

# **What Next For Africa's Higher Education?**

*What Should Follow the Continental  
Education Strategy for Africa  
(CESA 2016-2025)*

Edited by

**Fred Awaah**

**What Next For Africa's Higher Education? What Should Follow the  
Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025)**

**Edited by Fred Awaah**

**This book first published 2024**

**Ethics International Press Ltd, UK**

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

**A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library**

**Copyright © 2024 by The Editor and Contributors**

**All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.**

**Print Book ISBN: 978-1-80441-569-6**

**eBook ISBN: 978-1-80441-570-2**

**Paperback ISBN: 978-1-80441-571-9**

# Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Preface.....   | ix  |
| Dedication .....   | x   |
| Acknowledgments .....  | xi  |
| Chapter 1: Embedding International Perspectives in the Operational Structure of African Higher Education Through Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning – Reflections for Post CESA ..... | 1   |
| Chapter 2: Revitalisation of Culturally-Sensitive Teaching Methodologies that Prioritizes African Cultural Values in African Higher Education Institutions: A Post-CESA (2016-2025) Review ..... | 23  |
| Chapter 3: Implementing the Culturo-Techno-Contextual Approach (CTCA) in Chemistry Education in Burundian Universities – A Potent Tool for Education Post CESA (2016-2025).....                  | 42  |
| Chapter 4: Decolonizing Research Culture in East Africa Post CESA (2016-2025): A Case Study of Strategic Management .....  | 69  |
| Chapter 5: Private Higher Education in Morocco: Current Beliefs, Practices, Challenges and Implications for Post CESA .....  | 90  |
| Chapter 6: Ancient Wisdom and Heidegger’s Philosophy will be Successful in Teaching Biology Students post CESA (2016-2025) - the CTCA Data Analysis Technique .....                              | 111 |
| Chapter 7: The Missing Link: The Role of 21st Century Skills in Linking the Learners in Institutions of Higher Learning to the Work Place .....  | 136 |
| Chapter 8: Integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in African Higher Education in Ghana: A Post-CESA (2016-2025) Review.....   | 161 |
| Chapter 9: The Influence of Demographic Characteristics on Feedback Usage in Online Distance Learning: A Higher Education Perspective Post CESA (2016-2025) .....                                | 183 |
| Chapter 10: Harnessing Higher Education for Gender-Inclusive Agricultural Transformation post CESA: A Case Study of Sugar Production in Zimbabwe's Lowveld .....                                 | 213 |

Chapter 11: Soft Skills and Students’ Understanding of Public  
Administration.....235

Chapter 12: 21st-Century Skills for Higher Education in Africa’s  
Post-CESA (2016-2025): Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy  
Considerations .....260

About the Authors .....276

# Preface

The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) is a strategic framework that links education to the human resource needs of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, as well as national development goals. It was adopted by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in January 2016. The African Union Commission developed CESA 2016-25 in the bid to have a prosperous and peaceful Africa. It is a strategic framework in the realization of the African Union's vision as articulated in Agenda 2063.

Since its inception, many African institutions including the Association of African Universities have trumpeted the potential benefits of the strategic plan. Amidst these, many African educational institutions have adopted the goals, pillars and strategic objectives in bids to make education more relevant to their development agenda. It has been nine years since its inception with an end date of 2025. The reasonable question that remains unanswered is what next for the CESA 2016-2025 post the 2025 expiration date. In a bid to help set a new agenda for the African educational space, this book attracts 12 chapters from seven different African countries, proffering what may be done to ensure a new or continuing strategic vision for the African educational space.

It is hoped that, this collection will guide the next phase of policies relative to Africa education at the continental level and also contribute to the somewhat relatively scant literature on the Continental education Strategy for Africa.

**Fred Awaah**

## *Dedication*

This collection is dedicated to the higher education cluster of the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa – spearheaded by the Association of African Universities.

# Acknowledgments

This collection is made possible by the efforts of the various contributors across the continents who have brought insights and diverse perspectives from the lenses of their countries to bare on the continental education strategy for Africa – special thanks goes to them. Notable mention is made of the Awaah Research Foundation for the diverse resources availed for the completion of this book in a timely manner.

# Chapter 1

## Embedding International Perspectives in the Operational Structure of African Higher Education Through Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning – Reflections for Post CESA

Emily Ayieta Ondondo  
Julianah Akindele  
Rebecca Atchoi Akpanglo-Nartey

### **Abstract**

In response to the internationalisation of higher education world over, the future of Africa's Higher Education lies in the embedding of international perspectives at every layer of the operational structure of Universities in Africa. For Africa to make her graduates more marketable, recognisable, and committed global citizens, modern foreign language teaching and learning presents one option that provides staff and students with intercultural competence and global perspectives while in their home country to promote their communicative, intercultural and multilingual skills for meaningful international interactions and experiences. Taking a three African nations survey and analysis, the study assesses and reflects on the progress, achievements and challenges of modern foreign language teaching and learning initiatives at three universities in Africa: one in Kenya; one in Nigeria and another one in Ghana. Further, as one of the ways of overcoming one of the challenges of delivering quality modern foreign language teaching and learning in higher education in Africa, the study, using the same methodology, reflects on how modern foreign language teaching and learning can be initiated in Africa higher education



through Collaborative Online Learning (COL) and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL).

