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Notes on Translation and Transliteration

For the convenience of the general reader, we cite in the running text only translated quotes when the original source is written in Arabic. When the original source, however, is in French both quotes (original and translated) are cited. Additionally, when a reference to Arabic title is required in text, we quote only the title of English translation. In the bibliography, however, the title of the original source is quoted first and followed by English translation in parenthesis.

The transliteration of personal and place names from Arabic and sometimes from French into English follows the official convention in Mauritania and most of literature. Concerning personal names, in contrast with the convention in Mauritania, Mauritanians are listed by their last names. The term "ould," which means son of, is considered part of the name in Mauritania; thus, most writers include it when they write their names. As such, the term is added to the last name whenever it was found, and both of them are considered the last name of the author.

We used also a simplified version of the Library of Congress Arabic transcription system with the following exception. That is, diacritics in Arabic words and names are avoided. For instance, instead of referring to "ayn" by ('), it was spelled as "aa". In addition, the Arabic definite article "al" is included as part of the term which includes it in original entry.

Abstract

In the pioneer study, an attempt was made to investigate language policy and identity in Mauritania. In so doing, two methodologies were relied on. The data collected through consulting primary and secondary sources revealed that Mauritanians identified themselves mainly based on tribal and religious axes and were exposed to an Arabization policy before the independence. After the independence, however, ethnicity became mature and thus surfaced as a strong marker of identity as a result of the colonialist dividing policy. The Kwr, who were fully assimilated by the French, refused the governments' implementation of Arabic in education as well as administration. As such, ethnic tensions over language policy characterized the post-independence period in Mauritania. The tensions consolidated the ethnic identity and weakened national one.

In order to unearth which identities and language policy do Mauritanians subscribe to in the present, we carried out also an empirical investigation. Another purpose was also to see if there is a relationship between the participants' choice of language policy and their identities. In so doing, data were collected through means of questionnaire and interview respectively from 506 students and 2 chair-persons of political parties. The obtained results revealed that Mauritanians identify mainly based on religion and nationalism. It also was found that ethnic identity is strong in Mauritania, yet it is stronger among the Kwr than the Bedan. Tribal and national identities were also more common among the Bedan than the Kwr. A reached conclusion was also that the preference of language policy is influenced by ethnic background. The Bedan disfavored French-Arabic language policy, and favored Arabic language policy and English-Arabic language policy. This was because they considered Arabic as the language of their identity and religion and French as the language of the colonizer. French also, they argued, is internationally unimportant in comparison with English. In contrast, the Kwr viewed Arabic as a threat to their identity. They favored everything French. They considered it as a protector of their identity, and some of them regarded it as part of their identity. Unlike the Bedan, they refused the increase of English at the expanse of French. They also scored on the current Arabic-French language policy.

الملخص

في هذه الدراسة الريادية، جرت محاولة بحث للسياسات اللغوية والهوية في موريتانيا. و للقيام بذالك، أعتمدت منهجيتان. فقد أظهرت البيانات التي تم جمعها من مصادر أولية وثانوية أن الموريتانيين يحددون هويتهم أساسا على أساس محاور قبلية ودينية ، وأنهم تعرضوا لسياسة التعريب قبل الإستقلال. غير أنه بعد الإستقلال أصبحت الإثنية ناضجة ، وبالتالي برزت كعلامة قوية نتيجة لسياسة المستعمر التقسيمية. فقد رفض لكور، الذين أستوعبهم الفرنسيين بشكل كلي، ترسيم الحكومات للعربية في التعليم والإدارة. على هذا النحو، تميزت فترة ما بعد الإستقلال بالتوتر الإثني. وقد عززت هذه التوترات الهوية الإثنية وأضعفت الهوية الوطنية.

من أجل الكشف عن الهويات والسياسة اللغوية التي يرضاها الموريتانيون في الوقت الحالي ، قمنا بإجراء تحقيق تجريبي. وتمثل هدف آخر أيضا في معرفة ما إذا كانت هناك علاقة بين إختيار المشاركين للسياسة اللغوية وهوياتهم. و للقيام بذالك ، تم جمع البيانات من خلال أداة تقنية استمارة الإستبيان والمقابلة على التوالي على 506 طالب و 2 رؤساء - أحزاب سياسية. وقد كشفت النتائج المتحصل عليها أن الموريتانيين يعرفون أنفسهم بشكل رئيسي على أساس الدين والقومية. وقد وجد أيضا ، أن الهوية الإثنية قوية في موريتانيا ، ولكنها أقوي بين لكور من البيظان. وجد أن الهويات القبلية و الوطنية أكثر كذالك شيوعا بين البيظان من لكور. وكان الإستنتاج الذي تم التوصل به كذالك هو تأثر السياسات اللغوية بالخلفية الإثنية. فالبيظان لم يستحبوا سياسة اللغة الفرنسية – العربية ، وفضلوا سياسة اللغة العربية وسياسة اللغة الإنجليزية- العربية وكان ذالك بسبب إعتبارهم للعربية لغة لهويتهم وديانتهم والفرنسية لغة للمستعمر، وزادوا بالقول أيضا أن الفرنسية غير مهمة دوليا بالمقارنة مع الإنجليزية. و على العكس ، ينظر لكور للعربية على أنها تهديدا لهويتهم ويفضلون كل ماهو فرنسي ويعتبرونه حاميا لهويتهم ، ويذهب البعض منهم لإعتبار الفرنسية جزءا من هويتهم. فعلي النقيض من البيظان ، رفضوا زيادة الإنجليزية على حساب الفرنسية وفضلوا سياسة اللغة العربية – الفرنسية الحالية.

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General Introduction

Language and identity have been twin souls along the history or even before history. "This is why Rousseau leaves unresolved the problem of 'which was the more necessary, society already formed to invent languages or languages already invented to form society?'" Thus, the social nature of the human being is intimately tied up with human linguistic ability (Fiala, 2002, p. 38). The inseparable relationship between language and identity led some linguists to neglect the other components of identity (e.g. culture, age, and religion) and declare that "the entire phenomenon of identity can be understood as a linguistic one" (Joseph, 2004, p. 12). Such intertwined relationship is characterized by fulfilled promises, mutual interests and common needs. On the one hand, human being has social interests and needs; accordingly, identity of the individual as well as the state is formed and maintained through language. This is because language is "man's way of communicating with his fellow man and it is language alone which separates him from the lower animals" (Crystal, H & Crystal, D, 2000, p. 3). On the other hand, Abley (2003) argued that language is nurtured and kept alive by verbal practices beside written transcripts (pp. 38-39).

In the context of the intertwined relation between language and identity, the co-existence between multilingual communities and their agreements over the language policy have created many problems for many countries that have multicultural diversity, for a state has to decide which language(s) should be selected and adopted as the official language(s), and some groups tend to refuse such policy and thus stage their protests. Indeed, Bretton (1976) argued "[i]t is clear why blood is drawn over language in certain situations: language is the key, or the set of keys, needed to unlock the gates of access to survival kits – employment, advancement, social security, physical security" (p. 444). In this regard, Weinstein (1983) stated that "[d]isagreement over the official language of a country and the medium of instruction in schools (which can be a disagreement about who shall participate in power, wealth, and prestige) is a source of conflict between ethnic groups [and] regions" (p. 15). Realistically speaking, loyalty to the state, does not always override all other competing loyalties. For instance, Emerson (1959) stated that "[f]amily, tribe, locality, religion, conscience, economic interest, and a host of other appeals may at any given time and place prevail over national allegiance for particular individuals or groups" (p. 97).

Likewise, Thomason, among several other researchers, took for granted that "conflict is inherent in all multilingual settings" (2001, p. 34). One can remark that Thomason's statement might be inadequate and adequate. In other words, while he might be right to underscore the persistence of conflicts over language policy in multilingual states, Thomason's argument overlooks the fact that not all multilingual settings are the same. Indeed, even though France, among many other European countries, hosts many multilingual communities, the state was able to assimilate fully non-French speakers and thus had French language as a cornerstone of French identity. Other multilingual and multicultural countries, however, such as Algeria, if not all African countries, have been unable to fuse their population linguistically and thus tensions over language policy remained bubbling under the surface. Several reasons were given to the pervasiveness of the confrontations. According to Bngbose, African countries have failed to solve the problem of language conflict, and this is because of "avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation" (Bngbose cited in Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995, p. 335).

Indeed, in modern-day Mauritania, officially the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, tensions over the language policy and identity are a case in point. Before zeroing in on such tension, it is imperative to mention that Mauritania represents a fascinating historical and contemporary multilingual and multicultural setting. It is composed of two main ethnic communities, Arab and African, which speak five languages, Arabic, Hassaniya, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke. The Arab community is labeled in Mauritania as the Bedan and speaks Arabic and Hassaniya. The term is defined in due time, and it is used throughout the study. Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke are mother tongues of the African community which is also called Kwr. The term does not have negative connotation as its definition later shows. As such, it is used throughout the present study instead of the derogatory phrase "Black" African. On related note, it should be emphasized also that the term "Berber" is not used in the study because it might have a pejorative meaning. Alternatively, the terms "Imazighen" (sg. Amazigh) and Tamazight are used to refer respectively to people and language. Tensions between the two ethnic groups have been frying ever since the inception of independence. The ethnic groups coexisted peacefully before the coming of the French colonizer in political systems known as emirates and tribes. As such, language was not an issue. The French assembled the two ethnic groups in one political territory in the sense of nation-state

system and introduced their language to the people. The Kwr welcomed the French language and culture whereas the Bedan rebuffed them.

Since the departure of the colonizer, language policy has been considered as the main reason behind the ethnic tensions in the state and thus the postponement of the establishment of, to use Simpson's words, "an over-arching sense of belonging and loyalty to a collective 'national' whole" (2008, p. 2). When Mauritania became an "ex-colonial power" in 1960, the government followed the Moroccan steps in its attempts to move the state beyond its French colonial legacy through implementing Arabization policy, yet the Kwr ardently opposed such move, for they regarded Arabic implementation as a peril to their identities. They called instead for the use of French language which they see as the solo guarantee of their identities. The Bedan, however, insisted that since they represented the overwhelming majority of the population, their language, Arabic, should be implemented in education as well as administration. As a result, protests, deadly clashes and heated debates over language policy characterized the post-independence period in Mauritania. We, thereby, seek to investigate the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania. As such, we traced the past and witnessed the present Mauritanian's identities and language policies which the people of the state have been exposed to. An attempt also was made in order to unearth the Mauritanians' language policy preference and the relationship, if any, between their identities and their language policy preference.

The rationale of selecting the topic of the study is neither an arbitrary effort nor an intellectual luxury. In contrast, it is a response to several interrelated factors. Generally speaking, language policy and identity is one of the most commonly discussed topics across disciplines because many problems in the modern-day world are caused directly or indirectly by them as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, there is not even one single piece of work that has addressed the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania. There is one short article Pettigrew's "Colonizing the Mahadra: Language, Identity, and Power in Mauritania under French Control" (2007) which as the title shows discusses the French attempt to colonize mahadra (traditional school) and thus introduces French language to Mauritanians in the colonial era. The other very few works were composed in Arabic and French and were devoted either to language policy (e.g. Queffélec & Ould Zein's *Actualités*

Linguistiques Francophones: Le Français en Mauritanie, 1997) or the history of the Mauritanian people (Mohamed Mahmud's *Conflict of Values in Mauritania*, 2013). As such, the present study seeks to build the first body of literature on the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania and thus fills a crucial gap. Such gap may be due to the fact that the topic is considered as a very sensitive one in Mauritania. In fact, anyone who tries to explore language and identity in Mauritania might bring on himself or herself a social misfortune.

Moreover, the reason the present study has chosen Mauritania as a case study was not hit or miss. First, the history and the present of Mauritania and its people are shrouded behind thick veil, for they do merely exist in the corpus of English literature. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, there are only few works that were devoted primarily to charting out the culture, religion, and politics of Mauritania. Two works (Pazzanita's *Historical Dictionary of Mauritania*, *3rd edition*, 2008 & Handlof, et all *Mauritania: A Country Study*, 1990) were composed in the form of dictionaries. Such form implies that the information provided in the books might be superficial since dictionaries are meant to cover all knowledge about a particular state or field. The other works include Ould-Mey's *Global Restructuring and Peripheral States: The Carrot and the Stick in Mauritania* (1996), Blauer and Lauré's *Cultures of the World: Mauritania* (2009) and very few others. As the titles of the article and books reveal, limited branches of knowledge are exposed to the readers. The absence of Mauritania from the corpus of English literature was also remarked by Yassin-Kassab and Sardar. They stated that "[d]espite the majority of their efforts often being overshadowed by Western media narratives, which tend to focus on isolated and often sensationalist topics, such as slavery, terror threats, or the practice of force feeding known as gavage" (2014, para. 6). As such, the study is the first to mirror a clear and full picture of language policy and identity in Mauritania.

Several factors can be listed as the main reasons behind the inattention in Anglo-American academia. To begin with, Mauritania is demographically, geographically and economically irrelevant. The populations of Mauritania are estimated to be only about 4 millions. Such number makes it the smallest country in the North African region. It is also located at the extreme western edge of the Arab world. The remoteness from the Middle East contributed to its overshadowing. Another important factor that might be behind the neglect of Mauritania in the Anglo-American scholarship is the perception that it falls within the sphere of French influence;

therefore, it is irrelevant to English researchers and scholars. Moreover, high English is a rare commodity in Mauritania. There are less than 10 PhD holders in the state, and most of them work outside the academic field. As such, the country does not have people who may represent it in the corpus of English literature. Besides, Mauritania is a poor if not the poorest country in the Arab world. Furthermore, unlike its neighbors in North Africa, Mauritania is only 57 years old. Before the coming of the French colonizer, modern-day Mauritania was known by different names, and it was not a political territory in the sense of nation-state system. Rather, people were organized in emirates and tribal presidencies. Moreover, the fact that Mauritania is almost absent from the corpus of English literature might be due to the fact that it is religiously homogeneous. All Mauritanians are Muslims. The world might have given it more importance if it has a religious minority, say Christian or Jewish.

In addition, the importance of the study stems from the fact that it is not only a thorough introduction to an unfamiliar territory, Mauritania, but also a complementary contribution to knowledge about the "Arab" Maghreb in the Anglo-American academia. This is because studies on the Maghreb are relatively few in the corpus of English literature. Indeed, according to White and Zoubir (2016), the Arab Maghreb countries are relatively neglected in the Anglo-American scholarly works. White and Zoubir added that there are two reasons to this longstanding inattention. The Maghreb "is somehow part of the European especially France spheres of influence, and therefore not of particular relevance or interest to North American scholars." Furthermore, "the Levant and the Golf region- the Arab-Israeli conflict, the instability of Lebanon and Syria, petro-politics, and the Gulf wars- have long attracted greater attention because of their geostrategic importance" (2016, p. xi). It seems that the geostrategic importance of the Levant and the Golf-region made it a recurrent theme and thus eclipsing other themes about the Maghreb. Since Mauritania is part and parcel of the Maghreb, taking it as a case study is definitely a significant contribution that fills the gap in the corpus of English literature about the Maghreb.

In order to investigate thoroughly the language policy and identity in Mauritania, two main complementary methodologies are adopted. The first one involves a descriptive and analytical synthesis of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include but not limited to accounts of the founding fathers and governmental documents (e.g. memories and census data).

Concerning secondary sources, the study draws on innumerable articles, books, monographs, PhD dissertations, videos, to name but some (see bibliography). The first methodology is adopted in the first and the second part of the present study. The second methodology deployed in the study is empirical. Two techniques, namely, questionnaire and interview, are used to collect data about the Mauritanians' identity and their language policy preference. The techniques also were meant to investigate the relationship, if any, between identity and language preference. The methodology is used in the third part of the present study.

As mentioned earlier, the study comprises three parts each of which is subdivided into two chapters. The introductory part is intended to provide a conceptual aerial map, covering key concepts and theoretical debates over language policy and identity. The first chapter of the first part is devoted to defining key concepts, language, language policy, and identity. Types of language policy and identity are also charted out in the chapter. Besides, factors that affect language policy and markers of identity are discussed. The second chapter examines the interplay between language policy and identity. It discusses the role of language policy in nation-building and identity formation. It also investigates the role of identity in devising a particular language policy. Other issues discussed in the chapter are multilingualism and multiculturalism. Definitions and types of each one of them are outlined.

The second part constitutes the bridge between the literature-review in part one and the third empirical part by situating the study and discussing themes and related themes of language policy and identity in Mauritania. The first chapter surveys the historical names through which Mauritania was known along the history. It also situates Mauritania geographically. After introducing the state, an investigation of themes pertaining to the people of the state is carried out. The tribal composition and religion are discussed. The second chapter, as aforementioned, is the first of its kind to anatomize here and there ethnic and national identities in Mauritania. Innovatively, the chapter also surveys the linguistic landscape of Mauritania. It endeavors to capture the languages spoken and used in Mauritania. Besides, the language policies, which modern-day Mauritania has adopted ever since the eleventh century, are investigated. In other words, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial language policies are examined. The choice of the eleventh century as the starting point of analyzing language policy was due to the fact that the linguistic situation in modern-day Mauritania started to take its present shape ever since that

period. This is because Arabic was heavily introduced to Mauritanians with the Islamization process which was led by the Almoravids in 1039.

The third, and final, part is empirical and is devoted to discussing the methodology and the obtained results. The first chapter outlines the methodology. The hypotheses and research questions, which guide the study, are outlined. Two techniques, questionnaire and interview, were charted out. Quota sampling was adopted in order to involve all ethnic groups in the study and thus get comprehensive results. As such, out of a total 506 questionnaires, 252 questionnaires are distributed to the Bedan students and 254 ones to the Kwr students. The setting of the study was the Modern University of Nouakchott, namely, the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Sciences and Technology. Besides, two chair-persons of two political parties are interviewed. They were selected because each one of them sets himself as the champion of his ethnic group interest. The elicited information is presented, and the hypotheses are tested and discussed. The study ends with representing the findings and suggesting some recommendations which might solve the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania.

Part One: Clearing the Ground: Language Policy and Identity in Multilingual and Multicultural Settings

Chapter One: General Issues in
Language Policy and Identity

Introduction

Over the ages, language policy and identity have been a source of a particular interest to scholars and researchers across disciplines. With the rise of the new nation-state systems, this interest turned into an explosion of conceptual and theoretical innovations that have breathed new life into the subarea. The chapter, thereby, is concerned with a variety of miscellaneous matters centered around the issue of language policy and identity which has been discussed in the literature. In so doing and through surveying several articles and books that have dealt with this issue, the chapter treats each component of the constructs that make up the title of the chapter separately as to cover the topic more thoroughly. Under each construct, small, medium and large parts are toured. For example, under the constructs of "language policy," the term language is defined. Additionally, entrenched myths and misconceptions about language are demolished. Furthermore, the phrase "language policy" is defined and distinguished from language planning with which some writers use interchangeably. Besides, theories, types and factors that affect language policy are discussed.

In addition, the debate over the definition of identity is outlined. It is shown also that the debate is not only bickering over the terminology in the ivory tower of academia but also is concerned with the theories of identity. This is because the term "identity" has become ubiquitous within social sciences and cut across various disciplines from political science, sociology, psychoanalysis to sociolinguistics. As such, each discipline or say even scholar has had his or her own understanding of identity. For example, whereas some scholars viewed identity as essential and fixed, others regarded it as dynamic and changing. Moreover, amid the controversy over the nature of identity emerged the issue of typology. The issue is discussed in the chapter beside the different markers which affect identity.

1.1 Language policy

1.1.1 Defining language

> When we study human language, we are approaching what some might
> call the 'human essence,' the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far
> as we know, unique to man. (Chomsky, 2006, p. 88)

Whatever else people do when they come into contact, whether they communicate thoughts, beliefs, emotions, promises, threats, or the like, they talk. However, the term "communicate" is not only human property since non-human species also communicate information, declarations, threats, feelings and the like. Yet, even though they communicate, non-human species do not have a system of communication that resembles that of human beings, for their system of communication is primarily non-linguistic. For example, as cited in the article "What is Language?" non-human species communicate with non-linguistic means

> resembling our smiling, laughing, yelling, clenching of fists, and raising of
> eyebrows. Chimpanzees, gorillas, and or an [*sic*] gutangs can exchange different
> kinds of information by emitting different kinds of shrieks, composing their faces
> in numerous ways, and moving their hands or arms in different gestures, but they
> do not have words and sentences. By moving in certain patters, bees are
> apparently able to tell their fellow workers where to find honey, but apparently
> not very much else. ("What is Language?" n. d., p. 2)

The above citation goes in line with the previously cited extract by Chomsky about the fact that language is an exclusively human property. Extending such statement, Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2014) argued that the possession of language, perhaps more than any other attribute, sets apart human beings from other species. For example, "to some people of Africa, a newborn child is called *kintu*, a 'thing,' not yet a *muntu*, a 'person.' It is only by the act of learning language that the child becomes a human being" (p. 1). The arguments above answered one of the main intriguing questions of the philosophy of linguistics: Is language only possible among human beings? Yet, whether they were intended as definitions or not, they raise one or more points of the definitions of language as will be revealed later.

