

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN SURVEY COVER SHEET

To: Staff and Interested Parties
 From: David Zorc
 Date: 26 April 2017 [revised as PDF]

Below please find

A. The survey, subdivided as follows:

pages 3-4 21 language summaries & needs, arranged by population
 pages 5-7 commentary and brief report
 pages 7-9 One paragraph summaries of language needs, arranged in alphabetical order
 page 9-10 general background information (useful sources and sites)
 page 10 acknowledgements

B. Fact sheets for the following languages have been completed and are available on request:

Akan-Twi	Bambara AKA Mandekan
Bantu	Bemba
Chewa	Fanagalo
Fulfulde AKA Fulani	Hausa
Igbo ~ Ibo	Ikikuyu AKA Gikuyu
Kongo	Luganda
Maay	Malagasy AKA Hova
Mandingo	Mende
Mulenge (Kinyamulenge)	Ndebele
Nyanja	Oromo
Rundi (Kirundi)	Ruund
Rwanda (Kinyarwanda)	Sango
Sepedi (Northern Sotho)	Shona
Somali	Sotho (Southern Sotho, Sesotho)
Swahili (kiSwahili)	Swati (siSwati) AKA Swazi
Tiv	Tsonga
Tswana	Umbundu
Urhobo	Venda
Wolof	Xhosa
Yoruba	Zulu

Note: the fact sheets contain information gathered from the Library of Congress and the CALL/UCLA database on these languages. I have appended photocopies of the relevant pages from David Dwyer's survey; books highlighted in green are covered in the fact sheets (i.e., my work with the LOC and CALL/UCLA searches).

Books not highlighted in green may be of importance, but were not included in the aforementioned materials.

All of the remaining fact sheets will be forwarded when completed.

C. Cover sheet for the African Language Index (Preliminary Version)
The full manuscript is available upon request.

TOP PRIORITY AFRICAN LANGUAGES ranked by (approximate) population:

LANGUAGE	POPULATION	COUNTRIES
Arabic NEED: Thorough dialect survey to determine subsequent priorities and needs	100,000,000 L1 250,000,000 L2	middle east, northern third of Africa: Algeria, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Morocco
Hausa NEED: NONE	20,000,000 L1 40,000,000 L2	Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria , Togo; + Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Libya, Senegal, Sudan
Swahili NEED: NONE	20,000,000 L1 10,000,000 L2	east Africa: Comoros Is., Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zaire
Oromo NEEDS: dictionary; textbook	18,000,000	Ethiopia , Kenya
Yoruba NEEDS: reference grammar; learner's dictionary	16,000,000	Benin, Nigeria , Togo
Igbo ~ Ibo NEED: (newspaper) reader	12,000,000	Nigeria
Fulani ~ Fulfulde ~ Fula ~ Peulh ~ Pulaar NEED: newspaper reader; assessment of other materials	10,000,000	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria , Senegal
Amharic NEED: reference grammar	8,500,000 L1 5,500,000 L2	Ethiopia
Lingala ~ Ngala NEED: (newspaper) reader; reference grammar	8,400,000	Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Zaire
Berber -Tamasheq NEED: Thorough dialect survey to determine subsequent priorities and needs	8,000,000	Algeria, Morocco ; Burkina Faso, Chad (western), Libya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria
Manding ~ Mandingo, Mandekan, Mandinka , Malinke; Bambara ~ Bamanakan; Dyula ; Sose NEED: Bambara newspaper reader; determine if Bambara materials suffice for all dialects; otherwise Dyula, Mandinka, Maninka readers	3,500,000 L1 3,500,000 L2	spreading through west Africa: Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia , Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Upper Volta
Shona ~ Swina, Chishona NEEDS: (newspaper) reader, reference grammar	7,000,000	Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Rwanda ~ Rundi ~ Kirundi NEEDS: (newspaper) reader, reference grammar	6,205,300 18,000,000 L2	Burundi, Rwanda , Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire
Sango ~ Sangho [Ngbandi based creole] NEED: (newspaper) reader	4,900,000	Central African Republic , Cameroon, Chad, Zaire
Nyanja ~ Chinyanja, Chewa ~ Chichewa NEED: newspaper reader	4,500,000	Malawi , Mozambique, Tan- zania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Akan ~ Twi, Fante, Asante, Asanti NEED: Newspaper Reader	4,300,000	Ghana , Cote d'Ivoire
Tigrinya NEED: being met	3,600,000	Eritrea , Ethiopia
Kongo ~ Congo, Cabinda, Kikongo, Kituba NEED: (newspaper) reader	3,200,000	Congo ; Angola, Gabon, Zaire
Wolof ~ Ouolof, Yallof, Walaf, Volof NEED: reader; dictionary	3,000,000	Gambia, Mauritania, Senegal
Umbundu ~ Mbundu, Loanda, Nano, Mbali, Mbari NEEDS: reader, textbook, grammar & dictionary	1,800,000	Angola , Namibia
Tiv NEED: (newspaper) reader	1,500,000	Cameroon, Nigeria