**Key Words:** Internationalisation, Higher Education, Intercultural Competency, Online, Modern Foreign Language, Teaching and Learning

## Introduction

Universities are transnational actors. In all dimensions of its work and business, a university must perceive of itself as a creative part of a world higher education system. Only an internationalised university will be able to meet societal expectations, actively shape the globalisation process and guarantee its own competitiveness (Knight, 2007). African universities need internationalisation strategies to: enhance the quality of teaching, learning and research; educate graduates as responsible world citizens; gain access to good students and researchers through student and staff exchange; gain access to funding; enhance their reputation at a global level; establish and/or expand global networks; participate in intercultural exchanges; exercise global responsibility; influence on (emerging) global standards and/or benchmarks and analyse and benefit from the interests of the various actors involved (Knight, 2008). The achievement of these milestones highly depends on good communication facilitated through language. Indeed, objective 6(c) of Continental Education Strategy for Africa, herein henceforth referred to as CESA 2016-2025 is to promote the teaching of languages. In the African context, it is modern foreign languages that can promote universities as translational actors and should be taught in African Universities.

The face of internationalisation at universities world over and Africa, in particular, is changing rapidly. Internationalisation is moving away from being viewed and measured in terms of the number of international students present at the campuses. Instead, it is starting to be seen from a more comprehensive approach involving a myriad of indices ranging from but not limited to internationalisation of the curriculum, joint degrees, overseas campuses, on campus intercultural activities and other forms of internationalisation at home (De Wit, 2019; Van Der Wende, 2010).

Internationalisation, in whichever form, requires the embedding of international perspectives in every layer of a university's operational structure involving both staff and students as the main beneficiaries (De Wit, Hunter, Egron-Polak, & Howard, 2015). This is because, in an internationalised setup, both staff and students need to have an international experience at every level of their operation. Internationalisation of African universities is therefore key in the achievement of part of the African Union's vision of making Africa take the place it deserves in the global community and in the knowledge, economy as expressed in the CESA 2016-2025. The CESA 2016-2025 is a shift by the African Union towards a greater focus on a continent-born strategy that will lead Africa's education to 'the Promised Land' (Awaah, 2019). It is Africa's blue print for education for the years 2016-2025 crafted from the broader framework – Agenda 2063.

## **Internationalisation of Higher Education**

One way of internationalising higher education and embedding international perspectives in the operational structure of higher education in Africa to benefit both staff and students is promoting the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages to both students and staff at institutions of higher learning in Africa, to equip them with the much-needed communication skills, modern foreign language skills and intercultural competencies (Selvi, Galloway & Rose, 2023; Boonsuk, 2023; Cameron & Galloway, 2019). These are key competences that staff and students at institutions of higher learning in Africa need both inside and outside the academic world to be able to interpret, understand and appreciate global perspectives that are inevitable in the current digital global village that the world has become. These competencies facilitate international mobility, promote international exchange programmes, pave the way for international career paths, and lead to better employment opportunities overall (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Liddicoat, 2016). Therefore, one of the ways of responding to pillar 7 of the CESA 2016-2025 that advocates for the creation and continuous development of a conducive learning environment is in the teaching of modern foreign languages at African universities as institutions that churn out educators and players in the workforce in Africa.

Many universities in Africa offer at least two undergraduate degree programmes that have an international aspect (Luke, 2023; Hamza, 2022). To provide meaningful learning of such programmes, teaching and learning of modern foreign languages that are international and/or widely used to the students in such programmes becomes inevitable (Kubota and Miller, 2017; Flowers, 2015). This is because students in such programmes should enrich their studies for relevance in the work place and career paths by developing competence in at least two modern foreign languages that are international and/or widely used.

In order to promote the communicative, intercultural and multilingual skills of researchers, lecturers, students, and administrative staff in institutions of higher learning in Africa, there is, therefore, need for staff and students to have a chance to learn modern foreign languages to be able to communicate and interact with staff and students that come with internationalisation both locally and internationally, thereby embedding international perspectives in higher education in Africa. The teaching and learning of modern foreign languages provide staff and students with intercultural competence and global perspectives while in their home country by bringing the world to the classroom. This promotes internationalisation at home. However, the challenge is finding the best way to teach and learn modern foreign languages in the African context where getting access to competent native speaker tutors is hard.

## **Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Africa Higher Education**

The best way to acquire or learn a language is to pick it up naturally from the environment where it is spoken (Dornyei, 2009; Ellis, 2009). In this way the learner picks up the cultural aspects and way of life of the speakers of the language in question. Similarly, the learner is able to pick up and learn the values, norms, worldview, cultural aspects, and ethical principles of the speech community in question (Buschfeld, 2020), for cultural competency and integration of these perspectives in their day-to-day activities and interactions, both locally and internationally. For this to happen effectively, the learner needs to be immersed in the speech community of the languages in question (Dornyei, 2009; Ellis, 2009). In the case of modern foreign

languages learning in Africa this would require learners to travel abroad to live in the target language speech communities. However, this is challenging given the numbers and the cost implications.

