Title : Sociolinguistical Metamorphosis Of The Moghamo Speaking People Of Cameroon

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ABSTRACT:

As human altitudes evolve, so too do languages change as time passes especially African languages .African languages are instrumental media through which the African identity, cosmic vision and culture can be expressed and a reliable means through which meaningful development and transformation of the African continent can take place. This paper gives an inside perspective of the synchronic metamorphosis of the moghamo language spoken in the north West region of Cameroon , it's main challenge which is language attribution caused by the bilingual and multilingual nature of the Republic of Cameroon and Remedies to these challenges.

Key words : *Moghamo, Sociolinguistics, culture, decentralisation,dialect continuum. ,language attribution.*

Introduction

Definition and Origin Of Sociolinguistics

The word sociolinguistics is derived from two morphemes "socio" from the greek word "socius " meaning society and "linguistics " meaning "scientific study of language ". Sociolinguistics will there be defined as the relationship between society and language that is, how the people of a particular society uses language to interact with each other and with outsiders.

According to Janet Holmes sociolinguist are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through their language.

In this write-up , I am going to illustrate the way the moghHamo speaking people use language to interact with each other.

B) Literature Review
Historicity :

This publication is an orthography for Moghamo, a Grassfield Bantu language spoken by about 112000 elites of Batibo Subdivision, Momo Divisionof the Northwest

Region of Cameroon. SIL's (society of international Linguists) Ethnologue classifies Moghamo alongside Meta as follows:
Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-
Congo, Benue-Congo, Bentoid,
Southern, Wide
Grassfield, Narrow Grassfield, Momo
(Grimes, 2000:45).

According to Dieu & Renaud (1983), Moghamo has four different speech forms; (Batibo, Iyirikum, Bessi and Kugwe).ALCAM (the Atlas of central African l anguages) puts them in zone 8 under the number
866. This author agrees with Ndam (2001) that Ashong is one of the four speech forms of Moghamo (in addition to Batibo, Iyirikum and Kugwe).for Ndam, Bessi is the same as Batibo.This work is based on the Batibo speech form which is the reference dialect.

Moghamo speakers are also found in some villages of Santa subdivision (i.e., Baforchu, Baba II,Ngyiembo and Mbe) and Banjah village, all in Mezam Division of the Northwest Region. Moghamo and Meta' spoken in the Mbengwi Central Subdivision of the Momo Divivsion are sometimes considered as dialect continuum since they posses impeccable similarities.

Source:Alcam

Research Methodology

This research was done mainly on observation and Consultation of some data results and finally a positive conclusion was done with the consultation of discussion groups which has so far been accurate

Language Culture and Loncal Development

A) CULTURE
Definition

Culture can be defined as a set of rules , practices and believes under which the people of a particular society are govern. However, for anthropologists and other social scientists**, culture is the full range of learned human behavior patterns.**
The term was first used in this way by the pioneer English Anthropologist **Edward B. Tylor** in his book, **Primitive Culture,** published in **1871**. Tylor said that culture is *"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law,morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."*

Nature of culture
• Our written languages,governments, buildings, and other man-made things are merely the products of culture. They are not culturein themselve
• Culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but it is a fragile phenomenon.
• It is constantly changing andeasily lost because it exists only in our minds.
The Concept of Culture

Microculture
These are smaller groups with distinct pattern of learned and shared behavior and thinking found within larger cultures such as ethnic groups in localized regions.Some people like to think of these as
"local cultures" .Microcultures can include ethnic groups within nations

Levels of Culture
There are very likely three levels of culture that are part of your learned behavior patterns and perceptions.
1. Cultural homogeneity and Perculiarity When people speak of English, French, Italian,Samoan, or Japanese culture, they are referring to
the shared language, traditions, and beliefs that set each of these peoples apart from others.. In most cases, those who share your culture do so
because they acquired it as they were raised by parents and other family members who have it.

2.Subculture : In complex, diverse societies in which people have come from many different parts of the world, they often retain much
of their original cultural traditions. As a result, they are likely to be part of an identifiable subculture in their new society. The shared cultural traits of subcultures set them apart from the rest of their society.An example of subculture is –Cameroon – Fulani, Bantu, Pygmies,Arabs,
Semi-Bantus,–Africa – Bantu, Semi-Bantus, Maghrebian,

• **3. Cultural universals.** These are learned behavior patterns that are
shared by all of humanity collectively. No matter where people live in the world, they share these universal traits. An example of cultural universal is
Communicating with a verbal language consisting of a limited set of sounds and grammatical rules for constructing sentences.

