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La Revue Africaine des Lettres, des Sciences Humaines et Sociales KURUKAN FUGA

# ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHING OF BAMANANKAN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BILINGUAL CURRICULUM IN MALI: A CASE STUDY IN THE "GROUPE SCOLAIRE BABA SY OF BAGUINÉDA

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#### Résumé

L'utilisation des langues nationales dans l'éducation formelle au Mali a commencé en 1979 avec la mise en œuvre de la Pédagogie Convergente (PC). A cet effet, le curriculum a remplacé la pédagogie convergente pour rendre les activités pédagogiques plus actives et centrées sur l'apprenant. Le but de cet article est de démontrer et d'analyser la pratique de l'enseignement du curriculum bilingue au sein du « Groupe scolaire BABA Sy de Baguinéda ». L'article vise également à démontrer la pertinence du curriculum parmi les autres méthodes utilisées dans notre système éducatif. Dans cet article, les populations cibles sont les enseignants du curriculum au sein du « Groupe scolaire BABA Sy de Baguinéda ». Les instruments utilisés pour la collecte de données sont les questionnaires adressés aux enseignants. Les résultats ont montré que la pédagogie convergente et le curriculum ont les mêmes méthodes et techniques d'enseignement et que le curriculum est la suite logique de la pédagogie convergente dans le système éducatif malien.

Palabras clave: Analyse, Curriculum, Méthode, Enseignement, Système.

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#### **Abstract**

The use of national languages in formal education in Mali started in 1979 with the implementation of Convergent Pedagogy (PC). The curriculum replaced the convergent pedagogy to make the pedagogic activities more active and learner centered. The aim of this article is to demonstrate and analyse the framework of the bilingual curriculum teaching in the "Groupe scolaire BABA Sy of Baguinéda". It also aimed to demonstrate the relevance of curriculum among the other methods used in our system of education. In this study the target populations are the curriculum school teachers in the "Groupe scolaire BABA Sy of Baguinéda". The research instruments that were used to collect data in this study are questionnaires addressed to the teachers. The findings showed that both the convergent pedagogy and the curriculum have the same teaching methods and techniques and that the curriculum is the logical continuation of convergent pedagogy in the Malian educational system.

Keywords: : Analyse, Curriculum, Method, Teaching, System...

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#### Introduction

In 1979, the government of Mali took the radical decision to introduce the use of national languages in formal education as an attempt to solve critical problems of student abandonment, failure and grade repetition. Bilingual education began on an experimental basis; national languages were introduced in Grades 1 through 6 as the medium of instruction.

Before curriculum, in 1987, a new pedagogical approach called *Pédagogie convergente* (or 'Convergent pedagogy') was introduced on an experimental basis. This new model had been developed at the Belgian Centre international audio-visual d'études et de recherches (CIAVER). The term convergence describes a pedagogy that emphasizes interactive learning and links teaching methods of the first and second languages. The child's mother tongue is used as the language of instruction throughout primary school and the second language is taught in such a way that the learners become functionally bilingual (Kodio, 2018). The goals of this model are to improve school access and learning outcomes for students, integrate the school into the social and cultural environment of the students, and produce functionally bilingual learners.

The Bilingual Curriculum is in line with the Convergent Pedagogy. To meet the real training needs of Malians, several strategies are devised in order to facilitate learners' access to basic knowledge, that is to say, as the Convergent Pedagogy wants, to access to literacy in the first language. The Bilingual Curriculum presents itself as a refoundation of the latter by overcoming to the shortcomings. On the pedagogical level, it was necessary to take into account the metalinguistic factor by implementing strategies that confront French and the learner's mother tongue. In fact, it was a question of setting up a real bilingual teaching strategy which promotes language contact during learning. At the political level where the State has not been able to carry out its commitments of the CP, teaching materials, teacher training, etc., it was important that the ten-year development program (PRODEC) through the Curriculum of basic education presents a plan of refoundation. Thus, Law No. 99-046 of 28/12/1999 on the orientation law on education defines the Curriculum as the set of devices (purposes, programs, timetable, teaching materials, teaching methods, modes of evaluation) which, in the school and university system, makes it possible to ensure the training of learners. The Functional Educational Centre is designed to act on the entire school program and aims to create cross-disciplinarily between the different subjects

