

Language, Gender and Sustainability

LAGSUS

A PLURIDISCIPLINARY AND COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

Research project of the Volkswagen-Stiftung (Hannover)

"Schlüsselthemen der Geisteswissenschaften/Key issues in the humanities"

A joint venture initiated by language- and development-oriented researchers at the universities of Frankfurt a/M, Kassel and Zurich (Switzerland), in close cooperation with their partners and counterparts in the host countries: Ivory Coast (Centre Suisse de Recherche Scientifique [CSRS]; Université de Cocody [Abidjan]); Namibia (Univ. of Namibia; NNFU; TKFA); Indonesia (STORMA [= SFB 552: Stability of Rainforest Margins in Indonesia]; Tadulako Univ. at Palu [Central Sulawesi]), and with actors engaged in various roles in various local development projects.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(November 2002)

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I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1 GENERAL BACKGROUND AND "STATE-OF-THE-ART"

1.1 Linguistic fragmentation and development

The linguistic fragmentation which prevails in many parts of the Third World offers particular challenges and opportunities for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of development and development communication. One of the paradoxical effects of exoglossic language and educational policy inherited from the colonial era – a policy hailed as the way to education for all and the panacea to underdevelopment in the early post-independence era - is that access to innovative knowledge, and with it to social prestige and economic advancement, remains linked to proficiency in a European language, such as French or English in many parts of Africa, or in a major lingua franca such as Bahasa Indonesia in Indonesia. While some degree of such proficiency is no longer in itself a guarantee of socio-economic promotion, lack of it still fatally correlates with exclusion from communicative resources deemed necessary for full exercise of one's rights of citizenship and full participation in public debate and decision-making processes (Bamgbose 2000, ch. 3-4). Statistics of school enrollment only partially reveal the extent to which lack or insufficiency of Western-type education continues to be a handicap for the majority of Third World inhabitants in their quest for socio-economic advancement.¹ Moreover, against the backdrop of women's increasing and often leading role in many aspects of rural and urban development, the gender gap still prevailing in both formal and informal education in many countries of the South, despite its substantial reduction over the past three decades, calls for targeted attention in development communication planning.²

Under the pressure of conflicting sociolinguistic forces, complementary functions were assigned, and are constantly being re-assigned in society at large, to, and between, languages of wider communication at all levels - international, national, regional - on the one hand, and local languages on the other (Reh 1981, Brann 1993). Functional overlap and complementarity, reflected in a multifarious shading-off of types of diglossy or triglossy,³ in conjunction with the emergence of "mixed" forms of language, such as popular French in Côte d'Ivoire (Hattiger 1983), serve the immediate needs of daily intercourse between different groups in a setting still largely dominated by oral modes of communication. While "pervasive multilingualism" (Bokamba 1993) in Africa and other parts of the world attests an amazing mental versatility of the populations acquiring the gamut of linguistic competences required for daily survival, this ingenuity is not generally acknowledged as a socio-economic value but, to the contrary, remains emblematic of socio-cultural exclusion, and functions as a mechanism of self-reproducing social inequality through linguistic diversity. Nor is it – for the very same reason – perceived as an asset in development communication.

¹ "Four out of every ten primary-age children in sub-Saharan Africa do not go to school. *Of those who do go to school, the report finds that only a small proportion reach a basic level of skills.*" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Summary of report, 12 April 2002; italics TB)

² Statistics of female adult illiteracy in sub-Saharan Africa oscillate between around 50% (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Oct. 2002 [an estimated based on selected countries]), and 70% (UNDP, quoted in *D + C Development and Cooperation* no 4/July-Aug. 1999, p. 7.) According to the latter source, women produce 70-75% of food in Subsaharan Africa.

³ See for example Angogo (1983) for Luyia (Kenya), Johnson (1975) for rural Ghana, Haust (1995) for Gambia, Kropp Dakubu (1997) for an urban environment in Ghana.

Communication gaps resulting from pervasive language diversity and inequality characteristic of many developing countries (Bearth 2000a/b) are central to the present proposal. Unequal distribution of access to communicative resources due to language diversity in multilingual settings tends to have grave epistemic, cognitive and social implications affecting development communication and the ultimate outcome of development interventions. Tadadjeu/Chatio (in press), tracking the problem from its local roots, evoke the global dimension of its consequences with respect to the African continent: "In African local communities, where day-to-day communication takes place almost entirely in local languages, the need for the development and promotion of modern communication systems in these languages remains preoccupying. When information on modern approaches to development is made available to most of these communities, this is done almost exclusively in inherited official languages that the majority of the population neither speaks nor understands. This has been the fate of the continent for over four decades today. This approach to information dissemination has accounted significantly for the failure of most of the development programs proposed and implemented on the continent over the years." By focusing on development communication at the micro-level of the local community, the present proposal therefore addresses an issue of far-reaching consequences for global society and economy.

1.2 Language – missing link in development studies

Whereas language fragmentation has readily been identified as a hindrance to socio-economic growth,⁴ language as a potential *ally* of sustainable development tends to be either ignored or at best taken for granted. The vast literature focusing on communicative aspects of development only rarely takes notice of the language factor *per se*. Melkote/Steeves (2001),⁵ for instance, while offering a penetrating analysis of communication models and communicative practice in development around the world, remain silent on the language issue.⁶ Wilkins/Mody (2001) leave no stone unturned in exploring conditions for improvement of development communication, but do not even mention language divergence as a potentially relevant factor to be taken into account.⁷

⁴ Mueller (2002:39f.), reviewing correlations between cultural indicators and socio-economic development, still maintains that "ethno-linguistic heterogeneity is detrimental to economic development" (p. 39). This common sense opinion, supported by an influential World Bank paper (Easterly & Levine 1997), had already been challenged by Bamgbose (1991) on the grounds that an apparent correlation between density of language diversity and GNP, in reality reflects a possible negative correlation between degree of literacy and economic growth. While admitting evidence against over-generalization of Easterly/Levine's claim, Austin (2000/2001), in a recent World Bank publication, still defends its general validity. However, the Rwandan conflict between Hutu and Tutsi, which he adduces in its support, precisely shows that ethnicity may be constructed on sets of criteria which need not include language diversity, since Hutu and Tutsi both speak the same language, Kinyarwanda. Whatever the ultimate truth of the matter, ignoring linguistic diversity will not help those concerned, while taking language as a factor of development seriously may turn the perceived obstacle into a blessing.

⁵ The same is true of older references such as Ban et al. (1994), Parlato et al. (1995), Servaes et. al. (1996).

⁶ Most significantly, in the enumeration of disciplines having possibly some bearing on the multidisciplinary approach to development communication advocated by the authors, no mention is made of the sciences of language (p. 41). Where successful radio or TV programs on subjects such as AIDS are identified by their local language titles (p. 142), their success is attributed exclusively to the choice of genre, e.g. entertainment instead of education; the choice of language is not even considered as a possible factor.

⁷ Wilkins/Mody's "language blindness" is surprising, since a recognition of the importance of the language factor is implicit in their call for discourse analysis. An English-reading Martian studying the bulk of development research literature would go by the assumption that the world, above all the Third World - speaks English and English only and that development communication research is all about communication between people sharing a common language!

Writing from an African perspective, Koné & Sy (1995) show greater awareness of the language problem and its relevance to development communication. As Koné (1995:42) says, the choice of the linguistic medium may decisively affect the reception or rejection of an exogenous message by the target community.⁸ Sy (1995:65) and Nwosu (1995:154f.) recognize local languages as depositories of cultural knowledge on which development must necessarily be based. Rambelo (1999) similarly maintains that reliance on local language and local culture are interdependent conditions for agricultural innovation and for local participation in development.⁹ Diawara (2000:370) paraphrases development "mediated" through local knowledge as "concepts and conceptions of development experts [being] transmitted through local languages and measured against the practical judgment of local populations."

On the other hand, for half a century now – beginning with UNESCO (1953) - a vast body of sociolinguistic literature, particularly from African sociologists and linguists (Bamgbose 1991, 2000; Prah 1991, 1993, 1995; Prah/King 1999; Silué 2000; see Bearth 1997 for an overview), culminating in the Harare Declaration (Harare 1997), insists on the interdependence of language development and development in general. From a broad educational and cultural perspective, the mother tongue is viewed as an indispensable instrument of balanced development of human and natural resources, including technological advancement on the African continent. In the same vein of thinking, but with a new awareness of pressures from globalization, a more recent trend attempts to look at multilingualism *per se*, rather than on individual languages, as an asset to national development, justifying this view not only in terms of preservation of cultural diversity,¹⁰ but also in terms of economic potential (Grin 1990; Webb 1998; Grin & Villancourt 1999).

Early case studies reflecting on language-induced *communication gaps* and ways to deal with their adverse effects focus mainly on issues of terminology (Kishindo 1987; Ohly 1984-5, 1987). Admission of widespread failure of transfer at the conceptual level in rural development broadcast based on *ad hoc* translation into local languages leads to a call for transdisciplinary cooperation as a condition for enabling communication in rural development to live up to its claims.¹¹

More recent research tends to emphasize social consequences of communication failures and remedial action for improvement particularly in the domains of health (Crawford 1999; Diarra 1999) and agriculture (Tourneux/Yaya 1999), while at the same time broadening the perspective from terminology to communicative aspects of language use and non-linguistic communication (Hoffmann 1991, Tourneux 1993). Recognition of the correlation between choice of language and communicability of sensitive subject matter has been decisive for relative success of AIDS campaigns in rural Africa (e.g. Frank 1995:119f.). Mutembei et al. (2002) show how local

⁸ Koné evokes frequent passive resistance by rural constituencies against development messages conveyed in a language other than their own.

⁹ "En effet, non seulement pour générer des solutions mieux adaptées aux problèmes de développement, les techniques nouvelles et les savoir-faire nouveaux doivent s'enraciner dans la culture locale, mais en outre, on peut observer que c'est sur la base des cultures endogènes que fonctionnent souvent les micro-dynamismes sur lesquels s'appuient les communautés paysannes pour se prendre en charge et affronter les incertitudes de l'environnement économique et social. Autrement dit, *hors de leur culture, donc hors de leur(s) langue(s), il n'y a pas de participation des populations au processus de développement*" (Rambelo 1999:200) [italics TB].

¹⁰ This assumption underlies the Language article of the new constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Department of National Education, n.d.).

¹¹ "... work on scientific terminology must be a collaborative effort between subject specialists, linguists and competent language users" and "the introduction of this terminology to the ordinary man be an integrated part of development of his society, and not an isolated exercise" (Kishindo 1987:106f.).

language terminology and metaphor reflects, and at the same time contributes to shape, social attitudes surrounding the AIDS syndrome.

Robinson (1996) is exceptional (i) in examining, in a monograph size study, the problem of development communication at the micro-level of a single, prototypical language community, (ii) in proposing modelization in terms of the interaction between explicit, quantifiable language and development factors, and (iii) in posing the problem of development communication in terms of *language choices*¹² influencing the processing of innovative agricultural knowledge in a multilingual and "multi-development" setting.

1.3 Language and development theory

As can easily be gleaned from the quotes and comments on the literature surveyed in the preceding section, the terms in which the question of language in the context of development has been discussed so far invariably suggest that the source of the problem is located at the interface between a dominant language – which for convenience may be identified as "development source language" (DSL) – as opposed to a local language, that of the concerned population – identifiable as "development target language" (DTL). This view underlies the position even of those writers (e.g. Tadadjeu, Koné, Diawara) who explicitly plead for a participatory approach to development. Presumably, this exclusive insistence on the DSL/DTL interface finds its justification in the assumption that local development cannot be reduced to a local process but necessarily relies, on whatever scale, on external sources and stimuli, and integrates a supra-local (e.g. national) dimension and, usually mediated via the latter, a global dimension without which there would be no local development. In terms of communication this means that – notwithstanding the obsolescence of the modernization paradigm with its exclusive insistence on one-way transfer of knowledge – external sources of innovation continue to play an indispensable part even in a participatory approach.¹³

On the other hand, Robinson's claim "that the local language must have a place in a participatory kind of development intervention" (p. 248) implies that, notwithstanding the emphasis on DSL/DTL interface as the critical crossing point for innovative information destined to target communities, this emphasis must be coupled with the insistence on two-way communication as another indispensable prerequisite to local participation (Sy 1995:65). L1 – the local language considered without reference to the DSL/DTL dichotomy¹⁴ – might then be viewed as an essential source for the conceptualization of development contents, rather than merely in its role as a "transmitter" (Diawara 2000:370) indispensable to the successful transfer of pre-existent conceptions. From a fully participatory standpoint, monitoring the flow of information across linguistic boundaries in both directions appears as a precondition to the synthesis of exogenous and indigenous knowledge deemed necessary for sustainable local development and adequate local responses to global challenges.