Characteristics of culture
• Culture Is An Adaptive Mechanism
– We need our cultural skills to stay alive. • Culture is learned
– Culture is non-instinctive – Culture is cumulative
• Culture is cumulative
• We Do Not Know All of Our Own Culture
• All cultures change over time
• Culture Gives Us a Range of Permissible Behavior
Patterns
• Cultures No Longer Exist in Isolation

Before decentralisation, it was difficult to conceptualise how to include all the local languages in the development endeavour. French and English have remained the exclusive languages of educational, public administration, media, etc. This policy has failed to consider the view that maintaining one's individual identity and ideology through language and culture broadens one's perspective and outlook' (Wang and Marœa in Sgarcœa, 2002)'. Should heritage language speakers be able to build on the linguistic and cultural inheritance that their families pass on, they will be able to achieve a high level of language proficiency that will benefit both the individual and society as a whole.

Implications of Decentralisation On Traditional Structures, Local Languages and Cultures

Before decentralisation, the promotion of indigenous languages and culture (it remains partly) the responsibility of the Ministry of Arts and Culture, of Basic education,

of secondary education, and to some extent the ministry of youth affairs. The 1996 revision as well as the 2004 Law 33 which defines the assignment of responsibilities between the State and local governments to meet the criteria of complementarity, ostensibly follows developments in the EU(World Bank2011). According to the provisions of the Law on decentralization, the promotion of local languages and culturesis the responsibility of the local councils under the supervision of the Ministry of Decentralisation and local development.

Classification Of The Moghamo Language

The languages of Africa are generally divided into four major phyla: Niger-Congo, Nilo-Saharan, Afroasiatic, and Khoisan. Moghamo being a Cameroonian language and above all an African languages is classified under the Niger- Congo Phylum which is the largest of the four phyla containing between 1350 and 1650 languages which is two-third of the African languages.

Facts About Niger-Congo Phylum

Niger-Congo is the largest language phylum in the world covering a greater area than any other phylum (Williamson & Blench 2000). Not surprisingly, then, many of the most widely spoken languages in Africa belong to Niger-Congo. One of its salient features is an elaborated noun
class system with grammatical concord. A large majority of languages of this family are tonal such Yoruba, Igbo, Aghem, Ghomala, Fe'fe', Ewondo, Duala, Basaa, Fang-beti. A major branch of Niger-Congo languages is the Bantu. The Bantu Languages are believed to number
at present between 400 and 600. They are spoken in almost half of all Sub-saharan countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Comoros, Angola, Zambia, Malawi,
Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South-Africa, Lesotho, and Swaziland..

Approach Use To Classify Moghamo Language

The criteria used for classifying African languages have been and continue to be typological and even areal or geographic. In other parts of the world, languages are said to be genetically related only if they share linguistic properties and items which cannot have been borrowed, thereby demonstrating that they have a common "parent".

The approach use to classify moghamo language is **the mutual intelligibility test approach .**This approach tries to analyze whether speakers of language A can understand language B and vice versa . For example Moghamo speakers in Batibo Sub division and Menemo Speakers in Mbengwi sub division all in Momo Division of the northwest region of Cameroon.

One of the methods consists of playing a speech sample from Language B played to speakers of Language A. The Language A speakers
then tested on how well they understand the speech sample. And then the reverse is done: speakers of Language B try to understand a speech sample from Language A. Although this method has not been put to widespread use by linguists in Africa (see Ladefoged et al. 1972,
Schuring 1985, Slabbert & Myers-Scotton 1997), it has been widely used by social psychologists and sociolinguists, e.g., Labov 1981. It features prominently, of course, in the tool box of missionaries, particularly those intent on Bible translation, e.g., Casad 1974, Grimes
1990. With the information gleaned from such an assessment, missionary analysts can make decisions as to how many different Bible translations are needed for a given area and even which dialect should be chosen as the standard.

   In summary, then, an evaluation of intelligibility, in uncovering the social-psychological dimension, tells us much more than a purely linguistic analysis. Although such measures have
not often been used in genetic classification, they do provide information on the relatedness of languages at the micro level. From the data they furnish one can make social historical inferences and thus obtain information on past and future relations between language varieties, useful information for classification

Experiment Of The Mutual intelligibility Approach On Moghamo language
        During A Traditional wedding Between A bride from Batibo and a groom from ku Bomie village in mbengwi subdivision where the families of the former and the later could express themselves in their respective mother tongue respectively that is moghamo and menemo, it was observed that 75 % of the attendees of could clearly understand each others language perfectly without any interpretation .5% of invitees from other neighbouring villages could slightly understand because the existence of of loan words in this languages from other dialects for example ngoshie in njikwa sub division and the rest 20% could only express themselves either in English-pidgin or English which is one of the official languages of Cameroon.

   It was finally concluded that speakers of moghamo and menemo could clearly understand themselves because they have a common history and ancestor even though there is a slight variation in accent and tone in both languages.

