ingroups and outgroups.

- Borrowing words from the prestigious language and code-switching in favor of the prestigious language, when speaking the less prestigious language. This can give the impression that the latter language isn't complete or enhance the status of the speaker.

With these theoretical viewpoints and the background knowledge of CAR given in section 2, I set up the following assumptions for this study.

- French is seen as a language of wider communication,
- French is seen as a more prestigious language than Sango,
- French is seen as the language of knowledge and development,

- French is seen as a more "complete" language than Sango,
- French is seen as a part of Central African culture.

4. METHOD

The method used was interviews, most of them tape-recorded. The spoken language was mainly Sango. As attitudes can vary with the situation of the individual, I'll focus upon three categories, namely parents, teachers and young people (7 in each group).

In the language use of the three categories there are several similarities. They all know Sango and use it in everyday interactions. They know French, all except one. This they have learnt at school. Knowing French is however not representative of the population of CAR. French is limited to studies and interaction with colleagues or schoolmates.

One difference is that some young people can't speak the language of their ethnic group - not at all or not satisfactorily. The others use their ethnic language with those who know it and in certain contexts. Another difference is that the young people seem to have learnt Sango before their ethnic language.

5. RESULTS

In this section I am going to examine which languages the informants preferred in teaching and which languages they wanted to be taught, the reasons for this preference for the medium of instruction, and whether the reasons vary between the three categories in my sample. I will also see if the reasons correspond to reality. The level of concern is elementary school.

5.1. The preferred languages at school

5.1.1. Can French be omitted from the school curriculum?

All subjects in the three groups agreed that to omit French from the school curriculum was impossible. This shows that French is important, but it doesn't show how important it is compared with Sango. Table 1 below shows the informants' responses to the question: which languages do you want to be used in the schools?
Table 1 - The suggested teaching-language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>language</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th>youth</th>
<th>teachers</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sango</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa + Fr</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 1 informant (a teenager) chose French as the only teaching-language. He expressed his standpoint very clearly. No informant would see Sango as the only teaching language. The majority in all three groups wanted both French and Sango at school.

5.1.2. The preferred medium of instruction

Table 1 above doesn't tell us how and to what extent the informants think French and Sango should be used. A summary of this is, however, given in table 2 below.

Table 2 - Preferred medium of instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>language</th>
<th>parents</th>
<th>youth</th>
<th>teachers</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sango</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr + Sa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority in all groups selected French as the preferred medium of instruction at school or as the main language. Most of them also wanted Sango as we have already seen in table 1. But Sango was seen as less important.

I tried to find out how the informants wanted Sango to be used. The teachers were the ones who had the clearest ideas about this. Those who considered Sango as a second language would use it to explain the French, when the pupils didn't understand. The use of Sango would diminish as the pupils' knowledge of French improved. Only one of these teachers would allow pupils to take their examinations in Sango in the sixth grade. This teacher was the only one who wanted Sango to be studied as a subject.

The parent and the two teachers who chose Sango as the main language expressed themselves clearly. For them French would be the second language. The two teachers had only recently completed their professional education, during which questions concerning Sango had been discussed.

The parent who considered Sango as important as French would like to see Sango taught as a subject even at the secondary and high-school level. The teacher who ranked Sango and French equally was a pedagogical supervisor. Among the young people, most of them wanted Sango as a "help" language in the lower grades as well as learning to read and write in it. Only one teenager said that he would like subjects such as history and geography to be taught in Sango up to the sixth grade.

A majority of informants in the three groups of my sample thought it was a good thing to learn to read and write in Sango, but that the main medium should be French. Sango should be learnt in the first classes. Thus I found clear evidence for one of the hypotheses outlined in the Introduction.

5.2. Some reasons for the preference for French

The reasons for the preference for French could mainly be categorized into attitudes and pedagogical aspects. Most of the informants' answers were related to attitudes. These attitudes (or rather beliefs) were the same as those mentioned in section 3.3. All the beliefs can be categorized into the five categories listed in table 3.

5.2.1 Prevalence of the beliefs

Table 3 below gives an overview of the prevalence of the beliefs among those I have proposed in this study.
Table 3 - Prevalence of beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beliefs</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French as language of:</td>
<td>parents</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- wider communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- more prestige than Sango</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- knowledge and development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- of more completeness than Sango</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Central African culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of informants: 21
In each group: 7

Let us first look at the prevalence of beliefs seen as a whole. We see that the attitudes are ranked according to their prevalence. The most common belief is that French is considered to be a language of wider communication. Second most common is the belief that French is a more prestigious language. French seen as the language of knowledge and development is the third most frequent one. The least frequent ones are French seen as a more "complete" language than Sango and French seen as a part of Central African culture.