This alternating perspective on the local language as a recipient of external development messages and as an endogenous source of development also means that inquiry into the role of language in the context of development can no longer exclusively concentrate on the transfer of innovative

¹² Significantly, the concluding chapter of his book is entitled "Languages, communication and development", whereas "Language" in the title of the present research proposal is generic.

¹³ For a survey of theory and practice of participatory development and its ramifications, consult e.g. Chambers 1995/97; Nelson/Wright 1995/97; Servaes et al. 1996; Shepherd 1998; and Kothari/Minogue 2002.

¹⁴ L1 = the mother tongue, or, more generally, the language of initial socialization of an individual.

information from DSL to DTL. It can no longer leave outside its scope the complex communicative processes on which hinges the "post-incubation" fate of development interventions, and hence, we believe, their sustainability.

In terms of methodology, this means that a lexico-semantic view of the role of language almost exclusively favored in earlier studies (Crawford 1999 is an exception) must necessarily be supplemented by a more comprehensive, decompartmentalized view of this role, which includes for instance the use of language in negotiating issues pertaining to the process of development or the roles of actors involved in it, without excluding relevant non-verbal aspects of communication. In short, local language in the context of this proposal must be understood to refer to the broadest possible definition of language in terms of the tool-bag provided by the sciences of languages, including besides methodology of core linguistics the methods of discourse analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, conversational pragmatics and ethnomethodology.

Interdisciplinary studies on the interplay between *local discourse resources* and the *process of development* – as advocated by Fairhead (1994) – are still lacking. Underlying the present proposal is the conviction that such studies are indispensable in order to better understand the causes of ultimate success or failure of development interventions in multilingual environments.

1.4 Language, development and gender

In development studies, as well as in practical development work, the central role of women has become an important topic during the 1970s (UN decade for women's development, Boserup 1970, Zdunnek & Ay 1999; see Melkote/Steeves 2001:186-192 for an overview of doctrines and movements).¹⁵ As a result, there has been a heightened awareness of, and more explicit reference to women's role in the programs of development agencies. Increased attention paid to women's contribution to development, however, does not in itself mean that the situation of women has improved, or that, in general, the intensity of their struggle for survival has been eased. Recent studies have made it clear that women still make up the largest section among the world's poor (Braunmühl 1998, Schöninger 1998) and that, for instance, women have been more heavily affected by structural adjustment programs than other segments of society (Gladwin 1991, Izumi 1999) while, at the same time, their role in subsistence and group survival remains central and has even become more indispensable - it is women's economy that keeps the societies alive (Lachenmann 1992:77, Griening 1995).

Since its beginnings which also dates back to the early 70-ies, inquiry into the relationship between gender and language has been a major focus of interest in gender studies (e.g. Tannen 1990 and passim; Coates 1998; for overviews see e.g. Thorne et al. 1983, West et al. 1997). But in spite of overlapping research interests, the potential synergies of the two currents have not been fully exploited. For instance, Dolphyne's study on women's emancipation in modern Ghana (Dolphyne 1991), though written by one of Ghana's leading linguists, hardly mentions language as a factor of female advancement. A rare exception in this regard, the Vienna research program "Ecco" (dir. W. Schicho) integrates a strong emphasis on gender differences in its language-oriented critical discourse approach to development communication (Hanak 1997, Hanak & Smyth 1997).

While the recognition of women's key role in development and the necessity of their empowerment has long become common-place, the role which female language and discourse

¹⁵ For a listing of internationally established movements, see: Yale Africa Guide InterActive: Development and Social Action : Gender Issues.

play in this context still remains largely underexplored. In-depth studies of female communicative culture in East Africa testify to the specificity and social relevance of female communicative strategies such as ambiguity being used as a deliberate strategy in the Kanga culture (Beck 2000a/b). Such studies also point to the persistence of fundamental gender asymmetries with ensuing social discrimination against women even in culturally transitional societies such as the coastal Swahili (see e.g. Hanak 1996 and Hirsch 1998 on court procedures) and in African societies in general (Bryceson 1993, 1995; DAWN 1997; DAWN Informs 2002a, b; Charkiewicz 2002). At the same time, however, economic pressures and the pervasive influence of democratic ideology contribute to redefine and redistribute gender roles at a rapid pace in many traditional societies.¹⁶ This paradoxical situation makes it all the more urgent to address the question as to how changes in language and communicative strategies both reflect and affect shifts in gender relations, and how they might become relevant as conditioning factors of sustainability in development.

Feminist movements have insisted since the 70-ies that the recognition of the role of women in development is crucial to development itself. If, on the other hand, the language factor is equally crucial to sustainability in development (Bearth 2000a/b), then the study of both factors from the perspective of their interrelation is not only a priority in the light of the evidence of effects of global change on gender relations in traditional societies, but also a promising avenue of research on conditions of sustainable development. See 3.1, 3.7 below.

1.5 Development communication - meeting-point of linguistics and sociology

Interlocking research on social and linguistic aspects in development communication is, however, not limited to problems of gender. It is generally favored by convergent trends in linguistic and sociological theory and research methodologies over the past decades. The net result of this convergence may be described in terms of (i) the integration of a social perspective and methodology into the sciences of language on the one hand, and the apprehension of language activity as social action by sociologists on the other, and (ii) by the leading role of constructivism played in recent theory formation in both disciplines.¹⁷ Post-Bloomfieldian linguistics, spurred by the discovery of discourse as a field of linguistic inquiry (Pike 1967; Gülich/Raible 1979; van Dijk 1980, 1985; Stubbs 1983; Longacre 1983; Schiffrin 1994) and by the pragmatic turn (Austin 1962; Watzlawick 1967; Leech 1983; Levinson 1983; Verschueren et al 1995; see also Schulz von Thun 1981), has been marked by a steady rise of a communication and interaction-centered new paradigm (more or less peacefully co-existing with, rather than superseding structuralist, generativist and functional-typological paradigms) materialized by the emergence of new fields of inquiry and corresponding methodologies with strong natural affinities to sociology such as ethnography of speaking (Gumperz/Hymes 1972; Watson-Gegeo/White 1990; see also Labov 1978), conversational analysis (Grice 1975, 1981; Henne/Rehbock 1979/95; Egner 1989), interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982), symbolic interactionism (Goffman 1982), dialogue analysis (Franke 1990; Hundsnurscher/Fritz 1994), as well as face theory with its disputed claims to universality (Brown/Levinson 1987; Matsumoto 1988). Independently of this, new tools were

¹⁶ This process of change has been found to be "on-record" in both current male and female discourse in both Tura and Herero society (see forthcoming field report on preliminary study mandated by Volkswagen Foundation).

¹⁷ The essence of constructivism is that people are active sense-makers who are continually assessing their environment and acting according to the ways in which they interpret the situation (Ross & Nisbett 1991; Allen et al. 2002)

developed by leading theorists of sociology in an attempt to account for the role of human language as "communicative action" (Habermas 1998)¹⁸ and in the construction of "social reality" (Bourdieu/Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu's concept of "habitus"¹⁹, while not reducible to speech activity, may nevertheless be linked with theories of inferential meaning essential for understanding situated natural language utterances (Grice 1981, Levinson 1983, Sperber & Wilson 1986/95.²⁰).

Development sociology whose beginnings were triggered by a critical reflection on modernization theory and the unilateral "transfer of knowledge" model (Albrecht 1969, Ay 1980), has naturally favored a communicative approach to development (Rogers 1976, Berrigan 1981). Critical reflexion on participation (Fremerey 1993, Illy 1977, Lisk 1988) and the significance of local knowledge (Honerla & Schröder 1995) has been influential not only in shaping the participatory model and its application to the field of development, but also in producing its most recent offshoot, i.e. what has come to be called the "actor-oriented approach" (Neubert 2001:218; cf. Bierschenk et alii 1991:168ff.; Schwingel 1993; von Oppen and Crehan 1994; Curtis 1994; Nelson & Wright 1995/97; Swantz et al. 2000) to development. The myth of a homogeneous target community responding corporately to the DSL message is replaced by the arena of potential conflict where participation is seen as the outcome of a process of negotiation taking place between competing local actors. Social actor theory thus nicely dovetails with a participatory view of the role of language in development by providing a firm sociological basis for the bifocal approach to this role advocated above (1.3, end). We expect community-internal negotiation of actor roles to rely primarily on DTL resources and, more often than not, to consciously short-circuit the DSL instances altogether.

L1 resources of conflict avoidance and resolution include argumentative strategies and inferential mechanisms based on cultural presupposition and insider knowledge of expected behavior (cf. Bourdieu's "social capital")²¹ and are, in terms of their mode of expression, typically associated with a high degree of indirectness and implicitness. This delicate field of inquiry cannot be bypassed if processes leading to success and ultimately to sustainability in development, or alternatively, to failure, are to be thoroughly understood. It constitutes a propitious field for exploration of complementary methodologies drawing on sciences of language and sociology. For a balanced view, one should not overlook, however, that patterns of cooperation and supportive interaction, while featuring less prominently in terms of research interest than conflict, deserve no less attention in the perspective adopted in the present proposal.

In the light of the results of the initial exploratory field visits,²² the following specific areas were

¹⁸ Habermas' theory of communicative action has been quoted as a theoretical support for participatory action in development practice (Drinkwater 1994).

¹⁹ Habitus is "the strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations ... a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks." (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:18)

²⁰ Blass (1990), the best-known monograph-size study of a linguistically informed "emic" view of inferential discourse interpretation in an African society (Sissala, Ghana) uses the Relevance Theory framework developed by Sperber & Wilson.

²¹ This concept has been used in studying indigenous Maori communicative resources for natural resources management in New Zealand (Allen, Kilvinton and Horn, 2002)

²² As part of a pilot study commissioned by Volkswagen Foundation through Letter of authorization from July 3, 2002. See the homepage of <www.volkswagenstiftung.de> for a summary of the objectives of the pilot study.

designed as special foci of the intended cooperation between the disciplines:

- (i) *Power relations* within the target communities define and restrict options for action open to the various players participating in development processes. In a context of highly valued social cohesion particularly characteristic of Third World rural societies, individual action and, *a fortiori*, innovative individual action is licensed through prior negotiation along the lines of recognized power relations, or in shifting power settings, with respect to newly emerging hierarchies. The modalities and contents of such negotiation – whose successful outcome is a likely prerequisite to sustainability – are, to a very large extent, culturally coded and, on the other hand, must be apprehended through analysis of naturally occurring DTL discourse. In return, in a changing socio-political environment, emergent power claims are likely to be negotiated and enacted in everyday verbal interaction in subtle but noticeable terms that must be interpreted against the background of a sociologically informed analysis of pre-constructed social reality (Watts 1992, Leezenberg 2002).
- (ii) Notwithstanding the shift of attention to the DTL community as an area of conflict and negotiation, the joint reflection on the strategic DSL/DTL interface remains crucial, especially (but not exclusively) as perceived by DTL audiences. Constructivist approaches developed in sociology and in cognitive linguistics will help providing an objectivizing view of subjective constructs and stereotypes of actors and patterns of interaction potentially interfering with intended goals and expectations associated with development-related interaction. This is expected to create, as part of the field research inaugurated by the proposal, a field of action involving in joint participatory research the researchers and participants on both sides of the DSL/DTL divide, and to trigger common reflection with substantial returns in terms of heightened meta-communicative and procedural awareness, incidentally leading to practical solutions to blockages and misunderstandings in a notoriously sensitive domain. This should not be interpreted to mean that the researcher's role should be construed as that of a professional communication failure therapist, nor as that of a mediator guaranteeing ultimate success of the project (Swantz et al. 2000). Sustainable researcher participation in participatory research imposes a self-limitation to the role of a "mere" catalyst whose task it might be, for instance, to foster conscious use of meta-communicative resources based on local knowledge (Diawara 2000, 2002; Palshaugen 2000).
- (iii) There is a clear need to consider the role of *institutions at the local level* which provide some sort of a formal "stage" for the discussion and adaption of exogenous messages (the transformation of a DSL concept into a DTL concept), giving legitimacy to these and other processes of negotiation in the context of a development program.²³ Institutionalization does not necessarily refer to formal organisation but includes established forms of communication, such as the "kono" principle in Tura society (Bearth/Fan, in press); for institutionalization of gender relationships see Joeke et al. (1996:36).

Apart from these specific areas of convergence, the study of discourse processes in general cannot be abstracted from its social context lest it become meaningless, and thus constitutes a

²³ "Institutions are formed to reduce uncertainty in human exchange" (North, n.d., p. 2).

field predestined for interdisciplinary cooperation. In order to access the full range of communicative factors determining sustainability in development, firsthand access to DTL data (audio- and video-recordings and transcripts of conversations and discussions, comments by participants on playbacks) is therefore indispensable. This constitutes a broad area of material overlap where discourse-pragmatic and inferential analysis on the one hand and qualitative and quantitative (Creswell 1994, Neuman 2000) research methods of sociology (Brüsemeister 2000, Strauss/Corbin 1990) on the other can be brought to bear on the same set of primary data, and their results can be compared as well as their methodologies evaluated on a comparative basis.

