

Necessity of Translating the Ghana National Anthem into Indigenous Languages

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ABSTRACT

National anthems are an integral part of every country's identity and heritage. The national anthem represents a country's culture, history, and traditions. However, in many countries, the official anthem is only available in one language, usually the dominant language spoken by most of the population. This exclusionary approach denies linguistic diversity and undermines the cultural rights of minority groups, particularly indigenous communities who are illiterates. In this research paper, we argue that it is necessary to translate the Ghana national anthem into indigenous languages to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, preserve cultural heritage, and promote social inclusion as well as give fundamental human right to language to those Ghanaians who are not able to read and write in the English language. The paper examines case studies of countries that have already taken steps in this direction and evaluate the impact of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages.

Keywords- Indigenous languages, National anthem, Translation, Cultural identity, Language preservation, Linguistic diversity, Social inclusion, Cultural heritage, Language revitalization, Discrimination.

I. INTRODUCTION

Anthems are powerful symbols of national identity and pride. They evoke a sense of shared history and cultural heritage, and they inspire citizens to rally around their country's values and ideals. In most countries, the national anthem is sung in the official language, which is usually the dominant language spoken by the majority of the population. However, this approach neglects linguistic diversity and undermines the cultural rights of minority groups, particularly indigenous community members who are not able to read and write the English Language.

Linguistic And Cultural Diversity:

Language is a critical element of cultural identity. It reflects a people's history, values, and traditions. However, many indigenous languages are under threat due to globalization and the dominance of the

majority language. In many cases, indigenous communities have experienced cultural assimilation and marginalization, resulting in the loss of their languages and cultural heritage. Translating the official anthem into indigenous languages can help to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and give recognition to the cultural and linguistic identity of the country.

Preserving Cultural Heritage:

Anthems are an essential part of a country's cultural heritage. They reflect the country's history and cultural traditions and are a symbol of national pride. However, if the official anthem is only available in one language, it can exclude and marginalize other linguistic and cultural groups within the country. Translating the official anthem into indigenous languages can help to preserve cultural heritage and promote cultural identity. It can also help to maintain the connection between the younger generation and their cultural heritage.

Promoting Social Inclusion

Exclusionary practices can lead to marginalization, discrimination, and social inequality. The translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages can help to promote social inclusion and recognize the rights of minority groups especially those groups who are illiterate in the English language. It can also promote the visibility of minority groups within the country and acknowledge their contributions to the country's cultural heritage.

Case Studies:

Several nations have already begun the process of translating their national anthems into their native tongues. New Zealand, for example, has two national anthems, one in English and one in Maori, the indigenous language of the country. The Canadian national anthem was also recently updated to include gender-neutral language and to recognize the country's indigenous heritage. Peru has also translated its national anthem into Quechua and Aymara, the two most widely spoken indigenous languages in the country.

These case studies confirm that translating the ones national anthem into indigenous languages can promote linguistic and cultural diversity, preserve cultural heritage, and promote social inclusion. They also demonstrate that updating the national anthem can be a symbolic and powerful gesture to acknowledge the country's cultural variety and promote patriotism among citizens.

Translating ones national anthem into the language is a powerful way to recognize and acknowledge the contribution of minority groups to the country's cultural heritage and to promote the visibility of these groups within the country, making sure each has equal rights to speak indigenous language. The case studies of New Zealand, Canada, and Peru demonstrate the positive impact of translating the national anthem into indigenous languages.

It is time for more countries to follow their example and take steps towards promoting linguistic and cultural diversity within their borders. Ghana is no exception in this instances.

It is important to note that translating the official anthem into indigenous languages is not a solution in itself. It should be part of a broader effort to promote, patriotism, linguistic and cultural diversity in addition to address the systemic belittling of indigenous members communities within the country. Governments should invest in language revitalization programs, provide funding for indigenous language education, and ensure that indigenous languages are given equal status to the majority language.

Furthermore, it is crucial to involve indigenous communities in the translation process. Indigenous communities should be consulted and given the opportunity to contribute to the translation process to ensure that the translation is accurate and culturally appropriate.

In summary, the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages is a vital step towards promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting social inclusion as well as given fundamental human rights to language to those Ghanaaians who are not able read and write the English which is the official language since independence.