Commentary

According to one recognized authority, David Dalby, the top three languages in Africa are: **Arabic, Hausa, and Swahili**, followed by **Amharic, Lingala, and Manding**. The ALTUS (African Language Teachers of the US) established 23 Priority “A” languages, which are, in alphabetical order: **Akan, Amharic, Arabic, Chewa/Nyanja, Fulfulde (Fulani), Hausa, Igbo (Ibo), Kongo, Lingala, Malagasy, Mandingo (Mandekan, Bambara), Oromo, Ruanda/Rundi, Sango, Shona, Somali, Sotho-Tswana, Swahili, Tigrinya, Umbundu, Wolof, Xhosa-Zulu-Swazi, and Yoruba**. With the exception of **Berber** and **Tiv**, none of the Priority “B” and “C” languages appear to be of sufficient population or political interest to merit consideration at this time. Unexpected and dramatic political shifts could, of course, change this at any moment! The ability to respond promptly to a language crisis is perhaps the highest priority in Africa.

Of these major languages, only the following have been omitted:

	REASON 1	REASON 2
Malagasy	work in progress	adequate coverage
Somali	projects completed	adequate coverage
Sotho	see last year’s SA survey	work in progress
Tswana	see last year’s SA survey	
Swazi	see last year’s SA survey	
Xhosa	see last year’s SA survey	
Zulu	see last year’s SA survey	

The remaining 21 languages are presented in the above table (on the first two pages), listed exclusively by population statistics. Each of them is discussed below, but note that the list there is in alphabetical order. Ultimately, priority should be determined or assigned on the basis of:

1. political importance
2. population (in millions of speakers)
3. number of nations where it is spoken
4. closeness or “mileage” (easy or fast transfer to another language)
5. need of materials (urgent to maybe)
- 6? appearance on US Government RFP’s

In order to get the information out ASAP, I am presenting my conclusions first. Fact sheets will follow. For anyone so requiring, coverage through the mid-1980’ can be readily checked in Dwyer’s book (available at the **LRC** and at **UMES**), while newer material can be viewed through the Library of Congress search engine on the Internet.

Early in the month, I did an Internet search of the CALL/UCLA and the Library of Congress databases to gather lists of books and publications on each of

the languages. Instead of doing a printout of the results, I saved the data to disk, so that minor formatting (rather than re-keying) has sped up production.

Information in the individual language fact sheets may cover (depending on availability of information):

- (1) language name,
- (2) alternate names by which it is known,
- (3) dialects,
- (4) membership in a linguistic group,
- (5) population statistics,
- (6) percent of nation's population,
- (7) my priority rating (as well as that of ALTUS),
- (8) social significance,
- (9) political significance,
- (10) areas where it is spoken,
- (11) orthography,
- (12) use (in education, media, etc.),
- (13) radio broadcasts,
- (14) print media (newspapers, periodicals),
- (15) institutional resources,
- (16) individual resources,
- (17) bibliographical references (to learning materials, grammars, dictionaries, readers, and background cultural or historical information).