In sum, the proposal offers a unique opportunity (i) to cross-check the validity and ascertain the complementarity of methodologies which had so far evolved separately, (ii) to explore, by overcoming disciplinary closures, areas of joint "self-reflection" across disciplines and across cultures; (iii) to develop a coherent interdisciplinary approach combining theoretical and methodological premises from both disciplines and test its results in a field project allowing for cross-cultural validation.

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1.6 Why language?

The cognitive and cultural foundations of prevailing development paradigms, including participatory approaches, have not only been critically reviewed by development researchers themselves (Shepherd 1998, Kothari/Minogue 2002), but also by social anthropologists, as epitomized by a recent conference in Switzerland on the cultural and political foundation of socio-economic development.²⁴ Cultural and historical factors have been proposed as major or even main causes which, in quantifiable terms, explain differences in socio-economic development between different Third World countries (Müller 2002). One of the neglected factors now getting increased attention, notably in connection with the discussion of a holistic approach to development,²⁵ is spirituality found in target communities (Melkote/Steeves 2001 (passim), Shepherd 1998:264, Wilkins/Mody 2001:386). Moreover, especially for the African continent, witchcraft (not to be equated with spirituality!) has been shown to be a major "invisible" force interfering with development as defined by Western sponsors (A. Touré, Kohnert 1997:126; Geschiere 1995: 264, 282, Signer 2002). Thus the question may be asked: *Why should language be privileged as "the" missing link to sustainable development? Why not history, and why not spirituality*²⁶?

²⁴ Culture matters: Cultural and Political Foundation of Socio-Economic Development in Africa and Asia, Conference at the Centro Stefano Franscini, Monte Verità, Ascona (CH), Oct. 6-11, 2002 (organized by H.P. Müller, Dept. of Social Anthropology, Univ. of Zurich, and W. Linder, Dept. of Political Sciences, Univ. of Berne).

²⁵ See in particular The World Bank's Electronic Dialogue on the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) / Discussion archives <<http://www2.worldbank.org/hm/cdf/date.html>>, Oct. 28, 2002.

²⁶ As argued for in van Eijk (1998); see his statement in the CDF discussion archives (cf. note 25)

Preliminary data on development talk from the testing phase indeed amply demonstrates the necessity for any study focusing on development-oriented planning and action, and the discourse supporting it, i.e. any study relating to the way people negotiate their future, to include in its scope past experiences and their collective reconstruction through oral narrative as a main source of arguing pros and cons in relation to possible future action. It also became clear that whereas technical aspects could be addressed at any time, past experience could not, especially if it had negative implications for current issues. Religious matters impinging on development would only be addressed if (a) circumstances required it, and (b) speakers felt that they were in full control of the communicative situation, which meant that certain subjects of great practical significance were confined to "DTL only" environments and would as a matter of principle never cross to the DTL/DSL barrier, because "they won't understand anyway".

Extrapolating from this data, the hypothesis can be advanced that the typical DTL/DSL situation systematically prevents certain domains which may be decisive for local action in response to external development initiatives from being addressed. These "discourse taboos" may vary from culture to culture, but the point of general interest is that they cannot be apprehended independently from mediation through DTL discourse.²⁷ Religious matters and certain aspects of collective memory are good candidates for qualifying simultaneously as neglected key areas and taboo domains in externally monitored development communication. This assigns an epistemologically fundamental place to language as a "missing link" in development research from a more holistic perspective.

1.7 Conclusion

Broadly speaking, development communication was primarily viewed in the past as a technical, organizational and social problem, to which language stood at best in an accidental relationship. Recognizing the language factor as a major variable in its own right is a first necessary step in overcoming the generalized "language blindness" syndrome in development research. Recognizing it as a research topic is the second, following from the first. The almost total lack of in-depth long-time studies in this area points to *a serious strategic gap in interdisciplinary dialogue and cooperation* (Bearth 1999b, 2000a:171). The project is designed to make a major contribution towards filling this gap.

2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Recognizing the need, presented in the General Part, for a representative in-depth inquiry into the interdependence between *local language as a resource of local development discourse* and the *process of development itself*, the project purports to respond to this need through a sampling from geographically and culturally distant but synchronically comparable longitudinal studies

- permitting to derive, from well-documented case studies, a set of general hypotheses concerning the relevance of language to development, and more specifically, to sustainability in development;
- investigating the discursive, conceptual, and lexical processes associated with successive operational phases of development processes (e.g. initiating, implementing and terminating

²⁷ This, of course, is not a sufficient, but only a necessary condition. We tentatively consider language choice to be an epistemic condition for expanding the "menu" of accessible topics in development talk between locals and experts. Because it allows control of inferences, it precedes the more essential social conditions of mutual trust and protection from sanctions.

phases, recursively applicable to all emically identifiable component activities), the occurrence and recognition of specific communication failures typical for these phases, and compensatory strategies to counteract such failures;

- allowing to better understand local views on development and sustainability, the evolution of such views over time, and the ways in which they interact with national and global trends, policies and practices;
- integrating communicative factors to the study of changing gender roles triggered by economic and social pressure, and exploring their effects on development;
- analysing, evaluating and documenting local communicative resources relevant to change and innovation, and defining their role in bringing local knowledge to bear on development;
- enabling comparison of these findings from a cross-cultural perspective in view of their generalization and practical application to a broad variety of development situations;
- providing the empirical basis for constructing a theoretical model of communicative sustainability.

The project proposes to meet at least some of these challenges (including the last two) fully, and to meet all of them to some extent. Its primary object of inquiry are three different language groups which will be studied in a participatory mode with a view of finding out how their use of language affects development, and what discourse strategies are available to optimize the latter's effectiveness. The three case studies – two in Africa, and one in South-East Asia – are identified according to the ethnic groups on which they focus: 1. Tura (Côte d'Ivoire); 2. Herero (Namibia); 3. Kaili (Sulawesi-Indonesia). Each subproject is defined in terms of (i) an *L1 language area*, where L1 is tentatively identified as the DTL pole on the development communication axis, (ii) its *sociolinguistic profile* (e.g type and degree of multilingualism of the group and of individuals, determinants of language choice), and (iii) its association with a *local development project*.

While it is not the purpose of this project to evaluate and criticize different theoretical and practical approaches to development and sustainability, nor necessarily to contribute to development theories per se, it is indispensable, as a prerequisite to discourse-analytical research on local views of development and sustainability, to take record of prevailing theories and ideas in the broader environment, not only at the local level as expressed by local protagonists, but also at the level of national policies and scientific thought in institutions of higher learning influencing those policies. Osmosis between the supra-local and the local, and resistance to it, may come from various sources and through various channels (media, urban elites, economic and political factors, etc.). The focus on local language and local actors does not imply abstraction from the larger socio-political frame of which the DTL group is part (cf. Ostrom 1990:190), and which is itself part of the target group in that it is mentally represented and present in its discourse. Thus, the denotations used for identifying the main subfields of the research, i.e. Herero, Kaili and Tura, are not defined primarily as physical or geographic entities, but as communicative domains not exactly co-extensive with a closed area of residence.

This definition of the research domains takes into account the fact that global views e.g. on sustainability, as can be documented in detail e.g. for the broader context of the Tura subproject in

Ivory Coast (Silué 2000; Kagnassy 2002),²⁸ are mediated and modified by "more local" (e.g. national or regional) institutions and authorities. It is methodologically crucial to take seriously the "intermediate agencies" at the macro-communicative level rather than attempting to hypothesize a rarely operational direct interface between global trends and doctrines on the one hand, and local representations of development on the other.

The subprojects differ in three essential ways:

- i.) the nature, aims and current state of implementation of the development projects in which the communicative research is embedded.
 - a. The Tura subproject is linked to a subsistence crop diversification project in a traditional agricultural setting. It was initiated as a pilot project in April 2001 in order to respond to a call for help to restore nutritional security. It was used to test field methodology proposed for the present project.
 - b. The Herero subproject links up with an ongoing agro-pastoral development project jointly administered by the Namibian government and the German GTZ. Acceptance of the project by the people is no longer an issue.
 - c. The Kaili subproject, started in 1999, relates to a large-scale rural development and forest protection scheme which is jointly planned and implemented by Government institutions, NGO's and village organisations.
- ii.) their sociolinguistic profile:
 - a. Tura represents the prototypical case of a development and research project embedded in an essentially monolingual context, use of the Tura language being the preferred option²⁹ in all project-relevant interactions.
 - b. The Herero project integrates a triglossic profile: Herero for intra-ethnic, Afrikaans for interethnic and expert, and English for expatriate (expert) communication.
 - c. The Kaili project represents the prototypical case of a diglossic situation in which language choice is a major and a highly status-symbolic issue for all those involved; this applies to all levels of project-related interaction.
- iii.) The type of gender role assignment:
 - a. Tura: traditional gerontocracy with little room for female autonomy and initiative, gradually gives way to pluralistic control in most domains, along with a redistribution of gender roles under current economic and demographic pressures.
 - b. Herero: women's roles in the development project are well recognized, contrasting with general strong male dominance in Herero society at large.

²⁸ „Development can be defined as the body of actions undertaken in a community with view of improving significantly individual and collective living conditions. It is generally admitted that the improvement of those living conditions relies on the production of goods and wealth.“ (Silué 2000:8).

²⁹ "Monolinguality" could be paraphrased as "absence of diglossy". It does not deny that bilingual competence may be found to variable extent among members of the target community. It means, however, that the default option in all relevant situations is Tura and that French (or in rare cases, Jula) will be used only if Tura fails. This is quite different from, and possibly the reverse of the situation obtaining in Kaili.

- c. Kaili: strong male dominance and exclusive male discourse prerogatives in public life. There is little or no external pressure for change but undercurrents rooted in history provide possible legitimacy to alternative gender patterns (to be explored).
- d. Yanomami and Khmhu (associated): profiles to be provided by partners.

The recognized need for incorporating an explicit sociological viewpoint and corresponding methodology (see 1.5 above) is reflected in the incorporation of a *sociological research module* in addition to the geographically defined projects. The sociological research component will draw on ongoing work in all local area-defined projects and at the same time provide input to all local projects. Its expertise in the study of such subjects as power and institutions makes sociology a natural candidate for the task of adding a particular unifying focus to the field studies of the participating disciplines and will thus contribute to ensure comparability and dialogue between subprojects and across geographical regions (see Appendix 8).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Key hypotheses

The following survey of methodological assumptions underlying the proposal, and some principles and procedures which are expected to govern its implementation starts from the premise that development is essentially a communicative process, rather than an outcome of mere successful management of DSL/DTL interface problems of communication at some point prior to its implementation. It claims that the primary objective of development communication research should not be the study of the conditions of reception of an innovative exogenous message by a target community, but of *the conditions under which such a message becomes endogenous and endogenously reproducible*. In short, it proposes to study *development as a product of communication*. It further assumes that *communicative sustainability is a necessary prerequisite to sustainable development*.

Key hypotheses (1 hereafter) derived from these assumptions in turn branch out into sets of more specific hypotheses (2 to 5 below):³⁰:

1. Hypotheses concerning communicative sustainability

Communicative sustainability is defined in the first place as auto-propagation of an exogenous innovative message in the target community, independently of external stimuli. Communicative sustainability, in other words, results from the substitution of an endogenous source to the original exogenous source of an innovative message.

In a more explicitly participatory mood, communicative sustainability can alternatively be defined as the set of conditions under which sustainable knowledge can be constructed collaboratively between the exponents of the DSL and DTL poles. In either case, the DTL is assumed to be central to the process leading to communicative sustainability.

Communicative sustainability presupposes *control over linguistic and other communicative resources* required for naming new objects (2), monitoring inferences drawn by participants from debate and argumentation relative to a given field of activity (3), and management of face of the players involved on the local scene (4).

³⁰ A number of these hypotheses and sub-hypotheses were put forth in Bearth (2000a:172ff.)

The roots of the DSL/DTL interface communication failures are not primarily epistemic but relational (5).

2. Hypotheses concerning conceptual and lexical innovation

Indigenisation of innovative concepts subject to the "host" principle. Contrary to a common assumption according to which innovative concepts and their terminological correlates are adopted through exposure to appropriate verbal or visual stimuli (e.g. Mutembei et al. 2002:3), the construction of an object, phenomenon or procedure as a reproducible, i.e. sustainable value in local discourse is contingent on its being assigned its place in the relational network of culturally pre-existent knowledge structures³¹ (Dudley 1993:71; Bearth 2000b:85f.; see also Tourneux 1993 regarding visual stimuli).

