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**Relevance of Education :
Adapting Curricula and Use of African Languages**

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**Working Document
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Acronyms and abbreviations

NEP	Nomadic Education Program (Nigeria)
NGO	Non Gouvernemental Organisation
PoPCI	Popular Participation in Curriculum and Instruction
PRP	Primary Reading Program (Zambia)
USAID	US Agency for International Development

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. A number of documents have been written under the general theme *The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*, and on the specific theme *The Relevance of Education*, these being five base documents and four case studies. The base documents deal with the match between curricula and local conditions and the use of African languages from the point of view of policies, legislation and realities on the ground, which corresponds to the two main sub-themes of the wider theme *The Relevance of Education*. They also discuss the lessons to be drawn from experience in the use of African languages for teaching and the assessment of the cost of manuals on integration policy for African languages. As for the case studies, these address the question of bilingual education in Burkina Faso and bilingual teaching in Niger, the Primary Reading Programme in Zambia and the improvement of education for nomads in Nigeria (Nomadic Education Programme).

2. The present study provides an overview of the theme *The Relevance of Education*. It naturally starts out from the work referred to above. However, it also incorporates work of which a key element is the use of an African language as the teaching language and which has been done within the same framework, but on another theme, such as the case study of convergent pedagogy in Mali or the study on the use of the national language, and the design and production of manuals in Burundi. And lastly, it also takes into account work relating wholly or partially to one or other of the sub-themes connected to the *The Relevance of Education* and done either in an administrative context, for example work on curricular texts and associated documents, or in a purely academic context, such as the descriptive and/or analytical work on Burkina Faso, Burundi and Mali, included in the bibliography and published either locally or in collections or scientific journals with a focus on the theme.

3. As an overview, the objective of this study is to gather together, on a small number of points of significance for the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa, the knowledge that has been acquired in connection with the theme *The Relevance of Education*. To accomplish this, the study is structured in three parts. After an initial section devoted to the relationships between quality and *The Relevance of Education*, and which forms in a sense an overall framework for the analysis, the study proceeds to the overview summary as such. The second part is thus devoted to a presentation of the knowledge that has been acquired in connection with the sub-theme *The Use of African languages*, and the third provides a presentation of the knowledge built up around the sub-theme *The Adaptation of Curricula*. Within each of these two parts, acquired knowledge is organised in a pedagogical and functional manner. The study begins by highlighting the links between each sub-theme and *The Relevance of Education* and goes on to present the observable models for use of African languages and the adaptation of curricula, the results obtained by applying these models, emerging factors for success, and lastly the issues and risks that can possibly be expected to arise.

4. Once the facts have been presented, four domains delimited by the lessons that can be drawn from them are recognised in the study. The domain relating to the compatibility of education with society suggests that *you cannot graft a mango tree on to a lemon tree*. Given that the educational process can be likened to a graft, education itself being the transplant here, the latter must be compatible with the knowledge, beliefs, way of life, customs, practices, and so on, that the pupil has within him or her. Education, in terms both of its focuses and its teachings, must be compatible with the society of which the pupil is a representative. If such is the case, the educational grafting process will

“take” insofar as the pupils will acquire and assimilate the knowledge, expertise and behaviour that education offers them, enabling them to become socially integrated. If on the other hand incompatibilities appear, these will be so many obstacles impeding the grafting process. According to the pupil’s individual personality, the graft make take in part or not at all, and that fact will ensure that the pupil remains in most cases on the margins of society.

5. Secondly, the domain relevant to the adoption of the usual means of communication, the compatibility highlighted above, as well as the most basic logic of communication, as well as the content of the case studies carried out, make it inevitable that the means of communication must be the one used by the pupils themselves in their daily lives, that is to say a language they can understand. In such a situation, pupils can avoid the effort they will need to make to learn another language and achieve simultaneous understanding in that language, that is to say the colonial language which has since become the official teaching language. The study points out that the use of African languages for teaching in the first years of primary education is necessary not in order to satisfy some urge to Africanise or to take revenge against colonialism, but essentially in order to facilitate the communication of knowledge.

6. Furthermore, the domain related to integration of the existing knowledge base suggests, in the light of the problems encountered in nonformal education in general and in literacy in particular, that education takes as its foundation the knowledge that already exists in society, not only for the teaching of arithmetic, which is just one example among others, chosen as such by the author, but also for all other subjects taught. The study considers that we must no longer see arithmetic as universal, to be taught in the same way irrespective of the teaching language, which in turn entails the dispensing of such teaching with no account being taken of the basic knowledge existing in the society in this field.

7. And lastly, the domain centred on the provision of new and necessary knowledge does not suggest that there should be a form of education that is in the last analysis conventional in terms of its relationship with society, but rather specific forms of education related to specific features of societies. According to the author, education must no longer be the same everywhere, but must relate to the society for which it is intended. This is what is required by the provision of new educational content, such as prevention of HIV/AIDS, which would have been inconceivable without the devastation caused by this sickness, education on the environment, among the sources of which are droughts and desertification, or on productive activities, due to unemployment and the reduction of national education budgets.

2. INTRODUCTION

8. Within the framework of the general theme, *The challenge of learning : improving the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa*, and under the theme, *Relevance of education*, quite a number of works have been written namely, four basic documents and four case studies. Basic documents deal with the adaptation of curricula to local situations and with the use of African languages from three different points of view: policies, legislation and realities which correspond to the two principal sub-themes of the theme *Relevance of education*. They also treat lessons drawn from the experience of using African languages as languages of instruction and the appreciation of the costs of textbooks within a policy of integration of African languages. As for the case studies, they do treat the bilingual education in Burkina Faso and Niger, the Primary Reading Programme in Zambia and the improvement of the Nomadic Education Programme in Nigeria.

9. The present synthesis is relative to the theme *Relevance of education*. This synthesis is certainly based on the above mentioned works. However, it equally integrates works of which the most essential component is the use of an African language as language of instruction. These works were carried out within the same framework but under another theme such as the case study on convergent education in Mali or the one on the use of the national language, the elaboration and publication of textbooks in Burundi. Lastly, this synthesis integrates also works that partly or wholly concern either of the other sub-themes relative to the relevance of education and which are carried out either within an administrative framework such as curricula texts or other related documents, or within a purely academic framework such as the descriptive and/or analytical works relative to Burkina Faso, Burundi or Mali listed down in the bibliography and which are published both on the local level and in series or scientific journals connected to the theme.

10. The objective of the synthesis is to bring together, under some significant points for the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa, the knowledge acquired within the framework of the theme *Relevance of education*. In this perspective, this study will be organised in three parts. After the first part that will focus on the relationship existing between the quality of education and the relevance of education and which will somehow constitute the general framework of the study, we shall embark on the real synthesis. As such, the second part will focus on the presentation of knowledge acquired within the framework of the sub-theme *The use of African languages* and the third one will be centred on the presentation of knowledge acquired within the framework *The adaptation of curricula*. Within each of these two parts, knowledge will be organised in a pedagogical and utilitarian use. We shall in the first instance bring out the relationship existing between each sub-theme and the relevance of education. Later, we shall present the observable models of the use of African languages and the adaptation of curricula, the results obtained in the application of these models, the subsequent factors of success and lastly, the problems and risks to be eventually expected. A conclusion will give the main lessons drawn from the exercise.