Given the importance of foreign languages to universities in Africa, universities in Africa have embraced the teaching and learning of foreign languages but not without challenges. Here we highlight the case of Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana.

### **Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Kenya**

The language policy in Kenya, as in other African countries, recognizes English as the official language, Kiswahili as the national language and Kenyan indigenous languages as the languages of identity of the people of Kenya used in all domains and levels of communication in the catchment area (Hadeel & Salim, 2023; Buschfeld, 2020; Liddcoat, 2016; Kenya Constitution Review, 2010; Nabea, 2009). English, as the official language, is used as the medium of instruction from grade 4 to university and it is learnt as a compulsory subject from pre-school to secondary education level (Nabea, 2009; Ogechi, 2003). At post-secondary education level English is not a compulsory subject. It is learned as a choice. Kiswahili on the other hand, is learnt as a compulsory subject from grade 1 to secondary education level and as a choice subject at post-secondary level. Kenyan indigenous languages are used as mediums of instruction in the catchment area from pre-school to grade 3 (Kenya Constitution Review, 2010; Nabea, 2009; Ogechi, 2003). French and German are learnt in schools in Kenya as optional subjects. Due to this make-up, middle level colleges in Kenya teach these foreign languages to interested learners. Similarly, foreign missions promote their languages and cultures through the teaching and learning of their languages, predominantly French, German and Chinese at established institutes such as the French cultural centre for French, the Goethe Institute for German and the Confucius institute for Chinese in Nairobi. They also support albeit limitedly students and teachers through exchange programmes and scholarships to develop foreign language skills abroad. This immersion experiences help develop, in participating individuals, both language and cultural competence of the communities in question.

Universities in Kenya also have a component of the teaching and learning foreign languages, predominantly French and German but recently due to demand, Chinese, Spanish and Arabic are added to meet the demands of the market and to produce competent tutors in these languages for market needs. Again, universities in Kenya offer academic programmes that have an international component. Therefore, the need to offer foreign languages to students in such programmes necessitates the teaching and learning of foreign language at universities in Kenya.

Universities in Kenya, however, meet challenges in the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages. The main challenge is getting competent tutors/teachers/instructors to teach these languages to meet the demands. Another challenge involves availability of user-friendly curricula and teaching leaning resources on these languages. Time for learning these languages is also a challenge. Few schools (primary and secondary) offer these languages and few students learn these languages in school because they are optional. Many people develop interest to learn the languages when out of school. Given that at this point, they are working or occupied with other economic activities, they do not have time to learn the languages in physical class rooms at physical institutions. Though some self-administered digital tools and online learning platforms for language such as Duolingo and Babbel are available at their disposal, their uptake has been dismal.

Despite the fact that universities in Kenya have students in academic programmes that have an international component and require to learn modern foreign languages to enable them to interact and carry out their duties effectively, most do not have vibrant modern foreign language teaching and learning practices and culture that could promote the communicative, intercultural and multilingual skills of their researchers, lecturers, students, and administrative staff. Though departments of Languages exist at these universities, besides English, they do not offer teaching and learning in most of the other well-known and widely used modern foreign languages such as French, German, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese and Chinese. For academic programmes that have an aspect of modern foreign languages ingrained into the curriculum, the number of units designed to cover this are very few. In this way students do not get to

cover enough content to enable them to gain the required competence in modern foreign languages. Hence the desperate need for a platform in which modern foreign languages can be taught and learnt extensively and exhaustively at own free time.

In addition, there is a large population of staff and students at universities in who have the interest and desire to learn at least one modern foreign language besides English. An additional modern foreign language to English increases the marketability of graduates, by giving them an added advantage in the job market and higher chances of working in other countries. It also increases their job opportunities given their cultural and communication competence in an international language, and they enjoy the benefit of being ranked as international. With an additional international language, students and staff can be able to interact with ease with the international community in their research endeavours, exchange programmes, mobility programmes, something that will promote the visibility of these universities on the international platform through well-coordinated collaborations and partnerships in all areas of the universities' mandates.

Even though some members of staff at universities in Kenya have some competence in modern foreign languages through their international encounters and experiences, the number is too small and their level of competence varies and none of them has native speaker competence. The challenge then is getting competent speakers from among the staff at universities in Kenya to facilitate the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages.

## **Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Nigeria**

The case of modern foreign language teaching and learning in Nigeria is not very different from that of Kenya. In Nigeria, the learning of foreign languages involves the learning of several components, such as language proficiency, communicative competence and information about one's own and other cultures. It is indisputable that gaining knowledge of conventions - which may include custom and belief systems as well as systems of meaning - is also an integral part of foreign language learning.