Lexical innovation and empowerment. Lexical innovation is generally regarded as accessory to development, having to do with assimilation and understanding of new concepts. However, naming new phenomena in the local language is a means of classifying and appropriating them; it is tantamount to gaining control over things and states-of-affairs in the field of action constituted by a given development process. Control over processes of conceptual innovation and, as its linguistic corollary, over neology, is therefore an essential aspect of local empowerment.³²

3. Hypotheses concerning negotiation, argumentation and decision-taking

Participatory action presupposes prior negotiation of direction of action, actors' roles and means of action through discourse procedures recognized as valid and appropriate by the community or group concerned by the action. Empowerment for negotiation therefore presupposes argumentative competence, i.e. control over linguistic resources required for argumentation. Argumentative competence includes the capacity to monitor inferences drawn from one's own and other participants' utterances or discourses.

Strategies of argumentation and decision-taking rely on culture-specific presuppositions and on inferential knowledge which is not usually made explicit. As was observed in the Tura pilot study, a general property of local knowledge is its circumstantial nature. Cultural presuppositions are crucial in influencing decisions but are not usually made explicit, and, from the perspective of local participants, do not need to. From the researcher's perspective, this constitutes a major methodological challenge (see 3.2).

Recast in terms of face theory (Brown/Levinson 1987), constraints on utterability may be assumed to obey the principle that domains whose evocation is potentially face-threatening to either party, or appears to incur social risks difficult to calculate for the speaker or his/her group, tend to become "discourse taboos".³³

³¹ E.g. notions such as calorie, protein, vitamin etc. are part of a system of knowledge from which the value of each individual term is derived via its relation to the other.

³² Considering language as a local institution, the definition of empowerment offered on the World Bank homepage perfectly applies <www.worldbank.org>: "Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives."

³³ E.g. negative evaluations of outsider's actions who are in a position of superiority, or are considered to be affiliated to local or state government, are not only threats to those to whom criticized action is imputed, but constitute a potential threat to those who utter them.

4. Hypotheses concerning the nature and effects of the DSL/DTL boundary:

Epistemic and social barriers due to the DSL/DTL frontier restrict exchange in predictable ways. True dialogue (which is more than an exchange of words) is very difficult to achieve in a situation constituted by two different, not mutually controllable discourses only linked by a translational interface which itself is not mutually controllable (see Bearth/Fan in press, 2.2 "Aporias of translation").

Assumptions concerning the incidence of "discourse taboos" on development:

- Less a given topic is talked about, the more powerful it is as a potential obstacle to change.
- The more deeply resistance against change is embedded in specific local experience, the more negotiating effort is needed to overcome it, but the less it is likely to surface in the presence of outside agents, i.e. in typical DSL/DTL dichotomic speech situations, where the social consequences of what is said cannot be fully monitored by the local speakers.

5. Hypotheses concerning gender specific discourse in development communication:

The inquiry into gender role and discursive strategies starts from the hypothesis, abundantly supported by observations in the literature,³⁴ that women's discourse in traditional society shows a persistent preference for *strategies of verbal indirection*, and sometimes *strategic ambiguity*, in expressing or defending their views, and for attenuative strategies in asserting themselves. To consolidate this hypothesis, *in-group verbal behaviour* (women only) and *out-group verbal behaviour* (mixed consultation groups, public debates) will be systematically contrasted. Preliminary observation suggests a further hypothesis in need of elucidation: the same preferential strategies tend to be (deliberately?) maintained in spite of the loosening of traditional constraints against female self-assertion which is taking place even in many of the more remote ethnic groups with traditionally strong patriarchal structures (Tura, Herero).

3.2 Pillars of field methodology: discourse hermeneutics and participatory research

Guidelines adopted for field methodology reflect to some extent the set of key hypotheses outlined in 3.1. But given the novel aspects of the research, and the diversity of contexts to which it is applied, it will have to be conducted with a degree of sensitivity and openness ("open sampling", cf. Brüsemeister 200:220ff.) which will allow for the integration of new questions and hypotheses not immediately derived from the original set of hypotheses. Through the exploratory visits to the research areas in summer 2002, where a preceding version of the proposal was discussed with local and supra-local stakeholders, the stage was set for participatory research cooperation which can serve not only for cross-checking results, but also for heuristic adjustment and innovation. Adoption of such a methodological stance hardly needs justification in social

³⁴ Holtgraves 1998, Bavelas 1983, Bavelas et al. 1990. Research on communicative asymmetry with special reference to ambiguity has so far taken place mainly in the context of the Brown & Levinsonian framework (eg. Lakoff 1975; Brouwer 1982; Smith-Heffner 1988; Rundquist 1992; Yahya-Othman 1994, 1995, 1996; Obeng 1996), but also in more social-studies oriented communication research (eg. Bavelas et al. 1990, Burgoon et al. 1996; also Cupach & Spitzberg (eds.) 1994 and Fussell & Kreuz (eds.) 1998). See also Kotthoff & Günthner 1991 and Kotthoff & Baron 2002. For the African context frequent mention of ambiguity has been made in studies on proverb usage in a wider sense (eg. Penfield 1983:11-12 on Igbo; Yankah 1989, 1995, Agyekum 1996, Obeng 1996 on Akan; Shariff 1988, esp. pp. 99-100; Yahya-Othman 1994/5, Beck 2001, 2000a on Swahili). Studies in various parts of Africa (for Swahili see Beck 2001a/b, for similar forms of ambiguous communication in the Ivory Coast see Toure 1985, Domowitz 1992, for Africa generally see Beck 2000a).

research (see e.g. Chambers (1995/97:41). It also follows from a constructivist view of social reality - the "preconstructed object" - (Bourdieu 1992:229) and is straightforwardly applicable to research on development as goal-oriented action and projection of its results, as well as on social aspects of development organisation.

As for linguistics, research on a language other than one's own, where the researcher cannot rely on mother tongue speaker intuition, makes recourse to locally available metalinguistic knowledge, and hence a methodologically reflected participatory approach indispensable.³⁵ This is all the more true of research on naturally occurring discourse where contextual constraints - cultural, social and psychological – not immediately accessible to the researcher determine the interpretation of verbal and non-verbal actions and reactions alike. The first decisive methodological step to be taken is therefore that from analysis of relatively static form-meaning correlates to *interactional methodology*. As Levinson (1983:321) says: "Conversation, as opposed to monologue, offers the analyst an invaluable analytical resource: as each turn is responded to by a second, we find displayed in that second an *analysis* of the first by its recipient." The second step is to recognize the *inferential nature of discourse meaning*. "Inferences are not included in the semantic representation of the utterance but are derived from it" (Bearth 1997b:2; see also Levinson 1983, ch. 5; Sperber & Wilson 1995). Discourse meaning as interpreted by the participants and therefore capable of affecting their behaviour is the result of an inferential calculus applied by interactants to what is being said.

The past three decades have seen the emergence of a rich tool bag for studying naturally occurring discourse and conversation, including the pragmatics of inferential meaning (Grice 1975, 1981; Leech 1983, Levinson 1983, Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995, Moeschler/Reboul 1994).³⁶ Generally, however, theories of pragmatic presupposition and of conversational implicature, being mostly based on English and other Western languages, operate on the tacit assumption of shared familiarity of the readers with implied contextual and cultural information, whereas in the DSL/DTL setting it is precisely the failure to identify contextual information correctly that sets the scene for communicative mismatches in reconstructing the class of possible inferences. Cross-culturally sensitive work on inference and social aspects of language use such as Blass (1990) in the framework of relevance theory, and Brown & Levinson (1987), Gysling (1998), Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1995a/b), Mao (1994), Matsumoto (1988), Nwoye (1992), Obeng (1994, 1997), Schicho (1994), Yahya-Othman (1994) and others in connection with the study of the notions of face and indirectness in non-Western context, will therefore be of particular interest (see also Wierzbicka 1991). To this it might be added that a substantial part of the recent published work of two of the main researchers is devoted to the description of inferential mechanisms in cross-cultural discourse research (Bearth 1996, 1997b, 1998, 1999; Beck 2001 a/b).

Argumentation plays a key role in "nativizing" DSL discourse and, hence, in paving the way for adoption of innovation by the local community, which in turn is an essential prerequisite to sustainability. Inversely, there is a communicative imbalance, which is by no means limited to communication across the DSL/DTL frontier, in that negative arguments, which may lead to rejection and blockage, are often left implicit or suppressed. It is therefore an essential part of the

³⁵ So-called "native reaction" has for long been an inherent, though not always an openly acknowledged part of field methods, whenever so-called "informants" were involved in hypothesis formation e.g. about the range of use of linguistic forms, judgments of acceptability, etc.

³⁶ For a broader audience and for a first access in an interdisciplinary perspective, see e.g. Schulz von Thun 1981, Tannen 1990, Watzlawick et al. 1967/1996.

envisioned methodology to explore ways of making implicit information explicit. In fact, scientific methodology requires this. At the same time, the researcher must acknowledge the fact that motivations for implicitation or silence are not merely epistemic. Respect and empathy towards local people and their sensitivities are therefore primordial (see Chambers 1995/97: 39-42). The following are, under given conditions, legitimate ways of circumventing the epistemological conundrum of the implicit:

- i.) Under the conditions of dissent or conflict, deeper reasons in favour or against change of behaviour come to light, and social and relational constraints restricting individual and collective freedom of action become, as it were, "visible".³⁷
- ii.) It is particularly in view of elucidating hidden conflict and underlying arguments that the use of role play and methods of participatory theatre might assist in eliciting both possible cases of conflict and available strategies for resolving it (Mavrocordates/Martin 1995/97) – provided that role play is not naively equated, for analytical purposes, with everyday behaviour (Schank 1979:75f.).
- iii.) Playback of discussions with the participants provides another means of making certain types of implicit information explicit in a natural and generally highly acceptable way. As has been shown (Bilmes 1986), explanations of verbal actions by participants are data which must be submitted to the same kind of analytical scrutiny as the primary data which they are meant to elucidate.

Based on these already field-tested methods for elucidating discourse meaning, collaborative research will be taken a step further by involving local actors in a *joint* process of "self-reflection" on core issues pertaining to the research itself. First experiences demonstrate its feasibility and usefulness, e.g. by discussing a Herero version of the proposal *in loco*, and by elaborating local views on agricultural development and development communication with Tura village constituencies.

Local expertise, drawing on communicative and meta-communicative local language-based competences of active participants and observers, will be a major source of analytical observation. The emergence of native "expert talk" as the project takes shape (i) opens a mine of lexical and discursive resources for processing innovative concepts, (ii) provides a measure of communicative sustainability, and (iii) is a project goal in its own right.

A psychologically crucial and methodologically novel aspect of local expertise consists in putting key issues in writing for those actors at the local or supra-local level who show sustained motivation in participating in the self-reflection enterprise. Following the Herero example, *selected documents will be translated* (a) into working languages of experts from the national community (*French, Bahasa Indonesia, Afrikaans*), and (b) into *local languages*.³⁸

Introducing scientific literacy to traditional communities may have, in the longer term, unexpected fringe-benefits in terms of sustainability of the self-reflection initiated by the project and of further strengthening the development of local expertise. It also offers local voices a chance not

³⁷ For example, there is a norm in Tura society that every woman is responsible for providing water for herself and her household. In a traditional village setting, no one would dream of stating this norm which was, however, spelled out when a conflict arose between two women in an urban setting where water had to be paid for. See Baquez (1997) for an excellent example of hidden argument explicitation triggered by crisis.

³⁸ This will work in those communities where L1 literacy is functional and an already recognized asset (Herero, Tura).

only to be listened to in a temporary working relationship but to be taken seriously as contributors to practice and theory in their own right beyond the restricted confines of the project. While consensus for the development enterprise is eroding in the Western world under the influence of radical "post-developmentalism" (see e.g. Rahnema & Bawtree 1997) and questions as to who supports it and who benefits from it are becoming louder, helping collaborative research to come of age may eventually prove not be a luxury.

3.3 Field heuristics: the "Twelve questions"

A field questionnaire (known as the "Twelve questions", see **Appendix 2**) designed for group interviews was pre-tested in the Tura pilot project (April-June 2001) and thereby its usefulness and its accessibility to the non-linguist - i.e. its *interdisciplinary compatibility* - established. The data were analyzed by D. Fan and T. Bearth on the basis of detailed field reports written by the former, and the results presented at an international Colloquium on sustainable development in August 2001 (Bearth/Fan, in press). The test also revealed the need for incorporating additional questions concerning the local effects of macro-sociological change and the effects of local power conflicts on development communication. Results of the testing were fully incorporated into the present proposal.

Following the same model, it is envisioned to develop a *grid allowing to establish and compare locally relevant indicators of sustainability*. A rare detailed long-term case study from rural Nigeria by Morse et al. (2000) promises to be immensely useful in this undertaking.

The combined findings from the two heuristic instruments will serve as conceptual framework for correlating communicative variables with locally defined sustainability parameters.