As any other concept, definitions of language are many and effortlessly available, for we no longer suffer from the weight of history, as Marx suggested, but from the burden of an ever

increasing density of information (Rutsky & Cohen, 2005, p. 1). Indeed, with the tremendous quantity of data that saturates today's society, we can get answers to almost all questions in nanoseconds no matter where we are (Mackall, 2004, p. 9). However, the following definitions of language were chosen because of their significance. The first definitions of language are proffered by Webster International Dictionary: "Language is audible, articulate human speech as produced by the action of the tongue and adjacent vocal organs." Webster also gave a second definition of language as "any means, vocal or otherwise, of expressing or communicating feeling or thought" (Webster cited in Dash, N. & Dash, M., 2007, p. 1). The first definition is very limiting since it limits language to speech and excludes the other main building block of language which is writing. The second definition is also general since non-linguistic means such as clenching of fists and raising of eyebrows can fall under the loose terms "any means, vocal or otherwise" used in the definition. That is to say animals do use their means of communication; however, their means of communication as discussed earlier are not counted as language.

An alternative definition came from Sweet (2014), an English phonetician and linguist scholar, who defines language as "the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts" (p. 6). In this definition, Sweet overemphasizes the role of words to the extent that it seems that he reduces language to words when this is not true. Indeed, as Everett (2012) stated, "all words are "signs" (a meaning paired with a form), but not all signs are words or sentences (stop signs, "thumbs up," and other gestures come to mind)" (p. 33). Furthermore, according to Robins (1964), language is "symbol systems… almost wholly based on pure or arbitrary conventions... infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers" (pp. 13-14). The constructs deployed in this definition are loose. There is no further elaboration after the terms "symbol systems" that would show the nature of these symbol systems.

Moreover, Sapir (1921) suggested that language should be looked at "as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols…[which] are, in the first instance, auditory" (p. 7). In this definition, Sapir neglects written language. In fact, his attention was on the oral communicative function of language coupled with the distinction of language as human property. Nevertheless,

the communicative function he mentioned suffered from several defects. For example, his choice of the constructs "ideas," "emotions," and "desires" was limiting, for people communicate threats, promises, and the list is large. His choice also of the construct "idea" was imprecise.

In addition, the American linguists, Block and Trager, as cited in Bynon and Palmer (1986), stated that a language is "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates" (p. 260). Furthermore, according to Wardaugh, a language is "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication" (Wardaugh, cited in Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert & Leap, 2009, p. 1). Block and Trager's definition coupled with Wardaugh's prominently point out that language is a means of communication. In this sense, they did not pay attention to the argument that language is human property since animals do also have their system of communication.

Finally, a definition of language by one of the most influential linguists, Chomsky, should not be neglected. For Chomsky, language is "a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements" (1957, p. 13). Still on the same page, Chomsky (1957) added "each…language has a finite number of phonemes (or letters in its alphabets) and each sentence is representable as a finite sequence of these phonemes (or letters) though there are infinitely many sentences" (p. 13). Chomsky's definition is quoted at length because it is different from the earlier cited definitions both in style and content. It does neither mention the communicative function of language and the symbolic nature of the elements nor the sequences. Instead, it does stress the structural properties of language. That is, Chomsky puts forward that each language is a group of sounds/symbols and that out of these symbols/sounds different sentences can be constructed.

Even though almost all different trustworthy sources were consulted for the identification of language, the definitions cited here were incomplete as mentioned earlier. However, this is obvious since language has myriad characteristics, and no single definition could capture all of them. Therefore, in an attempt to define language satisfactory, it might be more relevant to mention some characteristics of language. To start with, language is human. In other words, language is a universal characteristic of human beings. Only human beings could deploy oral and written language symbols to represent their thoughts as discussed earlier.

Language is arbitrary. The most instance of arbitrariness in language, and the one that is frequently mentioned by linguists, is what Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006), referred to when they stated that with few exceptions, there is generally no natural, inherent relationship between the signs (sounds or letters) human beings produce and their meaning (p. 5). One of the few exceptions, which Fasold and Connor-Linton indicated, is traditionally called onomatopoeia. Lyons (1981) defined onomatopoeia as the non-arbitrary connection between the form and its meaning. As an example of onomatopoeic words in English, Lyons (1981) stated, "cuckoo," "crash," and "peewit" (p. 19). In addition to onomatopoeia, there is the term "iconicity" which marks the sporadic instances of the non-arbitrary nature of language. Examples of the iconicity in English are the words "small," "**tall**," and "**fat,**" as stated by Dostert (2009, p. 2).

Language is symbolic. Salim (2007) defined a symbol as "a concrete event, object or mark that stands for something relatively abstract". For instance, a cross is a symbol that stands for the "sacrifice" of Jesus Christ. It is also a symbol of a Christian (Salim, 2007, p. 4). In analogy with such example, it can be said that a flag is a symbol of a given state. Another example would be that of a capital of a state. Put differently, in a news report, a poem, a novel, a short story and well-nigh all literary and non-literary genres, a city name, such as a capital of a state, is commonly used to represent the whole state. The examples, the one provided by Salim and the others invited by this researcher, reveal that Christ and Christian were not literally identified with their physical illumination and neither was the state by its people and geographical boundary. In this sense, the relationship between the symbolic nature and its metaphoric one becomes clear.

Language is primarily vocal. Language is a system that can be expressed through different ways. For instance, it is not only expressed by the marks on a paper or a computer screen that are called writing, by hand signals and gestures as in sign language, but also by sounds that are vocalized in speech. However, if language is expressed through the different aforementioned ways, why do linguists, most of the time, list only one way, the vocal one, as a characteristic of language and neglect the other ones? For clarity, the thread of this question should be untangled into two main parts. Why do linguists frequently hold speech as a specific marker of all language and let go of writing? Why do linguists all the time perceive speech as a characteristic of all languages and drop gestures?

To start with the question, why do linguists frequently hold speech as a specific marker of all languages and drop writing? A prompt answer would be that every language is vocal, but not every language is written. That is, there are many languages that continue to exist, even today, in the spoken form only. They do not have a written form. An example of the many unwritten languages in the world is Mpongmpong language which is spoken by Mpongmpong people in Cameroon (Thormoset, 2010, p. 3). Other answers would be the fact that a child learns to speak before learning to write. Also, some people speak languages even though they do not know how to write them. In this regard, one can claim that every writer is a speaker, but not every speaker is a writer. It is indeed, wrote Algeo (2010), for "human beings have been writing (as far as we can tell from the surviving evidence) for at least 5000 years; but they have been talking for much longer, doubtless ever since they were fully human" (p. 6). Algeo (2010) further added when writing developed, it was derived from and represented speech, albeit imperfectly (p. 6).

To answer the second question, why do linguists all the time perceive speech as a characteristic of all languages and drop gestures?, one may assert that the reason behind linguists behavior is the fact that gestures are not human specific. That is to say gestures are the means through which animals communicate with each other as mentioned in the opening paragraphs above. Even though human beings with hearing difficulties use gestures to communicate their messages, in most communication contexts, human beings language is primarily vocal rather than gestural. Departing from such fact and as the general rule goes li akthari houkmou al-koulou (the majority rules) [*translation is mine*], it is undoubtedly true that speech is primary and gestures secondary to language.

As far as language as a means of communication is concerned, little evidence from linguists needed to be brought to the discussion, for language guides and controls people's entire activity is a fact. On a daily basis, from the moment people wake up in the morning till they fall asleep, they give and take orders, make and give request, offer and receive help, *think*, commiserate, chat with friends, deliberate, negotiate, gossip, seek advice…etc. The different activities are expressed, as mentioned above, through different ways, speech, writing, and/or gesture. Nonetheless, one activity that is listed here, namely "thought," was not discussed above. This leads us to elaborate on it. The relationship of language to thought is disputable. Great deals of speculations have been generated about the issue. Algeo (2010) summarized the speculations

and came up with a view that scored on the strong relationship between the two constructs as the following extract shows:

> At one extreme are those who believe that language merely clothes thought and that thought is quite independent of the language we use to express it. At the other extreme are those who believe that thought is merely suppressed language and that, when we are thinking, we are just talking under our breath. The truth is probably somewhere between those two extremes. Some, though not all, of the mental activities we identify as "thought" are linguistic in nature. It is certainly true that until we put our ideas into words they are likely to remain vague, inchoate, and uncertain. We may sometimes feel like the girl who, on being told to express her thoughts clearly, replied, 'How can I know what I think until I hear what I say.' (p. 15)

It is clear that language controls and shapes human activities even those that are mental as in the case of thinking. That is to say the human's dependence on language well-nigh resembles theirs on breathing, for every activity they do, including thinking, they do it through language.

Language is productive. Humans are continually creating new expressions and novel utterances by combining the 'building bricks' of language in endless ways, whether these are sounds, words or sentences to describe new objects and situations. Such property is described as productivity (or 'creativity' or 'open-endedness'). The characteristic is related to the fact that "the potential number of utterances in any human language is infinite" (Yule, 2006, p. 10). The communication systems of other creatures do not appear to have this type of flexibility. That is, most animal communication systems appear to be more limiting than enabling. Some typical examples are brought by Yule (1996) who stated that "Cicadas have four signals to choose from and vervet monkeys have thirty-six vocal calls. Nor does it seem possible for creatures to produce new signals to communicate novel experiences or events" (p. 23). Yule (2006) elsewhere illustrated that "the worker bee, normally able to communicate the location of a nectar source to other bees, will fail to do so if the location is really "new"" (pp. 10-11).

The importance of productivity and its status as a marker of language was stressed in the recent linguistic literature particularly by Chomsky when he stated:

> The most striking aspect of linguistic competence is what we may call the ,creativity' of language, that is, the speaker's ability to produce new sentences, sentences that are immediately understood by other speakers although they bear

no physical resemblance to sentences which are familiar. The fundamental importance of this creative aspect of normal language use has been recognized since the seventeenth century at least; and it was the core of Humboldtian general linguistics. (Chomsky, 1974, p. 74)

Elsewhere, Chomsky wrote:

The normal use of language is innovative in the sense that much of what we say in the course of normal language use is entirely new, not a repetition of anything that we have heard before, and not even similar in pattern-in any useful sense of the terms "similar" and "pattern"-to sentences or discourse that we have heard in the past. (Chomsky, 2006, p. 10)

The above passages show that the recognition of productivity as characteristic of language, by linguists, was not new, but rather it goes back to the seventeenth century. In the citations, Chomsky also stresses the innovation of language in the sense that it allows its users or speakers to continuously create new utterances, combining the 'building bricks' of language in endless ways. Chomsky asserts that the productivity of language is manifested in its grammatical structure through the extreme complexity and heterogeneity of the rules that guarantee and constitute it. In other words, Chomsky unveils the novelty of the rule-changing creativity. However, almost all linguists insisted that the novelty of utterances which language enables its users to produce is rule-governed (Akmajian, Demer, Farmer & Harnish, 2001, p. 7). Clearly, there are rules which control and guide the structure and function of language. Compactly, a conclusion about the productivity of language can be put as the following: language is an infinite rule-governed creativity.

In addition, displacement is an important characteristic of Language. The characteristic of displacement means that human beings can abstract, lie, and talk about talk itself in imaginary, distant, past, present, future, conjectural, and/or counterfactual statements (Algeo, 2010, p. 16). Language leaves the scope of time open to human beings in expressing their everyday life activities. Animals' communication systems, however, enable them only to express the messages which are quite connected with their immediate environment. Proper example runs in the following passage:

When your pet cat comes home and stands at your feet calling *meow*, you are likely to understand this message as relating to that immediate time and place. If

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you ask your cat where it has been and what it was up to, you'll probably get the same *meow* response. Animal communication seems to be designed exclusively for this moment, here and now. It cannot effectively be used to relate events that are far removed in time and place. When your dog says *GRRR*, it means *GRRR*, right now, because dogs don't seem to be capable of communicating *GRRR*, last night, over in the park. In contrast, human language users are normally capable of producing messages equivalent to *GRRR*, last night, over in the park, and then going on to say In fact, I'll be going back tomorrow for some more. (Yule, 2010, p. 12)

It seems that the an infinite stock of utterances human beings produce are not limited by time or place unlike the finite stock of communication systems of animals which is time and place bounded.

Furthermore, language is non-instinctive and conventional. Every language is the result of evolution and agreement between its speakers on words and their assigned meanings (Tamasi & Antieau, 2015, p. 3). Every language, then, is a convention in a community. The convention is culturally transmitted from one generation to the next (Saraswati, 2004, p. 25). Yet, it is not genetically transmitted. For instance, Silver and Lwin (2014) asserted that language must be acquired by human beings (p. 7). Indeed, people inherit their physical features such as their eyes and hair colors from their parents, but they do not inherit their language. Noting on this matter, Yule (2010) mentioned the following example: a child born to Korean parents in Korea, "but adopted and brought up from birth by English speakers in the United States, will have physical characteristics inherited from his or her natural parents, but will inevitably speak English. A kitten, given comparable early experiences, will produce meow regardless" (2010, p. 14). Clearly, while animals inherit their system of communication by heredity, humans do not.

The final characteristic of language is its reflexivity. The ability of using language to talk about language is called reflexivity, wrote Dörries (2002, p. 64). All creatures communicate in a way or another with their species, and some communicate across their species divide, yet non-human species do not reflect on the way they make their communicative messages or review "how they work (or not). That is, one barking dog is probably not offering advice to another barking dog along the lines of 'Hey, you should lower your bark to make it sound more menacing.' They're not barking about barking." In contrast, "humans are clearly able to reflect on language and its uses (e.g. 'I wish he wouldn't use so many technical terms')" (Yule, 2010, p.

11). Such quotation gives the premise that human beings can use language to talk about language itself whereas animals could not as the above example of the barking dog shows. Thus, the property of reflexivity is one of the distinguishing features of language. Indeed, "without this general ability, we wouldn't be able to reflect on or identify any of the other distinct properties of human language," added Yule (2010, p. 11).

The eleven characteristics, discussed above, show the novelty of the characteristics of language. Such novelty, as noted earlier, is what made the identification of language a difficult task in the sense that it makes it impossible for anyone to bring out a definition which captures all of them. Moreover, in the course of mapping out these different characteristics, we came up with several remarks. To start with, the eleven characteristics are all interconnected in various ways. In addition, after scrutinizing many linguistic works written by specialized linguists, it was clear that the characteristics are not only present in all languages, but also their presence is marked by a very high degree. However, few of them, for example, means of communication, are found in other systems of communication is unquestionable. Nonetheless, what is also unquestionable is that the few characteristics that are present in other systems of communication are not to be found with the same degree of interconnectedness as those of language.

1.1.2 Demolishing myths about language

The centrality of language to human beings makes it so universally important that people have contrived with their own notions about how it all works. A lot of what people think about language is true, but sometimes people get it wrong. In the following pages, some common misconceptions about language will be discussed. Only myths that are related to the topic at hand, language policy and identity, will be discussed. However, before so doing, the term "myth" needs explanation. Like any other concept, the concept "myth," to use Schrempp and Hansen's words, "continues to resist any definition that is uniform, universally valid" (2002, p. 240). Even though some of the different definitions of the term "myth" are cited, the one that serves the topic at hand is emphasized.

The first definition of the term "myth" was given in *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*, as a "traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a

people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon" (2006, p. 1320). The definition uses the term "story" to refer to the term "myth." However, the definition does mention a particular type of story through the use of the modifier "tradition." The definition also points out the purpose of myth which was described as a solution provider to problematic issues that concern people, their life, or natural phenomenon. Moreover, Watts defined myth as a "tale, a fable, a falsehood, or an idea that is out of date, something untrue." He further ran an older strict use of the term means "not something untrue, but rather an image in terms of which people make sense of life and the world" (1996, p. 73). In the definitions, Watts points out that the definition of myth has gone through changes overtime. The changes are represented in the modification of the tale from possibly true to definitely untrue.

In lying out the different myths about language and based on the above discussed definitions, one may fathom that a myth is a story that explains a phenomenon based on guest, observation, or experience rather than scientific experiment. In this sense, it is a theoretically based concept that can be to be scientifically either proved or unproved. In response to the above last question, then, language myths are misconceived sets of beliefs, hypotheses, or assumptions about language that people use to pertain to in their views of language. As such, the following constructed myths about language are deconstructed.

To begin with, some languages are more primitive than others. In his reinforcement of this myth, Mackey wrote "only before God and linguist are all languages equal" (1978, p. 7). However, the following passage seems to state the opposite, for

> [a]ll human languages have a system of symbols —spoken languages use sounds, signed languages use gestures — words, and sentences that can communicate the full range of concrete and abstract ideas.… linguists believe that all human languages are equally expressive — this is called *linguistic egalitarianism*. In particular, there seems to be no correlation between linguistic complexity and the technological level of a society. Every language can create new words to describe new situations and objects, and every language changes over time. Even relatively new languages, such as the *creoles* that emerge when languages come in contact, are fully expressive. (Burton, Déchaine & Vatikiotis-Bateson, 2012, p. 325)

Even though there are linguists who more or less agree with Mackey's above stated statement, the majority of them score on the linguistic egalitarianism which is expressed in the above

passage. Extending the mainstream's argument, Grady, Archibald, Aronoff, and Rees-Miller (2005) asserted that the reality is that no one language is more primitive than others, for languages have several functions, and all languages perform such functions. They are used as a system of communication, a medium for thought, a vehicle for literary expression, a social institution, a matter for political controversy, a catalyst for state-building. As such, "all human beings normally speak at least one language" (Grady, Archibald, Aronoff, & Rees-Miller, 2005, p. 1). Such quotation asserts that since all languages have certain functions and all of them allow their speakers to perform them, then they must be equal.

Some linguists, however, pointed out to the primitiveness of some languages based on their functionality in scientific fields. In other words, some languages were classified as primitive because they cannot structurally and lexically function in technical areas. Such claim cannot hold. For instance, even though "German is able to construct clearly defined single words for technical ideas," French and Italian cannot "do this so readily and instead uses phrases as a way of combining ideas" (Harlow, 1998, pp. 11-12). Furthermore, on the lexical level, there is no single language that copes with the scientific revolution based only on the invention of new terms. In fact, all languages incorporate words that are taken from other languages through a process that is called borrowing. For example, Harlow (1998) stated: "English can discuss nuclear physics because, over the centuries, as scientific thought has developed, it has acquired the vocabulary to deal with the new developments; it has not always been there as an inherent feature of English." By the same token, "all languages are capable of the same types of expansion of vocabulary to deal with whatever new areas of life their speakers need to talk about" (pp. 13-14). Harlow's argument unseats the mythical primitiveness of some languages. No language inherited completeness as a feature. Every language is incomplete, and the strategies through which languages cope with today's needs are available to all of them from borrowing to loaning and the like. As such, every language can fulfill the needs of its speakers. Thus, all languages are equal.

Standardized languages are better than dialects is another myth about language. This is a myth that is proclaimed by many people as well as some linguists as the following extract shows:

The vulgar and the refined, the particular and the general, the corrupt and the pure, the barbaric and the civilized, the primitive and the arbitrary, were socially pervasive terms that divide sensibility and culture according to linguistic categories. The baser forms of language were said to reveal the inability of the speaker to transcend the concerns of the present, an interest in material objects, and the dominance of the passions. Those who spoke the refined language were allegedly rational, moral, civilized, and capable of abstract thinking. (Smith, 1984, p. 3)

Such passage along with Mackey's above stated statement is stigmatized, and it tends to be viewed as violating the real. The real is unearthed through defining the terms "standard variety" and "dialect." On the one hand "a dialect is … to be understood as a language system that is found within local, regional, or otherwise defined territorial boundries [*sic*]- a language system which is unique to a certain geographical area within a national state." On the other hand, "a 'standard variety'… is a variety that serves as a norm or ideal standard for larger speech community, usually a national state, and which is often codified" (Auer & Schmidt, 2010, p. 23). It seems that the geographical affiliation marks the difference between the standard variety and the dialect. The difference, nevertheless, is far from implying superiority or inferiority. Another point that was mentioned in the above citation is that standard variety is always codified, written. However, does this characteristic favor a language over another in terms of value judgment? The answer is no. Most of the 6,000 or so languages spoken on the planet are not codified. That is to say spoken language is the primary form of communication. "Writing itself was invented relatively recently in the history of human kind" (Burton, Déchaine & Vatikiotis-Bateson, 2012, pp. 327-328). Such citation entails that a script is not an inherent part of a language, but rather was developed later by some people. Accordingly, speaking about the superiority and inferiority of languages, based on their codification, is shaky and cannot hold.