3. RELEVANCE AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

11. If quality does not constitute an object of the perceptible world, it appears however as being relative to such an object. It would therefore be illusory to wish to describe quality in the absolute, it is more reasonable to define it in the relative. Here, quality is relative to education. For this reason, first of all, two definitions are necessary. The quality of education can, in the first place, be defined as *all the characteristics of education that enable the population to have a positive or a negative opinion about it*. This being the case, because of the ambivalence of this definition, there is another interpretation of the concept of quality, which brings out the only positive aspect and which implies another meaning connected with that concept. This appears like a meaning derived from the first definition and calls for another meaning. For this matter, the quality of education may, in the second place, be defined as *all the characteristics of education that enable the population to have a positive opinion about it*.

12. Such a definition can be accepted because of society, to which education is destined. It is however very broad and for that reason, lacks the aspect of being operational. It does not allow the identification of characteristics that it mentions. These characteristics are those which contribute to satisfying the assessment on the acquisition of knowledge, know-how and self-awareness required by life in society. Some of these characteristics are a curriculum elaborated in this perspective, textbooks conforming to the different above-mentioned values, teachers trained to teach them, a load of teaching hours adapted to the pupils' capacity, an access open to the majority of school-age children, a reasonable number of pupils per class, adequate school infrastructures, sanitary supervision of the schools, a territorial school mapping and/or a remedial school bus system for picking up pupils, etc. In this respect, such is the conception of the quality of education.

13. Education being destined to society, its relevance seems to be function to it. It will be presented here on the basis of three points of view namely *subjection, conformity and appropriateness to society*. Subjection implies observing the conditions in society such as the social and cultural conditions. In this manner, education is considered to be relevant if it takes into account the country's economic potential and the people's purchasing power. As for the conformity, this implies the adoption of the modalities of communication at the base of social relations. In this way, education is considered to be relevant if it adopts as a means of communication, a language understood by the beneficiaries of this education. Lastly, appropriateness implies a complementary association between knowledge that is available in society and knowledge that has been proposed to society. In this way, education is considered to be appropriate if it responds to societal needs regarding knowledge, know-how and self-awareness. If the quality of education largely depends on its relevance, quality education is not necessarily a relevant education. As long as, within the context of a given society, there dwells a characteristic of quality that is not put into account by the education system, this characteristic can constitute a reason to deny the education in question a value of relevance. As such, however outstanding the education system may be, it will not be relevant if for one reason or another, it is not accessible (poor school mapping in the country, exorbitant prices for textbooks, etc.) to the majority of the school-age children.

14. Presented in this manner, education relevance shows some essential characteristics. Relevance is always characterised by the notion of relativity; it always functions within relativity, which implies, as an essential fact, that there is no principle in the absolute. In space, the relevance of education is always relative to the state of the

concerned society. This state of the society being incarnated by the educationalist, it is always a result of his vision. It can therefore conform to the reality of the society like it may differ from it. For this matter, on the one hand, the relevance of education will be in accordance with the real society while on the other, it will be in line with the image incarnated by the educationalist. Considered in temporal terms, the relevance of education evolves in line with the evolution of society. The realities of society do change and bring about a change in the implication of subjection, conformity and appropriateness. Moreover, as a state, the relevance of education appears as a self-evident truth or as a fundamental prerequisite within a theory. It is what education is subjected to and according to which education is organised. Lastly, as an objective to be attained, the relevance of education leads to a process that will guarantee the purpose of education, that is, to train citizens capable of responding to societal needs, fitting thus in society and not living on its fringe.

15. If the search for relevance appears in all education reforms in the concerned countries, if it is even often the cause of the reforms, it goes back a long way. It is not only typical of independent States, it was already in existence during the colonial era. Educationalists remember one of its implications, André Davesne's textbooks, *Le nouveau petit syllabaire*¹, *Les premières lectures de Mamadou et Bineta*², *Mamadou et Bineta apprennent à lire et à écrire*³, *Mamadou et Bineta lisent et écrivent couramment*⁴ et *Mamadou and Bineta sont devenus grands*⁵, which, though written in French, endeavour to translate the African traditional context. However, it is at the time African countries gained independence that, in a movement of africanization or even nationalisation, reforms flourished whereby teachers started dropping slowly by slowly, as well as can be expected, the contents of colonial education in the search for the relevance of education.

16. The two principle pillars on which lies the relevance of education in this context are the adaptation of curricula and use of African languages. Within the actions undertaken in African countries with a view to improving the quality of education, the relevance of education occupies an important position. As a matter of fact, in order not to disperse, if we limit ourselves to the pedagogical major actions such as changing the language of instruction, improving the methods of teaching, adapting curricula to African contexts, training in the field of elaborating textbooks, improving teacher training, etc., we realise that if we limit ourselves to a restricted meaning of the concept of the relevance of education, we cover two important domains, that is to say, language and curricula. And if we extend the meaning, we cover the biggest part of these domains.

¹ The new small syllabary

² The first readings of Mamadou and Bineta

³ Mamadou and Bineta learn how to read and write

⁴ Mamadou and Bineta read and write fluently

⁵ Mamadou and Bineta are now adults

4. THE USE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

17. The concept of using African languages refers, in the framework of this synthesis, to the use of African languages as languages of instruction. In this respect, if the principle of officiality is applied in the majority of African countries, which makes the colonial language (English, French, Portuguese or Spanish), that became the official language of the Independent States, the main language of instruction in black Africa, the fact remains that with the necessities of development, the search for the relevance of education and the adoption of African languages as literacy languages, these languages progressively established themselves as a tool but also and most especially, as a teaching strategy. African languages are today being chosen in the different basic education systems working in African countries

4.1. Relevance of education and the use of African languages

18. The use of African languages in education portrays the relationship with the relevance of education from three points of view: subjection, conformity and appropriateness. In fact, from the subjection point of view, the African language is considered as a component of the societal framework. Much like any other component constituting that framework, the African language is among others a component of the cultural identity, and in our humble opinion, it should not, without any prejudice, be ignored. Now from the conformity point of view, the African language is considered as the major component of the process of interpersonal and social communication; it transmits knowledge and information; it constitutes for that reason, a primordial tool for education. Lastly, from the appropriateness point of view, the African language cannot be disassociated from the contexts that demonstrate appropriateness namely those tending to respond to the societal needs regarding knowledge, know-how and self-awareness. This implies that education cannot transmit appropriate contents to those needs without putting into account the medium of transmission within the society itself.

19. In more concrete terms, there is need to acknowledge the use of African languages as languages of instruction within the framework of the relevance of education. We shall choose the basic essentials from among the justifications and advantages of such use contributed by scholars (cf. Houis, 1997; Poth, 1988; Ouane, 1995 etc.). Owing to the mastery of the language by the child, such use opens the access of a large number of children to education. The access to education is therefore no longer reserved mainly for the children of the “educated” – that is to say in the colonial language. The same use widely facilitates the communication of the knowledge taught. In this case, there is no need to learn the language of instruction to understand in that language, for the child already knows it and can interact with the teacher much like he could with an elder or a with a relative. The use of African languages maintains and sinks the child in his natural environment. The child is thus in his community, he does not feel himself in a strange or foreign place like would be the case at school when teaching is done in a colonial language. Such use guides teachers in the choice of African oriented educational contents. Through the teaching of these contents, the African language is at the core of the strengthening and consolidation of the child’s cultural identity. The African language and which is the school language for this matter, enables a dialogue on the school and its activities and opens thus the door to the participation of parents in the education of their children. Lastly, if we have to limit ourselves to these aspects of the use of languages within the framework of the relevance of education, we should not forget that by all means they make a tremendous contribution to democracy.