Skills acquired in one discipline are used in several domains. In addition, the Curriculum is

planned to gradually extend to the entire Malian school system. Thus, five major areas of training are created for the basic school: Language and Communication (LC), Mathematical Sciences and Technology (SMT): Science, Mathematics and Technology, Humanities (SH): History and Geography, Personal Development (DP): Moral civic education and Physical Education, Arts (Music, Drawing, Plastic arts, Singing, dancing nursery rhyme). It is in this dynamics that the present study seeks to account for "Analysing the teaching of Bamanankan within the framework of the bilingual curriculum in Mali: A case study in the "Groupe scolaire BABA Sy of Baguinéda"

The objectives of curriculum are among others to:

curriculum.

- develop qualities that make a child socially effective and happy in the various social settings such as friendliness, cooperativeness, self-disciplines, self-control, loves for social justice.
- develop pre-vocational skills, willingness to work hard, the dignity of manual work, and job satisfaction.
- develop the ability to appreciate and discover beauty in various life situations and integrate it into one's own personality.
- the curriculum facilitates teachers to make decisions about the choice of content, pedagogy, teaching, learning material, evaluation. It also helps the teacher and students in their overall development.

Bilingual curriculum is defined by ROCARE (2009, p. 11) as an educational plan reflecting the values of a milieu of reference. The bilingual curriculum designates, in its Anglo-Saxon sense, the design, organization and programming of teaching-learning activities according to an educational path. In the same study, bilingual curriculum is known as a learning plan that encompasses content, methods, means of teaching-learning and means of assessment.

Bilingual curriculum is used to mean teaching in at least two different languages which include students' mother tongue. In Mali, each linguistic community or area uses their own local language in addition to the official language, French, for instruction at school (Diarra, 2020). With reference to the Education Orientation Act of 28-12-1999 N ° 99-046 on education in Mali, "bilingual curriculum" must be understood to mean all the devices (aims, programs, schedules, teaching materials, pedagogical methods, methods of evaluation) which, in the school and university system, make it possible to ensure the training of learners." (Education-Orientation Act, 1999). Convergent pedagogy has developed a competence- based bilingual

Adopted by the Education Orientation Act in 1999 (Act No. 99-104), this bilingual curriculum was tested in 2002 in 80 schools for the first two years of fundamental education. According to

Traoré (2009), the Bilingual curriculum had "as a goal to capitalize on the achievements of Convergent Pedagogy and to correct the weaknesses identified in its implementation". p.159. According to Haïdara (2003, p.7), the Curriculum uses the same teaching methods, the same didactic materials as convergent pedagogy. It is, therefore, not easy to discriminate them from a pedagogical point of view (Nounta (2011).

The curriculum is an educational action plan whose objective is to help learners succeed in acquiring knowledge, know-how and skills, enabling them to act effectively in various situations in life. The implication of the teaching of the curriculum is that the knowledge, understanding, and experience that students bring to school constitute a significant milestone in their future learning. To this end, Romainville (2006, p. 3) defines competence as an ability to implement an organized set of knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform a number of tasks. Along the same lines, Letor (2004) emphasizes that competence is characterized by the mobilization of resources such as knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to respond to a complex situation. In so doing, the student is likely to use a variety of resources (internal or external) available to him in order to optimize his learning. A similar definition is provided by Delorme (2008) who describes competence as a system of procedural knowledge that promotes, within a class of situations, the identification of a problem-situation and its resolution. According to the Education

Orientation Act (1999), competence is a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are recognizable and measurable, and enables a person to perform a task or a set of tasks appropriately. The bilingual curriculum for Basic Education developed for Level 1 of curriculum (MEN14, 2004) comprises three types of competences:

- Disciplinary competences: they are related to the fields of training, to disciplines;
- Cross-curricular competences: they cover several fields of training and are mobilized during the resolution of problem-situations. They are intellectual, methodological, personal, social and communicational competences;
- Life skills: they are the manifestation of attitudes and behaviors essential to adapt to life and serve as links between school learning and everyday life.