It is worth noting that the above mentioned geographical affiliation, which distinguishes dialect from standard variety, mirrors other distinctions such as the social and cultural ones. According to Auer and Schmidt (2010) and Halebsky (1976) respectively, "[t]he very essence of the relation that conventionally exists between dialect and standard is that the latter- compared to other varieties- is the most prestigious variety at the national level, and it is the language that is most likely to be associated with social elites" (Auer & Schmidt 2010, p. 23) and "the occupants of positions in the political and other institutional areas of society" (Halebsky, 1976, p. 66). Just

like the above geographical distinction, the social and cultural distinctions between the two varieties of language do not imply the superiority and inferiority labels. In fact, the unfolding of the thirds of the above definitions of the terms "dialect" and "standard variety" shows that the real difference between the two varieties resides in the minds and constructed through the actions of the elites. For instance, UNESCO spelled out: "Languages… [are] equal before policy-makers, in the name of the cardinal principle of democracy, of the equal dignity of cultures, of human rights, of non-discrimination and of equal opportunity" (August 27-28, 2008, p. 46). Elsewhere, UNESCO concluded "in the galaxy of languages, every word is a star" (August 27-28, 2008, p. cover page). Concisely, the views which admix language varieties with superior and inferior labels are unjust.

Furthermore, linguistic diversity provides a fertile ground of mythmaking. Many people, including some linguists, see that linguistic multiplicity forms an obstacle to national unity within states. What is more, it was claimed that linguistic diversity hindered socio-cultural, economic and political development. Pool (1972) summed up the myths related to the linguistic diversity as follows:

> Linguistic diversity… aggravates political sectionalism; hinders inter-group co-operation, national unity, and regional multinational co-operation; impedes political enculturation, political support for the authorities and the regime, and political participation; and holds down governmental effectiveness and political stability. Similarly it is said that language diversity slows economic development, by, for example, breaking occupational mobility, reducing the number of people available for mobilisation into the modern sector of the economy decreasing efficiency, and preventing the diffusion of innovative techniques. (p. 214)

The negative evaluated myths about language diversity, as properly argued Dua (1990), have been perpetuated by the myth of monolingualism (p. 84). The myths are unseated by the fact that multilingualism is the norm and monolinguallism is the exception. In African countries, for example, "an average of more than 30% of the population speaks at least three languages. Elsewhere, the multiplicity is even greater and becomes a real specter. The number of recognized languages in Africa varies from 1,200 to 2,500" (UNESCO, August 27-28, 2008, p. 47).

Since linguistic heterogeneity or multilingualism is the norm, national development, therefore, has to take place largely in the context of the multilingual settings. For instance,

Fishman confessed that he could not establish any correlation between linguistic diversity and low economic development. "The many 'deviant' countries (rich but heterogeneous; poor but homogeneous) make this relationship a tenuous one" (Fishman, cited in the International Development Research Centre, 1997, p. 17). Besides, if the healthiness of communities and states is related positively with their monolingual homogeneity, civil wars would never have taken place in linguistically homogeneous states, such as Somalia and Rwanda, one of the rare countries with a tendency towards monolingualism, argued UNESCO (August 27-28, 2008, p. 47).

Bilingual students have a hard time at school. Some parents think that their children would perform better at school if they have been speaking one instead of two or three languages. However, researchers have proved that students who speak more than one language do not do less than those who are monolingual. In fact, speaking two or more languages benefits the students. For instance, "it increases neural pathways and improves memory and attention… this is a life-long advantage. A bilingual (or multilingual) brain ages more gracefully… it resists the inevitable decline in memory and other cognitive functions related to problem solving, verbal reasoning, and attention" (Burton, Déchaine & Vatikiotis-Bateson, 2012, p. 324). It is clear that speaking more than one language benefits the students' brain. It helps them perform well throughout their learning journey as well as their social life.

Besides, some research studies claimed that bi- and multilingual students have smaller portion of vocabularies in each language and are slower to process words than monolingual students. Nevertheless, the reality is quite the opposite. Burton, Déchaine and Vatikiotis-Bateson (2012) summed up the finding of researcher studies that refute such claim in the following passage:

> [B]ilinguals perform differently on these tasks according to how balanced their bilingualism is. If they use both languages across a wide range of social contexts, they'll learn the vocabulary items for those contexts. But if they use one language at home and another language at school, then, over time, the vocabulary items that they learn in each language will reflect these differences in social context. And as for longer processing time, this is the case only for tasks that require a bilingual to monitor both languages at the same time. In such bilingual contexts, monolinguals don't pay attention to the other language (because for them, it's just noise), while

> a bilingual pays attention to both languages. So bilinguals take longer to process the information because they're processing more information. (p. 324)

The findings present the premise that bi- and multilingual students have more cognitive ability than the monolingual ones.

Finally, women talk more than men do is a folk-linguistic idea that crosses freely in most societies. As such and as vehicles of society folk-ideas, many proverbs, sayings and stories capture and read this folk-linguistic idea as follows:

a. Women's tongues are like lambs' tails - they are never still. (English)

b. The North Sea will sooner be found wanting in water than a woman at a loss for words. (Jutlandic)

c. Many women, many words; many geese, many turds. (English)

In addition, some adages and sayings advocate that while women talk, men are silent patient listeners.

a. When both husband and wife wear pants it is not difficult to tell them apart - he is the one who is listening. (American)

b. Nothing is so unnatural as a talkative man or a quiet woman. Scottish

In her book, *Gender and Discourse*, Tannen (1994) told the following story:

> A joke has it that a woman sues her husband for divorce. When the judge asked her why she wants to be divorced, she explained that her husband has not talked to her in two years. The judge then asked the husband, 'why haven't you spoken to your wife in two years?' He replies, 'I did not want to interrupt her'. (pp. 54-55)

Nevertheless, the vast majority of research studies dispel the above stated claims. When men and women converse, males talk more than their female counterparts do. Two Canadian Researchers, James and Drakich (1993), reviewed sixty-three studies that address the question of gender differences in the amount of talk. The researchers found out that among the sixty- three studies only two studies concluded that women talk more than men (p. 284). Similarly, the result of a study carried out by Unger (2001) concluded that men are more likely than women to

engage in classroom and boardrooms activities (p. 248). In addition, other studies debunk that the gender difference of the amount of talk correlate with the context. While men talk more in public spaces, women talk more in private ones (Gamble, T. & Gamble, M., 2014, p. 75). The different quotations unseat the myth that says women talk more than men. In fact, some of them show quite the opposite. Men tend to talk more than women. Others refute the myth by saying that the myth screams a false generalization since their findings showed that the amount of talk produced by men and women correlates with the context.

1.1.3 Defining language policy

What is language policy? Such question is commonly raised in most literature, but concrete definitions are less common than discussion of types, goals and shapers of language policy. To fill that gap, we address the murky issue of definition in a separate entity in a separate heading. In so doing, three definitions, which might be of help in reaching appropriate synthesis of the phrase "language policy," are discussed. The first definition is proffered by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) who articulated that "the exercise of language planning leads to, or is directed by, the promulgation of a language policy by government... A language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the societies, group or system" (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. xi). In this definition, Kaplan and Baldauf point out that language policy is an amalgamation of abstract and concrete items that include ideas, rules and practices. The goal of this amalgamation is to arrive at an elevation of a language or some languages on behalf of others at both social and administrational levels. It is worth noting that Kaplan and Baldauf introduce language policy as an activity or activities that are enacted by an authoritative body, government for example. Moreover, Kaplan and Baldauf introduce the phrase "language planning" as an activity that leads to and comes as an outcome of language policy. No further explanation to disambiguate this interconnection between the two phrases was introduced in the above cited definition. A clear disambiguation is laid out later.

A further definition to the phrase "language policy" was suggested by McCarty.

I have characterized language policy as a complex sociocultural process [and as] modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power. The 'policy' in these processes resides in their language-regulating power;

that is, the ways in which they express normative claims about legitimate and illegitimate language forms and uses, thereby governing language statuses and uses. (McCarty, 2011, p. 8)

Unlike Kaplan and Baldauf, McCarty's definition extends the scope of language policy. She recognizes language policy not only as an authoritative but also as a multilayered intervention. In other words, she reveals that language policy is enacted as assemblages of the various institutions in a state from social, cultural to those which are governmental. The different angles of language policy, which are illustrated above, clarify how fuzzy the phrase "language policy" is. Putting the different threads of the above stated definitions together, one can remark that language policy is a set of thoughts, beliefs and attitudes that are generated about different languages, enacted consciously and unconsciously by governmental and non-governmental institutions through different rules and regulations in order to put some languages in hierarchical orders.

In addition, to clear up the phrase "language policy," it is worth clearing up an issue which crops up a lot with it. The issue is that the phrases "language policy and "language planning" are frequently used, both in the technical and popular literature, either interchangeably or in tandem. Scoring on the latter use of the phrases, one can argue that the phrases are different ones as the following passage reveals:

"Language planning" is an activity, most visibly undertaken by government, intended to promote systematic linguistic change in some community of speakers. The reasons for such change lie in a reticulated pattern of structures developed by government and intended to maintain civil order and communication, and to move the entire society in some direction deemed 'good' or 'useful' by the government. The exercise of language planning leads to, or is directed by, the promulgation of a language policy by government. (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. xi)

The citation shows that the two phrases, "language policy" and "language planning," represent two different aspects in the process of language change. In Orman's words, language planning is an "action-orientated dimension of language policy" (2008, p. 40). It is shown above also that language planning and language policy are primarily enacted by body of governmental institutions, but such argument is inappropriate. Just as language policy, as the aforementioned definitions revealed particularly that of McCarty, is generated by multilayered actors, society and government, language planning is "planned by organizations established for such purposes or

given a mandate to fulfill such purposes" (Rubin, 1977, p. 282). Rubin's remark exhibits also that language planning is included in language policy.

Furthermore, Poon (2000) distinguished between the two closely related phrases. "A macrosociological activity...at a governmental and national level" *only* [*italics in the source*] whereas language policy can be "either a macro- or microsociological activity...at a governmental and national level or at an institutional level" (pp. 116-117). Clearly, whereas language planning is always a government-led activity, language policy might be carried out by individuals, organizations, and/or government. Another distinction between the two phrases runs in Eastman's lines: "The absence of conspicuous, concrete language planning measures within a speech community does not, necessarily, imply the absence of a language policy. One may have language policy without language planning but no society is without a language policy" (Eastman, 1983, p. 6). As stated earlier, the dependence of language planning on language policy is clear.

1.1.4 Theories of language policy

As an outset, it is required to define the components of the heading. Having defined the phrase "language policy," the term "theory" remains begging. According to Grimes (2014), the term "theory" traces its roots to the Greek philosophers of the classical era, especially Plato and Aristotle. It comes from the Greek word "*theoria*," which means "to look at." In its ancient Greek sense, *theoria* is not a passive gaze. It is an act of deep receptivity. *Theoria* is what happens when spectatorship is transformed into visual and emotional participation" (Grimes, 2014, p. 166). In contemporary arts and humanities, the term "theory," however, has at least two meanings. "In one usage, it labels almost any collection of terms or concepts used to frame discrete bits of information. In a second usage ...the term "theory" refers to concepts capable of orienting a transformation or intervention" (Grimes, 2014, p. 166). From the different definitions of the term theory, it can be said that the term "theory" refers to a set of assumptions that are intended to explain or resolve an issue related to a particular phenomenon. As such, a rehearsal of theories of, or about, language policy is laid out in the upcoming pages.

The emergence of language policy as an academic discipline is relatively new, with the first use of the phrase "language planning" attributed to Haugen's (1959, p. 8) description of the development of a new standard national language in Norway after its independence from Denmark in 1814 (Karam, 1974, p. 105; Fettes, 1997, p. 13). Ever since, the phrase and the discipline were subjected to many changes due to the enormous interest they were given. The changes or evolutions can be summarized in two stages. However, such changes do not imply a lack of interaction. Rather, they complement each other. The early stage of language policy, which lasted from the late 1950s to the late 1980s, was revolutionized by many works among which are the works of Haugen (1959); Fishman (1968a, 1972, 1974); Kloss (1969); and Cooper (1989). The scholars' works were intended to answer the socio-political needs of the time. That is, decolonization and formation of new statehoods across Africa and Asia, after the Second World War, led many scholars to seek solutions to the issue of selecting and developing national language in multilingual settings. Fishman (1968b) spelled out the reason quite explicitly in the following lines:

> Precisely because the developing nations are at an earlier stage in development … the problems and processes of nationhood are more apparent in such nations and their transformations more discernible to the researcher. As a result the developing nations ('new nations') have come to be of great interest to those sociolinguists who are interested in the transformations of group identity in general as well as to those interested in societal (governmental and other) impact on language-related behavior and on language itself. (p. 6)

Given the perceived needs of these "new states," early works focused on typologies and approaches to language planning. For example, Haugen (1959) developed a language planning model in which he addressed the codification of language. For him, language planning is "the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community" (p. 8). The model was later known as corpus planning which is concerned with the manipulation of the form of language. Extending Haugen's model, some scholars called for a new one that would take into consideration the use of the codified language in the society. In this regard, Kloss (1969) introduced a distinction between corpus planning and status planning. The former is concerned with language itself, grammar, spelling, vocabulary…etc, and the latter is concerned with language selection (p. 81).

After Kloss's introduction to status planning, scholars started to develop theoretical frameworks of language planning. One influential model was the one developed by Haugen.

a. Selection of a norm (i.e. selecting a language variety for aparticular context)

b. Codification – development of an explicit, usually written, form

c. Implementation – attempt to spread the language form

d. Elaboration – continued updating of the language variety to "meet the needs of the modern world". (Haugen, 1983, p. 273)

For Haugen, selection and implementation are status planning, and codification and elaboration are corpus planning (1983, p. 275). To the status-corpus planning, Cooper introduced another phrase, "acquisition planning" to language planning which he identified as "increasing the numbers of users- speakers, writers, listeners, or readers of a language through promoting its learning by giving people the opportunity and the incentive to learn it" (1989, p. 33).

While some scholarly works, in the first phase, concentrated on devising models of language planning, other works focused on social, economic, and political effects of language contact. That is, the issue of selecting a national level and its ramification was brought to the fore. In this regard, while some scholars said that ideology should be the engine that drives language planners, others vocalized the necessity of divorce between ideology and the selection. For instance, Tauli (1974) insisted that languages can be categorized objectively according to their usefulness. For him, ethnic languages are less developed than those of the colonizer (p. 51). That is, he developed a hierarchical scale in which he listed the indigenous languages as primitive and the colonizer's as the more developed. Haugen (1983), nevertheless, opposed such division arguing that any selection must remain very objective even though "a stand on difficult value judgment" is unavoidable (p. 276).

A reflection of the debate bred taxonomy of bi/multilingualism and diglossia. However, the supposed neutrality of diglossia and multilingualism which were devised as means of national development and stability were called into question since historical inequalities and conflicts did not diminish. The selection of indigenous people's languages that could function in particular domains beside the colonizers' languages perpetuated socioeconomic asymmetries

between the societies of one nation rather than omitting them (Ricento, 2000, p. 16). Such orientation led to the persistence of the colonizers' languages because they were codified and adequate for education and other governmental institutions, observed Ricento (2006, p. 12). Omitting nuance, for the sake of rough generalization, one can observe that most of the early scholars saw language diversity as an obstacle to state-building. Extending this observation, Ferguson (2006) asserted that the early people who were involved in language policy, in the spirit of earlier European nationalists, used to consider language diversity as primarily a problem, and thus a hindrance to state-building. Therefore, the thrust of policy was to identify and select a language or few languages for official uses (p. 10). Scholars reduced sociolinguistic complexity to two languages or handy proportions of languages (Blommaert, 1996, p. 212).

The second stage, final stage, which started from the end of the second phase up to the present time, witnessed a move to broaden the scope of language policy. The scholars of this stage, who are postmodernists and human right activists, sought to provide alternative framework to language policy that the scholars of the first stage, who represented different schools, structuralism, pragmatism, post-structuralism, modernism and critical linguistics, failed to present. The classification goes in line with that of Ricento (2000) who divided the stages of language policy intellectually into three stages. The scholars shifted from the processes of language standardization, codification and selection limitation to the standards which were associated with the state-building, though still important, to "language revitalization, minority rights, globalization, and the spread of English, the preservation of linguistic diversity, and bilingual education" (Ferguson, 2006, p. 10). Indeed, typical example would be the works of Ferguson (2006) and Kaplan and Baldauf (1997).

The shift, therefore, turned the discipline's attention to be no longer so geographically biased toward the post-colonial states of Africa and Asia. With migration, globalization, and the rise of regional nationalism, the issue of language policies crossed freely to the old established nation-states (Ferguson, 2006, p. 9). The overall trend has been a tendency toward geopolitical diversification since there is almost no country outside language policy consideration. Ricento, stated: "of the estimated 6,000 languages spoken today, 95% of the world's population speak 100 languages, with 5% speaking the remaining thousands of languages" (2000, p. 17). In Alaska and the Soviet North, about 45 of the 50 indigenous languages (90%) are waning. Similarly, in

Australia, about 90% of the aboriginal languages still spoken are moribund (Krauss, 1992, p. 5). In the United States, Krauss (1998) asserted that only 20 (13%) of the 155 extant Native North American languages are spoken by all generations (p. 11). Such statics depict a phenomenon which is described by sociolinguists as language loss and which, according to Dreyer (2009), refers to the suppression or the abandonment of a language or mother tongue (p. 146).

The primary reason behind the language loss is the policies adopted by the early stage politicians and academic scholars. For postmodernists, their policies were reductionist. Critical scholar, Phillipson (1997), viewed thE reductionist approach as a mirror of what he described as language imperialism, unequal official use of languages (p. 239). In order to remedy the situation, many scholars called for the maintenance and the promotion of language diversity. The calls bred many policies which adopt language diversity. Two illustrative examples are:

> the 1996 post-apartheid South African constitution, which, in sharp contrast to the practice of most African states attaining independence in the early 1960s, extends official status to eleven languages and calls on the state to promote the status of previously marginalised languages, stated . Another, in a different context, is the qualified welcome given to the 1992 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which calls on signatory states to protect and promote these languages. (Ferguson, 2006, p. 10)

The Above two examples are a celebration of language diversity which is the current supported trend by almost all academic scholars and some decision makers.

1.1.5 Types of language policy

Even though Scholars of language policy have offered many views and interpretation of issues related to language policy, almost all of them seem to overlook an offer of a well organized framework of the typology of language policy. Instead, most of them discussed the types of language planning, status-corpus and acquisition planning, which, as mentioned above, are only the practice of language policy. Among the few scholars, who categorized language policy, was Johnson (2013) whose integrative framework is presented in this dissertation. Johnson (2013) articulated that there are four schemes based on which language policy can be classified. These schemes are mapped based on the following identifiers or criteria: Genesis, means and goals, documentation, and law and practice. The following table summarizes them.

Genesis	Top-down	Bottom-up
	Macro-level policy developed by some governing or authoritative body or person	Micro-level or grassroots generated policy for and by the community that it impacts
Means and goals	Overt	Covert
	Overtly expressed in written or spoken policy texts	Intentionally concealed at the macro-level (collusive) or at the micro-level (subversive)
Documentation	Explicit	Implicit
	Officially documented in written or spoken policy texts	Occurring without or in spite of official policy texts
In law and in practice	De jure	De facto
	Policy "in law"; officially documented in writing	Policy "in practice"; refers to both locally produced *policies* that arise without or in spite of de jure policies and local language *practices* that differ from de jure policies; de facto practices can reflect (or not) de facto policies

Table: Types of language policy (Johnson, 2013, p. 10)

As shown above, there are four typologies of language policy. The first typology, based on the genesis, classified language policy into two main categories, top-down and bottom-up. The former is carried out by people with power and authority (most of them are part of the body of the government) who make the decisions related to language in the state. The decisions are taken with minimal consultation with grassroots language learners and users, observed Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p. 209). The latter, however, is derived by language learners and users. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that language policies are developed across multiple "levels" of policy creation and even a language policy typically considered bottom-up and become top-down. For instance, "a policy developed in a school district *for* that school district, can still be

top-down for somebody (like, teachers or students)" (Johnson, 2013, p. 10). Accordingly, the terms "top-down" and "bottom-up" are relative since they depend on "who is doing the creating and who is doing the interpreting and appropriating" (Johnson, 2013, p. 10).