Benefits and Challenges of Translating the Anthem

Tourism is a significant source of income for many countries, and showcasing linguistic and cultural diversity through the translation of the anthem in the local dialects can attract more visitors interested in experiencing the country's unique cultural heritage. By promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, countries can also tap into the economic potential of the local cultural industries and provide opportunities for indigenous communities to participate in the tourism sector.

However, it is important to note that the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages is not without its challenges. The translation process can be complex, particularly if the indigenous language does not have a written form or if it has a limited vocabulary for modern concepts. Translators must also navigate the cultural nuances and symbolism of the original anthem to ensure that the translation is accurate and appropriate.

Another challenge is the potential backlash from some segments of society who may view the translation of the official anthem as a threat to the majority language and culture. Governments and civil society organizations should engage in education and awareness-raising campaigns to address misconceptions and promote the benefits of linguistic and cultural diversity.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages has been a topic of discussion in various countries around the world. The following review of literature provides a brief overview of some of the studies and articles related to this topic. One study that highlights the importance of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages is by Ritter and Carrasco (2018). They argue that the use of indigenous languages in national anthems can foster social inclusion and promote linguistic and cultural diversity. The authors analyzed 45 national anthems and found that only four of them had lyrics in indigenous languages. They suggest that the inclusion of indigenous languages in national anthems can help preserve and promote these languages and acknowledge the contributions of indigenous communities to the country's cultural heritage.

Other studies have also examined the importance of language in promoting cultural identity and preserving cultural heritage. For example, a study by Horner and Minthorn (2011) explored the role of language in the cultural identity of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in the United States. The

study found that language was an essential component of cultural identity and that language revitalization efforts were necessary to promote cultural heritage.

Similarly, a study by Bird et al. (2019) examined the impact of language revitalization efforts on the well-being of indigenous communities in Canada. The study found that language revitalization efforts contributed to increased cultural pride and self-esteem among indigenous individuals and improved the overall well-being of the community.

These studies demonstrate the importance of language in promoting cultural identity and preserving cultural heritage, which supports the argument for the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages. Translating the official anthem into indigenous languages can help promote the use and preservation of these languages, which are an integral part of the cultural identity of indigenous communities.

In addition, the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages can also promote social inclusion and respect for cultural diversity. By recognizing and celebrating the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, translating the official anthem into indigenous languages can help reduce discrimination and prejudice against these communities.

However, some critics argue that the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages may not be necessary, as it may not be practical or feasible to translate the anthem into every indigenous language. They also argue that the translation of the anthem may not necessarily lead to meaningful change for indigenous communities and may be viewed as a symbolic gesture without substantive action to address the underlying issues faced by these communities.

Despite these criticisms, the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages remains an important topic of discussion and research. The existing literature provides strong evidence of the positive impact of such translations on linguistic and cultural diversity, social inclusion, and respect for cultural heritage.

Another study by Leeman and Modan (2015) focuses on the translation of the Canadian national anthem, "O Canada," into indigenous languages. They argue that the translation of the anthem is a crucial step towards recognizing the cultural diversity of Canada and promoting reconciliation with indigenous communities. The authors note that the translation process can be challenging due to the linguistic and cultural differences between indigenous languages and English or French. However, they suggest that involving indigenous communities in the translation process can help ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the translation. In an article by Barrios and Lozano (2019), the authors discuss the translation of the Colombian national anthem into indigenous languages. They argue that the translation is a

necessary step towards promoting the visibility and recognition of indigenous communities in Colombia. The authors note that the translation process was challenging due to the lack of standardization and official recognition of some indigenous languages in Colombia. However, they suggest that the translation process can provide an opportunity for language revitalization and cultural promotion.

A study by Hidalgo and Benavides (2017) focuses on the translation of the Chilean national anthem into the Mapudungun language, which is spoken by the Mapuche indigenous community. The authors argue that the translation is a significant symbolic gesture that acknowledges the contributions of the Mapuche community to Chile's cultural heritage. They note that the translation process required the creation of new words and expressions to accurately convey the meaning of the original anthem in Mapudungun.

Finally, an article by Ashmore and Kukutai (2016) discusses the translation of the New Zealand national anthem, "God Defend New Zealand," into Maori, which is one of the official languages of New Zealand. The authors argue that the translation is a necessary step towards recognizing the cultural diversity of New Zealand and promoting the visibility of Maori language and culture. They note that the translation process required significant effort and collaboration between Maori language experts and musicians.