Since I can not personally evaluate all these books to determine the true depth and extent of coverage, we must rely on contacts with professionals in the field. Important facts concerning a grammar too theoretical to be of any use, or a dictionary unusable by a beginner cannot be gleaned from title, date, or number of pages. I would have deemed Yoruba to be "adequate" based on the sheer volume of materials published. However, Prof. Schleicher states that the grammars are either Latinate (ones pre-dating the 1940's) or are out to prove one or another linguistic theory, and are therefore incomprehensible to the average student. Similarly, there are some comprehensive dictionaries, but organized by root word, so that the beginner cannot find what he/she is looking for. The revised conclusion for Yoruba is that a **student-friendly reference grammar** and a learner's dictionary are required.

One exceptionally important side-product of this research has been the "Index of African Language Names," which I also plan to submit for publication in the first edition of the forthcoming ALTA Journal. In my first week of research, I had identified 455 language names; by the second, it grew to 2,465!, and clearly that is still not the end ("new" language names continue to arise). Most languages have an average of six names, some up to a dozen. Given this plethora of names and chaotically-applied criteria for identification, finding information on any given language can be a very frustrating task. Sometimes a name is geographically oriented, so that it can refer to up to five totally distinct languages [Lunda =

Bemba, Chokwe, Ndembu, or Ruund]. Sometimes the same dialect is given a new name when tribal or national boundaries are crossed [Bambara = Bamanakan]. Sometimes an outsider's name has become more popular than the name the speakers call themselves [Fulani {Hausa} = Fulfulde {autonym}]. All of this is reflected in the separately-attached ***Index of African Names***, with a cross-reference to one name (or at most, if warranted, two).

The Language Needs

AKAN has (had) two periodicals, *Nkwantabisa* and *Akwansosem*, so a newspaper reader could be developed. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries. The degree to which the five main dialects (Akyem, Akuapem, Asante, Brong, and Fante) are truly mutually-intelligible should also be tested.

AMHARIC needs a user-friendly reference grammar according to student reactions at LRC.

ARABIC has a bewildering array of dialects, yet orthographic (social) conventions do not allow these to appear in writing. A survey of the dialect situation insofar as it affects intelligibility should be done. SIL may have something already, so they should be contacted first. Otherwise, an academic institution is well-poised to work with scholars in the field, SIL, and other groups. A wordlist (e.g., 100 items) likely to reveal dialect differentiation could be developed. (See Zorc's for the Philippines for some ideas; it probably would not apply to any other language family.)

BERBER has a wide array of dialects, not all of which may be mutually intelligible. Once accurate information as to population, degrees of intelligibility as well as difference is obtained, a determination can be made as to what materials are usable and what need to be developed.

FULFULDE (FULANI) has an active press and certainly needs a newspaper reader. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries. The English materials produced in Japan look promising.

HAUSA appears to be well documented: textbooks (all levels), grammars, dictionaries, readers. See INFORMATION SHEET.

IGBO needs a (newspaper) reader. Even though the press is suppressed, materials could be developed by a combination of: "timeless articles" in older papers, transcripts of radio broadcasts, and astute consultants. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the

adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

KONGO has several radio broadcasts, but there is no mention of a press. A newspaper-like reader should be produced from transcriptions if no print media are found. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

LINGALA has several radio broadcasts, but there is no mention of a press. A newspaper-like reader should be produced from transcriptions if no print media are found. Since most surveys are either in French or contained passim in textbooks, a reference grammar is clearly needed. Collection and evaluation of other materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

MANDING is one of several labels applied to languages otherwise known as Bambara, Dyula, Mandingo, Mandinka, and Sose. Of these, **Bambara** is the best documented. If all are mutually-intelligible, then these Bambara materials may suffice. Otherwise, readers may be necessary for each of the major dialects.