The second typology of language policy is defined by means and goals into two main types, overt and covert policies. To start with, overt policy, as its name suggests, is unhidden and overtly vocalizes spoken and written texts. Covert policy, however, intentionally makes no mention of any language in spoken and/or written texts. "The notion of "covert" carries with it strong connotations of something that is intentionally concealed and, therefore, a covert policy is one which is intentionally hidden or veiled…, not openly shown, for either collusive or subversive reasons" (Johnson, 2013, p. 11). The slight difference between the overt/covert distinction from the following explicit/implicit dichotomy and the distinguishing characteristic proposed by Johnson is intent (Johnson, 2013, p. 11). The above table provided a typology based on documentation in which language policy is either explicit or implicit. Explicit/implicit dichotomy points out to the official status of language whether it is officially stated or not and how a policy is documented. A typical example of this policy would be that of the status of English in the United States of America, for even though there is no official declaration of English as the official language, but unofficially, it certainly is (Johnson, 2013, p. 11).

The de jure and de facto labels are used slightly differently. Johnson (2013) asserted that respectively, "the terms are typically used to connote policies that are based on laws (de jure) versus what actually happens in reality or in practice (de facto)" (2013, p. 11). Johnson (2013) brought the situation of language policy in Morocco as a typical example of de jure and de facto policies. He argued that while the official languages are Arabic and Tamazight, in practice (in education) many Moroccans use French (p. 11). In this sense, it seems that the notion of de jure lines up with the notion of overt and explicit policies since all of them refer to the "official-ness" of language policy; nevertheless, Johnson paid attention to this overlap and in disambiguating it he asserted:

> [A]n activity that is de facto is not necessarily covert or implicit or even a "policy" in the traditional sense – it is an activity that occurs in practice despite whatever the de jure policy states. This does appear to imply that whatever happens in practice is somewhat different than what is officially stated as a de jure

language policy. For example, even within schools and classrooms which are officially monolingual, teachers can include the multilingualism of their students as resources for classroom practice…. In this case, de facto refers to both the classroom policy as created by the teacher and the classroom practices, which are closely related but (here proposed as) distinct nonetheless; thus de facto refers to locally produced *policies* [*italics in the source*] that differ from what is explicitly stated (in law) and local *practices* [*italics in the source*] that may be in line with local de facto policies but do not reflect what is officially documented in de jure policies. (Johnson, 2013, pp. 11-12)

The distinction does not imply that policies do not overlap; in fact, it is worth noting that the above discussed typologies are elusive since they are interconnected. That is, policies overlap both within and across typologies. For instance, a policy can be both top-down and bottom-up; top-down and covert; bottom-up and explicit...etc.

1.1.6 Factors affecting language policy

Language policy is not a neutral phenomenon. In fact, the word "neutral" does not exist in the dictionaries of sciences. There is no phenomenon that can happen in vacuum. On the contrary, every phenomenon has some forces that influence and shape its nature and lead to its birth or rebirth. As such, there are many factors that influence language policy. The factors can be categorized into five main categories, political, linguistic, social-demographic, linguistic culture, and religious. Politics is a major force that influences language policy. The influence of the general policy of the former colonial powers, on the colonized countries across continents, is a typical example of the political factors' influence on language policy. In Mauritania, or, say, the North African countries, for example, even though French was not the mother tongue of the people of the geographical area, it was imposed on the countries and thus gained the status of the official language in them. Even today, French, whether explicitly expressed as in the case of Mauritania or implicitly felt as in the case of Morocco, is the official language of the countries beside Arabic and Tamazight in some of them. What is more, some countries of the ex-colonizers, like Portugal, pursued a policy of restricted assimilation and discouraged the uses of the vernacular languages. Spencer (1974) stated that the Portuguese authorities asserted that "nothing may appear in print in an African language without a concurrent translation in Portuguese. Portuguese is the only language permitted in education" (p. 170). In addition, the counter narrative to the above discussed colonial linguistic policy is an instant where politics

influences language policy. In the 1960s, when almost all the ex-colonies got their independence, some of them elevated the status of the local languages as Mauritania did to Arabic.

Linguistic factors are mainly concerned with the status and character of language. With the fact that the ex-colonized countries are located in multilingual continents, Africa and Asia, the choice of selecting a national language was based on the very characteristics of the local languages. That is, codified languages were considered the best candidates for the states' use. Given the fact that most of African languages are not codified, the colonial languages gained the race (Appel & Muysken, 2005, p. 56). In addition, the similarities between languages can influence language policy. For example, the predominance of Swahili in Tanzania was due to the fact that it is an amalgamation of well-nigh all languages that were spoken in Tanzanian's history. Therefore, it was considered easy to understand and learn by all Tanzanians, observed Appel and Muysken (2005, p. 56).

Socio-demographic factors refer to the number of languages spoken, the numbers of their speakers, and their geographical distribution. A typical case is East Africa, particularly the contrast Tanzania-Kenya. Appel and Muysken (2005) stated that Tanzania has about a hundred languages. "The fact that these ethno-linguistic units were numerically small clearly favoured the selection of Swahili as a national language... In contrast to Tanzania, Kenya has … small number of languages. They were able to compete with Swahili, and therefore English could strengthen its position" (p. 56). It is clear that the competition between languages to the position of national language is more strengthened whenever the number is big and less strengthened whenever the number is small. Pertinent example that depicts the influence of the number of the language speakers and their geographical distribution on language policy is Indonesia and Malaysia, which consist of thousands of islands. The fact that Malay became the lingua franca, a common language, was to a great extent determined by the number and distribution of its speakers. Malay is the mother tongue of people who lived in both sides of the Straits of Malacca, the most important sea rout in this sea. As such, Malay was chosen as a national language in Malaysia "and as the base for the national language Bahasa Indonesia in Indonesia, although it was culturally and quantitatively (with regard to numbers of mother-tongue speakers) not the most important language of the Malay-Polynesian group" (Appel & Muysken, 2005, p. 56).

Another factor, which has a great impact on language policy, is linguistic culture. By linguistic culture, is meant the beliefs about and attitudes towards language. As such, we line up our definition of linguistic culture with that of Schiffman who argued that it refers to "a set of behaviors, assumption, cultural forms, prejudices, folk belief systems, systems, attitudes, stereotypes, ways of thinking about language, and religio-historical circumstances associated with a particular language" (1996, p. 5). In this sense, the issue is more or less related to myths that are held about a language. Some languages were seen as primitive and others as more developed. By the same token, in contrast to monolingualism, bi and multilingualism were seen as an obstacle to political and economic stability as discussed earlier under the heading of "myths about language." Accordingly, many states adopted monolingual approach in their language policy. In the United Sates, for instance, indigenous languages and immigrant languages have limited or no legal status because of the national attitudes toward language which favor monolingualism and consider multilingualism as unhealthy. Such view is reflected in the existence of English only Movement in the United States (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, p. 30).

In addition to political, linguistic, social-demographic, linguistic culture, religious factor affects language policy. According to Ouedraogo (2000), Christianity, particularly Catholicism, has promoted the teaching of Latin and Greek in parochial schools such as seminaries (p. 36). Furthermore, Arabic is gaining more importance in new territories because of its relation to Islam since the Quran, the central religious text of Islam, is written in Arabic. Ouedraogo (2000) reported that religious pressure groups, in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, etc, are creating schools where Arabic is either used as the medium of instruction or as main the subject matter. Because the groups have great influence on a considerable proportion of the people, politicians and decision makers cannot ignore their demands. The local groups are not alone; in fact, the Arabic speaking countries and international organizations related to the Islamic world, say, the organization of Islamic conference, the Islamic Bank of Development, the Islamic education, science and cultural organization, support and call for the promotion of Arabic in the countries where Islam is the religion of the majority of the population (p. 36). As a result and because of its relation to Islam, Ouedraogo concluded that "Arabic is likely to emerge as the third language of wider communication alongside English and French" (2000, p. 36).

1.2 Identity

In his introductory note to identity, Riley (2007) stated that for over 2000 years, identity has been viewed "as a philosophical aporia, a problem so deep that we can hardly formulate the questions, let alone the answers." Some thoughts of just how knotty a problem is can be collected from the fact that "not only is the debate as intense now as it was in the times of Aristotle or Aquinas, say, but it is still essentially about the same issues and concepts" (p. 70). Riley's remark reveals that even though enormous works have been generated about identity, a single overarching framework of it is a far reaching goal. Similar observations about identity are made by Erikson (1974) who thought that identity is a phenomenon which "the more one writes about," the more it "becomes a term for something as unfathomable as it is all-pervasive" (p. 9). Nonetheless, in order to comprehend this all-pervasive notion, some of the different conceptualizations which this notion has been subjected to in the literature are mapped out in this dissertation. In so doing, its definition, theories, types and factors that affect it are explained.

1.2.1 Defining identity

The term "identity" is derived from the Latin word "*idem,*" which indicates sameness and lack of change and is, indeed, still used in this sense, though most frequently in its adjective form "identical." The Latin word "*identitas,*" nevertheless, refers to "the way in which the *substantia* of an entity remains the same despite all the changes undergone by its *accidentes*" (Van der Ven, 1994, p. 28). The both Latin words "*idem*" and "*identitas,*" the root for the English word "identity" and its synonym respectively, rest on the idea of sameness. The idea of sameness, which suggests uniqueness, people difference in relation to others, and which defines identity according to the above stated Latin terminologies, crosses freely into the minds of many scholars. Nonetheless, the sameness in relation to difference cannot be pinned down in one single definition since there are many factors, ethnicity and gender, to name but two, which lead people to define themselves in different places at different times. The following definitions run some of the different views of identity.

In *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* two definitions of identity were given. The first one described identity as "1. state of being identical; absolute sameness;

exact likeness. 2. who sb. is; what sth. is" (Hornby, Gatenby & Wakefield, 1963). In the definitions, identity is regarded as the distinction of sameness form change or unity from diversity. In addition, in the *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, identity was described as "an individual's sense of self defined by (1) a set of physical and psychological characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (2) a range of social and interpersonal affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles" (Vandenbos, 2006, p. 312). Unlike the first definition's incomplete introduction to the idea of sameness as the definition of identity, the last definition gives it more references. The idea of sameness is introduced as external features and internal characteristics that distinguish an individual or group of people from others; thus, the distinctions render a particular uniqueness.

Furthermore, Castells stated: "by identity, as it refers to social actors, I understand the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning" (2002, p. 6). The definition relates identity to culture and highlights the plurality and hierarchization of identities. Another definition that captures identity through the lenses of a range of socio-cultural, religious and biological dimensions runs in the following lines: "Identity is… the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture" (Deng, 1995, p. 1). Clearly, identity is determined by many factors. As such, there are many identities that an individual or group of people who share one or some of such factors can have.

In this sense, identity is an ongoing process that is limited by neither time nor place, but rather by different traits which distinguish an individual or a group of people from others. "Indeed, identity is objectively defined as location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world. ... [A] coherent identity incorporates within itself all the various internalized roles and attitudes" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 132). Similar definition was spelled in the form of question by Clifford "…what if identity is conceived not as a boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject?" (Clifford, 1988, p. 344). Consolidating such views, Hall (1991) reminded both the readers and the writers that "we have now to re-conceptualize identity as a process of identification….It is something that happens over time, that is never absolutely stable, that is

subject to the play of history and the play of difference" (p. 15). The definitions present the premise that an individual or group's identity changes over time as the roles they play are shifted, and/or the individual or group of people with whom the contrast is made changes.

As a concluding definition to such all-pervasive notion, Erikson's discussion of identity is invoked. He argued that it is impossible to have a single overarching definition to the term. This is because, as he mentioned, "at one time… [identity] will appear to refer to a conscious sense of individual identity; at another to an unconscious striving for a continuity of synthesis." Additionally, it appears "as a criterion for the silent doings of ego synthesis, and finally, as a maintenance of an inner solidarity with a group's ideals and identity." In such different reflections of identity, Erikson pointed out that identity connotes both "persistent sameness within oneself" and "a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others" (Erikson, 1956, pp. 56-57). Indeed, the trail of arguments about identity which are spelled above leads one to argue that identity is an indefinable concept in terms of fixed positions which are a priori defined and ready to be stepped into. In contrast, "identity" is a slippery term which can be understood only through the dialectical relations between and across self and other based on internal and external determining factors, age, gender, race, religion…etc. Based on the different determining factors, identity is both what constitutes an individual in relation to himself or herself and what constitutes him or her in relation with other groups. As such, everyone has one and numerous identities based on the traits s/he is put against either by himself/or herself or by others.

1.2.2 Theories of identity

Castells started his book, *The Power of Identity*, with the statement: "Our world, [*sic*] and our lives, [*sic*] are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity" (2002, p. 1). He thought of identity as a powerful phenomenon, alongside, and aroused by, globalization. Whatever form it takes, and whatever implications it carries, identity has occupied the centre-stage, not only in world politics but also in the world of humanities and the social science (Weedon, 2004, p. 1). Indeed, identity has attracted the interest of scholars from a wide spectrum of scientific disciplines. The spectrum includes, inter alia, philosophy (e.g. Flanagan, 1994; Popper & Eccles, 1977; Strawson, 1997), anthropology and cultural studies (e.g. Hall, 1992;

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), political science (e.g. Preston, 1997), sociology (e.g. Stryker & Statham, 1985) and psychology (e.g. Baumeister, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987).

Even though identity has developed as a field of study and has branched out into various disciplines and directions, two important issues about identity remain constant, identity as essence and as difference, identity as individualist and as collectivist, identity as singular and as plural, identity as real and as imaginative, which can be thought of as markers pointing to two different poles of the wider spectrum of these scientific disciplines contributing to the study of identity. That is, the debate over identity hinges on paradoxical combination sameness and difference. In order to lay out some of the different perspectives about the discussion of these paradoxical combinations, one can group the scholars of the different disciplines, who have approached identity, into what one can name the "five modes of thinking on identity," individualist, essentialist, symbolic interactionist, postmodernist and postpositivism realist. To be scholarly to some extent, it is worth noting, however, that this researcher is aware of the problematic issue of grouping people inside and across these different modes of thinking since every scholar in a way or another viewed identity in a different way. As such, it is clear that presenting a scholar or some scholars' thought as representative to the whole group is problematic; however, an equidistant position from Feyerabend's radical relativism-"unless we want to assume that they [theories or assumptions] deal with nothing at all we must admit that they deal with different [conceptual] worlds" (Feyerabend, 1978, p. 70)- leads the investigated effort of grouping and representing some scholars as comforting to the whole group's views to be laudable since the invited scholars express more or less the same views of the uninvited ones inside each of the different groupings.

To start with, individualists believe, primarily, in what Appiah (2005) called "the autarky of the soul" (p. 70). That is to say individualists lessen the reliance on the other when identifying the self. According to them, "the person, the personality, the inner core of the personality or, literally, the self" is the referent of self-concept or identity. "One could talk of an idyllic, lone being contemplating about oneself in a Wordsworthian world. Such an outlook emanated from personality psychology" [*sic*] (Mehdi, 2012, p. 32). In Lawler's words, the uniqueness or sameness "is seen as something which belongs to the person in question and is nothing to do

with the social world. The social world might impact upon it and shape it, but (it is generally assumed) it does not make it" (2014, p. 15).

However, the question that posits itself is what is that thing inside us which makes us unique? The answer was offered by Lawler. He argued that in some versions, it might be a unique mixture "of genes; in others, it is a 'soul'." Nevertheless, "that posits some notion of some part of a person that is not produced by the social world, what is being posited is an *essence* [*italics in source*]… It is often seen as what lies 'inside' and is understood as being 'deeper' or 'truer' than what is 'outside'" (2014, p. 15). Lawler seems to hold a view of identity that praises the inner core of the person and thus makes him the determinant marker of an individual or group of people's identity. However, the use of the terms "deeper" and "truer" entails that there is another identity which is less deep and true, for, linguistically speaking, the two terms are used in the form of comparative adjectives. In other words, individualists posit that there are two ways through which identity should be looked, identity distanced from society and identity interlocked with it; nonetheless, they score more on the former which they regarded as deeper and truer.

Furthermore, the standpoint, which emphasizes true identity, attracted Elias's attention. He confessed that this distinction between the inside and outside, true and less true was widely held by many people from roughly the Renaissance on. In contemporary sociology, the same basic experience finds theoretical expression in the acting ego, which finds itself confronted with people outside as others (Elias, 1994, p. 473). Even though Elias posited that "at most one can…juxtapose the two conceptions unconnectedly, that of the individual as *homo clausus,* as ego, as individual beyond society, and that of society as a system outside and beyond individuals" (Elias, 1994, pp. 472-473), and dedicated much space of his book to explaining this juxtaposition as reflected in the excerpts cited earlier, he called for the need to go beyond this "dead end of sociology and political sciences" (Elias, 1994, p. 473). Elias' call for the need to go beyond such juxtaposition is a reflection of his views of its limitation. For him, the juxtaposition suppresses an alternative view which understands identity in terms of their relation to a web of other identities. In other words, he calls for an understanding of identity that is formed between rather than within the individuals. Such view is what conceptualized the individual as a being. He suggested a view of identity that bridges the individual with the society, the inner core with

the outside world. Elias's position is a social constructionist critique to individualism and essentialism which are introduced next (Elias, 1994, pp. 481-482).

Essentialism is another mode of thinking which sees identity, even though in terms of essence, differently from individualism. While individualism attributed uniqueness and authenticity to the individual, essentialism attributed them to a group of people. Essentialism, then, is seen as the "reiterated and totalizing use of ethnonyms: entire groups are hypostatized as cohesive entities" (Conversi, 2003, p. 271). The essentialist approach is reinforced by Romanticist arguments, "to be yourself; to be true to your nature" (Calhoun, 1994, p. 15). In this sense, essentialists structure the 'common sense' of identity. They situate identity, or some part of it, in the sphere of some aspects of the person's nature rather than in the social relations. That is, identity is understood as an essence. "[A]n essence refers to something fundamental and integral to the person, which is not alterable (it is not possible to 'be' contrary to one's essence) and is held to persist throughout time and despite other social changes" (Lawler, 2014, pp. 17-18). The essence, as mentioned earlier, stems primarily from some aspects that are related to the individual: The body (biological essentialism) or the mind (psychological essentialism) or as existing in a 'soul' (religious essentialism). "Whatever the form, an essence of identity is understood as being 'internal' and as divided from the 'external' world of others" (Lawler, 2014, p. 18).

To lay out some of the essentialists' thought very clearly, an example is worth mentioning. They posit gender as the sole aspect which determines the social meaning of the individual experience. They tend to describe one woman in terms of the others. They blur all possible distinctions, social class, literacy, mother…etc between women; as a result, they generalize that a woman is the same as other woman in every corner of the world. According to Lawler, essentialists consider a slave woman living in antebellum America can experience her "womanness" in the same way a middle-class housewife living in Victorian England might do. Moreover, they argue that two women living in close proximity to each other (such as a Zulu maid and her Afrikaner madam) can be so similarly "situated in relation to the category of gender that their experiences, and the social meanings inscribed in those experiences, can be usefully described in the same terms" (Moya, 2000, p. 3). The representations of identity are criticized by many scholars. For example, according to Moya, "the social meanings attached to

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each woman's gender might be so different as to render the project of describing one woman in terms of the other meaningless" (2000, p. 3).

In fact, essentialists' tendency to perceive identity primarily in light of social categories, such as gender, class, age and ethnicity, should be appreciative, for on daily basis, people from all walks of life claim membership based on such categories. However, as critics said, the problem with essentialists is that their essentialization does not take into account the variation of the contexts of the attributes. No speech can be made about one context as the essentialists seemed to do. On the contrary, every attribute operates within different contexts and thus gives the individual different meanings of himself or herself.

There are variants of essentialism. Bucholtz (2003) anchored her theory of "authentication of identity" to a distinction she drew between essentialism and strategic essentialism. In so doing, she pointed out that essentialism actually serves a positive end in the way that it enables researchers to "identify a previously undescribed group and offer a preliminary description" (p. 400). She further added that, essentialism, for group members, "promotes a shared identity, often in opposition to other, equally essentialized social groups," whereas the latter "may be a deliberate move to enable scholarly activity, to forge a political alliance through the creation of common identity, or to otherwise provide a temporarily stable ground for further social action" (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 401). Bucholtz's typology seems to lessen the critique which is directed to essentialism's representation of identity.