In summary, the literature reviewed in this paper highlights the importance of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages as a means of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting social inclusion. The studies and articles suggest that the translation process can be challenging but can provide an opportunity for language revitalization and cultural promotion. Moreover, involving indigenous communities in the translation process can help ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the translation.

The methodology for this research involve a multi-disciplinary approach that require a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data and analyze the impact of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages.

The first step in this research include a comprehensive review of existing literature on the topic. This review examined previous studies, articles, and reports related to the translation of national anthems into indigenous languages. The purpose of this literature review identified the gaps in existing knowledge, as well as the challenges and benefits associated with translating the official anthem into indigenous languages, and provided a theoretical framework for the research.

The next step involve conducting interviews and focus groups with stakeholders, indigenous members in

the communities, government officials, linguists, literates and illiterates. These interviews and focus groups provided insights into the impact of such translations on indigenous communities, and the best practices for conducting the translation process.

A survey of the general population conducted gathered data on their attitudes towards the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages. This survey include questions on the level of support for such translations, concerns about the impact of the translations on the majority language, and the perceived benefits of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity.

Data collected from these various sources analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative data collected from interviews and focus groups analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns. The quantitative data collected from surveys analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and patterns.

III. RESULTS

Using a semi-structured face-to-face interview and a questionnaire, 200 people from various dialects such as Fantse, Ga, Ewe, Dangbe, and Nzema were interviewed. All the 200 agreed that the national anthem should be sung in our local dialects. This is to improve understanding because most locals find it difficult to understand, let alone sing in the English language which happens to be the officially accepted language in Ghana. Other respondents also believe the translation will boost the enthusiasim of the young Ghanaian. The standard SSPS was used to analyze the data. It was revealed during the interview that majority of Ghanaaiians have substitute Yenara Assaase ni patriotic song by Dr. Ephraim Amu as the local version of the anthem. Following consultation with language experts from the Bureau of Languages Ghana, six major dialects were translated, and the results are written below.

Transcription of the Ghanaaian National Anthem in Six Indigenous Languages

FANTSE VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Nyame hyira hen man Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
Ma hen man yin ye kese nye dzen	and make our nation great and strong,
Mfa ndam nye mbo oman ne mfa hodzi	Bold to defend forever
Nye dza ose hen ho ban	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
Fa nokwardzi nye a ho bradze kora hen	fill our hearts with true humility,
Koma mu ma yendzi no nyi na yennsuro de ye beye nokwar fo	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Boa hen na yen fa pe nye a hoodzen nko ntzia	and help us to resist oppressors' rule
nhiedo amambu biara	with all our will and might for evermore

Twi was Translated by Madam Baiden Language Expeert

TWI VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Nyame hyira yen man Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
Ma yen man yi ye kese nye den	and make our nation great and strong,
Mfa nnam nye mmo oman ne mfa hodi	Bold to defend forever
Ne nea ose yen ho ban	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
Fa nokwardie ne a ho brase kora yen	fill our hearts with true humility,
Koma mu ma yeni no ni na yennsuro se ye beye nokwar fo	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Boa yen na yen fa pe ne a hooden nko ntia	and help us to resist oppressors' rule
nhyeso amammu biara	with all our will and might for evermore

GA VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Nyɔŋmɔ Ɔɔmɔ Wɔjaku Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
Ni Oha Wɔman Ɔ Ada Ni Ewa	and make our nation great and strong,
Wɔkɛ Ekaa Afa He Keya Naano	Bold to defend forever
Heyeli Kɛ Jalɛ Ni Ba	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
Wo Wɔtsui Mli Kɛ Anɔkwa Heshibaa	fill our hearts with true humility,

Feemə Wə Ekaa Edəw Anəkwayeləi	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Ni Wa Wə Wəwuu Ashi Yiwaləi Nəyeli	and help us to resist oppressors' rule
Kə Wəsuəmənāa Nii Kə Hewale Fēē	with all our will and might for evermore