4.2. The models of using African languages

20. The major component chosen within the strategy of using African languages, major for, as it appears in most of the cases, is the reorganisation of the medium of instruction. Seen at the African level, this reorganisation reveals either a radical change in the language of instruction whereby the colonial language is abandoned for the benefit of a national language, or the use of an African language alongside a colonial language and a distribution of functions between these two languages which is the most widely known situation. Besides, it is also the situation that appears in our case studies. As a result, the two models of using languages emerge namely the monolingual model and the bilingual model. However, within the bilingual models, we have to acknowledge at least two other models, the successive bilingual model and the simultaneous bilingual model.

4.2.1. The monolingual model

21. The monolingual model is the one that shows the use of one single language of instruction throughout Primary education. As current examples of countries that chose and are using a monolingual model; we can cite Somalia and Tanzania (cf. Abdoulaziz, 1991 and 1995). Of course, each of these two countries uses a single and unique language of instruction, Somali in Somalia and Kiswahili in Tanzania. However, if Somalia benefits from a rather simple linguistic situation and a widely dominant language, Tanzania experiences a highly complex situation (more than 120 communities and therefore, almost 120 different languages), with however a language that is widely used in communication and in almost all domains.

22. This implies therefore that with the help of the linguistic situation, we can imagine a multilingual country using several languages of instruction, each of these languages being however used as the only language of instruction throughout Primary education whereby the country shows a monolingual model of education. Such was the case of Guinea from 1968 to 1984, which used at first eight Guinean languages, then six of those languages as languages of instruction and it seems the case was similar in Mauritania from 1982 to 1999, whereby three of the country's Negro-African languages were being used in the same function (cf. Halaoui, 2002).

4.2.2. The successive bilingual model

23. The bilingual model is the one that shows the use of two languages of instruction. The successive bilingual model begins the education cycle in the use of an African language as language of instruction, a language that is later replaced by the country's colonial language that became the official language. The successive bilingual model is the one that is chosen by the majority of countries using African languages as languages of instruction. We can give the examples of bilingual education in Niger, education in the national language in Mali, bilingual education in Burkina Faso, the use of Kirundi in Burundi, the Nomadic Education Programme in Nigeria, etc.

24. In this manner, in Niger's bilingual education system (cf. Wolf, 1995, Niger, 2000 and Hamidou et al., 2003), the local language is the language of instruction and is taught from the first to the fourth year. It becomes a teaching subject in the fifth and sixth years. French becomes a teaching subject in the third term of the second year until the fourth year. It becomes language of instruction and is taught in the fifth and sixth years. Bilingual education started in Hawsa in 1973 and extended to Zarma in 1976 and then to other languages i.e. Kanuri, Tamajaq and Fulfude in 1979.

25. Similarly, in Mali, in the teaching in the national language (cf. Skattum, 2002), which adopted in 1987 what we may call convergent education (cf. Fomba et al., 2003), the Malian language assumes the function of the language of instruction and is taught as a subject from the first to the fourth year, assuming only the latter function in the two following years. French is taught as a subject from the second year and becomes language of instruction in the fifth and sixth years. The use of African languages as languages of instruction started in 1979 with Bambara and it extended, in 1982, to other languages i.e. Fulfude, Songhoy and Tamashek. Today, 11 of the 13 Malian languages recognised by the State are used as languages of instruction.

26. Burkina Faso also uses a successive bilingual model within schools managed by the Oeuvre suisse d'entraide ouvrière (cf. Ilboudo, 2003). However, compared to other previous models, this one is somewhat different. The educational cycle lasts four years. The Burkinabe language assumes two functions. It works as the language of instruction and teaching subject during the first two years. On a parallel account, French is taught on the basis of the knowledge acquired in literacy in burkinabe languages. In the third and fourth years, the latter language assumes the function of the language of instruction. The use of a national language started in 1994 with Moore and later, from 1999 extended to other languages in the country such as Jula, Fulfude, etc. From the point of view regarding the teaching of languages, it is a question of additive bilingualism, as indicated by the author of our document. On the contrary, from the point of view regarding the use of languages, it is a question of successive bilingualism.

27. Lastly, the case of using the national language in Burundi is a particular case of successive bilingualism (Burundi, 2003). As a matter of fact, according to the texts of the 1973 reform which govern this use, it was, within the perspective of "nationalising and rationalising for maximum benefits", a question of a kirundisation of the Primary education system whereby Kirundi had to assume the function of the language of instruction throughout the six years of Primary education. In this case French could only be introduced in the fifth and sixth years as teaching subject. In 1975, it was decided that French should be introduced in the same function in the third year, and in 1989, to be introduced right from the first year. Apparently, Kirundi has never been the language of instruction in the six years of Primary education. As a matter of fact, according to Burundi (1988, 1989 and 2003) and Ntahomabaye (1994), Kirundi only assumed that function from the first to the fourth year, and according to Frey (1993), it assumes that function from the first year to the sixth. Whatever the case, Kirundi is today the language of instruction in the first four years. French comes in to assume that function only during the two following years. This reveals therefore a change from a monolingual use of an African language stipulated in the texts to a successive bilingual model that is indeed implemented.

4.2.3. Simultaneous bilingual model

28. Compared to the two previous models, the simultaneous bilingual model is rather complex. As a matter of fact, using the two languages of instruction like the other bilingual models, this model chooses at all levels, an African language and a colonial language as languages of instruction. If we now make a distinction between the teaching of reading and writing and the other subjects, we notice both a succession and simultaneity of the languages of instruction. It is actually difficult in this respect to talk about a model, for there is only one country illustrating this example.

29. As a matter of fact, in Zambia, the Primary Reading Programme (PRP) set its major objective as being the facilitation of the teaching of reading and writing (cf. Sampa, 2003). For that matter, concerning the teaching of these two subjects, the PRP chooses, in the first year, teaching how to read and write in a Zambian language

associated with teaching oral English. In the second year, the teaching of the Zambian language and teaching of written and oral English is done basing on the knowledge acquired in the first year. From the third to the seventh year, it is a consolidation of teaching of how to read and write of the Zambian language and English. Which are then the languages of instruction? The Zambian languages chosen, seven in number plus English are all languages of instruction, each one of the teaching how to read and write. Concerning the other subjects, whatever the level, English which remains the official language, is the language of instruction. However, both the teacher and the pupil have the choice between this language and one or the other of the Zambian languages of instruction, in order to express their thoughts better (cf. Zambia, 2000). Let us add that besides the teaching of reading and writing a Zambian language, the system provides for the teaching of languages in Zambia.

4.3. Results obtained from using African languages

30. The use of African languages as languages of instruction has generally yielded positive results. It is not necessary to present the results of all the enterprises presented above (see Alidou and Garba, 2003). In the works effected within the framework and around the framework of the theme of relevance of education, the one of Zambia concerns reading, that of Mali, convergent education, that of Nigeria refers to a special kind of education, the one in Burkina Faso is at cross roads on the Primary education and community schools, that of Burundi is an interrupted experience of nationalising the language of instruction. Only the study on Niger concerns a real Primary education in a national language.