In addition to individualism and essentialism, symbolic interactionism has its own picture of identity formation. "The symbolic interactionist perspective, associated with the Chicago school of sociology, seems to provide the link between psychologists' lone individual and sociologists' social processes. In its approach, identity is the process through which individuals become members of the society" (Mehdi, 2012, p. 34). Mead and Cooley are perhaps the main theorists of symbolic interactionism beside James, Strauss, and others. As such, let us consider the main theorists views about identity. To start with, Cooley asserted that "self and society are twin-born" (1962, p. 5). It seems that symbolic interactionism is moving us away from the static categorization of individualism and essentialism. Indeed, Cooley reveals that the individual and

the society are interlocked. That is, the individual is "always cause as well as effect of the institutions" (Cooley, 1962, p. 314).

In order to explain how identity is constructed, Cooley coined the phrase "looking- glass self." The reflective process, which this phrase suggests, is explained in Cooley's words as follows:

> As we see our face, figure, and dress in the glass, and are interested in them because they are ours, and pleased or otherwise with them according as they do or do not answer to what we should like them to be, so in imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it. A self-idea [self-image] of this sort seems to have three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification … The thing that moves us to pride or shame is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this reflection upon another's mind …We are ashamed to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man, cowardly in the presence of a brave one, gross in the eyes of a refined one, and so on. We always imagine, and in imagining share, the judgment of the other mind. (1964, p. 184)

Cooley's metaphor of "looking- glass self" reinforces that self is formed and maintained through ongoing interaction with and evaluation of (imagined ones) the others. As such, Cooley sees identity formation as a life-long process; accordingly, personality and self- concept are not stable or fixed.

Drawing on Cooley's "looking- glass self," Mead (1934) developed his own theory of the self. For Mead, the self is socially constructed. He wrote "the self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity" (p. 135). Such quotation demonstrates that Mead scores on interaction between the self and society in identity construction. The sense of sameness and difference that underlies "identities" arises as we participate in what Mead (1934) called the "conversation of gestures" (p. 43). Therefore, we can only comprehend ideas and concepts through our engagement with the symbolic, the gesture, the word, the representation. Mead introduced the notion of "I" and "me" to illustrate his views about identity more explicitly. The "I"/"me" are Mead's two dynamic aspects of the self.

> The "I" is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the "me" is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes.... The "I" is his action over/against that social situation within his own conduct ... The "I" gives the sense of freedom, of initiative. (Mead, 1934, pp. 175-177)

Such distinction reveals that the "I" stands for the individual's own perception of himself or herself, and the "me" reflects his or her interlocutor's perception about him or her. Elsewhere, Mead added that the "me" embodies the "generalized other," "the organized community or social group which gives to the individual his [*sic*] unity of self" (1934, p. 154). As a result of the dialectical relationship between the two aspects of the self, the "I" and "me," Mead asserted that individuals are characterized by different identities. Every individual has multiple identities since his or her identity is constructed through their relationship with different interlocutors who keep changing. The self is not a stable entity across time, but it changes as the context changes. Indeed, Mead said: "a multiple personality is in a certain sense normal.... There is usually an organization of the whole self with reference to the community to which we belong, and the situation in which we find ourselves" (pp. 142-143). Mead's view about identity construction has similarities with the postmodernist perspectives which are introduced next since both of them perceive that the individual is able to change his or her identity in line with the changing social context. Nevertheless, "Mead's concept pointed out to the differing variants of a single identity, "parts of the self," (1934, p. 142) and not of multiple, fragmented identities, postmodernist view.

From symbolic interactionism, we move on to what Mehdi called "cultural constructivism" (2012, p. 39). "A media culture has emerged in which images, sounds, and spectacles help produce the fabric of everyday life, dominating leisure time, shaping political views and social behavior, and providing the materials out of which people forge their very identities" (Kellner, 1995, p. 1). This is the culture of the postmodern, in which one seizes no essence (depth) and is shaped incessantly by the whims fashion. As such, postmodernist called for the death of "metanarrative" and thus meta-identity, of a grand sense of self, for they assert that people have fragmented multiple selves instead of fixed and stable ones. In Kellner's words, "once upon a time, it was who you were, what you did, what kind of a person you were – your moral, political, and existential choices and commitments, which constituted individual identity. But [*sic*] today it is how you look, your image, your style, and how you appear that constitutes

identity" (Kellner, 1995, p. 259). It is clear that postmodernist theorists believe neither in a true self nor in continuity in or unification of our selves.

Drawing a comparison between modernism and postmodernism, Bauman (2002) remarked that "[i]ndeed, if the *modern* 'problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the *postmodern* 'problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open." He added: "in the case of identity…. The catchword of modernity was creation; the catchword of postmodernity is recycling" (p. 18). Clearly, the postmodernist identity is flexible and uneven that its meaning in the sense of "sameness" and continuity has to be replaced with "difference." It is an unattainable phenomenon.

> "[I]dentity," though ostensibly a noun, behaves like a verb, albeit a strange one to be sure: it appears only in the future tense. Though all too often hypostasized as an attribute of a material entity/ identity has the ontological status of a project and a postulate. To say "postulated identity" is to say one word too many, as neither there is nor can there be any other identity but a postulated one. Identity is a critical projection of what is demanded and/or sought upon what is; or, more exactly still, an oblique assertion of the inadequacy or incompleteness of the latter. (Bauman, 2002, p. 19)

Such citation summarizes postmodernist view of identity. Identity, for postmodernist, is fragmented and characterized by loss and uncertainty.

With the construction of identity, the post-modern perspectives are mainly concerned about the "I" and "we," and "us," for, as Mehdi observed, "it is the intense winds of fashion and power blowing inside us that shape our identities" (2012, p. 40). Baudrillard expressed this view by saying that there is no "other" out there in the society that can identify us in the process of interaction. Put in his words, "[i]t's no longer possible either to hope to come to existence in and through the eye of the other for there is no longer a dialectic of identity… everyone is… called upon to appear, just appear, without worrying too much about being" (Baudrillard cited in Gane, 1993, p. 41). It is clear in the citation that postmodernists distance themselves from the interlocutor when it comes to agency. Thus, as mentioned earlier, they consider social actors as irrelevant to the "moral and "political growth" of the individual (Mohanty, 2000, p. 32). It is revealed also in the citation that they attain the distinction between "I" and "me." However, this distinction is not meant to distinguish between two stable blocks, the self and the other, that

might construct a stable and unified identity. In contrast, the distinction directs attention to the multiplicity of the self as a result of the plurality of the other, the context. This is because, as argued earlier, the postmodern subject is conceptualized as being fragmented and his or her identity as permanently shifting, as one that is "formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us" (Hall, 1992, p. 277). "It is from this position that the postmodernists and poststructuralists say that identity is in reality a myth, illusion, a construct of discourse and power, 'false consciousness,' a prototype of society's reigning cultural scripts" (Mehdi, 2012, p. 40).

It is worth noting that the postmodernist proposition of a fragmented identity does not mean that they do negate the existence of an identity. Instead, they see that the individual holds a privileged identity vis-à-vis the society. However, the construction of this identity is promoted through the experiences or interpretations "thereof, that strengthen people's individual identities (or their placeholders)" (Simon, 2004, p. 65). However, the postmodern perspective of identity did not remain unchallenged. Postpositivist realist, for example, maintained:

> Postmodernist conceptions--which tend to deny that identities either refer to, or are causally influenced by, the social world--have been unable to evaluate the legitimacy or illegitimacy of different identity claims. Because postmodernists are reluctant to admit that identities refer outward (with varying degrees of accuracy) to our shared world, they see all identities as arbitrary and as unconnected to social and economic structures. This renders postmodernists incapable of judging the male patriarch (whose identity claims might include a belief in his own gender superiority) as being more or less credible than, say, a woman (whose identity claims might include a belief in her own disadvantaged position vis-a-vis a "glass ceiling"). My point… is not to say which one of these individual's identity claims is more justified, but simply to suggest that the issue is at least partly an empirical one: the different identity claims cannot be examined, tested, and judged without reference to existing social and economic structures. (Moya, 2000, pp. 10-11)

The postpositivism realists' discontent with postmodernist view about the discontinuity, uncertainty and fragmentation of identity is clear in the above citation. They claim to be the first organized block that gives an alternative to the essentialist, interactionist and postmodernist views about identity (Moya, 2000, p. 11).

The postpositivism realist viewed that identity is both real and constructed. They "show… how identities can be both real and constructed: how they can be politically and

epistemically significant, on the one hand, and variable, nonessential, and radically historical, on the other" (Mohanty cited in Moya, 2000, p. 12). To how question to this view, the leading scholar of postpositivsm realist, Mohanty provided an answer. He stated "individual knowledge is based on cognitive theoretical grounds on which knowledge is constructed. In effect, people construct their knowledge from the resources they have with group knowledge from personal and social experiences, and interactions based on cognitively mediated processes" (Mohanty cited in Liggett, 2010, p. 93).

Mohanty (2000) further asserted the epistemic privilege of the oppressed is partially influenced and shaped by social location "and that it needs to be understood and revised hermeneutically" (p. 58). It seems that postpositivist realists deny the postmodernist irrelevant social actors and thus the fragmentation of identity. For them, the individual can understand his or her identity only when s/he sets it against the social actors; as a result, s/he would be able to revise his or her identity. When the individual perceives information and knowledge from his or her interlocutor, s/he will revise it and then define himself/or herself accordingly. Before closing on the different threads about identity which have been discussed so far, it is worth noting that individuals have essence, and such essence is both internal and external to the individual. Put differently, the body as a whole encompasses the internal essence, and the society at large has the individual's whole body besides other bodies. As such, the identity formation is strategic in the sense of symbolic interactionist and realist in the sense of postpositivism realist. In other words, the individual constructs his or her identity through a dialectic relation with the social world. Since the social world is characterized by plurality, the individual's identity is real and multiple. In every context, the individual can construct an identity that fits such context. In the classroom, for instance, based on a complex set or configuration of self-aspects, gender, race…etc, and the interlocutor's aspects, a professor forms his or her identity as a result of the existence in the classroom setting and the students. The same professor, and based on the same self-aspects and the interlocutor's aspects, is likely to construct other identities when s/he is in the presence of his/or her wife/or husband or children in the house. In this way, the construction of the individual's identity follows up.

1.2.3 Types of identity

According to Burke (2003), it is almost a truism to say that everyone has numerous identities (p. 195). Indeed, the aforementioned theories indicated the individual's identity shifts as the context and the interlocutors change. Such idea was expressed in Huntington's words: "Everyone has multiple identities which may compete with or reinforce each other: kinship, occupational, cultural, institutional, territorial, educational, partisan, ideological, and others" (1996, p. 128). Some scholars have categorized such multiple identities into three main categories: personal, role, and social (Smith-Lovin, 2003, p. 170). Others have followed another typology, social, personal, and collective (Rydgren, 2004, p. 47). From the different typologies, we follow the last one since role identity, which was mentioned in the former typology, is part and parcel of the social identity as will be explained later.

To begin with, personal identity refers to "one's unique personal characteristics such as personality, relationships, and self-esteem" (Taknint, 2015, p. 2). "Personal identity refers to specific attributes of the individual such as feelings of competence, bodily characteristics, intellectual concerns, personal tastes and interests" (West, Nicholson, & Arnold, 1987, p. 155). Another definition of personal identity is offered by Marohl. "Personal identity is the term given to that aspect of the individual's identity that is unique to the individual and may be based upon a relationship with another individual, or object, or upon a unique attribute of the individual" (Marohl, 2014, p. 99). The definitions illustrate that personal identity is about specific attributes which are relatively unique to a particular individual.

The attributes, based on which the person can define himself/or herself, are divided into three main groups: individual self, relational self, and collective self. The individual self refers to the unique traits and characteristics which are derived from interpersonal comparison and differentiation processes. The relational self points out to a set of attributes which are shared with relationship partners, parent-child relationships, friendships, and romantic relationships as well as specific role relationships such as teacher-student or clinician-client. The personal identity, here, is constructed and represented as a result of appraisal or motive. Finally, the collective self is achieved when the person draws comparison and contrast between a set of attributes of his/or

her in-group and out-groups (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001, pp. 1-2). In this division, Sedikides and Brewer equate the personal identity with self-identity.

It is worth highlighting that the above cited division elucidates that personal identity has social extensions, relational and collective ones. In fact, such extensions are required, for personal identities "serve as the pegs upon which social identities and personal biographies can be hung. If an individual could not be recognized from one occasion to another as the same person, no stable social relationships could be constructed, and therefore there would be no social identities at all (McCall & Simmons, 1966, p. 65).

In the same vein, Edwards posited that even though personal identity- or personality- is essentially "the summary statement of all our individual traits, characteristics and dispositions, it is important to realise that individuality does not arise through the possession of psychological components not to be found in anyone else" (2009, p. 19). Rather, it is logical to see

> [t]he uniqueness of the individual comes about, then, through the particular combination or weighting of building blocks drawn from a common human store. To accept this is to accept that no rigid distinction can in fact be made between personality and social identity. Again, this is a view of very long standing: "no man is an island, entire of itself"….Our personal characteristics derive from our socialisation within the group (or, rather, groups) to which we belong; one's particular social context defines that part of the larger human pool of potential from which a personal identity can be constructed. Thus, individual identities will be both components and reflections of particular social (or cultural) ones. (Edwards, 2009, p. 20)

Edwards illustrates above the overlap between personal identity and social identity is unavoidable since as cited above "no man is an island, entire of itself." In other words, personal identity cannot be constructed and represented without the reliance on and the mention of social dimensions, say, race, for example.

It should be noted that the three sets of attributes, individual, relational, and collective, of the individual are not only relatively unique but also continuous. In fact, the uniqueness and the continuity of the individual are two components of personal identity. Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987), for instance, stated

for an individual to believe that she will be the same person five years from now, she must suppose that the person that will be her in the future has developed out of the person she is now (causally related). She also must believe that she will grow into *only* one person in the future (unique); if there are many people who could be her in the future, then her sense of personal identity would be disrupted. (Hart, Maloney, & Damon, 1987, p. 66)

It seems that a feeling of individuality is characterized by a relatively unique set of attributes that are expressed over time.

Beside the uniquely sense of personal identity, there is also collective identity that represents the various groups to which the individuals belong. Collective identity is understood in terms of social categories. An influential formulation of collective identity was offered by Taylor and Whittier (1992) who defined collective identity as "the shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences and solidarity" (p. 105). The citation exhibits that collective identity refers to "we," the group, instead of the "I" the person in personal identity. Just as personal identity, the group identity or collective identity is derived from a set of attributes which are shared between the members of one group and different from other significant groups. The attributes of the collective identities can be understood as (potentially) encompassing shared interests, ideologies, subcultures, goals, rituals, practices, values, worldview, commitment, solidarity, tactics, strategies (Fominaya, 2010, p. 398), occupations (role identities), religious affiliation, and country of citizenship (Carducci, 2009, p. 478). Clearly, collective identity refers to unique attributes shared by group of people and thus set them apart from other groups. Like personal identity, collective identity is not fixed, but is in constant construction and negotiation through repeated interaction among the group members.

The final label of identity is social identity. A social identity is identification in terms of membership in a social category. For instance, a person can construct his/or her social identity based on a broad social category such as, race, religion, gender, age, class…etc. Individuals can have also social identity based on their social roles such as an occupation, say, professor and soldier or family roles, say, husband and wife. "In both of these cases, social identities, which are often rooted in categorical ascriptions or memberships, are based on social interaction and through this process are given to an actor by others" (Sherrod, Flanagan & Kassimir, 2006, p. 320). Another definition to social identity came from Snow. He stated that a social identity is an

identity attributed to others in an effort to situate them in social space. "They are grounded typically in established social roles, such as "teacher" and "mother," or in broader and more inclusive social categories, such as gender categories or ethnic and national categories, and thus are often referred to as "role identities"…and "categorical identities" (Snow, 2001, p. 3). The definitions emphasize that social identity is derived from and attached to a particular social category of the group to which the individual belongs. They show also that social identity is often given to the person in contrast with personal identity where the individual self-defines himself/or herself. Such distinction is one of the instances where social personality distances itself from personal identity though they frequently overlap.

Indeed, as shown earlier, "our personal characteristics derive from our socialisation within the group (or, rather, groups) to which we belong…Thus, individual identities will be both components and reflections of particular social (or cultural) ones" (Edwards, 2009, p. 20). In fact, the overlap does not occur only between social identity and personal identity but crosses freely to the three types of identity. Such overlap is likely to be the reason behind Brewer and Gardner's description of all of them as "social selves" (1996, p. 83). In addition, Llamas' definition of social identity mentioned that social identity is part and partial of both individual identity and collective identity and that this concept, social identity, pervades in the writing of researchers and scholars who investigate human behavior both individual and collective (Llamas, 2006, p. 95). Another mention of the strong ties between the three types of identity, personal, collective, and social identities, came from Lawler who asserted that "there is no aspect of identity that lies outside social relations" (Lawler, 2014, p. 180).

1.2.4 Markers of identity

No one can argue that someone engages in self, collective and/or social-interpretation as a 'tabula rasa,' for identity markers are born with the person. Indeed, from the day s/he is born, the individual has his or her chains of markers, personal traits (age, ideology, and sex) and shared attributes (cultures, ethnicity, and religion) based on which s/he relays when defining himself or herself. This is what led to the general agreement or ascription to the statement that people have multiple identities. Although a complete list of the factors affecting the construction of identity is an impossible attainment since they are related to the person and the social world

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with which s/he interacts, a 'laundry list' of some of the most common ones, that are discussed in the literature, namely, gender, race and ethnicity, occupation, and place, is charted out. To eschew redundancy, language is held for later discussion.

To start with gender, Harris (1995) started his book, *Messages Men Hear: Constructing Masculinities*, with the following passage:

> All boys are born innocent, capable of becoming Charles Manson or Dr Martin Luther King Jr. With constant love and nourishment boys have the capacity to grow into cuddly teddy bears. With hatred, abuse, and abandonment they can become fierce grizzlies. Young boys become men by responding to situational demands and social pressures. Surrounded with expectations about how they, as men, ought to behave, boys have to sift through various demands placed upon them by their culture, their associates, their teachers, their friends, and their family to construct their own gender identities. (p. 9)

Clearly, based on biological differences and as a result of socialization, people construct gender identities. It seems also that individuals are rewarded by the different social actors, say, parents and professors, for constructing such identities and thus conforming to gender roles which are assigned to them. The concept "gender identity" refers to "an individual's own feelings of whether he or she is a woman or man, a girl or a boy. "In essence [*sic*] gender identity is self attribution of gender" (Kessler & McKenna, 1978, p. 8). It is clear, then, that gender is a significant marker of identity.

Furthermore, people are frequently situated on the axes of ethnicity and race. However, before providing an example, it is worth clearing up the terms "ethnicity" and "race" and clearing some common misunderstanding of them.

> *"[R]ace" is a social category based on the* identification *of (1) a physical marker transmitted through reproduction and (2) individual, group and cultural attributes associated with that marker* [italics in the source]. Defined as such, race is, then, a form of ethnicity, but distinguished from other forms of ethnicity by the identification of distinguishing *physical* characteristics, which, among other things, make it more difficult for members of the group to change their identity. (Smelser, Wilson, & Mitchell, (Eds.). 2001, p. 3)

Smelser, Wilson, and Mitchell do not provide a more detailed definition to ethnicity, in the above citation, as they did with the term "race." Below is another example that explains the two terms

and thus distinguishes between them. Race is associated "with biologically based differences between human groups, differences typically observable in skin color, hair texture, eye shape, and other physical attributes."Ethnicity" tends to be associated with culture, pertaining to such factors as language, religion, and nationality" (Bobo, 2001, p. 267). Bobo (2001) further added: "[a]lthough perceived racial distinctions often result in sharper and more persistent barriers than ethnic distinctions, this is not invariably the case, and both share elements of presumed common descent or ascriptive inheritance" (p. 267). The cited references demonstrate that race and ethnicity are different terms. There are some criteria that separate the two terms. The criteria are summed up primarily in the cultural icons and language, for example. While both terms point out to the physical appearance, the cultural icons are particular markers of ethnicity.

The definitions of the terms "ethnicity" and "race," provided above, show that the terms categorize people into different categories and thus mark them from other significant groups. The following citation shows that people single out others and classify them based on their race and ethnicity. "…people confuse me for an African American.... They ask me, "Are you Black?" I'm like, "No, I'm Hispanic.".... Because… the way I talk, my hair... I use a lot of slang. You can confuse …Dominicans as African American by their color" (Bailey, 2000, p. 565). The excerpt illustrates race and ethnicity in action. The speaker said that he is always marked out based on his physical appearance (race and ethnicity) and his language (ethnicity).