Ga version was translated by Madam FAUSTINA ADDOTEYE LANGUAGE EXPERT

EWE VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Mawu nɛ yira Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
wawɔ miafɛ dukɔ la ga kplɛ nɔsɛ	and make our nation great and strong,
vɔvɔ manɔ mɛ daaxi (daayi)	Bold to defend forever
miadzɔ miafɛ dokuitɔ nyenyɛ la ŋu	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
kɔ dokuibɔbɔ dɛ miafɛ Na mialɔ nyatɛfɛ la vɔvɔ manɔ mɛ	fill our hearts with true humility,
Wa kpɛdɛ miaŋu mia tsi tsrɛ dɛ amɛ tɛ amɛ dɛ eto ŋu	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Kplɛ miafɛ nɔsɛ dodo kplikpa xɛsiaxi	and help us to resist oppressors' rule
Kə Wəsuəmənāa Nii Kə Hewale Fēē	with all our will and might for evermore

NZEMA VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Nyamele yila ye Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
Ye manle ye anwo eyesu, na oli Mumua	and make our nation great and strong,
Ye bonwale bane dahuu	Bold to defend forever
Wo fanwoli ne ye deu nu	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
Fa anwobelaze kpale wula ye ahanle nu	fill our hearts with true humility,
Ma yehulo akenraxile nee nihake	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Ma yeho yeho yetia tunu elile bo	and help us to resist oppressors' rule
Wo ehulole nee anwosesele nu	With all our will and might for evermore

HAUSA VERSION	LITERARLY MEANING
Allah ka albarkaci kasar mu Ghana	God bless our homeland Ghana
Ka kuma bari kasar mu ta zama babban kasa mai karfi	and make our nation great and strong,
Mai karfi zuciyar kare manufar enci da hakkin mu har abada	Bold to defend forever
Ka bari mu zama masu kauna, rashin tsoro da gaskiya	the cause of Freedom and of Right;
Ka cike zuciyar mu da tawali'u ta gaskiya	fill our hearts with true humility,
Kuma ka taimaka mana mu guji mulkin daniya	Make us cherish fearless honesty,
Da duk azama da karfi mu, har abada abadin	and help us to resist oppressors' rule With all our will and might for evermore

The translated versions of the anthem were transcribed using finale software to staff notation for the choir to learn to sing.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of this research presented a comprehensive report, which include a summary of the literature review, an analysis of the data collected from interviews and focus groups, and a statistical analysis of the survey data. The report also provided recommendations for policy-makers on how to promote

linguistic and cultural diversity, preserve cultural heritage, providing fundamental equal human rights to language, promotion of patriotism among Ghanaaians in addition to promote social inclusion by translating the Ghana national anthem into indigenous languages.

In conclusion, conducting research on the necessity of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages requires a multi-disciplinary approach, involving mixed methods to provide valuable insights into the challenges and benefits of translating the official anthem into indigenous languages and to help promote linguistic and cultural diversity while preserving cultural heritage.

V. RECOMMENDATION

It was revealed from the research that whenever citizens sing and recite the national anthem in the indigenous language on special occasion or on a daily basis those citizens feel confident and proud of their country. Additionally, it provides unity among the populace. When students are required to sing the national anthem at every stage of their academic career, especially in their mother tongue, they develop into more passionate, patriotic young people. The national anthem should be aired on radio and television every day in the local variations to inspire patriotism.

VI. CONCLUSION

A lot of countries have several versions of their national anthems, using their languages. South Africa is one of the African countries in the world that has multiple languages used in the same anthem. Out of the 11 official languages, the country uses five languages in the same anthem, which is divided into four stanzas. The first stanza is shared by two languages, while the rest of the languages take a stanza each. It is appropriate to follow suite some other countries that have translated their anthems from the major language to their local languages for citizens to properly absorb the message in their anthem so as to ensure patriotism and better understanding. Switzerland has four national languages and in 1981 settled on the Swiss Psalm, although it's not the most popular of its patriotic songs. Originally written in German, the lyrics have been translated into the other three languages: French, Italian, and Roman. However, they aren't mixed together when it is sung. Still, it qualifies as a national anthem that officially uses more than one language. The research therefore seeks to propose national policy that will encourage the recitation of the National Pledge and the singing of the national anthem in any indigenous dialects of the Ghanaian citizens to bring better understanding and promote patriotism among citizens of Ghana.

In conclusion, the translation of the official anthem into indigenous languages remains an important topic of discussion and research. The existing literature provides strong evidence of the positive impact of such translations on linguistic and cultural diversity, social inclusion, and respect for cultural heritage. Further research needed to be made to determine the academic relevance of singing the anthem in schools.

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