31. For that matter, we shall present here the results obtained in the comparative assessment of Niger's bilingual education (cf. Niger, 2002). The tests were carried out in two languages, that is in French and in one of Niger's languages working as language of instruction. The children tested come from the two systems of education, the traditional system of education in French and bilingual education in a local language with French, from Year III, Year IV and Year V. and lastly, the subjects tested are reading, writing and calculation.

32. In reading, whether the classes are tested in French or in a local language, the pupils from the bilingual system obtain much higher results. The difference tends however pare down in Year V. However, in read text understanding?, the classes were tested in French. The results of the pupils from the traditional system of education are higher. Classes being conducted in a local language, pupils from the bilingual education are still better, but the difference tends to pare down in Year IV and Year V.

33. In writing, the classes being tested in French, the pupils from the bilingual education obtain slightly higher results but incline in Year V. Classes being conducted in a local language, the same pupils get much higher results. The difference tends to pare down in Year VI. In regard to sentence construction, coherence of the text and orthography, when the classes are tested in French, pupils from the traditional system get slightly high results, when the test is effected in a local language, those from the bilingual education system get much higher results. The difference tends to pare down in Year V.

34. Lastly, in calculation, the classes being tested in French, pupils from the traditional system of education get slightly higher results in Year III and Year IV, the results being identical in Year V. Classes being tested in a local language, pupils from the bilingual education system get much higher results.

4.4. Factors contributing to the success of using African languages

35. Whether done within an experimental framework or in the national education framework, the enterprise to use African languages as languages of instruction is oftentimes not to say always, supported by a motivated staff, a militant staff, that believes so firm that the use of African languages is beneficial not only to the pupils but also to the country as a whole. In a general manner, that staff is not automatically assigned such enterprise, it is done at the request of the interested party. Besides, whether one supports or opposes the use of African languages as languages of instruction, no one can deny that in the process of communication, the use of a language understood by the interlocutors enormously facilitates the communication of messages in one way or another. Lastly, we should not forget that if initially, the enterprise to use African languages appeared like an isolated effort, even though in a country like Mauritania, the Institute of National Languages was highly supported by the Authorities as a factor for national peace and an educational experience (cf. Mauritania, 1992), today, the enterprises are supported by either the State, or foreign governments or finally by foreign NGOs. It seems therefore legitimate to consider here that the factors contributing to the success of using African languages as languages of instruction are based on these facts.

36. The militant aspect of the staff implies that the organisation of the use of African languages will benefit from all that it needs within, of course, the limits of the possibilities given to the enterprise. As for the use of the language that is understood, it will enable the emergence of the conditions required to ensure its own success. Lastly, the assistance given to the enterprise can only reinforce the determination of the staff. For that matter, it is legitimate to consider that the major factors contributing to the success of the use of African languages as languages of instruction are:

- a better communication (expression, vehicle and comprehension) of messages in general and education knowledge in particular within the classroom between the teacher and the pupil, but also among the pupils themselves;
- a better participation of the pupil, who does not hesitate to express himself using as a means of communication, a language that he masters;
- the trust of the staff in their work exemplified by the support given to the enterprise by the Authorities and the funding body;
- hence, a higher motivation of the educational staff (teacher, headmaster, researchers, teacher trainers, textbook designers, etc.), who, at their respective levels, contribute to the success of the enterprise to use African languages as languages of instruction;
- lastly, classes with a reasonable number of pupils to allow an intensive and enriching educational interaction between the teacher and the pupils but also among pupils themselves.

4.5. Expected problems and risks

37. However judicious the use of African languages as languages of instruction may be, it encounters some problems. In this respect, we shall develop some points relative to this use of African languages which can constitute problems like teaching how to read tonic languages, teaching calculation in African language, adapting the languages used, training of teachers, and transfer and displacement of teachers.

4.5.1. Teaching how to read tonic languages

38. With the exception of some languages like those coming under the West-Atlantic group such as Wolof, Pulaar, Serer, etc., African languages are tonic languages. This schematically means that two words written using the same consonants and vowels may be different in meaning and pronounced differently just because they bear different tones. The tone is borne by the vowel and implies a certain pitch in pronunciation. In tonic languages much like in atonic languages such as French, there does not exist a single a, a single i or a single o, but if a language uses two, three or four of tones, we shall subsequently have two, three or four a, i, or o. In the simplest of cases, when a language uses two tones, one is said to be a low tone while the other is said to be a high tone, etc.

39. In the general case, the tone is noted by an acute or a grave accent or by a dash on top of the vowel. At present, it appears that tonic language alphabets do not make use of the tones and give letters the way they are in atonic languages. On this basis, few countries call for the notation of tones once the word is written whereas all the others consider that with the help of the context, one can do away with the tone. The notation of the tone once the word (consonants and vowels) is written supposes that the word is known to the writer and that the word in question has been dictated to him or expressed by the writer. Such is not the case if the word has to be read when it is written without its tones. In this case, it is not possible to read the word without knowing the context, which context once known, will help towards getting the meaning on the basis of which, the words will be identified, read and pronounced. However, it is not a guarantee that any observer or potential reader of the text will know the context.

4.5.2. The teaching of calculation in African language

40. We realised that the organisation of counting in Peul was different from the same organisation in French (Mijinguini, 2003). As a matter of fact, the teaching of calculation in certain African languages for that matter poses serious problems. We shall point out two of such problems. Human languages use numeral syntagmas that are composed of numerals. A syntagma can be an additive whereby its result is the addition of the two numbers indicated by the numerals of the syntagma. This is the case in twenty-five, 25 (=20 + 5), forty-two, 42 (=40 + 2), or sixty-seven, 67 (=60 + 7). A syntagma can also be multiplicative whereby its result is this time the multiplication of two numbers – the second one by the first -, indicated by the numerals of the syntagma such as seen in two hundred, 200 (100 X 2), three thousand, 3000 (=1000 X 3), or six thousand, 6000 (=1000 X 6). The order governing the organisation of numeral syntagmas varies from one language to another. In this regard, we have seen some examples in English⁶. On the contrary, in Bambara, if twenty-five is said as *mùgan-ni-dúuru* (twenty and five) and follows the same order like English, it is not the same case with three thousand which is said as *wáa-sàba*. (thousand three) which follows a reverse order.

41. In this case there is a big inconvenience in the reading and writing of the universal calculation in languages of this type because its order is similar to that of English. For that reason, if a bambara learner is asked to read 25, he will read *mùgan-ni-dúuru*, which is correct. But if he is asked to read 3000, he will either legitimately stick on to the same logic he was taught which implies reading words in their order of appearance and therefore read *sàba-wáa*, which is incorrect, or change the logic, putting aside the logic of reading for the benefit of the one used in traditional calculation wherefore he will read *wáa-sàba*. Similarly, if in writing he is dictated *mùgan-ni-dúuru*, he will write 25, which is correct. But if he is dictated *wáa-sàba*, he will in this case also

⁶ The original version of this document is in French and therefore the examples referred to are in French

either stick on to the same logic, the one which imposes writing and according to the order in which the words appear within the dictation and that he was taught in the writing of the language and hence write 1000 and then 3, that is to say 10003, which is obviously incorrect, or abandon this logic used in writing in favour of the one used the universal calculation that will enable him to write 3000.