Especially in the era of globalisation, there is an increasing demand for intercultural communication competence, to enable people interact well with each other irrespective of cultural and social differences (Bourdieu, 1990). Foreign language teaching and learning entails acquiring a language that is not the native language of the learner. This process can occur in a variety of settings, including schools, universities, language institutions, and online courses (Königs, 2010). Proficiency in a foreign language enables the learner access information and knowledge for different purposes. Since learning a foreign language implies learning about people and their cultures, language teaching and learning can be considered one way of acquiring valuable, transferable skills and knowledge that can be used in creating knowledge networks (Duranti, 2017).

The increasing demand for language services and practical skills, especially among students in Nigeria higher education who learn a foreign language for a specific purpose, also seems to rest on the familiar correlation between supply and demand and the relevance of the language courses offered. The lower the cost for language courses, the greater the number of students who are likely to make use of language services. However, should the cost of tuition increase, it is likely that fewer language students would be able to afford the language courses being offered. In other words, students might base their choice of which language to study on economic reasons such as cost of tuition, rather than on personal needs (Königs, 2010). It is, therefore, possible that the foreign languages currently offered at most Universities in Nigeria may not necessarily be the languages that students need in the job market, and that students end up studying any language being offered and not necessarily the one they consider relevant to their individual needs. Alongside the economic factors, learning a foreign language also involves the attitudes, behaviour and different expectations of language students.

The opportunities inherent in the teaching of foreign languages in Nigeria Higher education are manifested in the teaching of language for various specific purposes, such as language of diplomacy and of business, language for tourism and travel management, and health communication. An emphasis on evidence-based teaching would enable language teachers to standardise procedures, which would make it possible to assess students' needs before language courses are developed. Evaluations of language

courses on a regular basis would also offer an opportunity for language teachers and students in Nigeria higher education to better plan and market language courses, as well as improve on their foreign language teaching approaches.

In recent years, there has been a push in many African countries, including Nigeria, to increase the number of foreign languages taught and learned in higher education. While English remains the predominant language of instruction in many institutions, many universities are now offering courses in languages like French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. In recent years, the Nigerian government has taken steps to support the growth of foreign language education. In 2017, the Nigerian Ministry of Education launched the "National Policy on Education," which includes a focus on foreign language learning. The government has also established a number of partnerships with foreign universities and language institutions to provide training and resources for teachers. In addition to government initiatives, there has been a growth in private initiatives to support foreign language education in Nigeria.

In this way, the progress in foreign language education in Nigeria has been significant. Many students in Nigeria are now able to communicate in multiple languages, and this has opened up new opportunities for them in terms of work, travel, and cultural exchange. Some universities have also established partnerships with foreign universities, which has allowed for the exchange of ideas and resources (Duranti, 2017). The introduction of foreign language education has also been seen as a way of promoting cultural diversity and understanding. And there are many advantages to this.

There are increased opportunities, students who have the ability to communicate in multiple languages have more opportunities in the job market. In Nigeria, many companies are looking for employees who can speak French, Spanish, and Chinese, as important languages for doing business in Africa and beyond. There is enhanced cultural understanding, learning a foreign language can help break down cultural barriers and promote understanding between different groups of people. In Nigeria, many universities have established exchange programmes with foreign



institutions, which has allowed students to learn about different cultures and ways of life. There is improved educational outcomes, learning a foreign language can also have positive effects on other aspects of education. Research has shown that learning a second language can improve cognitive skills, such as memory and problem-solving, and can also help develop critical thinking and creativity. In Nigeria, students who study a foreign language often have higher grades and better job prospects than those who do not.

The teaching and learning of foreign languages such as Arabic, German, Spanish and French language has had its challenges. The issue of language teaching is as vital as it is complex, whether the concerns are about the everyday lives of people or social change, education, development, inclusion, exclusion and empowerment. The complexity of language teaching and learning - whether the language is foreign or indigenous - is best demonstrated by its inextricable links with a society's cultural, economic, and political life. Languages inevitably have various historical embodiments. This means that any inquiry in connection with foreign language teaching or foreign language learning in the Nigerian context, takes us not only to the role the foreign language(s) in question used to play in the past, but also to the inevitable definition of the new roles foreign languages will have to play in the context of the East, North and South region in Nigeria in the current era of globalization.

In the past, the role of foreign languages in the African context has mostly been one of conquest, domination and suppression as foreign rule was facilitated by foreign language. Language at that time performed, and still performs, different functions as a means of communication, expression and conceptualization. Language can be used as a means of domination, discrimination, exclusion, inclusion and as a tool of political and economic empowerment. Language can also be used as a powerful instrument of development in the creation of functional and sustainable knowledge networks. It is these last two aspects that accentuate the relevance of foreign language learning and teaching in Nigeria today.

The challenge, however, is to sensitise students to understand and appreciate the added advantage of being proficient in a foreign language

for integration within the context of the African Community and beyond. Foreign languages are used in international contexts in the areas of business, diplomacy, media and scholarship. Knowledge of a foreign language can be an asset, while the inability to speak foreign languages may be costly. This is especially true in a multilingual setting since access to information on business, education, science and technology is rendered impossible without acquiring foreign languages.