3.4 Lexico-semantic analysis

Both a narrow, systemic, and a broad, language-in-use-oriented view are necessary to access the domain of interest which is central to the project. Both viewpoints are interdependent. For instance lexical choice can have argumentative force, and discourse can produce terminological innovation. Lexico-semantic analysis will draw on cognitive and structural aspects of lexicology (Behrens/Sasse 1999, Geeraerts et al 1994), lexicalisation processes (Talmy 1985), lexico-semantic organisation (Cruse 1986), as well as quantitative methods (frequency of occurrence), and from a practical viewpoint, lexical database construction.³⁹

3.5 Qualitative and quantitative methods

Casad (1974) has devised a fairly reliable method of measuring intelligibility across dialect boundaries which could easily be adjusted to test the efficacy of transmission of messages across DSL/DTL frontiers.

Frequently occurring terms e.g. in argumentative discourse tend to be indicators of non negotiable presuppositions, e.g. the recurrence of the expression "our ancestors" in Tura discourse as a measure of the allegiance to what is perceived as ancestral values and principles which, according to this view, should be the yardstick against which any decision and action ought to be gauged.

On the other hand, extensive sampling through questionnaires and statistics is only meaningful once the relevant categories have been established through qualitative research. Moreover, the

³⁹ See Bearth 1998, Akan encyclopedic dictionary II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION. 4. Database and applications < <http://www.unizh.ch/spw/afrling/> > / Projekte / Akan dictionary.

application of questionnaires and formal interviews in face-to-face societies carries the double risk of "injecting" competition or conflict and corresponding distortion of "results".

Apart from the first two cases, qualitative methods (Strauss/Corbin 1990; Creswell 1994; Brüsemeister 1998; Neuman 2000) will therefore be given preference at least during the initial phase of the project. However, the question of using quantitative research is open for review at a later stage.

3.6 Comparability

Comparison of results is essential as a prerequisite to their general applicability.

All three subprojects are situated in a multilingual environment. But it is clear that even in this respect they differ typologically, not to speak of the diversity of other external factors which may influence behavior towards development and its outcome. However, in spite of variability, we expect comparison to be possible at least in terms of a general typology of communication gaps with special reference to the DSL/DTL frontier, in terms of reversal of the dominance from DSL to DTL when it comes to negotiating local commitment to development, in terms of discursive processes of negotiation taking place in the development context, and in terms of growing discrepancy between traditional gender roles and economic pressures. The aim of comparison will be to identify core categories of communicative sustainability.

In order to reduce excess complexity, syndrome theory (Hurni/Wiesmann 2001:39-41) proposes to look for clusters of recurrent core problems in randomly distributed systems of vaguely similar constituency. In the present case for instance, all the case studies concern minority groups whose traditional structures are facing rapid change.

Finally, in regard to the central issue of sustainability, Najam (n.d.) reports an Indian experience of self-assessment of sustainability looking at dimensions rather than at indicators, with the further advice to include time depth in the comparison.

3.7 Field procedures, interdisciplinary methodology and project organization

Communicative processes associated with the development project will be recorded, transcribed and annotated. Both audio- and video-recording will be necessary prerequisites; playback sessions with participants are crucial for testing hypotheses about inferential discourse meaning. Documents will cover e.g. working sessions, spontaneous discussions and out-group interaction. Transcripts will normally be interlinearized and glossed so as to be of use to all project partners and for later publication.

For establishing the *transcripts* which constitute the core of the database, the project will make use as much as possible of the expertise of native research assistants already trained and experienced in recording, keyboarding and translating naturally occurring text and conversation (using standard orthography where available), and in preparing inquiries.

Among available computer programs for conversational analysis suitable for recording, storing, analyzing and exchanging data, we are considering EXMARaLDA, a multi-media synchronizing transcription program with high platform compatibility developed by Thomas Schmidt for the SFB "Mehrsprachigkeit" at the University of Hamburg. Other alternatives will be tested carefully before a decision will be taken.

Exchange of data, working hypotheses, and comments will take place via *internet*. A *project site* located at the University of Frankfurt will serve as a pool of resources and later as an open forum. Local *review sessions* and a *rotating annual workshop* uniting supervisors and researchers

involved in the project. In addition, there will be an annual *coordination meeting* of the supervisors (+/- main researchers) which will usually be held at the University of Frankfurt.

Regular reports from subprojects will serve as input for the *annual workshop* and for the annual project work report. The latter will be made available to the public via the *project homepage*. Innovative insights from the project shall also be made available in form of *working papers* which will be edited in cooperation with the Institute for Socio-cultural Studies (ISOS) at the University of Kassel in view of stimulating discussion on important issues beyond the project group. Parallel to a comprehensive final report, a *book publication* by a leading house is envisioned in order to ensure broad dissemination of the principal results among the scientific community.

Drawing as much as possible on professional competences available locally, video- and audio-recordings will further be used to produce *documentary sequences* suitable for bringing key aspects of the research across to non-specialized audiences.

4 EXPECTED RESULTS

4.1 Nature of the results

It follows from the largely innovative methodological premises outlined in the preceding sections that part of the results will be of an exploratory nature. Conclusive results are nevertheless to be expected in the following domains:

- a. establishment of language-dependence of development processes;
- b. evidence demonstrating the relevance of language-related factors to sustainability;
- c. a deeper understanding of negotiation as a prerequisite to participation in development;
- d. a typology of sociolinguistic diversity, with respect to the different project communities, and its effects on development communication;
- e. the correlation between changing perception of the roles of women in developing societies, and gender-specific discourse.

4.2 Theoretical contribution: towards a theory of communicative sustainability

As a main result of the analysis of field data, and as its main contribution to theory, the project group is committed to develop a *theory of communicative sustainability* which will include an open but well-defined set of *communicative sustainability indicators* (CSI) and a set of conditions for applying them. The theory will notably provide a framework for evaluation of multicultural and multilingual situations in general from the viewpoint of their communicative risks and will thus allow to better control these risks. The parameters which will be used for defining CSI will privilege human face-to-face communication both across language frontiers and within the same language community. Technological aspects of communication will not be given priority.

In addition, the proposed research will make a significant contribution to social and linguistic theory

- i.) by proposing a typology of communication failures and of corresponding remedial action;
- ii.) by defining more clearly, in respect to each other, the interlocking paradigms of language research and sociology, e.g. habitus and inference, and thus opening the way for a closer cooperation;

- iii.) by submitting to an extensive field test and critical review current theories of indirection, in particular the influential theory of inference proposed by Grice (1975, 1981), and to formulate ideas towards an alternative view.

4.3 Benefits for planners and practitioners

The project will contribute to meet recognized development (communication) needs through

1. opening up DTL-based communicative resources in the service of development-related objectives (i) by increasing awareness of these resources on both sides of the DSL/DTL divide, (ii) by proposing *guidelines for evaluating, respectively for creating repertoires of appropriate terminology in DTL communities*, (iii) by demonstrating that *full control of communicative resources* is an essential prerequisite for "target communities" to change from the role of more or less passive receivers of information from external sources, to that of actors conscious of their role and capacities;
2. providing *DSL participants* in development-related activities (e.g. experts, teachers, extension workers, etc.) with a *metalanguage* for talking meaningfully about concepts and conceptual differences relevant to their activities and goals, making it easier for them to cross the boundary between DSL and DTL and still know where they are;
3. constructing "bridges" for crossing the mental gulf resulting from the DSL/DTL dichotomy: (i) by pointing to sources of misunderstandings arising in the dialogue on development while "crossing the line" (see Bearth 2000b; Bearth/Fan, in press); (ii) by providing a metalanguage for controlling argumentatively or discourse-procedurally induced breakdown of communication; (iii) by providing DSL agents with insights into DTL argumentation and the pragmatics of consensus finding, and vice versa;
4. offering to the community of development researchers and practitioners an empirically tested framework of criteria which may serve to establish, for any development setting, a *language and communication profile* as part of project planning, as a guideline for project implementation, and as a reference for project evaluation in terms of its communicative sustainability;
5. providing development planners with a new tool for pre-evaluation, allowing them to take appropriate measures for ensuring proper allocation of resources and reducing waste of human and financial capital. (See section 1.1 end; quote from Tadadjeu.)

4.4 A model for interdisciplinary research

1. We expect clear statements about dovetailing between participating disciplines. Publications from the project will give this aspect particular attention.
2. We expect the outcome of the project to validate the assumption that the humanities in general, and language sciences in particular, have a contribution to make to areas which have traditionally been considered as a primary domain of competence of natural sciences and technical disciplines.
3. We expect the project to constitute an appreciable advance in formulating, explicating and testing interdisciplinary methodology and the possibility of a "common language" across disciplinary boundaries in the domain of development communication.

II. THE TURA PROJECT (COTE D'IVOIRE)

1 General background

Tura, a Mande language of western Ivory Coast, is spoken by an estimated population of 70'000 (census 1998) inhabiting the Tura mountains north of the regional capital of Man between 7° and 8° latitude north and 7° and 8° longitude west (see map). Many Tura speakers live in the urban centers of Ivory Coast where they constitute a diaspora whose importance for the economic survival of the rural population is significant. Tura belongs to the Eastern group of the Mande language family (Mani-Bandama, see Kastenholz 1996), a vast belt of still relatively little known language clusters and isolates extending from Eastern Liberia as far as western Nigeria (Prost 1953; Halaoui et al. 1983). Tura, exceptionally, has benefited from extensive study (Bearth 1971, 1986, *passim*). Among observable results of incipient literarization, the empowerment of newly literate women has been widely noticed in the area. Ongoing research on lexicography is carried out by the universities of St. Petersburg, Abidjan and Zurich as part of joint research sponsored by the Swiss National Science Foundation.⁴⁰

Economy: In spite of the rough physical conditions prevailing in their mountainous residence area, hardly favorable to large plantations, the subsistence economy based on rice, yams and cassava, allowed the Tura until fairly recently to earn their livelihood and to add to it through modest earnings from cash crops, mainly coffee and cacao. But the economic situation has deteriorated dramatically since the mid-80-ies to the point where autarchy for many is no longer guaranteed and food shortages are frequent. Deterioration of world market prices for cash crop products, diminishing soil fertility under the combined effect of slash-and-burn methods of cultivation and shortened fallow periods, and demographic growth due to higher birth rates, immigration and re-migration are the principal causes of the recent drift of increasing parts of the Tura population below the threshold of nutritional self-sufficiency. Agricultural diversification, an obvious part of a sustainable answer to this situation, has been on the national agenda of agricultural development for many years (e.g. special issues on Côte d'Ivoire in *Afrique agriculture* 19/221 (1994); 27/298 (2001)).

2 Link to development project

In order to counteract the negative effects of current cultivation practices on soil fertility and nutrition, the cassava diversification project was launched as an initiative by a local NGO, the AECT (Association Espoir pour le Canton Tura) and its literacy branch, ALPHATOURA; its starting phase was financed by a private donation. The project, which enjoys the logistic and scientific support from the Centre Suisse de Recherche Scientifique (CSRS) and the Centre de National de Recherche Agricole (CNRA) in Ivory Coast proposes to introduce in the Tura region new varieties of cassava (*manioc esculenta*), which have already been tested in other regions of Ivory Coast under the auspices of the CSRS (V3- Okolyawo, V4- TME1, V7- 92/0057, V8- 92/0325) (see Behi et al. 2000). Supportive action includes soil stabilisation (reforestation) in areas particularly affected by deforestation, and a poultry program for local farmers.

In addition to granting logistic support, the CSRS expressed interest in communicative research on the Tura development project and is ready to monitor it scientifically together with the Institut de Linguistique Appliquée of the University of Cocody (F. Adopo, currently Dean of Faculty) and the universities of Kassel (M. Fremerey) and Zurich (T. Bearth) (see letter by O. Girardin,

⁴⁰ See Holas 1962 for anthropological background, and Gonnin 1984 for a history of settlement in the light of oral traditions. Böni (1993) reports on a women's development project in one Tura village, focusing on locally adapted technology for palm oil extraction.

Director of CSRS, Appendix 10). A colloquium on the present proposal had been convened for Sept. 19, 2002, on the premises of CSRS near Abidjan in order to define and enhance future cooperation with the partner institutions, but had to be postponed because of the outbreak of political unrest in the country. It is planned to hold it as soon as the situation permits.

At the outset, the project was introduced to the population of three villages (Benomba, Dantomba, Yaloba, all three in the district of Biankouma) by the expert, Diomandé Fan, who is himself a Tura and a speaker of the Tura language. In presenting the project to the villagers, he used the *kono* procedure, an indigenous protocol designed for receiving and processing exogenous messages, yet without premature commitment. Part of the procedure consists of the innovative message being restated by a junior member of the audience and thus being formally constituted as an object of discourse and negotiation by the community, leading to its contextualisation in accordance with the latter's presuppositions and needs. The results of this inquiry were presented to the International Conference on *Research in partnership for a sustainable development in West Africa* at the CSRS in August 2001, as an example demonstrating (i) how local language resources may become a key to development, (ii) what is meant by communicative sustainability, and (iii) how researchers from disciplines as far apart as agriculture and linguistics can work together to contribute to achieving it (see Appendix 3).