42. Besides, the system of numbering in the universal calculation is the decimal system on the basis of 10. The teaching of counting in African language copied exactly from the universal system uses the latter system and not the one traditionally used in the African language. This has a big inconvenience. In actual fact, if Mandé languages like Bambara or Soninké use a 10 base system, the same does not apply to other languages falling under the West-Atlantic group such as Wolof or Pular which, according to the studies carried out, use a system on the basis of 5. The teaching of universal calculation, without putting into account the learner's experience as well as his environment in traditional calculation, imposes thus a system of counting that the learner does not know and has never used. Such a practice can only hinder the communication of knowledge and therefore the comprehension and mastery of the universal calculation.

4.5.3. The adaptation of languages used

43. The availability of scientific terms required for teaching is the major constraint encountered by the generalisation of the teaching of Kirundi in Burundi (cf. Burundi, 2003:38). In fact, a language always constitutes an instrument of communication within its natural setting of use in the sense that it shows an aptitude to convey the realities belonging to that setting and ensure the communication among the speakers. But once new realities appear and are introduced within this setting, the language may not convey them and will therefore not ensure the communication that could eventually integrate them. Such is the case when the language chosen as language of instruction has never fulfilled that role. In this case, the language is faced with new domains. In order to become an instrument of communication, the language will have to be enriched; it will have to be adapted to the new domains namely linguistics, mathematics, human sciences, etc. In this manner, the adaptation of a language is to act on it so that it can be used as an instrument of communication. The adaptation of a language that should be distinguished from the instrumentation of subjects will be carried out through three actions: neological, terminological, and phraseological.

44. The neological action that consists in the creation of new words and of which the different stages are outlined in earlier works (cf. Halaoui, 1993), poses some major problems today. It is generally undertaken without scientifically ascertaining beforehand that in the language in question, there are no words to convey the meaning of the new word to be created. As a matter of fact, each word belongs to a specialised field, discipline or subject in as far as teaching is concerned. However, the neological action is undertaken today before identifying the stock of words belonging to that domain in the language that is supposed to be enriched. Lastly, the same neological action is generally carried out in the translation into an African language of a word from the colonial language, French or English. For that matter, when one wants to embark on the terminological action that consists in presenting all the words used in a specialised domain (cf. Halaoui, 1989), one does not practically carry out any terminological study in the language supposed to be enriched but just draws a list of words used in the colonial language and translates them in the African language. In this procedure there are several inconveniences. The most deplorable of these inconveniences lie in the creation of a new word to refer to a reality which already has a name in the language; in the subjection of an African language to a colonial language and in the choice of only the terms used in the latter language; in practically denying the existence of an appropriate term in the African

language; in admitting a set of foreign translated words when we are looking for words from the African language; in running the risk of getting the new word refused by the speakers, etc.

4.5.4. Teacher training and movement of teachers

45. In the context of using the colonial language as the sole language of instruction, the training of teachers is conducted in this only language on the basis of a single and unique syllabus and textbooks elaborated in this language. In the policy of using African languages as languages of instruction, textbooks will have to be elaborated as many times as will be required by the chosen number of languages of instruction (cf. Halaoui, 2003b) and teachers too, will require training under the same conditions, as many times as may be required by the number of languages chosen. This will inevitably lead to a rise in the cost of teacher training.

46. Besides, still in the context of the sole use of the colonial language, the teacher is trained in this language and can teach everywhere this language is used as language of instruction, that is to say all over the entire national territory. On the contrary, in the context of the use of African languages, a teacher trained to teach in such African language, is condemned to teach in this language unless he is trained to teach in another language whereby there again, he will be condemned to teach in that language. Whatever the African language in which he will have been trained, the teacher will only be able to teach in a school where this language is the language of instruction; he will be able to teach in a region speaking that language. For that matter, if in the context of the teaching of the colonial language, the teacher had the possibility of being transferred from one school to the other on the entire territory, this will not be the case where a multitude of national languages is used. He will for that matter be limited to the area that uses the language of instruction in which he was trained.

5. ADAPTING CURRICULA

47. We have right away to acknowledge that the two concepts, that is to say, curriculum and the adapting of curriculum are considered here in a wide sense. Without going into details of definition, we shall admit that the concept of curriculum refers to all the mechanisms governing the training of pupils namely, educational orientation, competence, objectives or their acquired profile when leaving school depending on the case, the content to teach, the methods to use, the textbooks to be elaborated, the training of teachers, etc. As for the concept of adapting curricula, basing in principle, on the curriculum used and that is considered to be inappropriate to realities, it refers to the operation that corrects that curriculum with a view to making it conform to those realities but also to the operation that exhaustively elaborates a new curriculum in the perspective of making it adequate to the same realities.

48. Still subject to the objective of being adequate to realities, the adaptation of curricula is therefore understood either as the readjustment of the existing curriculum or a pure elaboration of a new curriculum. For that matter, it is important to distinguish the text-curriculum which is the document elaborated by the educationalist from the action-curriculum that is the ensemble of the actions which are governed by the content of the text-curriculum, which are effectively effected and constitute the application of this latter. The distinction made here should not be confused with the one referred to in English⁷ as *intended curriculum* and *implemented curriculum*. Nevertheless, it is the action-curriculum that reveals the inappropriateness of the text-curriculum and which motivates its action of adaptation, which action gives way to a new text-curriculum. As such, in the analysis of adapting curricula, the observation can focus on text-curriculum or action-curriculum or the two.

5.1. Relevance of education and adapting curricula

49. If the use of African languages as languages of instruction revealed some strong links with the relevance of education, the adaptation of curricula only shows one relationship. It actually appears as an instrument par excellence, of the follow-up and the realization of the relevance of education. Thanks to the adaptation of curricula, education can lay claim to relevance. As thus, there is a relationship of cause and effect between the adaptation of curricula and the relevance of education.

50. In actual fact, owing to the explanations given above, the prime motivation of the operation of adaptation is, on the one hand, the acknowledgement of the partial inappropriateness of the curriculum used to realities whereby it requires adjustment. On the other hand, it is the decision to simply change from that kind of education, hence the curriculum due to the acknowledgement of its total inappropriateness to realities that call for the elaboration of a new curriculum. Moreover, whether there is acknowledgement of partial or total inappropriateness, the perspective, seen as the entire objectives to attain, within which operates the adaptation of curriculum is the perspective of follow-up but also of the attainment of relevance such as it is presented here above. For that reason, the more the curriculum is adapted to local realities, the more, education, of which it is the vehicle is relevant.

51. Thereupon, such as it has been noticed in the presentation of the relevance of education above, if relevance is always relative to the knowledge of society conveyed by the educationalist, the same applies to the adaptation of curricula. The latter adaptation

⁷ The original text of this document is in French

operates on the basis of the identification of prior realities of society equally conveyed by the educationalist. For that matter, much like the relevance of education can portray more or less real relations to society depending on the degree of conformity of the knowledge conveyed by the educationalist to the society, the adaptation of curricula can also portray relations to realities of the very same society that are more or less real, depending on the degree of conformity. The adaptation of curricula is therefore of course the operation that leads to relevance of education. However, the educationalist, who is in charge of the operation has to remain quite clear-thinking when analysing the realities of society (see Weva, 2003 et Halaoui, 2003c).