In the context of globalisation and taking into consideration the challenges of foreign language education, the role and function of foreign language promotion in the context of Nigeria continues to be crucial. The divergent views in relation to foreign languages and their functions are generally reflected in the various approaches to the study of foreign languages among teachers. On the one hand, language learning is considered to be principally instrumental. In other words, language is learnt as a skill to use for communicating thought and information. On the other hand, language is understood to be an essential element of the thought processes of human beings, their perceptions, attitudes, self-expressions and world view. According to Sapir (1921), language is a particular "how" of thought. Sapir adds that language and our thought patterns are inextricably interrelated and are, in a sense, one and the same. While we use a foreign language to communicate our needs and concerns to others, language simultaneously reveals what and who we are to others and to ourselves.

However, there are still many challenges that need to be addressed one of which is funding. Nigerian universities struggle to find the resources needed to offer foreign language courses. The cost of hiring qualified teachers and providing the necessary materials can be prohibitive, and the government has not always provided sufficient support. Another challenge is that of accessibility. While there has been progress in the number of foreign language courses offered, many of these courses are only available to students in major cities. Student attitudes is yet another challenge in the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Some students in Nigeria are still resistant to learning foreign languages, especially if they feel that doing so will undermine their own cultural heritage. Teacher training also poses a challenge in that, there is a shortage of qualified language teachers in Nigeria, and this has had an impact on the quality of instruction. Many

teachers do not have the necessary experience or knowledge to teach foreign languages effectively, which can lead to frustration among students. Another challenge in the teaching and learning of foreign languages is in curriculum development. There is a need for more research into the best methods for teaching and learning foreign languages in Nigeria. Current curricula may not be meeting the needs of students, and this has led to a lack of enthusiasm and motivation among learners.

Therefore, in the course of acquiring functional language abilities, foreign language users in Nigeria would be in a position to focus on areas which foreign languages at higher education in Nigeria have in common. It is well known that the understanding of the unknown from the perspective of foreign language students is also influenced by their expectations, motivation, learning environment and the value they attach to the foreign language being learnt. Foreign languages should therefore be taught in a way that enables students to express themselves appropriately and effectively in multilingual and multicultural contexts upon the completion of a language course. The focus should not only be on linguistic content or on making foreign languages teachable but on the functionalizing of foreign language teaching through designing foreign language courses from which the future foreign language learner can benefit. This is the position which Königs (2010) also argues for when he discusses the possibilities and limitations of study reforms from the perspective of teaching English language as a foreign language in foreign language teaching and learning.

## **Modern Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Ghana**

The Ghanaian case with regard to the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages is not any different from that of Kenya and Nigeria. The idea of teaching and learning foreign languages in Ghana started as far back as 1961 when the first President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah realized its importance in the socio-economic and political transformation of the country through communication, skills acquisition, building relationships and creation of a sense of community (Ghana Institute of Languages, 1961). The most obvious benefit of learning a foreign language is the ability to communicate with people from different countries. Speaking the language

of your clients or partners can create a strong bond of trust and help establish a better relationship. It also allows you to understand their values and business practices, which is critical in today's globalized economy. The teaching and learning foreign languages in Ghana goes beyond just communicating with others. It also helps students understand the culture and history of the country where the language is spoken. This can lead to a greater appreciation and respect for other cultures, which is critical in today's diverse workplace.

In realisation of the above and other factors, the Ghana Institute of Languages was purposefully built for the teaching and learning of English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian (Ghana Institute of Languages, 1961). The teaching and learning of these languages has gone through some paradigm shifts in terms of the pedagogy and presentation methods. The teaching of foreign languages has been extended to include Chinese and Kiswahili which are being taught in most universities as well as pre-tertiary and professional institutions in Ghana. Learning foreign languages improves all-round cognitive ability of learners and helps hone one's soft skills, and increases mastery of mother tongue. This has indeed helped in communication among students in Ghana.

The achievement of foreign language teaching and learning in Ghana is significant. The number of foreign language students across the tertiary institutions is growing steadily amidst few challenges. This reflects the demand for increased teaching and learning resources coupled with expansion of lecture halls and offices for staff. In recent times, there has been significant increase in local authorship of books in foreign languages other than English. This reflects the efforts of lecturers and policies implemented by school authorities. Associations such as Ghana Association of Writers herein henceforth referred to as GAW and Ghana Publishers Association liaise closely with both foreign language students and lecturers to promote more local authorship in foreign language scholarly books.

Good government policies implemented over the years have helped to a large extent to shape the teaching and learning of foreign language in Ghana. Gyasi (1997) reiterates that the English language is the only

language of formal education beyond the first three years of primary school in Ghana because it is assumed that every child will acquire an indigenous language before s/he starts school. Consequently, using it as the language of instruction at the lower primary will not only be helpful but also beneficial for the child as it will enable him/her to understand abstract concepts. This was the practice in most public schools. In May 2002, a law was passed making English the sole medium of instruction from primary one and indigenous languages learnt as subjects to the secondary level (The Statesman 2002). English is the lingua franca of the state and that all efforts must be put in to ensure that children acquire the right level of competence in both the spoken and written forms of the language. No doubt this policy shows that in Ghana the acquisition and use of English cannot be compromised.