Moreover, the individual's role is a fundamental marker to his or her identity. Such role can be an occupation or a family role. According to Weaver, Reid, Valien and Johnson (1939), occupation refers to any employment for which wages is to be received (p. 86). Family role, remarked White and Klein (2002), refers to a partnership between members of the family, father-daughter, husband and wife…etc (p. 96). Based on such roles, people define and are defined by others. Many organizations, company and institutions give their workers a particular cloth that sets them apart from those who do not work in them. When people also are asked to introduce themselves, they tend to identify themselves based on their roles. For instance,

> Japanese businessmen employed by large corporations have traditionally worn a small lapel pin to signal their company affiliation…some [people] in the United States… wear a polo shirt or a tie with a company logo... In Japan a person's organizational identity is so important that during introductions the company's

name is given before the individual's name…. In the United States an individual is introduced first by his or her name, followed by the organization. (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel & Roy, 2007, p. 222)

The above examples offer insight to how occupation stresses identity. People practice their identity on daily basis based on their affiliation to their job organizations.

In addition to gender, race and ethnicity, occupation, place has a great impact on the way people define themselves. Place is a "geographical space that has acquired meaning as a result of a person's interaction with the space" (Hauge, 2007, p. 3). Place identity, then, is defined as a "potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings, as well as types of settings" (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983, p. 60). Many theories have been developed in recent decades to explain the impact of place on identity, place-identity theory, social identity theory, and identity process theory, to name but few. Nevertheless, since the scope of the study is beyond such theories and due to lack of space, only typical examples are introduced to show the importance of place is as an identity marker.

In his study, Munroe (2002) concluded that, in the Caribbean, individuals define themselves primarily on the bases of their island identity, whether they are Jamaican, St Lucia, or Barbadian. They did so in relation to other people who belong to different places. They transcended race, ethnicity religion and all identity markers and relayed primarily on their geographical affiliation when they introduced themselves (p. 13). It is clear that people's belonging to geographical space lead them to define themselves accordingly. In fact, people from all around the world define themselves based on their affiliation to a particular space. People's geographical affiliation is spelled out in almost every identification card. When they are out of their homeland, people also tend to define themselves based on their geographic affiliation. Succinctly, people are situated on different axes, race, ethnicity, gender, place, to name but few. As the setting or the context shifts, people choose to rely on one or some of these axes. For instance, in the house, people adopt their family role identity such as son, daughter…etc. In the university, the same people may shift to other axes such as occupation; thus, they define themselves as professors, students…etc. In such environments, other axes, such as sex, ethnicity, race, religion, are also present but in a peripheral position.

Conclusion

An attempt was made in order to answer the question, what is language policy and identity? In so doing, many answers were offered which were crystallized in the forms of definitions, theories, types, and factors of possible effects. The chapter started by defining the term "language." It was argued that the term "language" is best understood through laying out its different characteristics since no one single definition can capture all of them. The characteristics contain, but not limited to, human, arbitrariness, and reflexivity. Additionally, it was demonstrated that, as a result of generalization and sweeping claims, some linguists and almost all non-linguists tend to hold some misconceptions (myths) about issues related to language. In contrast to what the people think, it was proved that all languages are equal, and language multiplicity does not scotch social and political stability and economic growth. Besides, solid evidence was provided to dismantle the myth that people hold concerning the low performance of bi- and multilingual students in comparison with monolingual ones. Finally, an alternative view of language that underlines the verbosity of women in comparison with their male counterparts was provided.

After conceptualizing language and some of its related myths, the chapter dived into the heart of language policy. It was defined as ideas, rules and practices formed by different actors, government, institution, and society, to name but few. It was also distinguished from language planning which some researchers in the literature used as its synonym. Language policy is language planning in practice, we clarified. Furthermore, the old and the recently developed theories of language policy were mapped out. Aside from their different takes on the nature of language policy, scholars of language policy offered four main schemes to language policy, each of which is formulated based on a different identifier. Based on genesis, the first typology classified language policy into two main categories, top-down and bottom-up. The second scheme classified language policy into two main types, overt and covert policies, based on means and goals. Finally, language policy was marked as the de jure and de facto labels. In addition to the types of language policy, the different factors that influence language policy were discussed. These factors were categorized into five main categories, political, linguistic, social-demographic, linguistic culture, and religious.

Beside language policy, different themes, definitions, theories, types and markers, which helped in clarifying identity, were discussed. It was found out that identity is an ongoing process that is limited by neither time nor place, but rather by different traits and distinguishing characteristics which mark an individual or group of people from others significant actors. The literature revealed also that scholars across disciplines have developed many theories. Individualism theorists argued that identity should be understood in terms of sameness. Moreover, essentialism theorists remarked that identity is manifested in a set of categories, say, gender and race. The identity, they asserted, is stable and the same across different societies. Symbolic interactionism theorists observed that identity is strategic. Postmodernists painted identity with uncertainty, arbitrariness and fragmentation. The recently developed theory was that of postpositivism realism. Theorists of this block criticized the preceding theories and asserted that the individuals construct their identity through a dialectic relation with the social world. In every context, the individual can construct an identity that fits such context.

In addition to offering possible definitions and devising different theories, scholars classified identity into three main types, personal, collective, and social. The different types of identity indicated that there are many identity markers. The chapter, thereby, pointed out that people are situated on different axes, race, ethnicity, gender, place, to name but few. As the setting or the context shifts, people choose to rely on one or some of these axes. In one context, for instance, the individual may identify himself/or herself based on race; however, other markers, such as sex, ethnicity, religion, are also present but in a peripheral position.

Chapter Two: The Interplay between Language and Identity and Some Issues in Multilingualism and Multiculturalism

Introduction

A third issue, that has been lurking at the edges of the topic of language policy and identity, is the interplay between the two constructs which is a central theme of this chapter beside issues in multilingualism and multiculturalism. As a complement to the first chapter in the course of clarifying language policy and identity, this chapter provides a conceptual aerial map covering a number of possible themes related to the interplay between language and identity that have been marked out along the evolution of the field. In so doing, the chapter pinpoints exactly what is meant by the phrase "nation-state" and the term "nationalism." In so doing, the evolution of such concepts was mapped out. It is shown also that nationalism has two main types: civic and ethnic. The former originated in France and the latter in Germany.

The chapter proceeds, after that, to charting out the role of language policy in both state-building and identity construction. Decision makers tend to opt for language as a marker that fuses the diverse people of a state. As a result, people start to define themselves based on such linguistic identity. The role of identity in language policy is also discussed. Besides, in order to understand the concepts "multilingualism" and "multiculturalism," the chapter spells out the possible definitions and typologies of the two terms.

2.1 The interplay between language policy and identity

2.1.1 Defining nation-state, nationalism

Before pinning down the phrase "nation-state," definitions of the couple terms, "nation" and "state," can be addressed. Such step is necessary indeed since, as remarked by Michie, the coinage of nation-state indicates an appreciation of the difference between the two constructs of the hyphened phrase (2000, p. 1093). Similarly, Campbell, MacKinnon, and Stevens (2010) asserted that although the terms are used sometimes interchangeably, they also have distinct

meanings (p. 32). However, before embarking on laying out the distinctions between nation and state, it is useful to show some of the instances where the two terms are used interchangeably. In international law, the term "nation" is always used interchangeably with the term "state" and the phrase "nation-state". For example, "Article 1 of the UN Charter provides that the purposes of the inter-State organization are "to develop friendly relations among nations" and "to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations"" (Schrijver, 1997, p. 10). Another case is the name of the United Nations. That is, the United Nations represents the whole nations of the world when the meaning is that it represents the whole states of the world or the whole nation-states of the world (Kellas, 1998, p. 3). The cases reveal the frequent use of the terms "nation," "state" and the phrase "nation-state," interchangeably.

Theoretically, the terms, "nation," "state" and the phrase "nation-state" may be used interchangeably as the above cases unveiled; nonetheless, technically, they are different. What are the possible answers to the foundational questions of "what is a nation?" Originally, the word "nation" is derived from the Latin word "natio," which in turn was formed from the verb "nasci," which means birth or place of origin (Flanagan, 2008, p. 67). Tracing its development, Opello and Rosow (1999) stated that

> "nation" was a derogatory term that referred to groups of foreigners from the same place whose status was below that of Roman citizens. During the Middle Ages, the word was used to designate groups of students from the same geographical locations attending Europe's medieval universities. Because students from the same regions often took sides as a group against students from different regions in scholastic debates, the word *nation* [*italics in the source*] came to mean an elite community of scholars who shared an opinion or had a common purpose. During the early sixteenth century, the word *nation* began to be applied to a whole population of people from a particular geographical locale rather than to a student elite. Entire populations were elevated and made into the bearer of sovereignty, the basis of political solidarity, and the ultimate object of loyalty. One's *national identity,* [*italics in the source*] therefore, came from being a member of a certain people, which was defined as homogeneously distinct in language, culture, race, and history from other peoples. Thus, nation came to have its contemporary meaning: a uniquely sovereign people readily distinguishable from other uniquely defined sovereign peoples who are bound together by a sense of solidarity, common culture, language, religion, and geographical location. (pp. 123-124)

The above citation traces the term "nation" from its birth to its actual state. What is remarkable about the evolution of the term "nation" is its constant reference to shared group and geography

and to some degree culture. However, Opello and Rosow's contemporary meaning of the term "nation" is too general to the extent that it can lead the reader to coincide it with nation-states. Since our aim is to avoid falling prey to nation and nation-state interchangeable use, other scholars' definitions to the term "nation" are worth mentioning. According to Campbell, MacKinnon, and Stevens (2010), the term "nation" refers to "a shared cultural or ethnic identity rather than to a legally recognized geographic territory" (p. 32). A typical example that explained their definition is that of the people of Navajo. In Campbell, MacKinnon, and Stevens' words (2010) "the people of the Navajo nation, for example, share a cultural identity that does not depend upon fixed territory or outside legal recognition. Rather, their status as a nation is based upon shared historical and cultural experiences" (p. 32).

Another definition to the term "nation" is offered by Mangone. He stated that the fundamental "binding force of the nation is variously derived from a strong sense of its own history, its special religion, or its unique culture, including language. A *nation* may exist as an historical community and a cultural nexus without political autonomy or statehood" (1969, p. 451). The two above definitions indicate that the term "nation" points out to a people grouped together on the basis of history, culture and consciousness. The definitions also do not refer to geography as a defining factor of the term "nation" as previously did Opello and Rosow.

According to Campbell, MacKinnon, and Stevens (2010), in academic discourses, however, the term "state" is used instead of the more commonly used "country" to refer to "an internationally recognized, politically organized, populated, geographical area that possesses sovereignty" (p. 32). They added that states are geopolitical entities with the following characteristics:

a. a fixed territory with boundaries;

b. a population;

c. a government;

d. the capacity to enter into relations with other states. (Campbell, MacKinnon & Stevens, 2010, p. 32)

Such definition unearths that the term "state" is more general than the term "nation." In other words, the term "state" refers to the term "nation" (group of people who share history and culture) plus government, fixed territory with boundaries, and international recognition.

By now, it becomes clear that the difference between the two terms, "nation" and "state," rationalizes the coinage of the hyphened phrase "nation-state." What is, then, nation-state? The definition of the phrase "nation-state" is an amalgamation of the definition of the term "nation" and that of the term "state." It refers to a particular nation living in a state. It combines social and political ties and separates with border a group of people from a neighboring one that is subjected to different laws and rulers. In other words, the phrase "nation-state" refers to a sovereign and geographically defined territory with a government and population who share history and culture.

Griffiths (2005) offered the most thorough explanation of the characteristics which constitute the nation-state.

> The nation-state is a type of politico-military rule that has a distinct, geographically defined territory over which it exercises jurisdiction. Second, it has sovereignty over a territory that is theoretically exclusive of outside interference by other nation-states. Third, it has a government composed of public institutions, offices, and roles that administers the territory and makes decisions for the people within its jurisdiction. Fourth, it has fixed boundaries marked by entry and exit points and in some cases by fences patrolled by border police and armies. Fifth, its government claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical coercion over its territory and people. Sixth, its people share, to a greater or lesser degree, a sense of nationhood (i.e., national identity). And seventh, its government enjoys, to a greater or lesser degree, the undivided obedience and loyalty of its inhabitants. (Griffiths, 2005, p. 566)

The above outlined characteristics of the nation-state set it apart from other systems such as nation and state. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the phrase "nation-state" is frequently used interchangeably with the terms "state" and "country," observed Campbell, MacKinnon & Stevens (2010, p. 32).

In addition to nation, state and nation-state, nationalism is a central thread in the present study which needs to be taken apart. The rise of nationalism correlated positively with that of nation-state system, each of which correlated negatively with the domination of the Catholic

Church over almost all Europe. The decline of the Catholic Church took place after the signature of the Peace of Westphalia (1648) which ended the Thirty Years War (1618-48) that erupted in Europe. The decline led to the birth of nation- state system which was organized around many ideas among which nationalism (Campbell, MacKinnon & Stevens, 2010, p. 33). Likewise, Smith (1998) asserted that nationalism, as a liberating force, crumbled the different "localisms of region, dialect, *custom* and clan, and helped to create… powerful nation-states…. It attacked feudal practices and oppressive imperial tyrannies and proclaimed the sovereignty of the people and the right of all peoples to determine their own destinies, in states of their own" (p. 1). Smith's account on the origin of nationalism lines up with that of Campbell, MacKinnon, and Stevens. The scholars agree that the emergence of nationalism coincided with that of nation-state system. They consider the former as the sperm that led to the birth of the latter. Their accounts also indicate that the idea of nationalism was originated in Europe and after that spread into the rest of the world. In Smith's words, raised in England and Holland, nationalism "stretches the length of Central and Latin America, pushes across southern, central, eastern, then northern Europe into Russia, India and the Far East, and then winds its way in many guises into the Middle East, Africa and Australasia" (1998, p. 1).

Having traced the roots of nationalism, what is it, then? Many answers to the question were given and are constantly added to the nationalism literature. Before introducing the answers, however, it is useful to clarify what most scholars think nationalism is not. First, nationalism is not patriotism. According to Navarro (2015), "'while patriotism evidently is a sentiment, nationalism is not. At most, it gives rise to sentiment, perhaps to patriotic ones.' Whereas patriotism accentuates devotion to one's country or nation, nationalism turns devotion to the nation into programs or principles" which encompass rituals, beliefs, political action, and practices (p. 13). Clearly, patriotism is pride in or loyalty to one's state. Nationalism, however, is not limited to such pride in or loyalty to one's geographical border, but it goes to a devotion to the state's properties. It is clear, then, that patriotism is part and parcel of nationalism.

Second, just as nationalism is not patriotism, it is not chauvinism. According to Peachey (1994), "chauvinism" is a term derived from the name of Nicolas Chauvin, a French soldier during the Napoleonic wars, a super-patriot (p. 174). The last hyphened phrase in this quotation clearly stated that chauvinism is super-patriotism. However, this definition is a little vague. A

more clear definition is offered by Flecker (2007) who asserted that chauvinism refers to "general national pride, a view of uniqueness and superiority of one's own country and national ingroup to which one is… attached" (p. 69). As such, it becomes clear that chauvinism is unhealthy patriotism, and since nationalism is not patriotism, it is not, of course, chauvinism. Unlike the previously stated "isms," nationalism "embraces the primacy of national identity over claims of class and religion in general," observed Navarro (2015, p. 13).

Clarifying what nationalism is not does not facilitate coming to a broadly accepted definition that states what nationalism is. In their definitions, scholars are divided between whether nationalism is a belief or a movement. Gellner wrote that "nationalism is primarily a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent" (1983, p. 1). Moreover, Mudde (2000) asserted that nationalism refers to "a belief that 'the political unit (state) and the cultural unit (the nation or ethnic community) should be congruent" (p. 187). The second division of scholars considers nationalism as a movement. For instance, Pitt stated:

> Nationalism is a movement, an [*sic*] historical and political movement which brought about the development of nationalities and Nation-States. It is a movement in the sense of a series of acts and events among groups of people leading towards a definite end. It is historical, for it required the slow process of time for the idea to germinate and the spirit of nationality to be thoroughly awakened and to pervade masses of distinct peoples, and events of far reaching importance to stimulate this spirit into action. The movement was political, for its object was political independence and the recognition of political rights. As a movement, nationalism is the principle of nationalities or the right of self-determination of peoples, in action. (1993, p. 35)

It is clear that nationalism is a movement organized around the spirit of unity which is established over time. The movement demands the right of self-determination of a group of people and their territory.

Barrington (2006) too asserted that nationalism is "the creation of the unifying features of the nation, [*sic*] or the actions that result from the beliefs of the group" (p. 9). Mellor (1989), in the same vein, pointed out that nationalism is "the political expression of the nation's aspirations," containing control over territory that members of the state "perceive as their homeland by right" (pp. 4-5). The two definitions, to some extent, wed nationalism as an ideology, belief, idea…etc with nationalism as a movement. Both of them stress that nationalism

is an idea and an activity. Such view is what we opt for. The definitional division of nationalism, in the literature, between an idea and a movement are unnecessary or more sharply might be inadequate. Indeed, their conflation might be the right one. The two definitions are inseparable. Nationalism, as an idea, leads to nationalism as a movement. Backing such view, Hutchinson and Smith (1994) emphasized that as "an ideology and a movement, nationalism exerted a strong influence in the American and French Revolutions" (p. 3). They further labeled nationalism as "ideological movement" (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994, p. 4).

Bringing the two definitional divisions together, Barrington (2006) argued that ""nationalism" is de-fined… as the pursuit-through argument or other activity-of a set of rights for the self-defined members of the nation, including, at a minimum, territorial autonomy or sovereignty" (p. 10). Likewise, Clarke and Linzey (1996) defined nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population, some of whose members deem it to be an actual or potential action" (p. 590). Based on the definitions, one can define nationalism as an ideology held by an individual or group of people that praised and called for freedom and equality between the group members and against other territorial independent states. It is, then, an ideology of the people and a movement for the interest of the state.

So far, the term "nationalism" has been defined. However, to understand the term more thoroughly, a brief discussion of its typology is necessary. There are two types of nationalism, civic or societal nationalism and ethnic nationalism. The two types are German and French in origin. According to Baycroft (2006), the civic nationalism is the French type of nationalism since it was associated with the French scholar, Renan and his 1882 Sorbonne lecture "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" In the lecture, Renan asserted that the nation should be sovereign and founded on the free will of and equality between its individuals. Such conception of nationalism started with the French Revolution. Inspired by the ideas of Enlightenment [mode of thinking flourished in the eighteenth century with progressive and liberal ideas that stress universality and rationality (Adams, 2001, p. 23)] thinkers, such as Rousseau, sought to put into practice new-fangled political theories which would obliterate the ancient regime of third estate (a hierarchal division of society into nobility, clergy commoners), replacing it with a new 'social contract' between all the equal citizens of the French state (Baycroft, 2006, pp. 28-30). Based on such view, it

becomes clear that civic nationalism stresses the idea that the state is the sole defining feature of the individuals, and that all individuals have the same right and duty. In Ignatieff's words,

> civic nationalism maintains that the nation should be composed of all those – regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, language or ethnicity – who subscribe to the nation's political creed. This nationalism is called civic because it envisages the nation as a community of equal, rights bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values. (1993, p. 261)

Civic nationalism is then concerned primarily with the state. Otherwise stated, civic nationalism calls people to go beyond all possible types of identity, say, race, age, gender…etc, and be united around the nation in terms of its geographical and institutional aspects. It is observable that such type of nationalism is democratic.

Ethnic nationalism displays a contrast model to that of civic nationalism. It is a German type of nationalism. Inspired by German romanticists' thinkers, such as Herder, nationalism came to be associated with shared blood, language, and culture (Song, 2009, p. 25). In ethnic nationalism, nation-states are the product of common history and culture. Jenkins and Sofos (1996) wrote nation-states were "'communities of fate' bound together by… history, language and culture and often, by connotation, blood ties. Rather than free associations based on residence, they were historically determined entities based on ancestry" (p. 15). The state is, thus, an already decided fate based on history, race and blood, in which no one can enter and from which no one can escape. In Smith's words, "whether you stayed in your community or emigrated to another, you remained ineluctably, organically a member of the community of your birth, and were forever stamped by it" (1991, p. 11). Unlike civic nationalism, ethnic nationalism makes the nation-states exclusive rather than inclusive. In this sense, ethnic nationalism abhors the new and praises the old. It can be said that it is a type of racism or chauvinism. Even though France was the first to develop and celebrate civic nationalism over many decades, its recent move to the adoption of retrieving the French citizenship policy, from anyone who has dual citizenship and is convicted of "terrorism," represents a tendency toward adopting ethnic nationalism, though in a soft form.