5.2. The models of adapting curricula

52. *The most frequent, visible and controversial innovation in curriculum components has been the introduction of local languages for instruction in the early grades* (Moulton, 2003). Drawn from a study focusing on the knowledge acquired by the World Bank on the improvement of the quality of education, through the observation done on 58 projects and 30 countries and the discussions carried out with leaders from eight other countries, this assertion is confirmed at least in the two adjectives *frequent* and *visible*, by the contents of the case studies handling the adaptation of curricula and by the contents of curricula recently adapted and analysed. The language of instruction seems like the most important component in adapting curricula, a component one may not do without in the search for relevance of education if however, it responds to realities in subjection to some of them, conformity to others and an appropriateness to some others. Nevertheless, we shall choose in the following, according to the modalities of adapting curricula, the different models of adaptation to the language of communication, «home pedagogy», productive activities as well as the model of global adaptation.

5.2.1. The model of adaptation to the language of communication

53. All countries of the Sub-Sahara were more or less colonised. Right after independence, these countries inherited the language of instruction of their former colonial masters. However, right from that time, voices were raised in several countries calling for the adaptation of the language of instruction. The experiences have led to the use of African languages as languages of instruction such as the case is presented above. Today, it is in the formal education that this perspective is more and more chosen and the curricula are adapted in this direction.

54. Basing on the fact that in traditional environments, education is conducted in the local languages of communication we should acknowledge that the adaptation of curricula in the field of the language of instruction is an adaptation to this language. This language being a component of society, a reality, one can consider that the modality of adaptation in question is the one that entails subjugation to this component. However, to be more precise, we should rather say, for reasons that have no place in a synthesis, that this modality is that of the expression of the curriculum in the local language of communication.

55. The adaptation of curricula to a local language of communication is observable in curriculum texts themselves. In actual fact, in Niger, in the official instructions and comments of the syllabi of Level 1, which come before the syllabi themselves, the teaching in a national language is announced on the first page in much the same way like for teaching in French (cf. Niger, 1990). In Zambia, the Basic School Curriculum Framework (cf. Zambia, 2000) devotes long developments to the language of

instruction, which is the Zambian language and English as we know, asserting that, pedagogically, the best language of instruction is the one the child is more familiar with.

56. Lastly in Mali, the new curriculum of fundamental teaching (level 1) dates from the year 2000. The previous or the one that served that purpose was a syllabus dating back to 1994. In this latter text, a particular chapter, the first one in the book, focuses on the status of teaching in French. French is recognised the official language, language of work and communication and a means of teaching (cf. Mali, 1994). In the current context, there is no reference made to French but on the contrary, Malian languages are recognised in their status as media of instruction, taken into account in much the same way as the local setting cultural values, within the process of transforming the Malian education system. (cf. Mali, 2001).

5.2.2. The model of adaptation to “home pedagogy”

57. To our understanding, the choice of an African language as language of instruction has never been carried out alone, it has always been either followed up or accompanied with a choice of new pedagogy adapted to the language of instruction chosen. It is the existence of an African language as language of instruction that seems to be the prime motivation of the new pedagogy. For that matter, the concept of home pedagogy refers to pedagogy subjected and appropriate to an environment, based on the components of that environment and which for that matter, is never in contradiction with the latter. Lastly, generally, the use of an African language as language of instruction logically, does not only suggest adapted methods for its teaching but also and more especially the African contents to teach.

58. Convergent pedagogy in Mali is associated with the use of a Malian language according to the language of instruction. It is a pedagogy centred on the pupil, a pedagogy of learning, a differentiated pedagogy, it is also a project pedagogy according to the authors of the document (cf. Fomba, 2003). It is mainly a pedagogy of construction of knowledge, its set objective is to develop aptitudes, to organise knowledge and give it meaning, it attaches great importance to methodological convergence between languages and sciences, lastly, it allows to create new structures thanks to the integration of knowledge (Wambach, 2001: 199).

59. In Burkina Faso, it is the ALFAA method, or the teaching of French basing on the knowledge acquired through literacy that was associated with the use of a Burkinabe language as language of instruction (cf. Ilboudo, 2003). Here, the objective is to exploit both acquired aptitudes in reading and writing by the pupil and the characteristics of the African language of instruction, to teach French and organise the transfer of knowledge at the end of the second year.

60. In Zambia, the method of teaching how to read and write that is associated with the use of a Zambian language as language of instruction should have opted for the name of convergent method for, such as presented above, teaching is initially done in this language for a year and later in English for a year and lastly, in the two languages for until the end of the cycle (cf. Zambia, 2000 and Sampa, 2003).

5.2.3. The model of adaptation to productive activities

61. Whereas at the time of colonial era, in several countries, productive activities mainly food crop and poultry farming were part and parcel of the rural school, after independence, these activities progressively phased out but today, owing to the current economic situation, they seem to be back in full swing.

62. In Ethiopia, within the Popular Participation in Curriculum and Instruction project (PoPCI), the official and therefore national curriculum was enriched by local practices, productive activities such as masonry, pottery and agriculture (cf. USAID, 2001). According to the model adopted by the project, the specialist of one or the other of these activities and the teacher make a joint elaboration of a lesson-text on the local theme. The specialist does this in form of a lesson and the teacher integrates the lesson in the official curriculum. This is an example of adapting a curriculum to local realities through enrichment, addition, and here, the adjective local is being naturally opposed to the adjective national.

63. In Burkina Faso, within the context of bilingual education particularly in the villages of Nomgana and Goué, the curriculum was accompanied with productive activities such as those carried out in the region (cf. Ilboudo, 2003). Such activities bring about total adhesion of children who identify themselves with adults involved in them. This is normally the case in cattle rearing and poultry and the growing of groundnuts and beans. For that matter, the sale of the products of these products is assured

64. Lastly, with regard to these two last cases, the case of the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) in Nigeria is rather a particular one (cf. Nigeria, 2003). In actual fact, the existing curriculum contained productive activities such as the rearing of rabbits or pigs. However, the NEP is meant for populations which do not practice these activities and moreover, are Fula in majority and Muslims, the productive activities as a theme, were maintained but as a content, they were changed. It is for this reason that these activities were cancelled for the benefit of other activities such as rearing goats and sheep, cattle keeping, which are more in line with the practices of the Fula community. This was a real re-adaptation to productive activities.

5.2.4. The model of global adaptation

65. If the models presented above may be considered as sector-based models in the sense that the domain of adaptation of the curriculum was privileged, here the model is considered as being global in a sense that the adaptation of the curriculum aims at the global nature regardless of the objective set or means used. In Nigeria, the objective is education of a community whereas in Zambia, it is reading. In Burundi, the means is kirundisation while in Madagascar, it is the Contract Programme. We are going to observe both the cases of Nigeria and Zambia in the following paragraphs.

66. In Nigeria, the NEP that we have just seen above, is a special education enterprise, destined to groups with special needs like the nomads. These are pastoral groups (generally the Fula ethnic group) or communities of fishermen. As it is a new education, destined only to nomads, the strategy implemented is multidimensional. Within the NEP, the adaptation of the curriculum is double (cf. Nigeria, 2003), it is in actual fact an adaptation when need arose to correct the existing curriculum in the major subjects: English, mathematics, science, etc. and a real elaboration of curriculum in the domains where there was still nothing, the use and teaching of Fulfulde, health education, religious knowledge in Islam, etc.