However, other foreign languages besides English are now being learnt in schools in Ghana through collaborative online learning with some foreign tertiary universities including Village du Bénin, Lomé; Cebela, Benin; Université de Caen, France; Université de Strasbourg, Université de Regina and this has enhanced good academic relationships. The collaborative relationship does not only aid in the learning of the languages but gives understanding of the nuances of different cultures, and work more effectively with colleagues from different backgrounds.

For instance, given that German is neither a compulsory nor an elective language at schools in Ghana the teaching and learning of German as a Foreign Language occurs through extracurricular programs, such as German Clubs and the Goethe Institute's PASCH initiative. Students interested in learning German therefore usually come to the university as zero beginners. Universities in Ghana have then come up with rigorous ways of teaching foreign languages. For instance, for the past seven years, German studies at the German Unit in the Faculty of Foreign Languages Education at the University of Education Winneba herein henceforth referred to as UEW have been taught as a minor subject whereby students of English, French and Ghanaian languages choose to do German as their minor subject. The German Academic Exchange Service herein henceforth referred to as DAAD has collaborated by providing lecturers over the years to teach the German as a minor from the French Department of UEW. Until

now, German could only be chosen as a second subject by students whose main subject was French, English, Applied Linguistics or one of the Ghanaian languages as their main subject.

The cooperation within the framework of the multilateral *German Studies Institutes Partnership* herein henceforth referred to as GIP since 2018 has also increased the quality of the subject and the professional exchange with Germany and within the region. UEW is crucial for Ghana's German expertise, as it is the first university to offer German as a subject and because it is one of the most important teacher training centres in the country. The teaching and studying of the German language as a foreign language at UEW has significantly evolved in recent years. This development is closely linked to modern foreign language didactics and methodology, which encompass various approaches and practices to promote effective teaching and learning of German as a foreign language. Particularly noteworthy are aspects of collaborative international teaching and learning, both in traditional classrooms and in the growing field of online instruction. Important also is the communicative approaches and intercultural learning (Byram, 2008) that facilitate the teaching and learning of German at UEW. These approaches emphasize the development of communicative competence, through guest lecturers, teaching assistants, students from Germany, interactive exercises, role-plays, and discussions, in various contexts, while at the same time getting insights into German culture, history, and society. Students are encouraged to explore and understand cultural differences to develop their intercultural competence and improve their ability to communicate in a global environment.

Another aspect that UEW finds useful in the teaching and learning of German is fostering participation and interaction for learner autonomy. Research suggests that learners who follow their interests tend to be more successful, and self-directed language acquisition yields deeper learning (Neuner, Hufeisen, Kursisa, Marx, Koithan & Erlenwein, 2009). Therefore, learner autonomy is at the forefront of modern foreign language didactics when it comes to teaching and acquiring German. In the modern approach to teaching German as a foreign language at UEW, learner autonomy is central. Learners of German at UEW are empowered to determine and select topics based on their interests, providing them with various

opportunities for autonomous learning and exploration. This approach not only fosters motivation but also allows learners to take ownership of their learning process. Moreover, individual knowledge and skills are activated through continuous learning tips or comparisons to other languages, which align with the principles of multilingualism didactics and tertiary language learning (Neuner et al., 2009). By incorporating elements of these approaches, lecturers further enhance the communicative approach by providing learners with a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of language learning strategies.

One of the most significant developments in foreign language didactics at UEW is the promotion of collaborative learning, both within the classroom and online (Warschauer & Kern, 2000). Through group work, pair exercises, and peer-to-peer interactions, and projects, students of German at UEW are encouraged to collaborate, support each other, and learn from one another. This fosters not only language proficiency but also social skills such as teamwork and empathy. The integration of technology has also had a significant impact on German language instruction (Warschauer & Kern, 2000). At UEW, lecturers utilize digital learning platforms such as *Vclass* to provide interactive teaching materials, and online communication tools to enrich instruction and provide learners with new opportunities for learning and practice.

However, the teaching and learning of foreign languages environment in Ghana are not devoid of challenges like other fields of study. Inappropriate learning environment with requisite basic technological equipment betray the efforts being made by instructors and learners. Modern facilities such as information technology equipment are not readily present to access. There is also lack of state-of-the-art language laboratories to support the teaching and learning of the foreign languages. The challenges of language laboratories as well as space for linguistic practice beyond the classroom defeat the promotion of effective teaching and learning of foreign languages in Ghana.

The lack of appropriate teaching resources, permanent lecture halls and staff offices with equipped information technology communication resources do not attract the required full-time number of language teachers.

Another challenge that needs attention is the lack of time for lecturers for further studies that is daunting the interest in the study of foreign languages to attract permanent lecturers. The department of foreign languages in some universities in Ghana are under staffed and lack the appropriate teaching and learning resources to promote effective learning of the foreign languages. Again, Language policy reforms by every government on assuming office deny learners at the basic level in grasping the foundation in the learning of foreign languages to build upon it to the tertiary level.