So, in the Malian context of education, competence is a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are recognizable and measureable, and enables a person to perform a task or a set of tasks appropriately.

#### 1. Methodology

Language planning and language policies were an inspiration when writing this research. There are various authors who have given definitions regarding these two theories. When looking at language planning and policies from different angles. One angle that will be discussed here looks more at language planning as a whole and the various aspects that fall under this, of which language policies is one. Kamwangamalu (2004) defines "language planning as a body of ideas, laws, and regulations (language policy), change, rules, beliefs, and practices intended to achieve a planned change (or to stop change from happening) in the language use in one or more communities" (p. 243). Research methodology refers to the process by which the researcher collects the data for the purposes of solving the underlying research problem. It gives various sub-sections involved in carrying out the research which includes the research design, population, sampling procedure and sample size, instruments used. The notion of bi/plurilingualism is also addressed insofar as our work deals with this issue in Malian schools (Groupe scolaire BABA Sy of Baguinéda). It allows us to understand the notion of Bi/plurilingualism and bilingual education to analyse how the Bilingual Curriculum applies to lessons.

## 1.1. Research Design

In this study the researcher used mixed method design. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect data from the respondents. The researcher used both approaches to collect the data with curriculum teachers on the use of curriculum in the "Groupe scolaire Baba Sy of Baguinéda".

## 1. 2. Data Collection Procedures and Samples

The data of this research were collected by using interviews with 36 teachers (30 males and 6 females). The type of interview used in this research is Semi-structured interview which is perhaps the most common type of interview used in qualitative social research. In this type of interview, the researcher wants to know specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. To do this, the same questions need to be asked in each interview. However, the researcher also wants the interview to remain flexible so that other important information can still arise. An interview is a purposeful interaction between two or more people focused on one person trying to get information from the other persons (Gay and Airasian, 2003, p.209). Interviews allowed us to get relevant information that could not be obtained otherwise.

The interview is an important qualitative data collection approach. It is commonly used in collecting the data for descriptive study, action research, evaluation studies, etc. Agyedu, Donkor, Obeng (2011) affirm, "The interview approach has several advantages that stem from

personal contact. Response rate is high and issues can be clarified. The interviewer can probe for specific meanings of responses (p.122).

#### 2. Results and Discussion

#### 2.1.Results

Kussi (2012, p. 5) defines qualitative research as "an umbrella term that encompasses many research approaches, including case study, ethnography, grounded theory, action research, and narrative research, etc." Although qualitative and quantitative approaches could be employed in the same study, qualitative research approach has some distinguishing characteristics that differ it from quantitative approach. Qualitative researchers, on the other hand, might acknowledge that participants are influenced by taking part in the research process. They might also acknowledge that researchers bring their own preferences and experience to the project. Qualitative data analysis is a very personal process. Ask two researchers to analyse a transcript and they will probably come up with very different results. This may be because they have studied different subjects or because they come from different political or methodological standpoints. It is for this reason that some researchers criticise qualitative methods as 'unscientific' or 'unreliable'. This is often because people who come from quantitative backgrounds try to ascribe their methods and processes to qualitative research. This is a fruitless exercise. The two approaches are very different and should be treated as such.

Also, qualitative research allows the use of multiple methods for collecting extensive data. Therefore, according to Kussi (2012, p. 4), "In a single study a researcher can employ instruments such as a semi-structured interview, structured questionnaire, and an observational schedule to gather data". The possibility of using a variety of instruments to collect data facilitates triangulation. The technique of triangulation in our study consisted in validating the research findings. It is for the same reason that we gave primacy to qualitative research approach. Another characteristic of qualitative research is that, the researcher's presence in the socio-cultural context of the participants is required during the study. It is imperative that he /she move to the setting to interact with them to gather the relevant data for the study (Kussi, 2012, p. 5). First, it provides a background analysis of the use of curriculum method as a language of instruction in the Groupe Scolaire of Baguinéda, a school composed of many primary schools.

The researcher administered a total of 36 questionnaires to the teachers of curriculum in the "Groupe scolaire of BaBa Sy. This school is composed of six primary schools, in which the curriculum is taught from first to six years. All the questionnaires distributed were returned at

100%, among the participants, 30 (83%) were male while 06 (17%) were female and therefore both genders were well represented.