2.1.2 The role of language policy in the state-building

At the outset, it is necessary to define each of the constructs that make up the title, language policy and state-building, in order to understand in turn the relationship between both of them. Having defined earlier the phrase "language policy," it is the time to answer the question: what is a state- building? According to Bogdandy, Häußler, Hanschmann, and Utz (2005), a state-building refers to "the establishment, re-establishment, and strengthening of a public structure in a given territory capable of delivering public goods" (pp. 583-584). They further added that the state-building is the most common form of a process of collective identity formation with a view to legitimizing public power within a given territory" (Bogdandy, Häußler, Hanschmann & Utz, 2005, p. 586). Additionally, Paine (2010) stated that state-building is "the development and strengthening of a shared set of an [*sic*] overarching values and an overarching common identity among the inhabitants of a country with a sovereign government. The population can encompass one or multi nations," people with different culture, religion, ethnicity, language…etc (p. 7). The two definitions exhibit that the state-building entails a preceding state of political, cultural, religious…etc vacuum or more precisely a state of political, cultural, or the like instability that is experienced by a group of people on a particular territory.

Indeed, according to Jenkins and Plowden (2006), "state-building has… been regarded as an appropriate response where the state machine has *collapsed* [*italics added*] for other reasons – war and civil war, civil disorder, famine or other catastrophe" (p. 2). The use of the term "collapse," in the definition, to refer to the status of a state that urges its building might be inadequate. This is because every state is in an ongoing process of building and rebuilding. As such, one can define state-building as a process of making and remaking of the unmade in order to establish the ideal institutions that earn the agreement of the different people who make up a particular state. On such bases, the begging question is what are the steps that should be taken in order to build a state? According to Jenkins and Plowden (2006),

> [t]he first stage in a [state]-building exercise – regime change, whether or not preceded by military intervention – is relatively speaking fairly straightforward. The problems begin with the second stage. The ability to create or recreate a nation requires the ability also to create the institutions necessary for its effective functioning, and which bestow legitimacy on its rulers – electoral systems, or other arrangements for choosing the rulers, legislatures, the apparatus of the

executive, legal and judicial systems, police, sub-national government, taxation systems, defence capability and public services of all kinds. (p. 6)

Clearly, the different policies, which are necessary for molding a particular state, range from the political, economic, defensive, to those oriented toward social stability.

Central to such different policies is language (Orman, 2008, p. 59). It is worth noting, however, that such centrality of language to the state-building project is relatively new. According to Mansour (1993), "[l]languages were not criteria in their formation [*sic*] and linguistic unification rarely became an issue in these monarchies which derived the legitimacy of their rule from divine right" (pp. 104-105). Mansour's statement clarifies that language was not a primary concern to the rulers when the Catholic Church was dominating Europe. At that time, as discussed earlier, religion was the sole factor that unified the different states under the umbrella of the Holy Roman Empire. Similarly, Craith (2010) wrote:

> Most Europeans were farmers, peasants or serfs who grew up in a specific region and spoke the local language/dialect, which had been transmitted from one generation to the next. Language difference was hardly a matter for concern as most adjacent dialects were mutually comprehensible and difficulties in communication were not an everyday occurrence…. Latin was the language of the church. It was a sacred language, used across political and linguistic borders. Clerics were literate in Latin and were required to have some knowledge of it, regardless of their mother tongue. This contrasted with the Eastern, Orthodox side of the continent where Greek and Church Slavonic dominated spiritual matters. (p. 47)

Clearly, language was not a critical element in the Empires-building. Across the Empires, commoners were free to speak their local languages in their everyday life, and they did not have any problem in communicating with each others. The official language was that of the Church. However, the use of the official language was confined to religious prayers in the Church and in the governmental institutions. It is entailed also that the Church did not impose its language on the commoners. On the contrary, it followed laissez fair policy, "tolerance- oriented approach" toward language use (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012, p. 64). May be because of this laissez fair policy and certainly because of the sacredness of the Church, the commoners (the majority of the people) did not question the Church language status.

The primacy of language in state-building appeared with the emergence of the nation-state system after the decline of the Church domination over Europe. For instance, Mansour remarked that language became a primary and critical component in the state- building process right after the "separatist tendencies" toward having their nation- state system (1993, p. 105). Similarly, Hoffmann argued that the primacy of language "arises both in nation building within pre-existing states, and in independence movements in nations which lack their 'own'" (Hoffmann, 1996, p. 32). It seems that language policy was an important policy that western states and the newly independent state across Africa, Asia, and Latin America adopted in order to establish stable states. Likewise, Craith (2010) observed that the relation between language and state-building is highly political. Because the medieval Europe was united around the sacredness of religion, language was not called on to operate as a unifying factor to the different states within the great Empires of that time. However, at the end of the Catholic Church's dominance over Europe, the linguistic landscape was localized in order to establish a national identity that would strengthen the newly independent states (p. 47).

Having recognized the primacy of language in forming a national identity that would assure their states' stability, the different states followed two different policies in their approaches to language. While some of them followed monolingual policy, others favored bi or multilingual policies. France and German's language policies, to mention but two, considered monolingual approach as the best policy that would achieve their unity and thus the stability of their states. The states through assimilation device reduced their multilingual settings to French and German respectively. As a result, they were able to establish one state, one language. In order to demonstrate such point and because of the lack of space, only France is taken as a typical case. According to Weber, the attempt of making French language as a unified force to France started in the sixteenth century. From the Village of Villers-Cotterêts, a cantonal *chef-lieu* in the *département* of Aisne, François I issued the edict of the same name, Villers-Cotterêts, in 1539, ordaining the use of the French language for all legal and judicial areas subject to his power (Weber, 1976, p. 70). Amit (2014) observed that such enact did not only promote French as official language but also cause the disappearance of the use of other local languages of France in any written act (p. 16).

The next milestone in French language policy owed its birth to the establishment of the Académie Française, created in 1635 initially as a private endeavor, but eventually turned into an "organ of the regime when it was chartered by the Parliament in 1637 (under pressure from Richelieu)" (Schiffman, 1996, p. 85). The role of the Académie Française was to "approve new words in the language, decide which the linguist structures are part of grammar, and fix the language's orthography" (Thomason, 2001, p. 41). It seems that the role of the Académie Française was to codify and regulate the use of French language. Indeed, the institution's charter stated clearly the role of the Académie in reserving French language and entailed its status as a tool of unification. The charter stipulated: "Statute XXIV-The principal function of the Académie will be to work… to endow our language with exact rules and make it pure… and capable of treating subjects in the arts and the sciences" (Delon, 2001, p. 6).

The third boost of the French language, as a language for academic writing, took place in the seventeenth century. By this time, according to Anderson (2006), the power of the Church was in decay; therefore, publishing in Latin language decreased all over Europe, giving a way to the local languages (pp. 38, 42). Indeed, by the time, French replaced Latin in education, began to rival Latin in the Church and gained the status of universal language besides Latin (Schiffman, 1996, pp. 90-93). Even though many measures were taken by the French rulers in order to make French language as the national language in France instead of Latin (the language of the Church) and other local languages (such as Patois), their efforts, to some extent, went unheeded. For instance, Hoffmann (1996) observed that

> [w]hen the Revolution broke out, France was still a heterogeneous, multi-lingual federation of provinces proud of their local laws and customs. Linguistic uniformity simply did not exist. On the basis of the survey organised by the Abbé Grégoire (…deputy of the National Assembly), it is estimated that out of a population of 26 million some 6 million could not understand French at all, the same number were more or less unable to sustain a conversation in French, and that only 3 million of the remaining 14 million spoke the language correctly.... Whereas the French monarchy had tolerated local languages, the French republic needed to assert unity in the face of what was perceived as the 'divide and rule' policy of the Ancient Régime. A general equation began to be made between the French language, the nation-state, freedom and enlightenment. (p. 79)

The statistics demonstrate that even though the French monarchy tried to reinforce French as the unifying language of French people, people were holding up their mother tongues.

However, linguistic uniformity major success took place during and after the French Revolution in 1789. According to Schiffman, "in the French Revolution [*sic*] the speakers of non-standard French dialects and other languages and dialects were seen as counterrevolutionary, as enemies of the Revolution, and that therefore these languages needed to be stamped out, annihilated, destroyed" (1996, pp. 94-95). Clearly, the French Revolution marked and reinforced linguistic-nationalism, "forms of nationalistic politics structured around the issue of linguistic distinctiveness and exclusiveness" (Georgakopoulou & Silk, 2009, p. 277). Such linguistic-nationalism is reflected and reinforced in the following framework of events. It is worth noting that many events took place in French Revolution, and the following table summarizes those that address the issue of language policy.

Date	event
1791	*Assemblée législative* hears proposals, such as the seminal one of Condorcet, to teach citizens to read and write (French?), but passes no legislation. Meanwhile in various provincial cities (Colmar, Toulon, Marseille), provincial and municipal councils establish (or recommend the establishment of) schools to teach *la langue française*.
September 22, 1792	Proclamation of the (First) Republic, and establishment of the Convention.
October 10, 1792	CPI [Committees on Public Instruction] made recommendations on what to do for citizens not knowing French, became Title III of a later decree.
October 18, 1792	CPI publishes the report of Lanthenas—to destroy the *patois,* but to tolerate the *idiomes* held in common with neighbours.
July 27, 1793	Maximilien de Robespierre becomes a member of the Committee of Public Safety…. Acting from the Committee of Public Safety, he declares language issues to be affecting the public safety (insurrection and treason are associated with other languages, etc.), and starts to formulate policy that conflicts with policy coming from the Committee of Public Instruction.
October 21, 1793	Law of *30 vendémiaire an II:* decree establishing state schools, teaching children to speak, read and write the French language.
January 27, 1794	proposal of *8 pluviose an II* at the Committee of Public Safety, enacted by decree of same date: *French shall be taught in every commune where the local people do not speak French* [*Italic in the Source*]. (Note that this is cast as a public safety issue, not an issue of public instruction, and the Committee of Public Safety is now running the government, not the *Convention*.)
July 20, 1794	*(2 thermidor an II)* —the decree of *8 pluviose* has teeth added to it: sanctions are decreed for failure to use French.

(Schiffman, 1996, pp. 96-98)

Furthermore, Abbé Grégoire, one of the proponents of "Francisation," was appointed to the Committee of Public Instruction. Acting in his capacity as a member of the Committee, he propounded his ideas about "Francisation," based on a survey he carried across France on the dialect situation. He predicted somewhat later (on 30 September, 1793 to the Convention):

> Ainsi disparaîtront insensiblement les jargons locaux, les patois de 6 millions de français qui ne parlent pas la langue nationale. Car…il est plus important qu'on ne pense en politique d'extirper cette diversité d'idiomes grossiers, qui prolongent l'enfance de la raison et la vieillesse des préjugées.

> Thus, the local jargon and dialects of six million Frenchmen who do not speak the national language will disappear gradually, for it is more important to eradicate politically this diversity of vulgar tongues than to prolong the infancy of reason and the senility of prejudice. [*Translation is mine*] (Grégoire quoted in Brunot, 1967, vol. 7, p. 142)

Schiffman (1996) observed that the first stage of the French Revolution did not innovate in establishing a linguistic uniformity. "The first *assemblées* did not innovate with regard to the language of the acts, they did not forbid anything, and did not impose anything. There is much translation from French to German, and much bilingual usage, both written and spoken" (Schiffman, 1996, p. 101). Stage two of the French Revolution saw the use of force in reinforcing French language as the national language. Just as Grégoire and others, although in extremist tone, Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac was unsatisfied of the progress of the spread of French Language. In his speech before the Convention on 27 January, 1794, de Vieuzac asserted:

> En somme, le fédéralisme et la superstition parlent bas-breton; l'émigration et la haine de la République parlent allemand; la contrerévolution parle italien et le fanatisme parle basque. Brisons ces instruments de dommage et d'erreur. Il vaut mieux instruire que faire traduire, comme si c'était à nous à maintenir ces jargons barbares et ces idiomes grossiers qui ne peuvent plus servir que les fanatiques et les contre-révolutionnaires.

> In a nut-shell, federalism and superstition speak low Breton; emigration and hatred of the Republic speak German; the counter-revolution speaks Italian and fanaticism speaks Basque. Smash these faulty and harmful instruments! It is better to instruct than to translate. It is not up to us to maintain these barbarous jargons and coarse idioms which can only be of further service to fanatics and counterrevolutionaries. [*Translation is mine*] (de Vieuzac quoted in Brunot, 1967, vol. 9, p. 181)

The French nationalists, at this stage, made the French people believe in the crucial role of language as a unifying force and an instrument in making their Revolution succeed. Schiffman reported that people believed in the idea that "[n]ational unity meant 'unity of hearts' which meant 'unity of language'. The idea that 'each nation must have one language', [*sic*] followed by the notion that 'each nation must have only one language'" (1996, p. 105). Yet, the fact that the French language gained a wide acceptance, boosted by many decrees, and used in the governmental institutions and taught at all levels of education, did not mean that it met the nationalistic purpose of making it the only language of French people. The nationalistic ideology about the "Francisation" was not achieved completely until 80 years later. This is because "France did not have *a compulsory educational system* [*italics added*] until the Third Republic, which came into being after the defeat of 1871 in the Franco-Prussian War," observed Schiffman (1996, p. 115). Schiffman further added "[t]he Third Republic harked back to the rhetoric of the First Republic, and implemented its decrees: it was anti-clerical, anti-monarchical, anti-*patois,* and it picked up where Grégoire and Barère had left off" (1996, p. 115). As such, French language would be the mother tongue of their children (Weber, 1976, p. 77). Thus, France successfully created a linguistic-nationalism and thus united the different people of the state around the idea of one language and one state.

France did not only try to build its state based on linguistic nationalism but also to follow the same policy in its colonies. For instance, when France invaded Algeria in 1830, it exercised its cultural, social, political, and economic colonialisms. The cultural colonialism encompassed the assimilation of Algerian to the French language (Queffélec, 2002, p. 23). As such, Algeria became three departments of France with French as the official national language (Holt, 1994, p. 27). In *le Monolinguisme de l'Autre, ou, la Prothèse d'Origine*, Derrida (1996) remarked that during French colonialism in Algeria, Algerians were not only impelled to speak French but that access to non-French languages was forbidden as well (pp. 56-57). Nevertheless, if France's imposition of its language on Algerians alongside other colonized people was to build a state that was unified by it language, the ex-colonized states followed the same policy though through replacing the colonizer's language by their local language(s). The next pages discuss the issue.

In contrast with France and the like states, which adopted homogenization policy through the process of assimilation, there are other states which oscillated between homogeneous and

heterogeneous policies in dealing with its multilingual settings. That is, some states adopted at first monolingual approach. When it failed, they advocated a more tolerated approach toward the state's local languages in order to achieve stable states. Among these sates, though not limited to, are Morocco (first Arabic then Tamazight), Mauritania (first French then Arabic), Algeria (first Arabic and lately Tamazight), to name but few. Because Mauritania is the case study in the dissertation, it is hold for latter discussion in the second part of the dissertation, and because of the lack of space, in this section, Algeria is the only state examined to reveal the oscillation between homogenous and heterogeneous policies in search for building a stable Algeria.

Since independence, the Algerian's elites have tried to establish an Algerian linguistic-nationalism similar to that of its ex-colonizer. According to Benrabah (2005), after independence in 1962, Algeria's leaders opted for monolingual model through the adoption of assimilation strategy. In so doing, the government came to believe in their natural right to the Arabic language; therefore, it adopted "Arabization" policy, hoping to nationalize Algeria with a single language and thus united its different population around the idea of linguistic- nationalism (p. 59). The reason behind choosing Arabic as the official language was three folds. First of all, for Arab Muslims, Arabic was the language of their ancestors and their religion (Gordon, 1985, p. 136). Secondly, Arabic was seen as the language-of-power since it is practiced by many Arab states. Furthermore, Modern Standard Arabic was seen as the language of prestige since it was spoken by the educated Algerian elite, especially the nationalists (Mostari, 2004, p. 26). In this regard, Benrabah (2005) observed that "Arabization" policy was an "identity planning through language planning" (p. 73).

The "Arabization" policy was first adopted in educational institutions since "schools function as major socializing agents and (re)produce the dominant social order or the order that the dominant group(s) aim(s) to set up" (Benrabah, 2005, pp. 65-66). After classical Arabic became the medium of primary education right after the independence, French was moved to the status of a second language in 1964 and later to a foreign language in 1976. By 1974, all education institutions, from all levels, were "arabized" beside all teacher training centers (Mostari, 2004, pp. 29-30). It is worth noting here, nevertheless, in spite of government keen efforts to implement Arabic and suppress French, chiefly through an education medium, both languages remain in existence in Algeria today (Queffélec, 2002, p. 68). For instance, most

administrative documents are still written in French and then translated into Arabic. Additionally, information in passports is written in both languages. Whereas identification cards and contracts are written in French, stamps and money are printed in Arabic (Queffélec, 2002, pp. 70-72). Furthermore, even in education the French language is still used as in the case of medicine and science faculties, to name but few (Gordon, 1985, p. 138). Clearly, "Arabization" policy was not able to annihilate French language and thus establish one state with one language.

The Algerian leaders' primary reason of adopting monolingual model, as mentioned earlier, was to build a unified state. They thought that having one language would likely reduce miscommunication, inequality, and exclusion between Algerians. Therefore, the possibility of the occurrence of conflicts between Algerians would be minimized or even wiped out (Benrabah, 2005, pp. 59-60). However, the results of adopting such policy were quite the opposite. The Algeria building was about to stop or even collapse. According to Benrabah (2005), a vicious circle of violence erupted all over Algeria, and a state of sensitivity spread between Arabs and Imazighen (p. 74). It is clear that the monolingual policy adopted by the Algerian leaders inflamed the tension between Algerians, leading to the state division instead of unity. Indeed, according to Benrabah, in 1980, when the authorities disallowed the Algerian writer Mouloud Maameri from lecturing on Berber poetry at the university of Tizi Ouzou, located in Kabylia, the principal Berber-speaking region, the entire Kabylian region went into civil defiance, causing series of violence (2005, p. 74).

Moreover, Imazighen, who represent 25% of the Algerian population, (about six or seven millions speak a variety of Tamazight) partook in political protests, massive demonstrations, and strikes during the 1960's and 1970's and their mobility increased outstandingly after 1991 (Mostari, 2004, p. 35). Evidencing this point, Queffélec (2002) reported that some Imazighen embarked on a school boycott against "Arabization" policy, which began in September of 1994. The boycott continued until the authorities agreed to recognize the status of Tamazight in February of 1995 (p. 32). However, the resistance and tension caused by the imagined linguistic unity did not fade away. Amazigh movement continued its mobility and fight against the "Arabization" policy and for the recognition of Tamazight. As such, the Algerian decision makers recognized the failure of the imagined idea of one state united by one language. Accordingly, in 2001, the Amazigh movement paid off when the government announced that the

constitution would be reformed to make Tamazight, one of the many Imazighen dialects, a national language (Mostari, 2004, p. 35). In 2015, the government heralded two institutional reforms. One of them is about the recognition of Tamazight as a national language. Briefly, it becomes clear, then, that the Algerian government was convinced of the importance of the bilingual policy in building a stable state. It can be remarked that whereas linguistic-nationalism was successful in uniting the multilingual French state, it failed in uniting the post-independent multilingual Algerian state. The importance of language in state-building is widely recognized. The language plays a crucial role in building the state as well as in collapsing it.

2.1.3 The role of language policy in identity construction

Just as we have discussed the role of language policy at the state level (the construction of national identity), we emphasize the role of language policy at the local level (the construction of ethnic identity). A fair concern of the reader may come in the form of the following question: why you have chosen ethnicity, among the numerous markers of identity, to be studied in relation with language policy? The answer is simple. As previously discussed in the definition of the term "ethnicity," it encompasses different markers, language, culture, race and religion; therefore, because of it wider scope, it was chosen among the other markers.

Language is a central feature of ethnicity since it has a simultaneous capacity to both include and exclude. For instance, "knowledge of a particular linguistic variety enables one to communicate with those who also speak that variety or quite similar varieties. Conversely, lack of that knowledge seriously constrains one's ability to do so. The ability to communicate may allow" the ties of identification and, thus, "a sense of community to develop between fellow speakers of a language" (Orman, 2008, pp. 30-31). In this light, Anderson (2006) noted that the language has the "capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect *particular solidarities*" [*italics in the source*] (p. 133). The bond between language and ethnic identity is said to be so close that Wierzbicka (1992) said "languages are the best mirror of human mind and cultures, and it is through the vocabulary of human languages that we can discover and identify the culture specific conceptual organizations characteristic of different people of the world" (p. 22). The numerous quotes rotate on reflecting the intertwined relation between language and ethnicity. In the light of the interrelationship between language and identity, Pool

(1979), somewhat laboriously, made the following conclusion regarding the relationship between language planning (language policy in practice) and identity: "Since language affects identity, an increase in language planning means that planners are having an increasing effect on identity. In other words, identity planning (whether deliberate or not) is increasing" (Pool, 1979, p. 5).