Therefore, creating an enabling foreign language teaching and learning environment calls for adequate teaching and learning resources and provision of appropriate logistics. There should be a meaningful intervention regarding provision of appropriate infrastructure for foreign language teaching such as language laboratories, research libraries for students, and information technology infrastructure. The ICT infrastructure serves as the backbone of digital connectivity, influencing various aspects of academic work, economic development to education and global communication. This will facilitate real-time communication across borders, connecting language students and institutions globally. In the modern era, with the rise of telecommuting and remote work, a robust ICT infrastructure is essential for maintaining productivity and collaboration among geographically dispersed students. ICT infrastructure, particularly the internet, serves as a gateway to vast amounts of information. It enables students worldwide to access educational resources, news, research, and a wide range of services. An effective ICT infrastructure promotes digital inclusion by providing access to information and services to people in remote or underserved areas, contributing to reducing the digital divide.

The provision and application of teaching/learning resource materials in teaching help cater for different learning styles and preferences, making the learning process more engaging and effective for students. Additionally, it can enhance the depth and breadth of understanding by providing real-world examples, illustrations, and practical applications of concepts of the language. Learning resource materials makes learning more interactive and dynamic, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Moreover, they can support teachers in delivering more comprehensive and inclusive



lessons, accommodating diverse student needs and backgrounds. Overall, learning resource materials can contribute to a more enriching and impactful educational experience for both students and lecturers.

## **Foreign Language Teaching and Learning through COL and COIL in Africa Higher Education**

The challenges faced by African Universities in the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages are common predominantly involving lack of competent and permanent staff, infrastructure and appropriate curricula and teaching learning resources. Given that bringing the target community to the African context classroom to enable natural acquisition of foreign languages in a challenge and that bringing native speaker collaborators to Africa to enable this happen also has cost implications, collaborative teaching with native speakers becomes an almost only and apt alternative.

The alternative way to undertake collaborative teaching is going the online/virtual way. What then becomes handy is the new and quickly gaining popularity and momentum Collaborative Online International Learning herein henceforth referred to as COIL. COIL is an international virtual exchange initiative that allows the exchange and sharing of expert knowledge and services through online platforms by experts all over the world. One of the main aims of COIL is to promote internationalisation at home by virtually connecting students and professors from different countries for collaborative learning. The purpose and benefit being to provide students with affordable opportunities to gain global competencies within their courses, regardless of their physical location, thereby bridging the physical distance between them through technological means and allowing them to work together on multicultural and blended online learning. COIL is, therefore, a powerful way to enhance global competencies and prepare students for a connected world.

The study advocates for the initiation of the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages at Universities in Africa through Collaborative online learning herein henceforth referred to as COL and COIL post CESA. The strength that universities in Africa have is that they already have establish and functional centres for e-learning that were developed and

embraced during the COVID-19 Pandemic, through which COL and COIL classes can be mounted and actualised. Available curricula and resources will be used for a start and then modified into interactive curricula and resources specifically designed for collaborative online learning and that appeal to learners at all possible ages. Before spreading to the international level, collaborations can start with organisations within each country, such as the French embassy, the German embassy, the Chinese embassy, the French Cultural Centre, the Goethe Institute, and the Confucius institute. Collaborations can also start between institutions of higher learning offering programmes in these languages.

African governments should also be encouraged to inculcate modern languages and their training as part of the language policy of each member country under the African Union. This will possibly aid the appropriate investments in the teaching and learning of modern/foreign languages within the university system in Africa with its attendant benefits. Post CESA 2016-2025, it is also important that, AU member states do not just subscribe to modern/foreign language because the training in such are available and cheap but that, such languages align to their development agenda and appeal to the stakeholders' relative to the country's development. There is also a need for more research into the best methods for teaching and learning foreign languages and providing technological equipment that enhance learning of modern languages.

## **Conclusion**

In an ever changing educational, economic and political global landscape Africa needs to agilely embrace changes to address emerging global challenges if it is to remain globally competitive. Universities are the think tanks of and main producers of the major players in the workforce of a nation and communication and language are at the centre of the success of universities in meeting this obligation. The multilingual and multiethnic nature of Africa and the fact the official languages of most African nations are modern foreign languages, universities in Africa must adopt and teach modern foreign languages to remain a float on the global sphere. This calls for students who are the primary beneficiaries, professionals and other stakeholders to develop a sense of appreciation for the foreign languages

that have the potential to yield great rewards and embrace their teaching and learning. A foreign language as a choice has serious implications for African professionals in terms of employment opportunities and global standing. Therefore, the importance of foreign language knowledge in relation to skills development, economic and cultural development opportunities should not be taken for granted by universities in Africa.