A heuristic launching platform, the catalogue of the "Twelve questions" (see Appendix 2), developed from an earlier "Ten Question" catalogue (Bearth/Fan, in press), had been pre-tested and consequently revised during the pilot phase (April-June 2001). It turned out to provide a topical frame of reference which seemed useful as an initial heuristic framework for the other subprojects as well, while also providing a starting point for a comparative approach.

The launching of the cassava diversification project in the pilot area has spurred considerable spontaneous interest in other villages on the Western slope of the Tura mountains, with over 250 requests for participation within 2 months since Diomandé Fan and his family took residence in Man in June 2002. The fact that the main promoter of the project is a "child of the village" has contributed to its initial acceptance and has facilitated the introduction of concomitant joint reflection at the village level on issues surrounding the project itself and concerning development in general. As a result, the parallel communicative research, including the recording of project-related communicative activity and meta-communicative reflection on it, is considered by the population to be part of the development project itself.⁴¹

During the exploratory field visit in September 2002, the Project Working Group (PWG) - comprising for the time being the prospective members associated with the Tura subproject as researchers or research assistants - did a tentative analysis of recorded and partially transcribed "development talk". This led to formulate a number of preliminary hypotheses on "local views" of development in general, agricultural development and agricultural extension, sustainability, visions of time, and interaction with external agencies involved in local development.

3 Research objectives

Starting from materials already recorded and partly analysed, an immediate goal to be pursued will be to cover the entire revised version of the "Twelve questions", including more specific

⁴¹ Given the prevailing situation, it is unavoidable that the person who heads the development project is also to some extent responsible for data collection. The methodological bias which could potentially result from conflicting objectives resulting from this double commitment has been and continues to be carefully monitored at the level of the main researchers, T. Bearth and D. Fan.

items which emerged as part of the preliminary inquiry, such as the function of chanting as an incentive to collective manual labour.⁴²

A second major focus will be the emergence of village expert talk. It is expected that this will yield insights into strategies of lexical and terminological innovation (see 3.1, 2 above). Internship has been an integral part of the development project from its beginnings: some farmers are instructed to become themselves instructors and communicators in view of the extension of the project to other villages and its propagation by various means including local radio and literacy. This reflective approach will be strengthened by its association with the elaboration of a “Tura Development Dictionary” as part of J. Baya’s planned doctoral research.

Argumentative discourse in the context of development is a third major focus. Of particular interest from this angle are *inferential reasoning*, *reasoning by natural analogy* (of which the frequently mentioned use of proverbs is but a special instance), and *argument by historical antecedent*.

This inquiry is conceived as a closely co-ordinated effort between three main researchers, i.e. T. Bearth, D. Fan and J. Baya. Parallel research in *women's communicative behaviour and discourse strategies* in partially overlapping development project contexts will be undertaken by Lydie Kouadio Vé in collaboration with a female junior researcher in order to elucidate transformation processes in respect to gender which Tura society undergoes presently in key areas of social, cultural and economic life. In the context of the Tura cassava diversification project, it will be of interest to observe how women communicate in situations where they need or want to enter formerly male domains. Against the background of findings in other parts of Africa (see Beck 2000a and the literature in note 34), and preliminary observations collected during the pre-testing period, we may hypothesize that rhetorical ambiguity as a preferred strategy of women's communicative activity - over the full range from kinetic and prosodic to pragmatic and semantic means of expression - reflects the social ambiguity of their transitory position in Tura society.

4 Methodology

The methodology for analysing Tura discourse will be able to draw on previous work (Bearth 1986, 2000a/b, and passim), but will have to include visual aspects of communication. In general, it will follow rather closely the methodology outlined in the General Part (section 3).

5 Expected results

On the basis of already obtained preliminary results, it can be expected that the research on language and development in the Tura community will provide a first comprehensively documented case study of an emerging new paradigm of development communication in a multilingual context, viewing the local language as a major resource for development.

Abstracting from the observational level, this investigation should permit to elucidate at least three fundamental questions concerning the *nature of communicative sustainability*:

1. The functional *interrelation of local language and multilingual contexts in regard to sustainable development*. While the Tura example is likely to emerge as a particularly strong case showing the necessary link between local language and developmental sustainability, we expect that it will also show that *reliance on the local language alone is*

⁴² This was suggested by the village people themselves as an example from existing custom showing the relation between language and goal-oriented collective activities of the type also associated with development activities.

not sufficient to produce desired sustainability effects in the long-term in all areas concerned by development. Sustainability in the longer term presupposes local control over local resources (Fremerey in press). However, effective control over resources – natural as well as human – requires access to communicative resources beyond, and in addition to, those offered through the local language. An operational definition of communicative sustainability, while insisting on the significance of the local language as the generally most neglected ingredient, will have to include a broader definition of locally available - or locally needed - communicative resources.

2. *The interrelation between a language-conscious approach to development communication and the outcome of development intervention.* Insistence on the use of the local language as a medium of communication alone does not entail the necessity of a scientifically reflected approach to language use in development as it is proposed here. We expect the Tura research module to demonstrate that and how such a “linguistic approach” contributes to optimise conditions conducive to sustainable development.
3. We expect the study to reveal new ways of *bridging the gap between local views and global views*, particularly as far as views on sustainability are concerned. In respect of this and the preceding two points, the role of *literacy* will have to be considered.

On a practical level, the research is expected to enhance self-esteem and contribute to local community-based propagation of innovative agricultural techniques necessary for the survival of the present generation and for opening a socio-economic perspective for future generations.

Publications: see Appendix 4. Also in *Sempervira*, the annual publication of the CSRS (Abidjan).

Finally, the project is expected to lead to a doctorate for Diomandé Fan at the University of Kassel (Prof. Dr. M. Fremerey), and to provide the basis for doctoral studies for at least one Ivorian junior researcher, Joseph Baya, and possibly also for L. Kouadio Vé.

III. THE HERERO PROJECT (NAMIBIA)

1 General background

The project will be located within the Herero-speaking communities of the Omatjete region (Omatjete and Omutiwanduko) in Western Namibia (Erongo Region) (see Map, appendix 6). Apart from Herero, most people have a fairly good command of Afrikaans and English. The research will focus on discourses in Herero, but take into account specialized discourses between experts in English and Afrikaans (see below).

Herero, a Bantu language, is spoken by about 160,000 people, ca. 7% of Namibia’s current population (CIA 2000 estimation), mainly in the provinces of Kunene, Erongo, Otjozondjupa and Omaheke. After the genocide of the Herero and Nama by the Germans in the years from 1904 to 1907 and their subsequent reconstitution as an ethnic group (Gewald 1996, Werner 1998), the rural Herero remained extremely impoverished (but see Bollig & Gewald 2000 for a more differentiated view). Today, their main income generating activities centre around extensive cattle farming on communal lands (former reserves) and some small-scale crop production mainly for subsistence and sale on local markets (Westphal et al. 1994: 17). The migration rate for work in the mines, on commercial farms or in urban business is high and leaves the communal areas mainly populated with the elderly, the women and the children (FAO 1995: 5, Iken 1999). The communal areas – the area where the study shall take place - are little developed, with poor

infrastructure, low literacy, high infant mortality, and a 30% HIV/AIDS infection rate. Despite the efforts of the government over the past 10 years aimed at developing these areas, the situation has not changed substantially.

2 Link to Development

The project will take place in a community in Western Namibia in the context of SARDEP, the Sustainable Animal and Rangeland Development Project of the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation Agency) and the MAWRD (the Namibian Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development, Namibia). **SARDEP** started its cooperation in agricultural development shortly after independence in 1991. First objectives were to improve livestock and rangeland quality in the communal areas that had long been neglected by the colonial regime. For this end SARDEP chose 11 Pilot Areas with Test Areas in several parts of Namibia (SARDEP 1999:33). However, it soon became clear that there were literally no functioning communities which could meaningfully respond to the program. Therefore, in 1995, as a result of intensive evaluation and policy discussions (KEK 1994, SARDEP 1995) the main thrust of the project was directed towards community development. The SARDEP project, while continuing to be conducted under GTZ principles and by GTZ personnel, came under the wings of the Directorate of Extension and Engineering Service (DEES) of the MAWRD, on both the ministerial and the extension officers' / agricultural facilitators' levels. Today, SARDEP is well integrated into the MAWRD and recognized as one of its successful programs.⁴³ Development of human resources, more specifically the promotion of communicative competences, had been explicitly identified as the major current need in view of ensuring sustainability of the positive results reached in the previous stages of the project. Improvement of communication across all organizational levels of those involved in the project was recognized as a top priority by the joint project management prior to and independently of their initial contact with the present research proposal.⁴⁴ The latter was therefore immediately welcomed as fitting in very precisely with the current situation in the project area and the direction in which its further development should be steered.

The insights permitting to position the project proposal rather precisely in relation to current development activities and needs in the area reflect the concordant explicit views of the senior officers of SARDEP and of DEES who were contacted during the exploratory trip in September 2002.⁴⁵ Contacts with government officials⁴⁶ and with research personnel from the University of Namibia⁴⁷ and the NEPRU⁴⁸ allowed to confirm and complete this picture. The assessment by the development officers⁴⁹ received abundant support by the observations made in direct contacts with the local population to the extent that this was possible.⁵⁰

⁴³ Steenkamp (p.c.), Werner (p.c.).

⁴⁴ My own observation (Omaruru, Sept 17, 2002).

⁴⁵ Thomas Kroll, former national coordinator of SARDEP; Norbert Neumann, current national coordinator of SARDEP in the termination phase until 2004; Stoney Steenkamp, is deputy director for Kunene, Erongo and Khomas region of the Extension and Engineering Service (DEES) at the MAWRD.

⁴⁶ Mr. Rukoro, chairperson of the Otjohorong-Konjee-Farmer's Association.

⁴⁷ Prof. Dr. Wilfried Haacke, Department of African Languages, Prof. Dr. Kingo Mchombo, Department of Information and Communication, Dr. Ben Fuller, Senior Researcher at the Multidisciplinary Reserach Centre, University of Namibia.

⁴⁸ Dr. Wolfgang Werner, Senior Researcher at NEPRU (Namibia Economic and Policy Research Unit), Windhoek.

⁴⁹ Local Extension Service officers Mechthild Kameho and Jefta Ngavetene.

⁵⁰ Local Tribal Council members and members of the Otjohorong-Konjee-Farmer's Association Alphons Ndjahero and Chief Ernest Jaya; the community of Omutiwanduko.

The study will be located in the Pilot Area of Omatjete and the Test Area of Omutiwanduko where the community and its development-related institutions of Community Based Organization (CBO) and local Agricultural Extension Service will be studied. In the Omatjete region this organizational structure was initiated by SARDEP. The function of a CBO is to assist the community to manage natural resources (SARDEP 2001: 35ff, esp. 38). Elected by the community itself and, in terms of its membership, intended to be representative of the various social groups of which the community consists, the CBO links the community with governmental and non-governmental institutions. These organizations have been successfully motivated to actively take part in development from their own perspectives; one may say that they have taken up ownership of development in truly participatory fashion. The role of the Agricultural Extension Service is to facilitate the work of CBOs, but also of individual farmers.

3 Objectives of the study

The study has the following objectives:

1. To focus on the question of development from a "bottom-up" perspective, and describe how, within the local community, development is negotiated. The primary emphasis on communication within the local community and between communities and mother tongue-speaking local facilitators corresponds to a priority need identified by the SARDEP (see above, also the letter from T. Kroll, 6 July, 2001 [see Appendix 10], Norbert Neumann p.c.).
2. To describe the communicative actions pertaining to developmental issues within and between the communities, the Community Based Organizations and the local Agricultural Extension Service as the three main organizational levels of SARDEP at Omatjete. The national level of SARDEP will be taken into account only insofar it interrelates with the local levels. Attention will be paid to the language choice of the groups and individuals involved, leading to a sociolinguistic profile of SARDEP.
3. The work of each of the three levels will be described in depth with special reference to their success, and tested against the evaluation of the other groups concerned or involved. This ties in well with SARDEP's opinion on future action: "The project [i.e. SARDEP] did not manage to research in depth the role of the established committees within the existing organisational landscape and to shape its support mechanism according to findings of such research. Thus the roles of the committees, to a certain extent, remained hidden" (SARDEP 2001: 62).
4. The Omatjete ward was chosen because it was recommended by SARDEP as one of the most successful Pilot/Test Areas of their project (p.c. Thomas Kroll, Norbert Neumann). SARDEP sees the excellent work of their local facilitator, Mechthild Kameho as an important reason for this. The study shall find out a) which factors account from the local perspective for the positive evaluation of the development work in the Omatjete ward, b) how these factors relate to generally recognized and locally defined indicators of sustainability, c) to what extent the positive outcome can be attributed to communicative processes (negotiation and decision-making strategies) and decisions relating to them (e.g. language choice), d) which aspects of the current state of the Omatjete development environment and the process leading to that state are seen with a critical eye, e) any other factors that may be relevant to understanding the current situation in Omatjete from the local perspective.
5. During the September visit it has become clear that social hierarchies, especially gender but also age, and current change occurring presently with respect to these hierarchies, are an important catalyst in the development processes in Omatjete and Omutiwanduko. This

pertains to the extension officers (p.c. Mechthild Kameho, Jefta Ngavetene) as well as to Community Based Organizations such as committees and the Farmer's Association, and the community as a whole. Therefore we are interested in what ways age, but especially gender, and the success of development interact or are interrelated. Further we are interested to understand in what ways these changes find expression in communicative and discursive behaviour.

