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Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Sociolinguistic Overview by Efurosibina Adegbija. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 1994. Pp. viii + 130 pp.

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Language planning has been a primary focus of African sociolinguistics since the formation of independent states three and a half decades ago (Bokamba, 1990). Still, the 'language problem' remains unresolved from one end of the continent to the other. In Ethiopia, where Amharic was imposed as the sole official language and all other languages were suppressed for over 30 years, educators are purging Amharic from the curriculum (Honig, 1994). In South Africa, apartheid promoted ethnic conflict by segregating language groups (Harlech-Jones, 1990), a legacy confronting the new governments as they struggle to create post-apartheid language policy that will foster national unity (Luckett, 1992). In Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Sociolinguistic Overview, Adegbija outlines the historical and current sociopolitical factors that make language planning in African nations so complex and contentious. Central to his discussion is the argument for further and more in-depth research on language attitudes.

In the first two chapters, the author provides a basic sociolinguistic profile of Sub-Saharan Africa. He draws most of his examples of language policy and attitudes from Nigeria, his country of origin. From the outset, Adegbija is forthright about his ideological perspective: he supports multilingual policy based on an "asset and resource perspective to diversity" (p. 113).

The third chapter addresses research of the past decade on language attitudes in Africa. This includes a description of some previous studies and their methodological deficiencies, as well as a call for more rigorous research in fields relevant to language planning. By applying Lambert and Gardner's model of motivation to Africans' acquisition of European Languages of Wider Communication, Adegbija raises an intriguing question: how readily can the instrumental drive for upward socioeconomic mobility be separated from the integrative desire to affiliate oneself with the European or the African elite? He thus emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive application of western theories to individuals' language learning in the African context.

The fourth chapter is a plea for the protection of small minority languages against regional Languages of Wider Communication. A more concrete connection between access to resources and competence in prestige languages would have strengthened his argument that language promotion is

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necessary for the sociopolitical and economic advancement of advance linguistic minorities. By revealing his own prejudice against the Hausa-speaking majority of Nigeria, Adegbija illustrates the impact of extra-linguistic factors such as regional or religious conflict on language attitudes and any effort to investigate or influence them.

Most problematic is the fifth chapter, which focuses on language use in education. Adegbija does not adequately develop his argument for mother tongue instruction, citing as evidence experiments whose results are held by many sociolinguists to be inconclusive (Schmied, 1991). In his demand for government-sponsored development of small minority languages, the author glosses over the need for a cost-benefit analysis of such a policy prior to expending limited state resources.

While far from being comprehensive, Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa is an interesting outline of the issues in language attitudes research and language planning in the region. However, rather than assert without adequate evidence that multilingual policy is the key to literacy, socioeconomic equality, democracy, and freedom from neo-colonialism, Adegbija might do more for his cause by posing more questions that will inspire the research needed to support his claim that, for the greater good, governments must maintain and develop minority languages. "Language development is people development" (p.109), but it may not be the panacea he claims.

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