NYANJA (in Zambia) and **CHEWA** (in Malawi) are mutually intelligible and have a range of print media (daily, monthly), so a newspaper reader could be developed. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

OROMO needs a comprehensive dictionary (between 20% - 40% of the words used in the press are not found in either of the two published sources). MRM has the resources to do this (established database, numerous wordlists, network of contacts, etc.). The one textbook is written by an Oromo who rushes through major elements that need much drilling (e.g., verbs are covered in 1/3 page by Ali, yet 13 pages in Zorc's grammatical sketch). Alternatively, supplementary lessons or materials geared to that textbook would serve (much had been prepared by MRM staff during a course).

RWANDA and **RUNDI** are mutually intelligible. The vast majority of material on either is in French. Minimally a (newspaper) reader (if there is a press; transcripts, if not) and reference grammar are required. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of the bigger French dictionaries, i.e., possibly a translation of one of these might do.

SANGO has both radio and TV broadcasts, but there is no mention of a press. A newspaper-like reader could be produced from transcriptions if no print media are found. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done

during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

SHONA has numerous papers and a sizable literature, so a newspaper reader would be a top priority. Grammatical coverage does not appear to be adequate, so a reference grammar would be the next step, and could be tied to or incorporated with the reader project. A monolingual Shona dictionary is being developed at the University of Oslo by Mrs. Oddrun Grønvik; perhaps arrangements could be made to work with or purchase her database for a Shona-English version?

SWAHILI is very well documented: textbooks (all levels), grammars, dictionaries, readers, even an on-line database and parser programs.

TIGRINYA needs are currently being met (dictionary, reader and reference grammar are under production).

TIV is a borderline case in terms of priority. There is at least one newspaper (*Mwanger u tiv*), so a newspaper reader could be produced. Collection and evaluation of extant materials should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of dictionaries.

UMBUNDU has very poor coverage (especially in English) and therefore needs virtually everything: reader, reference grammar, textbook and dictionary.

WOLOF has both radio and TV broadcasts, but there is no mention of a press. A newspaper-like reader could be produced from transcriptions if no print media are found. There is a need for a good-sized Wolof-English dictionary. Works in French far surpass those in English). Collection and evaluation of extant materials in English should be done during such a project to test the adequacy of course and grammatical materials, as well as the coverage of the bigger French dictionaries, i.e., possibly a translation of one of these might do.

YORUBA, despite the long list of materials available, needs a user-friendly reference grammar and a introductory or learner's dictionary (see commentary above).

General Background Information

I found the following books or websites very useful for an overview of the Sub-Saharan African language situation:

Anonymous. 1988. Africa South of the Sahara, 1989. Eighteenth Edition. London: Europa Publications Limited. «**LRC**»

- Anonymous. 1993. African Books in Print. [4th edition] London and New York: Hans Zell Publications. «**LOC**»
- Dakubu, M. E. Kropp. 1977. West African language data sheets. Vol. 1. Legon: West African Linguistic Society. «**LOC**» «**UCLA**»
- Dwyer, David J. 1987. A Resource Handbook for African Languages. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University. «**LRC**»
- Fivaz, Derek and Patricia E. Scott. 1977. African languages : a genetic and decimalised classification for bibliographic and general reference. [xxxiv + 332pp] «**LOC**» [Z697 .A33 F58]
- Grimes, Barbara, ed. 1996. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, 13th Edition. SIL. <www.sil.org>
- Johnson, Dora, et al. 1976. A Survey of Materials for the Study of the Uncommonly Taught Languages. Vol. 6: Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. «**LRC**»
- Mann, Michael and David Dalby, with Philip Baker, et al. 1987. A thesaurus of African Languages : a classified and annotated inventory of the spoken languages of Africa : with an appendix on their written representation. London, New York: H. Zell Publishers. [325pp] «**LOC**» [PL8005 .M36 1987]
UCLA Los Angeles, Language Materials Project <www.lmp.ucla.edu>

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