Moghamo Dialect Continuum

 Definition of Dialect
        The word dialect comes from the Latin word "dialectus" meaning to dialogue or converse. A dialect can be defined as a regional variety of language distinguished by

features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language.

Dialect continuum:

A dialect continuum can be a range of dialects spoken in some geographical area that are only slightly different between neighbouring areas. But these differences become larger as someone travels in any direction, so that speakers from opposite ends of the continuum, are no longer mutually intelligible, they cannot understand each other. "A traveller walking in a straight line from village to village notices successive small changes, but seldom, if ever, observes large differences.This sounds like a justification of the continuum view, but there is an added twist. Might the traveller be misled by the perspective of most recent memory"(Heeringa and Nerbonne 2002: 375).This can be explained by the assertion below.

If we travel from village to village, in a particular direction, we notice linguistic differences which distinguish one village from another. The further we get from our starting point, the larger the differences will become. At no point is there a complete break such that geographically adjacent dialects are not mutually intelligible (speakers of these dialects can't readily understand and communicate with one another),but the cumulative effect of the linguistic differences will be such that the greater the geographical separation, the greater the difficulty of comprehension. This type of situation is known as a geographical dialect continuum (Chambers and Trudgill 2004: 5).

This shows us that the mutual intelligibility seems to depend on geographical distances between the villages. But the question is does this traveller notice everything or just some changes?

Moghamo language has four speech forms (Batibo, Iyirikum, Bessi and Kugwe) with just slight variation in accent and pronunciation.It is also similar to other western other core dialects of the Momo Division conspicuous amongst them is the meta dialect with the code MGO same as that of moghamo. It has six speech forms(Bameta, Chubo, Menemo-
Mogamo, Metta, Mitaa, Muta) and it's spoken in the following areas
 east and southeast Mbengwi and east Batibo subdivisions,Bamenda1 Subdivision, Bafuchu and Nja village areas.

The Table Below shows the different areas whose dialects are similar to Moghamo by virtue of the fact that they have been classified as western momo language and have so many similarities with moghamo in the areas of Morphology and graphetics in the northwest region of Cameroon

Dialect	Code	Speech forms	Area Spoken

Meta	MGO	Bameta, Chubo, Menemo-Mogamo, Metta, Mitaa, Muta	East and southeast Mbengwi and east Batibo subdivisions; Bamenda1 Subdivision, Bafuchu and Nja village
Ngamambu	NBV	Bafuchu, Banja, Mbu, Mungyen, Nga, Ngembo	East and southeast Mbengwi and east Batibo subdivisions; Mezam Division, Santa Subdivision, Bafuchu and Nja village areas.
Ngoshie	NGN	Ngwaw	East Njikwa subdivision

Njen	NJJ	Nyen, Nzin	Southeast of Batibo Nyen Village
Ngie	NGI	Angie, Baminge, Baninge, Mingi, Ngi, Ugie, Ungie	West mbengwi sub division Andek Area

Current Situation Of Moghamo Language

   Within the last decade moghamo has almost become an extinct language because of language attribution.

Language Attribution :
    It is the process of losing a native or a first language .This process is generally caused by the both isolation from the speakers of the first language (L1) and acquiring a new language (2). In the case of moghamo, this can be clearly link to the large exodus

of indigines of the community to Urban areas in search of greener pastures and also the promotion of official languages of Cameroon which are English and French by the state as enshrined in article1(3) of its constitution. This is clearly visible as english and french are use in all areas of the country even in education to solve the problem of linguitic and cultural diversity which is a major call of concern in the country as it has over 250 national languages. Also,the high rate of using English-Pidgin as a sociolect amongst individuals in to communicate has also cause a decline in many local languages including moghamo. A new creole known as *Camfranglais which is a combination of Cameroonian languages including moghamo, English and French is currently making waves across the nation and it serves as as an idiolect for a majority of the youths and a sociolect for members of a particular social class and could be used as a regeolect in particular regions depending on how words of the three languages are permutated and commutated to make moaning.*

REMEDY AND CONCLUSION

   To solve the problem of language attribution, several mechanisms are being put in place by the moghamo speaking people such as the organization of cultural Jamborees to teach people the culture of the moghamo people,

      The government of Cameroon is doing a great deal to promote local (national) languages through the national Commission for the promotion of bilingualism and multiculturalism (NCPBM) ,the ministry of scientific research and innovation(MINRESI) in partnership with SIL Cameroon has carried out intensive study on the moghamo orthography and have documented it. The Moghamo language Committee (MOLCOM) has done a great deal to document the moghamo language using the general alphabet of Cameroonian languages and has organised several workshop to educate people on the use of the language .In the education sector, the ministries of education in the country has encourage the teaching of local languages including moghamo at the basic and secondary level.Also the celebration of the Mother's tongue day goes a long way to instill the zeal to learn local languages.

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