6. Through experimental methodology (see below) the proposed research will develop a model for training professional development workers to assess the communicative landscape in a given situation, and a model for local groups to assess their communicative resources. Such communicative assessments shall support experts and local groups to a) identify positive and negative aspects of development communication, b) enable them to find solutions to their communicative problems in a participatory way, and c) to implement these solutions on a communicative level.
7. For the purpose of establishing a broader corpus of reference, permitting a comparative evaluation of the observations made in the SARDEP setting in Omatjete and Omutiwanduko, a parallel small-scale study will be undertaken in the Moru Kutu cooperative in Okakarara, where a contact has been established. The Moru Kutu cooperative is not part of SARDEP, but an independent community based non-government development organization (Morukutu Cooperative Union 1999).⁵¹

4 Hypotheses

In accordance with the hypotheses formulated in the general outline of the project, the following specific working hypotheses can be proposed for the Herero-subproject:

1. The SARDEP programme has already successfully brought across to its constituencies the notion of development as process of negotiation and thus of participation. This is reflected in the discussions and negotiations on the three levels of local facilitators, Community Based Organizations and local communities. We may for instance expect to find elements of meta-language or meta-communicative reflection. It will be of particular interest to find out to which extent meta-communicative competence derives from learning processes taking place through the cooperation with and exposure to SARDEP's methods and to what extent such competence draws on group-internal and culture-specific resources.
2. Due to this explicitly communicative approach to development in the SARDEP setting, participants are aware of the need to recognize conflict and the need for conflict management. Therefore we expect to be able to record and observe communicative processes of conflict recognition and resolution. Notwithstanding the presumed heightened awareness of conflict potential, we expect to be able to observe strategies of indirection and inferencing.
3. During the exploratory trip to the region in September 2002 the local actors on several occasions expressed their awareness of communication gaps and potential misunderstandings

⁵¹ In 1994, informal sector entrepreneurs in Okakarara formed the cooperative. In 1999 it had a membership base of about 470, organized into 240 producer groups. Eighty percent of the members are women, and the majority of members are subsistence farmers who have initiated self-employment off-farm activities to supplement their meager household incomes (Morukutu Cooperative Union 1999:2). Morukutu is a savings & credit cooperative that functions similar to other less institutionalized but very well known savings - & credit groups all over Africa and India ("tontine"). In 2002 it was in the course of fusing with a worker's cooperative (p.c. Wensia Tjipura, Issy Girl Tjakuaa, members of executive committee, 16 Sept 2002, Okakarara).

as well as of their social consequences in development work. However, it also became clear that they do not have conscious knowledge of repair strategies. We expect participatory research to lead to identify local resources such as the "host principle", the reconstruction of local knowledge concerning conflict resolution, culture specific forms of conflict management, and meta-communicative devices.

4. We expect to find the following sociolinguistic profile: Herero is the primary language spoken in most contexts, namely within the community, within the Community Based Organizations, and between the local facilitators and the latter two groups. Both researchers will have at least a working proficiency of Herero in order to be able to understand the processes taking place. Between local/agricultural facilitators and between the facilitators and the national coordinator of SARDEP, Afrikaans and sometimes English are used. The preferred choice of Afrikaans over English in a purely Namibian context (i.e. among Namibian experts) despite the low prestige of Afrikaans compared to English may be due to the fact that Herero-mother tongue-speaking experts feel or are felt to have better knowledge of Afrikaans than of English. It will be important to understand the consequences of this communicative behaviour both in the light of the persistence of colonial roles between "white" and "African" Namibians and development work.
5. The change of social roles and hierarchies is more plainly noticeable in the non-verbal aspects of communication than in discursive (i.e. mainly verbal) behaviour (my own observation in Omutiwanduko, 18 Sept 2002). In Herero-society, non-verbal behaviour is first affected by changing social roles and hierarchies. However, it remains to be seen which influence verbal and non-verbal behaviour have on social change.
6. Local, national and global issues of development play a role in the local negotiations on sustainability. This pertains to the local perception and interpretation of terms such as "culture", "gender", "history", but also of developments on the international (i.e. Southern African) and global markets (see also Namibia Natural Resources Consortium 2002).
7. SARDEP seems to be very well integrated and accepted at all of its operational levels. Therefore we expect to be able to find out and make explicit reasons for the acceptance enjoyed by SARDEP and to inventory and describe successful communication strategies at all levels of organisation and interaction. While a final evaluation of sustainability will have to wait until after its termination in 2004, the project is advanced enough to establish significant correlations between communicative processes and what can be expected in this regard. This presupposes participatory research which includes a common reflection on what precisely sustainability means in the local context and on how this can be reached.

5 Methods

On the background of the multidisciplinary approach favoured here I suggest various methodological approaches:

Heuristics. The 12 questions will serve as a heuristic and interpretive grid and at the same time as a point of departure for further working hypotheses and questions.

Collection of data. The initial phase of working with the communities and Community Based Groups will be through participatory observation, focusing on the acquisition of a good working

competence of Herero, as well as of a more comprehensive knowledge of society and culture.⁵² After this initial phase the meetings of the community-based organizations, of the communities themselves and of the work of local facilitators with farmers and communities shall be attended and video-recorded. The video-films will then be played back to the actors having participated in them. Since all the groups have had practice with SARDEP's methods of goal-oriented participatory project planning and related participatory moderation methods, these already existing abilities can be used as tools for the interpretation of the recordings by the actors themselves. These interpretive comments will in turn be either video- or audio-taped.

The gain of incorporating systematic auto-reviewing in the standard research procedure is twofold: Firstly, the actors themselves gain insight into their own communicative behaviour and discursive strategies. The research can thus contribute directly to improving project-related communication at the grassroots level – a result of the research project which corresponds to explicit expectations voiced by the local communities when it was outlined to them. The local actors are also able to in a sense preserve their ownership over the research and to a certain extent control its outcome. That this was both a fear and a request was made clear during the exploratory stay, where a written paper with the translation of our project proposal into Herero was very positively commented on. Secondly, the audio-visual material will allow to constitute a parallel corpus of interpreted data which in turn must be submitted to the usual methods of discourse and communicative analysis.

Basically, through this experimental method of action research, we expect to increase the analytic quality and interpretive potential of the material. The material will be expanded through narratives and thematically led interviews.

The analysis of the material. The audiovisual material will be transcribed, glossed and translated. It will be entered into a common database and subjected to a program of analysis and the corpus thus made accessible to the other subprojects. The program used for the analysis of the database also allows for a quantitative as well as qualitative search for key-notions and recurrent terms.

The audiovisual material and the interview-material will be analyzed with qualitative methods such as Grounded Theory and content analysis (eg. Glaser 1992, Strauss 1994, Corbin & Strauss 1990) in combination with "ethnographic discourse analysis" (Deppermann 2000, Habscheid 2000, Schmitt 2001). The insight gained through participatory observation will be included into the categories established in the course of this analysis.

6 Expected results

The specific aim of the Namibia-project will be to describe the way the Omatjete community, i.e. the local facilitators, the Community Based Groups and the communities themselves negotiate sustainable development on a communicative and discursive level. This locates the project within the field of development studies with special reference to language, communication and social change:

- It will show how development is communicatively negotiated.

⁵² Though substantial material has been published lately on the history of the Herero people (for a good account and summary see Bollig & Gewalt 2001), up-to-date linguistic and ethnographic literature on Herero language and people is still largely lacking. Therefore the research will have to take into account aspects that are at a first glance not directly related to the primary study, but may well form the background to it, such as the social structure of the community with special reference to gender relations, an "ethnography of speaking", and linguistic description, especially project-relevant aspects of discourse analysis.

- It will show the resources preferred in Herero-society in negotiating a socially sensitive topic such as development.
- It will show in which ways social change leads to communicative change.
- It will highlight the role of women in development from the perspective of communicative behaviour.

The comparison of the Omatjete region with the Okakarara region is intended to give the study a broader basis and additional background in view of the generalization of our findings.

The study shall further be understood as a contribution toward the study of Herero language and society.

On a theoretical level the proposed research has the aim to contribute to current discussions on theories of indirection as communicative strategies with reference to social asymmetries. We will do so in the tradition of interpretive sociolinguistics (as represented, in Germany, by eg. Helga Kotthoff, Susanne Günthner, Herbert Knoblauch) and communication studies (eg. Knapp & Miller 1994; Merten, Schmidt & Weischenberg 1994; Cupach & Spitzberg 1994; Reddy 1979).

On a practical level our work will contribute to the study of development communication and specifically to an initial write-up of practical guidelines for enhancing sustainability with special reference to communicative practices. This will be done in cooperation with SARDEP/MAWRD, who have signalled their interest specifically in this type of expected result because of their practical potential (Thomas Kroll, p.c., Norbert Neumann, Stoney Steenkamp):

- It will develop a method of consciousness-raising about communicative processes within the local group.
- It will develop a method for facilitating communicative processes within local groups for practitioners of development work.

We further expect the study to lead to a Habilitationsschrift (or equivalent) for Dr. Rose Marie Beck under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Rainer Vossen, Univ. of Frankfurt a/M, and a Ph.D. dissertation for the Namibian colleague.

IV. THE KAILI PROJECT (CENTRAL SULAWESI – INDONESIA)

1 General background

The Indonesian archipelago, which covers an area of close to 2 million km², stretches from West to East over more than 5000 km and from North to South over approximately 1800 km. It is inhabited by about 500 different ethnic groups most of which have their own language. Bahasa Indonesia is the national language officially designed for inter-ethnic communication since 1945 (Grimes C. 1996). However, speakers of regional and local languages often have a limited mastery of Indonesian. For purposes of development communication, the gap of communication resulting from this is widened by the general lack of adequate terminology in regional and local languages which constitutes a major obstacle to their use for conveying innovative concepts, resulting in a loss of communicative sustainability and hence of sustainability of development *per se*, since without adequate indigenization of the innovative message its appropriation by local actors is in jeopardy. In addition, language choice has deep social implications and hence an

incidence on acceptability of messages, Indonesian being the only medium deemed appropriate for formal deliberation and decision-making except at the most local level. The barrier to the unimpeded flow of information – both top-down and bottom-up - is further heightened by the internal variation of Indonesian, its still incomplete standardization, and the interferences from local languages in its regional varieties. As a consequence, immediate communication is often not possible between project administrators and local actors even if both supposedly speak some variety of Indonesian. Bilingual intermediaries must be called in in order to bridge the communication gap "artificially", creating a further obstacle to spontaneous interaction desirable for goal-directed empathy and successful negotiation of problematic issues.

Verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication are of equal importance and interact in significant ways in Indonesian society. Public debate and private conversation are equally subject to the laws of a strictly hierarchical social order, known as *adat* (customs and tradition). *Bapakisme* (fatherhood) restricts speaking privileges to prominent members of the society while imposing strong limitations on less prominent ones, largely excluding women and those being insufficiently competent in Bahasa Indonesia. There are regional exceptions to this rule, one of which is for example the matriarchal Minangkabau society in West-Sumatra. Inheritance of land, house, gold, money and "pusaka" (i.e. traditional heirloom) follows the female line of the family, leaving a man seen as a guest in the house of his wife. Therefore, the role which Minangkabau women play in society is much stronger than in other parts of the archipelago. Although they are still not in the position to reach the highest ranks within their group (for example the rank of governor), their share of powerful and high-income jobs is considerably higher than in other parts of Indonesia. In addition, their economic importance is not to be underestimated since they literally own everything. Besides, although the system of *Bapakisme* is to some extent true for all of Indonesia, its stronghold is the island of Java. The strict Javanese adherence to old traditions depicting a sharp hierarchical structuring of the Javanese society based upon historical reasons, is not necessarily true for *adat*-systems out of Java, since some parts of Indonesia never knew as strict a hierarchical structuring as the island of Java with its century-old kingdoms. Another "century old" and "highly developed aspect" of *adat* which affects decision-making and communication of decisions is the use of the "right channel" or "filter" (Draine and Hall 1986). Consequently, the group of people entitled to be legitimately addressed in conveying innovative messages is limited at the outset and may exclude e.g. all those having a less than perfect command of Indonesian, i.e. the vast majority of the target population of development projects. Again, this is supposed to be more true for Java than other regions of Indonesia.