67. The adaptation of the curriculum put into account the sensitisation of the population to the NEP. It prescribed adult literacy, veterinary services, the organisation and administration of the co-operatives, etc. From the linguistic point of view, the curriculum adopted a local language, Fulfulde as language of instruction and strongly recommended the use of Hawsa by other nomadic communities as they are waiting for the adoption of languages from those groups namely Shuwa, Koyam, Badawi and Buzzu. A pedagogic renovation, more centred on the beneficiaries was undertaken, associated with the training of teachers in order to reach the number required and the elaboration of

new textbooks. Lastly, with regard to infrastructures, mobile classes and boat schools were envisaged to follow the nomad, cattle keepers and fishermen but also other fixed and permanent school structures with a view to responding to settling of communities as per the wish of the Authorities.

68. In Zambia also, there are a number of domains in the adaptation of the primary education curriculum (cf. Zambia, 2000). From its point of view, the curriculum is now defined not only by the syllabus, textbooks and assessment but also by the policy on national education, organisational document and the local curriculum. Moreover, the organisation of the curriculum is based on the acquired profile on leaving school more than on the content taught.

69. The number of hours went up, it is now 20 hours in the 1st year, 25 hours in the 2nd, 27 hours in the 3rd and 4th and 30 hours from the 5th to the 7th year. A reduction in the number of subjects was effected in order to concentrate on the major subjects. These are 6 subjects in the 1st year, 7 from the 2nd to the 4th and 9 from the 5th to the 7th year. The teaching of reading and writing as well as mathematics is promoted to the priority teaching level. From the 5th to the 7th year, and as soon as it will be possible, the computerisation of the teaching of reading and writing will be introduced. The lessons are grouped by teaching domains. Schools are being encouraged to associate methods and relevant local examples with the main subjects defined on the national plan but also to add on to these subjects, local themes as local components of the curriculum. The sensitisation to HIV-Aids is a major teaching subject and has high priority at all levels. Lastly, continued assessment on teaching and learning should be permanently carried out.

5.3. The results obtained in adapting curricula

70. As concerns the adaptation of curricula to the language of communication, the examples and the results given above with regard to the use of African languages are still valid here. The only difference being that the facts are, in the present section, found within the adaptation of curricula. In order to vary the illustrative examples, we shall present here the rate of internal school achievement observed in Burundi between 1997 and 1998 (cf. Burundi, 2003). The kirundisation, or the institution of Kirundi, national and official language by virtue of the Constitution and language of primary education by the reform, but from the 1st to the 4th year in the observable facts, but also as a driving component of providing education in the rural areas of the country, yielded honourable results in school achievement. In actual fact, before, more than 2/3 of the children joining 1st year never reached the 6th year, moreover, many children left school before completing four years.

Internal school achievement rate in Burundi – 1997 – 1998

Rate -years	Years 1 & 2	Years 3 & 4	Years 5 & 6	average
promotion	66.70-71.40	71.10-75.60	63.40-55.90	69.20
repeating	27.10-28.70	27.30-27.10	36.80-44.10	28.20
Drop-out	06.20-00.10	01.50-02.70	00.20-00.00	02.00

(Source : Burundi, 2003)

71. As concerns now the adaptation of curricula to the “home pedagogy”, if the case of Mali’s convergent pedagogy is patent, Zambia’s Reading Programme (PRP) equally is. (cf. Sampa, 2003). Before the execution of the programme, children read better in English than in a Zambian language. Since the execution of the programme, they read better in a Zambian language than in English and there is a big improvement in the two

languages. In the former, they largely obtain results expected of them whereas in the latter, the level attained is rather low. This means that a pupil at level 2 reads in a Zambian language like a pupil at level 2 should, and, in English, the same pupil reads like a pupil at level 1. However, the progress registered is very honourable such as shown by the comparison of average performances carried out before and after the execution of the PRP. As thus, in the Zambian language, for level 1, performance rose, in the Central province from 2.2 to 12.1, in the Coperrbelt from 1.7 to 19.7, in the Eastern province from 1.6 to 20.9, in Luapula from 1.7 to 17.7, in Lusaka province from 2.7 to 24.1, etc. In English, for level 2, on the national plan, performance rose from 4.8 to 24.

72. Ethiopia, Nigeria and Burkina Faso were given as examples of adapting curricula to productive activities. In any case, these activities are adopted by the pupils and the results obtained are satisfactory. It goes without saying that the two major objectives of integrating a productive activity to teaching are in the first instance to teach the pupil how to carry out this activity and then to generate funds as an illustration of the capacity of the activity to constitute a career, the destination of the funds obtained within the school are of little importance at that level. For that matter, if on comparing the received and invested funds it appears that the former are higher, it is then a proof that the activity is a success. To this regard, we shall give the example of cattle rearing in Burkina Faso in the two villages of Nomgana and Goué (cf. Ilboudo, 2003).

Reports on cattle rearing in Burkina Faso

Villages	Number	Cost price	Selling price	Profit
Nomgana	30	225000 Fcfa	356000 Fcfa	131000 Fcfa
Goué	25	187500 Fcfa	289500 Fcfa	102000 Fcfa
Total	55	412500 Fcfa	645500 Fcfa	233000 Fcfa

(Source : Ilboudo, 2003)

73. Lastly, within Nigeria's Nomadic Education Programme (NEP), the model of global adaptation of the curriculum yielded positive results in several domains. We shall limit ourselves to a few examples of quantitative results and figures (cf. Nigeria, 2003). The school enrolment of the NEP went up from 163361 in 1999 to 229944 in 2002, the number of schools rose from 1098 in 1997 to 1680 in 2002 and the number of teachers from 3355 to 4150 from 1997 to 2002 respectively, the number of qualified teachers rose from 1563 to 3139 and the non-qualified ones from 1792 to 1011. 700 mobile classes were constructed with each of them capable of accommodating 15 pupils, 25 boat schools of 3 classes each were also constructed. As regards fixed and permanent structures, 196 classrooms were renovated and 48 cemented pits were constructed. In 1972, out of 1274 pupils, 534 (45%) were admitted into secondary schools, in 1997, out of 6304 pupils, 3588 (57%) were admitted, lastly, in 2002, out of 9120 pupils, 4976 were admitted (54.6%).

5.4. The factors behind the success of the adaptation of curricula

74. If in primary education, the use of African languages as languages of instruction, although it has been widely stimulated by the already accepted use of these very languages as literacy languages, began generally as an experimentation, because the authorities were sceptical on the capacity of these languages to assume such a function, the adaptation of curricula is a national affair, an enterprise largely motivated by the problems posed by the existing system, lastly, an enterprise generally accepted by the

authorities in place. In the operation of adapting curricula, there is agreement not only on the existing component that has to be removed from the curriculum but also on the new component that has to be integrated. This is a foundation of success in as far as adaptation is concerned, for it would be unthinkable to believe that all partners could be mistaken over the problem and its solution. This being the case, there is no reason why the adaptation of curricula should fail and we should even consider that in this situation, there is the major factor of success of the enterprise of adaptation.