Table1: What is the teaching language in your school?

Languages	Teachers	Percentages
Bamanankan	36	100%
French	00	00%
Total	36	100%

Source: Field data

According to the respondents from the teachers; 100% or all the teachers confirmed that Bamanankan is taught in the Groupe scolaire BaBa SY, from the first year to the sixth and that language is taught as follow: The 1st grade: 100% National language, 2nd grade: 75% National language and 25% French, 3rd and 4th grades: 50 % National language and 50 % French, 5th and 6th grades: 25% National language and 75% French. Meanwhile the teacher does everything in Bamanankan. In the next table we are going to see the method used to teach Bamananakan.

Table2: What is the method taught in your school? Curriculum, Convergent Pedagogy or Tjiwara

Methods	Teachers	Percentages
Curriculum	36	100%
Convergent Pedagogy	00	00%
Tji wara	00	00%
Total	36	100%

Source: Field data

The analysis in table 2 shows that, 100% or all the teachers used Curriculum as the teaching method. The « Curriculum Bilingue » (Bilingual Curriculum), this model, in which national languages are central, is part of a series of reforms destined to improve the efficacy of the education system. It involves offering learners the possibility of using their first language in order to build knowledge and competency in French (which progressively becomes the sole language of instruction).

Table3: Is this method useful for students?

Yes/ No	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	36	100%
No	00	00,00%

Total	36	100%
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Source: Field data

According to the responds from this table 36 or 100% confirmed that the curriculum method is useful for the students. According to them it provides teachers, students, school leaders and community stakeholders with a measurable plan and structure for delivering a quality education; the curriculum identities the learning outcomes standards and core competencies that students must demonstrate before advancing to the next level.

The Bilingual Curriculum is in line with the Convergent Pedagogy. Always with a view to meeting the real training needs of Malians, several strategies are tested to facilitate learners' access to knowledge basic, that is to say, as CP wants, access to literacy in the first language starting from the shortcomings of the CP, the Bilingual Curriculum presents itself as a refoundation of it by returning to the shortcomings. In addition, the Curriculum plans to gradually extend to all of the Malian school system. Thus five major areas of training have been created for basic school: Language and Communication (LC), Mathematical Sciences and Technology (SMT): Science, Mathematics and Technology, Humanities (SH): History and Geography, Personality Development (PD): Civic Education Moral and Physical Education, Arts (Music, Drawing, Plastic Arts, Singing, Dance, and nursery rhyme).

#### -Interviewer: What is curriculum?

**M. Chodo Goita:** Curriculum is a standards-based sequence of planned experiences where students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills. Curriculum is the central guide for all educators as to what is essential for teaching and learning, so that every student has access to rigorous academic experiences. The structure, organization, and considerations in a curriculum are created in order to enhance student learning and facilitate instruction. Curriculum must include the necessary goals, methods, materials and assessments to effectively support instruction and learning.

Interviewer: What is the different between PC, Curriculum, and Sira? M. Seydou Coulibaly teacher in PC and then trainer: CP is called convergent pedagogy, it is based on global objectives, in these global objectives, the teachers worked a lot unlike the students, and the teacher was at the centre of the work. In PC we evaluated at the same time we also examined the students. This is why they introduced the curriculum. The curriculum is competency-based; the CP is objectives and the curriculum is the skill, it is the CP that gave birth to the curriculum. The curriculum objective was to reduce the work or occupation of teachers and put the students at the centre of all activities in theory as well as in practice. In curriculum we do not evaluate unlike in PC. It is the CP subjects that are assessed in the