2 Link to development

The present research focuses on discourse strategies, societal "channels" for disseminating exogenous concepts and on diglossia between Indonesian and Kaili, one of Indonesia's 500+ ethnic languages, spoken by about 130.000 people most of whom reside in the province of Central Sulawesi. Like its neighbours (Pipikora, Lindu, Sedoa, Napu and Bada) it belongs to the Kaili-Pamora subgroup of the Central Sulawesi subgroup (Wurm and Hattori 1983). About 70% of the population is indigenous; the remaining 30% are immigrants.

The Kaili region is included in the target area of the Central Sulawesi Integrated Agricultural Development and Conservation Project` (CSIADCP), a community area development project funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and currently in the beginning stages of being implemented as a complementary project to the Lore Lindu National Park (LLNP) in Central Sulawesi Province. The specific purpose of CSIADCP is to improve the socio-economic welfare

of the communities surrounding the Park and to allow them to become independent of the Park's resources for their livelihood.⁵³

Of considerable importance to the expected results of the research project under discussion here are infrastructural differences and the socio-cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity within and between the villages of the project area. Although the 60 villages belonging to the CSIADCP project area share the border with the national park, they highly differ in means of access (i.e. paved roads usable by cars vs. small tracks) and other modern equipment (like electricity, water supply etc.). That leads inescapably to a favouring of certain villages in respect of economic advantages, project facilitators staying in the villages and project money going to the villages. This in turn leads to an uneven distribution of developmental input. Socio-cultural elements are as important as the infrastructural ones, since they might trigger different hues of acceptance of developmental input. There are villages predominantly Christian, others are religiously well-balanced, others again predominantly Moslem, showing each different approaches to discourse strategies. There are villages only or predominantly inhabited by indigenous ethnic groups. Other villages have been strongly influenced by immigrants to this area who already long ago brought new "concepts" and ideas along, which have in the meantime been adopted by the local population of certain villages for economic reasons opening up the society for new ideas in general. Successfully implemented new concepts generating local knowledge through discourse within a limited range of villages are in the process of being successfully transferred to surrounding villages, again for economic reasons (farmer to farmer approach).

In addition, the ANZDEC team evaluating the project area found out, that traditional inheritance patterns differ from village to village. As in the Minangkabau society (see above) they discovered villages with strong "matri-focal social organisation" (ANZDEC .1997. Final report. Annex 9: The Indigenous People's Plan.3.2.Descent, marriage and Inheritance.p.4) These findings can be taken as a hint that the traditional participation of women in matrilinear villages can be compared to the strong position of Minangkabau women. A strong participation of women in developmental projects and therefore in verbal and non-verbal communication can be expected for at least some of the villages.

While Indonesian is necessarily the working language in any project involving government and development agencies, it is at best a second language for the members of the target groups directly and primarily involved in its implementation. In accordance with the social implications of language use as described above, the dominance of Indonesian entails the communicative marginalization of the central actors at the grassroots level. This leads to a situation, not untypical for Indonesia, where a sub-variety of Bahasa Indonesian is adopted as a working language at the grassroots level, leading to a sort of imbricated second order diglossia or even triglossia between competing varieties of Indonesian and Kaili. On the other hand, the local languages (L1, i.e. the target language for exogenous innovations and concepts through which sustainable development only will be made likely) are of extreme importance on the village level, since the facilitators who are in charge of carrying out the programme of the CSIADCP in the villages generally originate from the villages they work for and work in. Therefore, the relationship of DSL and DTL in a diglossic language situation can as easily be observed as local discourse strategies in L1.

Apart from the link with the CSIADCP, established through its regional coordinator, Mr. Rasyid of BAPPEDA, significant links exist with the DFG-Sonderforschungsbereich on the stability of

⁵³ Initial survey data on the area are found in ANZDEC (1997) and Sunito (1999).

forest margins (SFB 1687; deputy head: Prof. Dr. M. Fremerey) and, through the latter and the researcher himself, with the Tadulako University at Palu (Central Sulawesi). Since the GTZ office in Jakarta through its head of office, Dr. Sülzer, has shown immense interest in this research project and the practical application of its projected results, GTZ project areas, like Nusa Tenggara Barat and Nusa Tenggara Timur will be included in the investigations of the project as a basis for cross-checking the results of Lore Lindu National Park., i.e. the villages of CSIADCP.

3 Research objectives

Taking the situation as outlined above as a starting working hypothesis, the following topics suggest themselves as research priorities:

8. The place and role assigned to the different languages and varieties of language in the communication processes accompanying the implementation of LLNP-related projects in the Kaili area: E.g. which language/variety serves as preferred option (in which communicative setting) for introducing new concepts and objects to the Kaili universe, and which strategies are used or newly developed for this purpose; (b) for negotiation, argumentation and evaluation of matters relating to the development program; (c) in administrative matters?
9. The possibly new variety of colloquial Indonesian which is being used in order to fill the communication gap between the project management and the target population: its salient linguistic features; the condition of its use; implications of its use for the social status of participants; the extent of its spread and acceptance as a means of out-group communication; implications of its spread for the future of the Kaili language (notably as perceived by the Kaili themselves).
10. A further set of questions specifically concerns the social aspects of language choice and language use as well as non-linguistic cues to interpretation and status attribution.
11. Women are subject to double communicative marginalization on account of their being Kaili speakers with less education and hence even lesser command of Indonesian than the men, and on account of their status as women. To the extent that they are both allowed to participate in the main project and requested to do so in a parallel agricultural home gardening project launched by CSIADCP, where their status is clearly different, their communicative behaviour can be studied from contrasting vantage points in two communicative settings, one of the in-group, and the other of the out-group type.
12. A set of villages which differ in the of infrastructural means and ethnic, linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds will be taken as the target villages for collecting data. Some villages in the CSIADCP area have already strongly benefited from the project proceedings due to easy access. Exogenous concepts have to some extent already become part of the indigenous knowledge through strong acceptance (or economic advantage?). Local “channels” (sermons in church, discussions in mosques and health-centres, etc) have evolved to secure this new indigenous knowledge and the economic welfare of the village. On the other hand, some villages are too remote to have received any attention at all. These villages are to be included in the next phase of CSIADCP and can then be contrasted in their development and building-up of discourse strategies and channelling systems to the already more prosperous villages closer to Palu city.
13. Special attention will be paid to power, acceptance, economic advantages and discourse strategies. L1 and its channel-systems as the securing element of sustainable development will be analysed in this respect. What is the interaction between power, acceptance, economic

advantages and discourse strategies and their relationship to different approaches in development projects. Is discourse only triggered by power, acceptance and economic advantage? Or is discourse and its strategies a phenomenon in its own right which can be influenced by the above mentioned parameters to a certain degree but is to be primarily considered as a self-sustaining component of processing exogenous material into endogenous knowledge?

4 Methodology

The data on which the analysis will be based are of two fundamentally different types:

1. *Primary data* obtained through methods of direct and participatory observation, interviews, questionnaires and recordings of narrative and conversational materials from members of the Kaili community involved in the development projects at the grassroots level, classified according to age, sex and linguistic competence. The collection of data on gender aspects will be delegated to a female junior research partner to be appointed by the Department of Sociology.

The "12 questions" catalogue developed and tested for the Tura subproject will serve as a heuristic guide in order to ensure some degree of coherence and comparability between the African and the Indonesian projects. At the same time, it will be reviewed in view of its possible adaptation to South-East Asia.

2. *Secondary data* obtained through interaction with key personnel on the management side of the LLNP-related development projects and also with scientific counterparts, especially from Tadulako University. A discussion forum on issues of development communication will provide a platform for this interaction and a guarantee that hypotheses and preliminary results will be co-validated through *musyawarah* (discussion) and *mufakat* (consensus), which, from an Indonesian viewpoint, is an indispensable socio-cultural prerequisite for scientific results to be recognized as being relevant to the community at large and of potential use for application to development projects.

5 Expected results

The outcome of the research is intended to show that, and how, language choice, adjustment of lexical repertoires and accommodation of criteria of language use to local conditions are important factors for obtaining sustainable results in development projects. It is expected that some of the findings will feed back, via local intermediaries (see forum), into the ongoing development projects related to the LLNP and perhaps beyond, and, at least, will contribute to create a heightened awareness of linguistic aspects of development communication.

Observation of the dynamics of language use and restructuring over a certain period of time is expected to provide the basis for extrapolation from the situation of imbricated diglossia as it is assumed to be the case, prototypically, for Kaili, to the directions of change to be expected in many other parts of Indonesia where similar situations prevail, and thus to contribute in a significant way to planning of development in terms of communicative resources available and needed for enhancing sustainability.

The analysis of the data collected in the villages of the CSIADCP will most likely show that L1 and its "channelling systems" are the one and only prerequisite to ensure sustainable development. Argumentative processes in a certain local group are the main trigger to create this sustainable development through indigenization of exogenous concepts. Power, acceptance and economic advantages are important factors co-triggering discourse strategies and influencing these in

degree, but can never reach the goal of sustainability on their own but for a short term. Power, acceptance and economic advantages have to be taken into account as important elements in reference to innovations. Yet, sustainable development can only be placed upon strong argumentative processes within each target group.

The different developmental stages of the villages in the CSIADCP area suggest a scale rather than a certain point for analysing and depicting collected data in respect to the importance of argumentative processes and its correlates like power etc. This scale in turn can be taken as a guideline for practical implementation of developmental projects in general: The more interaction between discourse, power (only to a certain degree), acceptance and long-term economic advantages is discernible, the more sustainable development can be established. It is most important not only to allow the creation of necessary prerequisites of sustainable development (i.e. the channelling systems for argumentative processes), but to ensure acceptance and highlight long-term economic growth in order to promote local discourse and to strengthen thereby indigenization of new concepts.

In addition to the publication of the results as part of the project series (see Appendix 4), it is planned to produce at least one working report co-authored with Indonesian counterparts in Indonesian and English containing the essential findings of particular relevance to Indonesian partner constituencies.

V. SOCIOLOGY AND INTER-PROJECT COMPARISON

Cf. also I.1.5 above

The overall task of the sociology coordinator is to provide support for the collaborative development of the interdisciplinary methodology envisaged for the project. The specificity of the overall project is to investigate the role the local languages - employed in concrete situations within local communities and between members of the local communities and the staff of development projects – play in the local conceptions of development and sustainability. While synthesizing the results of the subprojects into a common comparative framework (glossary of terms used to convey notions of “innovation”, particularly the concrete innovations the spread of which is the objective of the development organisations in each of the project areas), “development” and “sustainability”, families of related concepts, list of situations in which these terms are used, and enumeration of (if existing) specific discourse strategies for using these terms), the sociology component will, in addition, focus on the observation and discussion of the relationship between “local” and “global” images (the latter represented in the conceptions used by staff of development projects). To what extent does the local discourse take over topics from the global discourse, to what extent does the local discourse represent resistance to the global discourse, to what extent does the local discourse influence the global discourse (by changing views of project staff as they better understand local conditions)?

The theoretical framework for constructing this comparative framework is given by theories on discourse, power and communication (Bourdieu, Foucault, Habermas). Of particular importance for the collaboration on a common language and methodology for the sub-projects and their disciplines will be the “critical discourse analysis” described by JÄGER (1993) which acknowledges the relationship between discourse and power (JÄGER 1993, p. 153). The second reason for adopting this methodological stance is the additional focus on practical methods for creating trust: the importance of “trust” for development is finding increasing recognition (see

FURLONG, 1996 and HUMPHREY and SCHMITZ 1996), there is no accepted methodology for studying the phenomenon of trust, its development and effects – much less in intercultural contexts. It is hoped that this research project can throw some light on the mechanisms for developing and maintaining relationships of trust through the study of local languages and the repertoire they provide for understanding “trust” in a local cultural context – and through a comparison of the (locally and globally differing) conceptions of development and sustainability, and how these are reflected in practical situations of communication between local populations and project staff. Of particular relevance in this context is a focus on institutions at the local level – with an understanding of institutions as “accepted and expected regularities of communication” rather than as formal structures (which may or may not be involved).

The theoretical question to which the evolving interdisciplinary methodology will contribute new insights concerns the relationship between power and trust: higher trust will make it less necessary to use “power” for the achievement of intended results (including developmental outcomes) while increasing the likelihood of sustainable results.

The focus will therefore be on the intercultural comparison of methods for building and maintaining trust: to what extent do local languages and discourse strategies provide resources for the building and maintaining of trust and how is this reflected in the interaction with project staff? Can interculturally valid conclusions about such methods be drawn and possibly develop into a methodology of building trust through paying attention to particular features of local languages and behaviour patterns, such as forms of respect?

This approach answers to the call for innovative and interdisciplinary methods for the study of the relationship between sustainability and institutions (HATZIUS 1996).

During the first year the sociology coordinator will focus on intensive narrative interviews with project staff of the development projects involved in the project areas. Apart from the notions of development and sustainability, an important area will be concepts of trust and trust building as related to the perception of the local population and the interaction with them.

Results of these interviews will immediately be made available to all other project participants. Together with interim reports provided by them, they will provide a focus for the yearly workshop for the exchange of experiences also to be organised by the sociology and coordination component.

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