75. Another factor that seems to be of importance to us is the adaptation to the language of communication already presented above. Whatever the adaptation of the curriculum that may be, whatever its improvement that may be, if the language used to teach the contents it recommends is not appropriate to the population of the beneficiaries, then education will experience obstacles in communication; the most appropriate language remains the language understood by those to whom the educational message is destined, the language that, if we set ourselves in the context of adaptation to local realities, is the language used for communication. Yet, it appears that in the majority of cases, the adaptation puts this language into account. It is no longer a foreign language that is used to convey the africanised contents. Such is, in our opinion, the second factor of the success of the enterprise of adapting curricula.

76. Lastly, if as seen above, the consideration of the language of communication has been underlined in the knowledge acquired by the World Bank, in our humble opinion, the environment to which this language belongs, has not been sufficiently so. In actual fact, if we put together all the domains of the adaptation of curricula, including the one on the language of communication, we get to realise in the majority of cases what should actually be called local realities. Here, the adjective local is of course opposed, not to national but to foreign and means therefore all what refers to the local setting, to the country without however, implying that whatever belongs to the country must be traditional. In so doing, we come back again to the field of the concept of relevance in the sense that education is considered relevant if it is subject to local realities. We believe in this respect that the consideration of the local environment in the adaptation of curricula is another factor of success of this enterprise.

5.5. The expected problems and risks

77. In a general case, when the adaptation of curricula takes relevance into account, it follows a scale, moving from the least relevant to the most relevant. In the particular case of Sub-Saharan Africa and owing to its colonial past and the heritage of colonisation, the same adaptation of curricula shows a tendency to move on a “nationalism” scale, moving from the least nationalistic, that can be assimilated in fact outside and mostly to the colonial reality, to the more nationalistic, that can be assimilated to the local reality. Such a tendency can be detrimental to the curriculum and therefore to education in general, for relevance can be associated with nationalism. In fact, this tendency enables a person with no epistemological observation of education but who, on the contrary, shows a nationalistic tendency, to minimise the place of foreign realities and to maximise that of national realities in the curriculum of primary education of a developing country whereas the development itself imposes an equilibrium between these two types of realities.

78. Besides, we have seen that the local language appeared like one of the most important components of adapting curricula. This being so, this importance should not obliterate that of the other components. In other works, we presented the different policies of using African languages as languages of instruction (Halaoui, 2003a). As long as the adaptation of curricula to the local language aims at facilitating the language of communication of knowledge, the role of the language is limited and the equilibrium with

other components is respected. On the contrary, if the educationalist aims at the nationalisation of the language of instruction, the same role is hypertrophied, implying necessarily an atrophy of the importance of the other elements, but also an africanisation of teaching, guided by the africanity of the language of instruction, which can only be detrimental to the reality of education and its image in society, etc.

79. Owing to the differences existing between local realities in some countries, the south and the north of Mali, the south and north of Niger, the south and north of Chad, there are countries that endeavour to elaborate a national curriculum, leaving the task to the local authorities of education and at times to the teachers alone, to complete it by adding in a local component. If in theory, there is a legitimate need to conform to the country's realities that, in our humble opinion should be supported by all educationalists, in practice, we may wonder when the country is really multicultural, which is not a rare case, what is the possibility of finding an area of agreement among the existing communities, what is the possibility of realizing such an addition, what is the probability of renouncing to this addition, what is the probability of limiting ourselves to the national curriculum, which is in essence incomplete? In our humble opinion, it seems there is need to follow up the perspective of joint adaptation of curricula by the national and local authorities.

6. CONCLUSION

80. Having presented the facts above, the lessons to be drawn will be organised in four domains namely the compatibility of education with society, the adoption of the means of communication in use, the integration of the basis of the existing knowledge and lastly, the contribution of the new acquired knowledge. Nevertheless, in order to give a base to our conclusions, we shall take liberty to borrow an elementary assertion from the agricultural world to advance our arguments: *One cannot transplant a mango tree on to a lemon tree*. In fact, in order for transplantation to be effected, the two species must be compatible. If the graft always contributes to the emergence of a new plant in form of a hybrid, this new constitution will show traces of the two species if the compatibility is acquired. It will on the contrary show some unexpected traces, which may come from neither of the two species. On the one hand, the new plant will integrate the useful agricultural world, whereas on the other, it will live on the fringe of that world.

81. Such is the situation in which we generally find education in its relationship with the pupil. If education can be assimilated to a transplant, education itself being the graft, it has to be compatible with the pupil's knowledge, beliefs, traditions, customs practices, etc. In its orientation and teaching, education must be compatible with the society, represented by the pupil. If such is the case, the educational graft will take root from the pupil's acquisition and assimilation, knowledge, know-how and self-awareness that education offers him, which will enable him to integrate himself in society. On the contrary, if there are incompatibilities, that will be an obstacle to the process of transplantation. According to the pupil's personality, it will either grow partially or not. This situation oftentimes leaves him on the fringe of society. Such is the general lesson that seems to be drawn from knowledge acquired on the relevance of education.

82. In a particular way, if we make abstraction of its end and only focus on its objectives, we can admit that the essential objective of education is to teach knowledge, know-how and self-awareness. However, any education worthy so calling, should generally be organised in contents focusing on verbal, oral or written communication associated with practical examples that could be of different types. The compatibility pointed out above, but also the most elementary logic of communication, leave alone the content of the case studies that were effected, imposes using, as a means of communication, the means used by the pupil himself in his day to day activities, in other words a language that he understands. In such a case, the pupil economises on the effort to have to learn a language and understand in it simultaneously, namely the colonial language that became the official language and language of instruction. The use of African languages as languages of instruction during the first years of primary education must therefore be adopted, precisely, not to satisfy any given needs of africanity or as a revenge on colonisation, but essentially to facilitate the communication of knowledge.

83. On the other hand, reading, writing, calculation, sciences, etc. constitute what we can call the major educational contents. According to the general practice, these contents are those taught to the child in a "direct manner". To take the example that seems to be the most patent, we consider that calculation and mathematics are universal and can be taught in the same way regardless of the language of instruction. This means that such teaching can be conducted without putting into account the basic knowledge that exists in society on that domain. Such estimation is yet contradicted by the new methods that accompany the use of a new language of instruction. Of course these new methods are closely linked to a language and we don't know of any particular method connected with the teaching of calculation. Yet, if a domain poses problems today when the language of instruction is an African language, it is calculation. Such problems are seen in non-formal education in general and in literacy in particular. In view of what

exists and what does not exist with regard to the method, the relevance of education suggests that education is based on the knowledge already existing in society, not only for teaching calculation which is an example that we have chosen among others, but also for any other teaching.

84. Finally, besides the major educational contents, there are what we may call associated educational contents such as environmental education, the prevention of HIV-Aids, productive activities, education for democracy, etc. The teaching of the contents responds to precise needs of society. In fact, the prevention of HIV-Aids would not have been brought to light had it not been for the ravages caused by the disease. Environmental education is faced, among other things, with sources of drought and desertification. Productive activities are due to unemployment and the fall in the national budgets on education. For that reason, to take only but one example in the associated educational contents, the success registered in the practice of productive activities supposes that the relevance of education and the compatibility that it commands do not only require a classic education as such in relationship with society, but it needs a particular education basing on the particularities of society. Education must not be anymore the one found everywhere, it must be the one that is relative to society to which it is destined.

85. Such are the major lessons that seem to have been drawn from the knowledge acquired on the relevance of education.

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