curriculum. In the curriculum there are many lessons that are not taught, during the assessments we are sent CP subjects instead of subjects not taught in the curriculum. For example Walanfili (Writing), kuuna sebeni (Dictation), Jaté (Math), all of these subjects are from PC, but they are evaluated in the curriculum, SNT that includes (Science, Math and technology), as there had a lot of failure in curriculum, they introduced again the 'Tjiwaraliste' in LC reading and writing, Tjiwaraliste also had a lot of failure, it is at this time that they introduced 'SIRA', the SIRA comes from these three elements (PC, Curriculum and Tjiwaralist). The Sira is based on the balanced approaches and decipherable word in LC (Language and communication), the Sira is also based on certain techniques, they are called the news of the class (guided reading and writing, games, decipherable words), it goal is to learn by playing games, children play but during these games they learn, Sira's main goal is games, but those are instructive games, reading and writing plus decipherable words. In a nutshell the CP gave birth to the curriculum, the curriculum also gave birth to Tjiwaraliste and the Tjiwaraliste gave birth to Sira. The PC and Curriculum were from the first year to the sixth year, Tjiwaraliste and Sira were from the first year to the second year, the Sira is only LC (language and communication) it does not take the other fields like: Mathematics Sciences and Technology (SMT): Science, Mathematics and Technology, Humanities (SH): History and Geography, Personality Development (PD): Civic Education Moral and Physical Education, Arts (Music, Drawing, Plastic Arts, Singing, Dance, and nursery rhyme). Sira does not touch these areas.

## Interviewer: Are you for curriculum method? If yes why?

**Madou Coulibaly**: Yes I'm for curriculum method, because the Bilingual Curriculum in Mali which makes the mother tongue the basis for the construction of learning; it intends to develop in learners, capacities and aptitudes in L1, so that they can mobilize them and put them to the benefit of L2 learning, and disciplines in L2. This requires the school to develop strategies for transferring a language to another

## Interviewer: What are the objectives of the Curriculum?

M. Adama Traoré: In my point of view, the objectives of the curriculum are:

It permits to the child to:

- \* Know and value their language and culture
- ❖ Develop a positive relationship with their language and culture
- ❖ Know the history of their cultural and linguistic group
- ❖ Know the values and beliefs of their family and community
- ❖ Develop a sense of belonging to their linguistic and cultural group
- ❖ Develop pride in belonging to their cultural and linguistic group

- ❖ Appreciate the other cultures present in their community
- ❖ Appreciate World Heritage

#### 2.2. Discussion

The aim of this study is to analyse the use of curriculum method in the "Groupe scolaire BaBa Sy of Baguineda". It also aimed to demonstrate the relevance of curriculum among the other methods used in our system of education. Speaking of the general program - Curriculum of fundamental education, the teacher emphasizes the fact that this program is based on principles that are verified in the human sciences. It equates the Malian CEF with a skills-based approach that mobilizes all the means of the school for a single objective: that of helping the learner to have skills allowing him to act in his living environment. It will also demonstrate why the use of curriculum whereas as there was another method before it. The former method is PC that is called convergent pedagogy, it is based on global objectives, in these global objectives, the teachers worked a lot unlike the students, and the teacher was at the centre of the work. In PC we evaluated at the same time we also examined the students. This is why they introduced the curriculum. The curriculum is competency-based; the CP is objectives and the curriculum is the skill, it is the CP that gave birth to the curriculum. The curriculum objective was to reduce the work or occupation of teachers and put the students at the centre of all activities in theory as well as in practice

#### Conclusion

The main objective of this article was to make an inventory of the teaching of bilingual curriculum. On the one hand, it was a question of examining the official texts which govern the Bilingual Curriculum and on the other hand to put them in confrontation with the practices in the classes through field research.

Mali, always concerned about the quality of its education system, is looking for ways and means to improve it. It is in this context that national languages have been used in teaching on an experimental basis. Their use in teaching has made it possible to considerably reduce school dropout, to facilitate the acquisition of instrumental disciplines such as reading, writing and arithmetic; and to ensure a better connection between the school and the learner's environment. It required the experimentation of a new educational approach which is the curriculum. The curriculum for teaching national languages and French, as we have observed, values the learner's environment, whose mother tongue constitutes one of the essential elements, by opening it to the outside world through the learning of French, international language of communication. Teaching in national languages in a curriculum manner with French

constitutes, in addition, limitless enrichment for the learner and a fertile field for opening up to another culture. Mali saw curriculum as the solution to a certain number of problems facing schools in this country. These include the high rate of school dropouts, low academic performance, and others. It is to be hoped that Mali will mobilize all the human and material resources necessary to extend curriculum to all its schools and all its national languages used in teaching.

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