If we examine the beliefs for each group, we find that the ranking of the beliefs for the groups as a whole doesn’t hold for each individual group. There are some interesting differences.

5.2.2. Comparison between the categories

The most outstanding difference between the three groups concerns French as a language of prestige. It is considered to be so by all the young people, by a majority of the parents, but by less than 50% of the teachers. Why this difference?

Parents know and teenagers know even better that to get a job with high socio-economic status one must succeed in one’s studies, which are carried out in French, and that the exams to be passed are always in French. But are not the teachers conscious of this? Three of them express this. It’s possible that the others also are but they don’t want to admit it, because in that case they would acknowledge that they themselves had advantages over other Central Africans. These 3 teachers were trained after independence. Sango seems to be associated with nationalistic feelings. I think these teachers have a desire to identify with the independent nation CAR. These 3 teachers also had some courses in Sango during their teacher-training.

The teachers who thought French had socio-economic advantages over Sango had been trained during colonial time when the policy rule was one of assimilation. They learned that their culture, including their language, was inferior compared to French. To advance socially they had to learn French. Thus they have been trained to identify with France and they haven’t changed their ideas. They don’t seem to be influenced by nationalism to the same extent as the other teachers.

Concerning differences between the teachers and the two other categories in the prevalence of the belief that French is seen as a part of the Central African culture, this is possibly due to the same factors as the belief mentioned above. Those who thought that French was a part of Central African culture were trained before independence, and all the other ones were trained afterwards.

All the parents and adolescents in our sample were brought up after independence and have strong nationalistic feelings linked to the independent CAR. On national days, for example, they have been reminded of their own Central African culture and of their national language, Sango.

French seen as a more "complete" language than Sango shows the same difference in prevalence as French seen as a part of the Central African culture. It’s interesting to note that, as earlier, it’s the older teachers who think that French is more "complete". Perhaps even this is due to their feelings for French culture. Another reason is that all the parents have learnt to read and write in Sango - most of the young people too, but not the teachers. Those teachers who had courses in Sango did not deal with the language itself, or the writing-system, but rather socio-linguistic aspects of the language. Most parents have also learned the grammar of Sango to a certain extent. A third reason is that the completeness of French and Sango wasn’t a question that the other two groups had thought about or discussed.

French stands out as a language of knowledge and development most prominently among teenagers and teachers. I think that for them knowledge and development are associated with the West and it’s given in formal education in French. All parents have been taught the same sort of knowledge in Sango that is given in formal education. Therefore I think that for parents...
3. Advantages of Sango

In my interviews I also asked what the advantages of Sango were. It was sometimes hard for the informants to express their views about this, even harder than to talk about the advantages of French.

The opinions were few and did not vary. The informants said that Sango had advantages but that these advantages were limited to CAR. The most common answer was that Sango was the national language. Thus it was seen as a part of Central African culture. It was also pointed out that Sango had a wider function than the ethnic languages but not as wide as French.

Several assumed that Sango was spoken by the whole population, which was not the case for French. And a teacher emphasized that Sango "touche jusqu'à la dernière couche sociale".

4. The beliefs about French and Sango in the light of the situation in CAR

A belief can correspond to the real situation or it can be false. In this section I'll compare the beliefs towards French and Sango with the situation in CAR as presented in section 2.

The view of French as a language of wider communication than Sango was a very frequent belief. It is obvious that French is a language of wider communication, in a global perspective. But in CAR, knowledge of French is limited to certain groups. Within CAR the language of wider communication is Sango, which almost everyone speaks. The conclusion is that both French and Sango can be considered to be languages of wider communication, but at different levels. One language cannot be excluded at the expense of the other. Thus the belief that French is the only language of wider communication doesn't correspond fully to the real situation.

French was seen as a more prestigious language than Sango. It's very often the language spoken by the upper classes, rare as a first language but used in certain situations, e.g. with other members of the same high social group. That French is a more prestigious language than Sango is evident. As we saw earlier, French is used by rather few people. But they all have had a relatively long school education. French is also used in official contexts. Thus the belief that French is a prestigious language cannot be considered to be false. However, among the teachers there were some that thought that French wasn't more prestigious than Sango. This I find is a false belief.

The view that French is the language of knowledge and development was expressed by almost half of the subjects - especially the young people and the teachers.