## References

- Attorney General, Committee of Experts on Constitutional Review. (2010). *The proposed Constitution of Kenya*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Awaah, F. (2019). *Shifting the Focus Towards an Africa-Born HE Strategy*. University World News.
- Boonsuk, Y. (2023). Which English Should We Stand For? Voices from Lecturers in Thai Multicultural Universities. *RELC Journal*, 54(3), 588-602. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00336882211054650>
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of Practice*. Stanford University Press.
- Buschfeld, S. (2020). Language acquisition and World Englishes. In Schreier, D., Hundt, M., & Schneider, E. W. (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of World Englishes*, 559–84, CUP.
- Byram, M. (2008). *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship: Essays and Reflections*, Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters.
- Cameron, A., & Galloway, N. (2019). Local thoughts on global ideas: Pre- and in-service TESOL practitioners' attitudes to the pedagogical implications of the globalization of English. *Regional Language Centre Journal*, 50(1), 149–63.
- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2022). *Pedagogical Translanguaging (Elements in Language Teaching)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- CESA 16-25. (2015). *Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025*. African Union
- De Wit, H. (2019). Internationalization in Higher Education: A Critical Review. *SFU Educational Review*, 12(3), 9-17.

- De Wit, H., Hunter, F., Egron-Polak, E., & Howard, L. (Eds). (2015). *Internationalisation of Higher Education: A Study for the European Parliament*. Springer.
- Dornyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: OUP.
- Duranti, A. (2017). *Linguistic Anthropology*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Ellis, R. (2009). *The Study of L2 Acquisition* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Oxford: OUP.
- Flowers, S. (2015). Developing intercultural communication in an ELF program through digital pen pal exchange. *The Centre for ELF Journal*, 1(1), 25–39.
- Ghana Institute of Languages. (1961). Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages in Ghana. <https://gil.edu.gh/history.php>.
- Gyasi, S., O. (1997). An Analysis of the Linguistics Situation in Ghana. *African Languages and Cultures*, 10(1), 63-81.
- Hadeel, A. & Salim, B. (2023) Sustainability and educational language policy in Arab higher education: findings from Q research. *Current Issues in Language Planning* 24(5), 573-595.
- Hamza, R. (2022). Intercultural philosophy and internationalisation of higher education: epistemologies of the South, geopolitics of knowledge and epistemological polylogue. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 46(2), 1-13.
- Knight, J. (2007). Internationalization: Concepts, Complexities and Challenges: In: Forest, J.J.F.,
- Altbach, P.G. (eds) *International Handbook of Higher Education*. Springer.
- Knight, J. (2008). *Higher Education in Turmoil: The Changing World of Internationalisation*. Sense Publishers.
- Königs, F.G. (2010). Zwischen Hoffen und Bangen. Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer europäischen Studienreform am Beispiel des Faches Deutsch als Fremdsprache. *Info DaF* 1(37): 3-20.
- Kubota, R., & Miller, E. R. (2017). Reexamining and reenvisioning criticality in language studies: Theories and praxis. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 14(2–3), 129–57.
- Liddicoat, A. J. (2016). Language planning in universities: teaching, research and administration. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 17(3–4), 231–241.

- Luke, H. (2023) Language, hospitality, and internationalisation: exploring university life with the ethical and political acts of university administrators. *Current Issues in Language Planning* 24(1),42-59
- Nabea, W. (2009). Language Policy in Kenya: Negotiation with Hegemony. In: Itibari, Zulu (ed.) *Journal of Pan African Studies*. Los Angeles, 3 (1), 121-138. ISSN 1942-6569
- Neuner, G., Hufeisen, B., Kursisa, A., Marx, N., Koithan, U., & Erlenwein, S. (Eds.) (2009). *Deutsch als zweite Fremdsprache*. Langenscheidt.
- Ogechi, N (2003). On Language Rights in Kenya. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 12(3): 277-295.
- Sapir, E. (1921). *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. London: Rupert Hart Davis.
- Selvi, A.F., Galloway, N., Rose, H. (2024). *Teaching English as an International Language*. CUP.
- van der Wende, M. (2010). Internationalization of Higher Education. In: Penelope Peterson, Eva
- Baker, Barry McGaw, (Editors), *International Encyclopaedia of Education*, (4), 540-545. Oxford: Elsevier
- Warschauer, M. & Kern, R. (2000). *Network-based language Teaching: Concepts and Practice*. CUP.

## Chapter 2

# Revitalisation of Culturally-Sensitive Teaching Methodologies that Prioritizes African Cultural Values in African Higher Education Institutions: A Post-CESA (2016-2025) Review

Dickson Adom  
Joann Thompson  
Owusu Oteng Bediako  
Isaac Asare-Aboagye

### **Abstract**

There have been recent calls for the inclusion of culturally sensitive teaching methodologies that focus on African cultural values in African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In African HEIs, the pursuit of inclusive and equitable learning environments is paramount, considering the continent's rich cultural diversity. Educators face the challenge of ensuring that teaching methodologies are responsive to the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of students. Therefore, the foundation for this chapter is set in one of the guiding principles in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 16-25, which is, "holistic, inclusive and equitable education with good conditions for lifelong learning is sine qua non for sustainable development". The ramification of African ethnic principles on the dynamics between learners and facilitators emphasises how essential it is for institutional procedures to incorporate sensitive cultural diversity through the integration of oral traditions in lesson delivery, mentorship, and meaningful pedagogical settings that connect deeply with the cultural backgrounds of learners.