As mentioned in section 2, in 2.1, all formal education is in French as well as much of the literature. Formal education has adopted the Western model. It seems to me that most informants limited the concept of knowledge to the Western view of it. They forget their own native knowledge, which is made available through an ethnic language or through Sango. Much knowledge is also spread in Sango through the medium of radio-broadcasts and non-formal education. As for the Arabs in CAR, they acquire a great deal of their knowledge through Arabic and by means of Arabic literature. Thus the belief that French is the only language of knowledge and development does not correspond to the real situation in CAR, if other types of knowledge than school-knowledge are to be considered.

French is seen as a more "complete" language than Sango by nearly a quarter of the informants. Not surprisingly it was especially the teachers that expressed this view. By a more "complete" language they meant that French had among other things more functions than Sango. For example, French has a long-established standardized written language. Sango is above all an oral language. As a written medium it's only partly standardized.

Concerning vocabulary, Sango, as a newly created language, is very limited. One must resort either to borrowing and code-switching, or long expressions or paraphrases. Probably because of the limited vocabulary, one subject thought that he lost something in the comprehension of a Sango utterance. The arguments that Sango is not as "complete" as French can be attributed to the fact that Sango is a newly created language and isn't yet standardized (see 2.4.).
That French is a part of Central African culture was a view especially common among teachers. The teachers pointed out - that CAR had adopted French civilisation, - that French is
"un souvenir de notre colonisation qu'on ne peut pas effacer. Nous sommes obligés de parler français".
This belief isn't shared by all subjects in my study. The others considered French to be a foreign language. In view of the influence of French in the history of CAR and the importance of French in the present situation in CAR, it can't be overlooked, any more than Sango as a part of present Central African culture.

6. CONCLUSION

In this study I set out to investigate the attitudes towards French and Sango as languages of instruction. This study ought to be seen as a first attempt, because it is limited in several respects. However, I found the following beliefs to be valid:
- French seen as a language of wider communication,
- French seen as a more prestigious language than Sango,
- French seen as a language of knowledge and development,
- French seen as a more "complete" language,
- French seen as a part of the culture of the Central African Republic.

The method I used to investigate the validity of my suggestions was interviews. They were carried out in Sango. I preferred this method to written inquiries or methods of scales (e.g. matched-guise scales), since some of the informants hadn't much Western schooling and consequently were not trained for such methods. The question of attitudes towards French and Sango was only a part of a more extensive interview. Most interviews were tape-recorded. The number of the informants was 21. As attitudes can vary with the situation of the individual, I chose three categories: parents, young people and teachers.

All informants but one had gone to elementary school. It's possible that this has influenced their attitudes. Attitudes can also vary according to who is asking the questions. As the informants knew that I was interested in Sango and that I like to speak Sango this may have affected their answers in favor of Sango.

All subjects except one teacher felt that French had advantages over Sango. All answers concerning beliefs could be assigned to the beliefs listed above. Seen as a whole the most common belief was that French is a language of wider communication. The ranking of occurrence of the other beliefs follows the order in which they are listed. Thus the least widespread belief was that French is a part of Central African culture. My initial hypotheses are borne out by my study.

However, among the three categories: parents, young people and teachers, the occurrence of a given belief was found to vary. The most widespread belief among parents and teachers was that French is a language of wider communication, while the most widespread belief among the young people was that French is a more prestigious language. This was the second most current belief among the parents. This belief was not very prevalent among the teachers and not more common than the remaining three beliefs, viz. that French is a language of knowledge and development, that French is a more "complete" language and that French is a part of Central African culture. The two last mentioned beliefs were even less current among the parents and the young people, while French seen as a language of knowledge and development was found to some extent among the teenagers but less among the parents.

This difference between teachers and the other two groups is interesting. There are probably many reasons for this. Let me mention some I think are important.
- Nationalistic feelings

All the informants, with the exception of some of the teachers grew up after independence. It seems that nationalistic feelings in many cases have influenced their beliefs, while those who grew up before this time are more tied to French culture.
- The language in which the informants learned to read and write.

The parents received much of it in Sango, but not so the teenagers and the teachers. Therefore, I think, French is not associated with knowledge and development for the parents in the same way as for the other groups.
- The socio-economic status of the informants

The situation of teachers is different from that of the other two groups. Teaching is a prestigious profession in CAR. None of the parents in the study has a similar position, nor have the teenagers. It is possible that the teachers fail to see the advantages of knowing French, because they are not hindered in their social advancement by language handicaps. It is also possible that they do not wish to acknowledge the advantages of having French which the majority
of the population lacks. Some teachers are however not consistent. They say that French has no socio-economic advantages over Sango, but they teach their pre-school children French to prepare them for the future. Consequently their actions don't seem to correspond to their attitudes. It would be interesting to study further this conflict between the verbally expressed attitude and the attitude showed in action.

Are the attitudes in my study grounded on real facts or not? I found that most of them were well-grounded (see 5.4.).

- French is a language of wider communication than Sango, if we are to consider the number of French-speaking people in the world. But the view that French is spoken everywhere abroad as many subjects claimed isn't true. This opinion is understandable. Central Africans' contacts with the rest of the world are mostly through the channel of French. They don't know much about the English-speaking world for example. In CAR French isn't the language of wider communication, it is rather Sango that is. Consequently, the following question arises: which language ought to be the language of instruction, the one of wider communication at the world-level or the one at the national level? This question is important for the language-planners to consider.

- French is a prestigious language. To advance socially, Central Africans have to master French. Thus I consider the teachers that deny this as blinding themselves the facts.

- French is the language of knowledge and of development? Yes, if knowledge and development are equated with certain types of Western knowledge and development. This is learnt in formal education in CAR and abroad - mostly in French-speaking countries. But Western knowledge is also acquired in Sango. However, knowledge shouldn't be restricted to its Western aspect. One must take into account for example the knowledge proper to Central African society that is transmitted in an ethnic language or in Sango and the knowledge transmitted by the medium of Arabic. Thus the belief that French is the only language of knowledge and development doesn't correspond to reality.

- It is true that French is a more "complete" language than Sango in the sense that Sango isn't fully standardized. It lacks, for example, some vocabulary that is necessary in a modern society. And it's above all an oral language. On the other hand, French does not possess all the terms necessary for an African culture.

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- French can be considered a part of Central African culture since it is one of the official languages, and because it has had a great impact on the social, economic, political and cultural life during the last century and still has a strong input.

An attitude makes the individual tend to act in a certain way (see section 3.). The positive and mostly well-grounded attitudes towards French imply that the informants in my study should strive to learn French. If it is impossible for them to learn French themselves, they ought to make it possible for their children to have this opportunity. For example, none of the subjects in my study want to leave French out of the school curriculum.

Their positive attitudes towards French don't however automatically lead to a negative attitude towards Sango. Sango has advantages too but not so many, was a common answer. All subjects but one were in favor of it in education. But Sango wasn't seen as being as important as French among the majority. Two teachers and one parent wanted Sango to be the main language of instruction. These teachers had recently finished their professional training. One teacher (a supervisor) would give Sango and French equal importance at school. Most informants were in favor of learning to read and write in Sango at school. Deschamps/Gerbault (1988) also found a positive attitude towards Sango in their studies. Most informants in my study were vague about the use of Sango at school. Thus my assumption that the majority of subjects in my study don't want a radical change concerning language shift in school is also reinforced.

There was nothing in the answers in my study that indicated a desire to reject French in favor of Sango (in Deschamps/Gerbault, 1988, however, the opposite is demonstrated). Most subjects were very surprised by the following question:

"Can French be replaced with Sango in CAR as medium of instruction?"

Often I added "now that you are independent". One answer expresses rather well the attitudes that most subjects seemed to have towards French. He said:

"A lingbi ti ke só a'ke só é dí irí a'ü ti é a'pe"

"We can't reject French. It's the one we call uncle on our mother's side".

The relation between an uncle on the mother's side and his nephew is very special. The uncle has many duties towards his nephew and the latter many privileges. This answer implies that French is not associated with oppression or with colonizers. L'Oubanguí-Chari (later CAR) was considered as a part of the French empire and after the Second World War had a deputy in the National Assembly. Today France and its former colonies are tied together
through various associations of "la francophonie". In the CAR National Assembly a number of deputies are engaged in questions concerning this. It's probable that this is one of the reasons why the language policy in CAR after independence hasn't been as active in favor of Sango.

My study shows that the attitudes towards French and Sango are similar to attitudes towards Spanish and Guarani in Paraguay, but not so accentuated (see section 3.2). Furthermore, my study reveals a trend towards a change in attitudes. People who have grown up after independence have more positive attitudes to Sango, while those who grew up before seem to be more tied to French.

I think to succeed in language planning for different forms of education in CAR, it's important to take people's attitudes into account. And in a democratic state such as CAR, this is natural. In a democratic state, the aim is also for everyone to have the same rights. As far as languages are concerned that will mean that everyone will have the possibility to learn the dominant language, French as well as the less prestigious, Sango, which is the language at the national level. This must be taken into account when devising the school curriculum. My suggestion is that Sango should be used in the first grades as a medium of instruction and reading, and that writing in Sango should also be taught. French would then be introduced gradually.

But whether the positive change of attitudes towards Sango will continue depends among other things on how the codification of Sango fares. For instance, the language-planners ought to record the vocabulary of Sango which is used among the people and not continue to create expressions inspired by purism. Such constructions seem unnatural to most people. Didactic materials must be elaborated.

The attitudes in favor of Sango would also be changed if the decree that Sango is an official language alongside French were implemented. That implies for example, that it is natural for both French and Sango to be used in the government, the National Assembly and when political declarations are made. The positive change of attitudes towards Sango need not bring out a negative change in the attitudes towards French.

As I have already mentioned, my study ought to be seen as a first attempt to study attitudes towards French and Sango in CAR. It's limited in several respects. For example, the categories investigated were limited and so was the number of informants.

The parents and young people who were interviewed are all studying. It would be interesting to study the attitudes of parents who are illiterate as well as young people. It is possible that their attitudes would differ. For example, the supervisor suggested that their attitudes were rather negative to Sango at school. If it were introduced, many would take their children out of school. Whether this attitude is common remains to be investigated.

Other interesting categories not considered in my study are political leaders, linguists and pedagogues involved in standardization activities for Sango. Are their attitudes towards French and Sango, like that of some of the teachers, ambiguous or contradictory? It is possible. As we have seen earlier, these linguists and pedagogues seem to value Sango highly. But the schoolbook publications point in another direction. No school book in Sango has been produced since the presidential decree. However, two expensive reading books in French for the two first classes at the primary level have been issued by the Institut Pédagogique National (IPN) in Bangui.

It's also possible that the attitudes of political leaders are ambiguous. The fact that very few concrete measures have been taken, to my knowledge, to introduce Sango at school, points to this.

It would be interesting to do a more large-scale study with these categories of respondent who have not been investigated in the present study. In such a future study, I would prefer a different approach from the present one. It would be interesting to measure how "strong" the most current attitudes which have been brought forward in this study are. And whether they vary between the categories.

This study is limited to attitudes toward French and Sango as teaching languages, but what about the attitudes towards the different ethnic languages? Do Central Africans want them as a medium of instruction or as a subject at elementary school? Only a few of the informants mentioned something about his/her ethnic language. In a further study it would be interesting to take this into account in order to obtain a more complete picture of the attitudes towards languages of instruction in CAR.

As I mentioned in the introduction there are several other factors besides attitudes that influence the choice of language. One of the more important factors, I suppose, is of a political-economic character.

CAR is independent, but it has a close relationship to France in many ways e.g. economic. France is the state that gives the most financial help to CAR. Very often such help is subject to conditions. It's also very common that such help is aimed at specific projects. Probably France will not support every project in CAR. I suppose that projects that contribute to the promotion of languages at the expense of French, would be unlikely to be supported,
considering the enormous sums of money that the francophone world spends on the maintenance and spread of French in the world. This is, however, a suggestion that demands further investigation.

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INDUSTRIES DE LA LANGUE ET AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE EN AFRIQUE

PRESENTATION

L'objet de ces quelques réflexions est de tenter de dresser un bilan. Celui de l'insertion dans le processus général d'Aménagement linguistique en Afrique, de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler aujourd'hui "les Industries de la Langue".

Il importera, dans un premier temps, de s'interroger sur l'état actuel des Industries de la Langue, des espoirs que la Francophonie avait fondés sur elles, et des résultats auxquels elles ont conduit.

Il nous faudra ensuite identifier les enjeux fondamentaux de l'instrumentalisation des langues africaines, conçue comme élément moteur d'un développement endogène.

Sur cette base, nous pourrons alors chercher à cerner les domaines de pertinence des Industries de la langue pour la problématique globale du développement en Afrique, et évaluer en quoi et comment les Industries des langues africaines s'insèrent dans des politiques d'Aménagement linguistique et conditionnent leur mise en place.

Ce faisant, nous aurons conscience de reprendre à plusieurs reprises des éléments à présent bien connus, mais dont l'articulation en termes de politiques concrètes n'a peut-être pas toujours été perçue avec suffisamment de netteté.

1. LES INDUSTRIES DE LA LANGUE : ETAT DE LA QUESTION

Nous conviendrons de ne traiter ici des Industries de la Langue que dans leur perspective francophone, c'est-à-dire dans le cadre des objectifs et des

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