Pool's assertion, above, might not be always true in the sense that ethnic groups which make up a state would have their ethnic identity constructed in accordance with the state language policy. For instance, in the nineteenth century, the German Empire tried to illuminate Polish language. In so doing, the Germans punished children using their native tongue in school and deported parents caught furtively teaching their children Polish language; however, the Germans' efforts went unheeded, and Polish became a symbol of ethnic identity. For instance, according to Smolicz (1981), the effort to eradicate "the mother tongue and, through it, the culture as a whole, succeeded in this instance in elevating that language to a symbol for the survival of the group as a separate entity and for the preservation of its cultural heritage" (Smolicz, 1981, p. 106). It is vocalized in this citation that language policy may not succeed in assimilating ethnic groups. In contrast, language policy may lead ethnic groups to hang on their mother tongues. As such, the ethnic groups will self-construct their identity based on their languages rather than on the languages adopted by their states.

2.1.4 The role of identity in language policy

Just as language policy plays a significant role in the construction of identity, as the above discussion demonstrated, identity plays a similar role in adopting a particular language policy. According to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999), ethnic group, represented in their leaders, is the main agent of language policy (p. 37). Similarly, Chríost (2003) asserted that an "official language would be fashioned out of a dialect chosen by the bourgeois state" (p. 68). In this sense, language policy, therefore, is a reflection of a particular identity. The nature of such identity, however, should not be measured by minority/majority status. For instance, Chríost stated that

> [i]n achieving the status of official national language it is irrelevant whether the language is that of a minority or otherwise. The critical issue is whether the speakers carry sufficient political weight. So, it was the language of metropolitan revolutionary France, and of Paris in particular, the 'langue d'oui', which was

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adopted as the French language for the purposes of the revolutionary new state, even though most of its citizens did not speak the language. (2003, p. 69)

As shown above, identity particularly that of the elites is a determinant factor of language policy.

Likewise, Phyak (2016) claimed that language policy of a particular state is a manifestation of the identity of elites who have access to political and economic power (p. 208). Moreover, Hobsbawm (1990) remarked that "the mystical identification of... language, existing behind and above all its variant and imperfect versions, is much more characteristic of the ideological construction of nationalist intellectuals… than of the actual grassroots users of the idiom" (Hobsbawm, 1990, p. 57). The idea which the citations reinforce might be true. However, arguing against this idea might also be true. For instance, identity of the grass-roots influences language policy. A case in point is Algeria. As discussed earlier, even though the Arab nationalists claimed their right to Arabic and adopted "Arabization" policy, the Amazigh movement against such policy paid off. In 2016, the Algerian government conceded to the pressure of the Amazigh movement when it announced a reform in the constitution directed to language policy. Whereby, Tamazight is recognized as an official language. Put most briefly, it is clear that people's identity determines the nature of policy that is adopted by a particular state regardless of the nature of this identity, ethnic, racial, education, religion...etc.

2.2 Multilingualism

Multilingualism is a phenomenon that attracted the researchers' attention as far back as the ninth century. Until this time, monolingualism was the norm. A spate of studies has followed since then on linguistic, educational, theoretical, legal, and political aspects of multilingualism (Srivastava, 1999, p. 39). As it attracted researchers across disciplines, studies on multilingualism have grown immensely in the last few decades offering a variety of concepts (Aiello, Charnley & Palladino, 2014, p. ix). The increase of interest in multilingualism is caused by the following factors, colonialism, immigration, and economic interests (Cenoz, 2009, p. 3). In order to understand the phenomenon, its definition and typology are mapped out.

2.2.1 Defining multilingualism

Weber and Horner (2012) stated that multilingualism is "verbal repertoires consisting of more than one variety (whether language or dialect)" (p. 4). Furthermore, according to Franceschini (2009), the term "multilingualism" refers to "the capacity of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage on a regular basis in space and time with more than one language in everyday life….Multilingualism is a product of the fundamental human ability to communicate in a number of languages" (Franceschini, 2009, pp. 33-34). The two definitions exhibit that the term "multilingualism" refers to the knowledge of more than one language.

In pursuing a definition for the term multilingualism, one immediately faces a terminological issue. The terms "multilingualism" and "bilingualism" are frequently used interchangeably. For instance, Myers-Scotton (2002) remarked that the term "bilingual" refers to "persons who speak two or *more* [*italics in the source*] languages" (p. 1). Additionally, Grosjean (1992) observed that "bilingualism is the regular use of two (or more) languages, and bilinguals are those people who need and use two (or more) languages in their everyday lives" (p. 51). In the same vein, Oksaar (1983) asserted that bilingualism is "the ability of a person to use here and now two or more languages as a means of communication in most situations and to switch from one language to the other if necessary" (p. 19). Mackey (1957) too used bilingualism as a synonym of multilingualism. Addressing bilingualism, he stated "we must moreover include the use not only of two languages, but of any number of languages. We shall therefore [*sic*] consider bilingualism as the alternate use of two or more languages by the same individual" (Mackey, 1957, p. 51). The definitions confused the term "bilingualism" with the term "multilingualism" when there is a clear cut distinction between both of them. The implicit suggestion, of researchers who confused multilingualism with bilingualism, is that "several lingualisms can be subsumed under the concept of bilingualism" (Szubko-Sitarek, 2015, p. 7).

However, multilingualism can be seen as more inclusive than bilingualism. Indeed, as De Angelis (2007) observed, "in the literature on the topic [*sic*] the word bilingual can refer to *anything* beyond the L1, when in actual fact the prefix 'bi-' means 'two' hence a bilingual can only be a speaker of two languages and not a speaker of *more* than two languages by definition" (p. 5). Moreover, Weinreich (1953) wrote: "…the practice of alternatively using two languages

will be called here BILINGUALISM, and the persons involved BILINGUAL. Unless otherwise specified, all remarks about bilingualism apply as well to multilingualism, the practice of using alternatively three or more languages" (Weinreich, 1953, p. 5). Likewise, Haugen (1956) referred to multilingualism as "a kind of multiple bilingualism [*sic*]" (Haugen, 1956, p. 9). Such definitions emphasize the quantitative distinction between the two terms "multilingualism" and "bilingualism." As such, the term "multilingualism" cannot be used interchangeably with the term "bilingualism." The term "multilingualism" embraces the meaning of the term bilingualism; accordingly, the former can be used as a shorthand form of the latter.

Other terms related to multilingualism which should be clarified are monolingualism, trilingualism, quadrilingualism and plurilingualism. To start with, monolingualism refers to knowledge of one language. Trilingualism and quardrilingualism, which are new terms, have come to be used, respectively, to refer to the knowledge of three languages and the knowledge of four languages (Szubko-Sitarek, 2015, p. 7). Plurilingualism is used as a synonym for multilingualism (Aronin, 2012, p. 7). To recapitulate, the above discussion revealed that "lingualisms" are defined based on a numeric scale. The terms "monolingualism," "bilingualism," "trilingualism" and "quardrilingualism" were, respectively, defined as knowing one language, two languages, three languages, and four languages. The terms "multilingualism" and "plurilingualism" were defined as knowing more than two languages. As such and taking into consideration the distinction between the different terms, the term multilingualism is used throughout this dissertation to refer to all of them instead of repeating the awkward bi-/tri/quardri/multilingualism. There are, however, moments in the discussion, as is already evident from the foregoing, where a distinction is made between the different "lingualisms" when the reference is to be made to a precise number of languages.

2.2.2 Types of multilingualism

Literature is replete with different typologies of multilingualism, and many more typologies are constantly added because of the increase interest in Multilingualism. For example, a work that celebrated the numerous typologies of multilingualism is that of Beardsmore (1986). In his book, *Bilingualism: Basic Principles*, he discussed thirty seven (37) types of multilingualism (Beardsmore, 1986, pp. 1-42). The reason behind the diversified typology of

multilingualism is the diversified criteria and situations based on which researchers govern their typologies. From such huge number of typologies, the most discussed typologies in the literature are mapped out. For instance, based on the degree of acquisition, (level of competence a person has in languages), multilingualism is divided into three main categories: ambilingualism, equilingualism, and semilingualism. Herdina and Jessner (2002) pointed out that ambilingualism refers to native-like proficiency in all languages. An ambilingual person is a person who has native-like command of all languages s/he knows (p. 118). Commenting on ambilingualism, Edwards (1994) argued that ambilinguals constitute a "rare if not non-existent species" (p. 57). This is because, observed Beardsmore (1986), it is impossible for the speaker in question, ambilingual, to live "a double life in which all of his activities in one language" will be or can be "reduplicated in the other" (p. 7).

Equilingualism, alternatively called balanced multilingualism, refers to "equal mastery of two or more languages" (Braun, 1937, p. 115). Whereas the above discussed types of multilingualism describe higher degree of competence of languages one knows, Szubko-Sitarek (2015) pointed out to a third type that counted a person with a minimal mastery of languages as multilingual. In addition to Diebold (1964), Hockett (1958), and Macnamara (1967), Szubko-Sitarek referred to this type as semilingualism which is alternatively called incipient bilingualism (Szubko-Sitarek, 2015, p. 10). It is worth noting that some linguists went even so far when they considered that, based on the level of competency, everyone is multilingual. According to Edwards, for instance,

> [e]veryone is bilingual. That is, there is no one in the world (no adult, anyway) who does not know at least a few words in languages other than the maternal variety. If, as an English speaker, you can say *c'est la vie* or *gracias* or *guten Tag* or *tovarisch* – or even if you only understand them – you clearly have some "command" of a foreign language. (1994, p. 7)

The above discussed typologies of multilingualism, particularly the one based on the level of proficiency, illustrates that the level of proficiency required for a person to be classified as multilingual is controversial. However, through scanning the literature, it seems that the majority of linguists reject Edwards' classification. They asserted that for one to be multilingual s/he should have some degree of proficiency of languages s/he knows and not just a few words or sentences.

Furthermore, based on manner of acquisition, linguists classified multilingualism into two main types, natural multilingualism and artificial multilingualism. Manner of acquisition means how and when a person becomes multilingual. As such, Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) pointed out that natural multilingualism refers to the acquisition of languages without formal teaching in the course of everyday life as natural means of communication, and it is often acquired in the childhood. "The reason this happens may be either internal, to do with the family (that parents speak different languages), or external- societal (that the community speaks a different language from the family)" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981, p. 95). Artificial multilingualism, however, exposes a different setting in which the acquisition is done. According to Wolf, Peter, and Polzenhagen (2008), if languages are solely acquired in the classroom setting and their uses are often restricted to this sphere, the resulting multilingualism is referred to as artificial. This type of multilingualism frequently emerges as a result of bilingual education. One or two of the compulsory languages are merely a school subject for the majority of the students, or, at best, to some extent, they are mediums of instruction with rare significant role as means of communication outside the school setting (Wolf, Peter & Polzenhagen, 2008, p. 44).

Finally, based on grouping, multilingualism is categorized into two main categorizations: individual multilingualism and societal multilingualism. Grouping means the presence of languages on personal and collective levels. It is worth noting that whereas this type of classification is frequently endorsed by many scholars in French-speaking tradition (Szubko-Sitarek, 2015, p. 5), many scholars in English-speaking tradition tended not to subscribe to it (Kemp, 2009, p. 14). Individual multilingualism refers to the ability of the person to speak two or more languages (Brock, Küchler & Schröder, 2011, p. 85). Societal multilingualism refers to "a situation where two or more languages are in contact [*sic*] and some or all community members use more than one language to communicate" (Potowski & Cameron, 2007, p. 83). Such definition prods us to invite a related term, diglossia, which the reader might think of when reading the above stated definition of societal multilingualism. Diglossia is "…two or more varieties of the same language [that] are used by some speakers under different conditions" usually measured based on high/low prestige (Ferguson, 1959, p. 325). It seems that diglossia is a type of societal multilingualism since the former describes varieties of one language and the latter describes different language regardless of their interrelatedness.

There are two principles that govern multilingualism at the level of society, territorial principle of multilingualism and personality principle of multilingualism. On the one hand, the territorial principle refers to a state which consists of several language groups, yet each one is primarily monolingual. That is, the state adopts multilingual policy, but not all individuals are necessarily multilingual. A typical example is Canada which even though it has four official languages, not all Canadians are multilingual. On the other hand, multilingualism can be based on the personality principle. The state multilingualism positively correlates with its citizen. In other words, the state adopts multilingual policy, and most individuals are multilingual. India and many countries in East and West Africa are typical examples of this type (Grosjean, 1982, pp. 12-13). In fact, as McKay and Hornberger (1996) remarked, most multilingual states are governed by a combination of these two principles (p. 48).

2.3 Multiculturalism

Although a fairly new term that made its way into mainstream parlance in the 1980s, "multiculturalism" is actually a reformulation of the older concept of cultural pluralism, a term coined by Horace Kallen (1915) in his essay "Democracy versus the Melting pot" (Tunc & Marino, 2010, p. 116). The citation uncovers that both the idea and the name, multiculturalism, are the twentieth century product. Besides, it entails that the west is the sole guardian of the idea of multiculturalism. However, even though almost all scholars agree on the recentness of the name of the term "multiculturalism," it seems that some of them disagree on the previous stated statement about its time and root. They think that the idea of multiculturalism dated back to centuries ago, and its origin was not a western practice and thinking. For instance, Marcinkowski (2009) vocalized that the idea of multiculturalism began in the near East, and one of its earliest advocates was Cyrus the Great (559-529 BCE), the founding father of Achaemenid Persian Empire. He called for religious tolerance and generally an understanding of Hebrews. Furthermore, multiculturalism was echoed in the ideas of Socrates and Diogenes. For instance, when Diogenes was asked from which country he is, he replied "I am a citizen of the world." Moreover, the Roman civilization can be considered as in line with Diogenes. That is, Roman civilization united different cultures, religions, languages, and ethnic groups on a world scale (Marcinkowski, 2009, pp. 110-111).

Marcinkowski, further, pointed out that the Muslim Caliphates celebrated the diversity of cultures, religions, languages and all human attributes. In Cordoba and Bagdad, for instance, Christians and Jews' attributes, say, religion and culture, were respected and encouraged (2009, p. 112). Marcinkowski's discussion shows that the idea of multiculturalism is neither new nor western product. Rather, over centuries, each civilization has celebrated its own synthesis of multiculturalism. However, the pursuit of power and the need of recognizing the different ethnic groups that make up a state, which is constantly getting diversified as a result of immigration high rates, have led to the increase interest of multiculturalism in both academic and popular literature (Keller & Melnick, 1999, p. 78; Frazier & Margai, 2010, p. 2). In order to understand such phenomenon, the upcoming pages walk through many twists and turns, anatomizing here and yon, the meaning of multiculturalism as well as its different types.

2.3.1 Defining multiculturalism

As its name implies, multiculturalism refers to cultures in the plural. As such, it seems appropriate to approach the definition of multiculturalism by first defining the root of the term. According to Eagleton (2000), the term "culture" stems from the Latin word "*colere*," which had a range of meanings: to inhabit, to protect, to cultivate, and honor with worship (p. 1). According to Williams (1983), by the early fifteenth century, the term "culture" had crossed into English with primary meanings then in husbandry, the tending of natural growth. Williams went on to say that "culture, in all its early uses, was a noun of process: the tending of something, basically crops and animals" (p. 87). "Through a slightly different linguistic route, by a century later the term had developed an important next stage of meaning, by metaphor, and was extended to the process of human development," remarked Lago (2006, p. 41).

The term "culture" is impregnated with meanings. Indeed, "It has been estimated that, by the early 1960s, there were in excess of 160 different definitions of culture in the social science literature" (Lago, 2006, p. 40). What is more, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) uncovered three hundred definitions of culture (p. 149). However, since the space does not allow listing all of the definitions and since some definitions are echoes of others, listing three definitions, that may capture the different meanings, is enough for the purpose of the present research. According to

Tylor (1871), culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p. 1).

Furthermore, Spencer-Oatey (2008) and Schwartz (1992) respectively stated that culture is a "set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence… each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 3). Culture consists of "the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 324). The above cited scholars rotate on displaying culture as an amalgamation of assumptions, ideas, values, behaviors, conventions, morals, customs, and habits that are shared between groups of people and which are, to use Schwartz's words, "more or less learned or created." As such and having in mind that multiculturalism, as the term indicates, is cultures in the plural, it can be said that multiculturalism is a set of assumptions, ideas, values, behaviors, conventions, morals, customs, and habits that distinguish an individual or group of people from another. Otherwise stated, multiculturalism refers to cultural diversity.

Nevertheless, such definition, which is based on the terminology of the term, is not the only one that multiculturalism might mean, for, beside cultural diversity, multiculturalism refers to a public policy. For instance, in 2003, the Federal Government updated its multicultural policy releasing *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*, which maintained that Australian multiculturalism

> recognises, accepts, respects and celebrates cultural diversity. It embraces the heritage of Indigenous Australians, early European settlement, our Australian-grown customs and those of the diverse range of migrants now coming to this country. The freedom of all Australians to express and share their cultural values is dependent on their abiding by mutual civic obligations. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, p. 6)

The quotation illustrates that multiculturalism is a public policy adopted by a government toward its different people. The policy celebrates the cultural diversity of the different cultural make up of the state.

Moreover, closer to the above meaning though not identical, multiculturalism points out to an ideology or a movement that strives for incorporating ethnic diversity in the society. According to Gallagher and Lippard (2014), in the United States, multiculturalism came to refer to political and social movement and ideology that upholds the right for everyone, regardless of his or her culture. The ideology called for the redistribution of two separable foci. One is the need to redress the inequity of the distribution of economic and political power. The second is the need to protect the rights of new comers to the United States. In other words, the second focus of multiculturalism in the United States is the reinforcement of cultural pluralism (Gallagher & Lippard, 2014, p. 819).

2.3.2 Types of multiculturalism

Although there has been an inordinate amount discussion about multiculturalism in both academic and popular literature, no agreement has been achieved about its typologies. However, the following typologies are the most common ones: Liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism, and cosmopolitan multiculturalism. To begin with, liberal multiculturalism refers to a complex ideological phenomenon. It is complex because it oscillates between diversity and unity. Liberal multiculturalists embrace cultural diversity and distance themselves from universalism. By the same token, they stress that a state should bracket together its population by rules. For instance, according to Kymlicka (2009), the grounds of liberal multiculturalism hold that countries should not only maintain the recognizable "set of common civil, political, and social rights of citizenship that are protected in all constitutional liberal democracies, but also adopt various group-specific rights or policies that are intended to recognize and accommodate the distinctive identities and aspirations of ethnocultural groups" (p. 41). Clearly, liberal multiculturalism does not distinguish between civic state and ethnic state. Rather, it urges the use of both of them since it stresses civic unity within ethnocultural diversity.

Nonetheless, the ethnocultural diversity, which Kymlicka, in the above citation, exposed as a core for liberal multiculturalisms, might be both limiting and enabling. For instance, Heywood (2011) argued that liberal multiculturalists uphold that diversity "can and should be confined to the private sphere, leaving the public sphere as a realm of integration. Moral, cultural and lifestyle choices can thus… be left to the individual, while common political or civic allegiance help to bind people together" (p. 174). It seems that the type of cultural diversity, which liberal multiculturalists advocate, is, on the one hand, limiting since its manifestation is not felt outside the darkness of one's house. The liberal multiculturalists seek to integrate the different ethnocultural groups into the mainstream. On the other hand, it is also enabling since people are allowed to reserve their own cultures.

Furthermore, like liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism enfranchises cultural heterogeneities between different groups of people. According to Hesse (2000), for instance, plural multiculturalists focus on maintaining the virtues of cultural diversity in the society (p. 210). Similarly, Orlowski (2011) indicated that, similar to liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism encourages tolerance between the different ethnic groups (p. 92). The major difference between the two versions of multiculturalism is that while the liberal multiculturalists are reluctant to accept the recognition of cultural distinctiveness in public policy as discussed earlier, their pluralist cousin stresses the need for such policy (Bevir, 2012, p. 20). However, Crowder (2005) observed that pluralist multiculturalists place a limit on the range of cultures that should be publicly recognized (p. 10). Based on such assumption, some readers might accuse pluralist of having fall in the trap of liberal multiculturalists when they took unequal stand in representing all cultures. However, it is not the case, for naturally enough, with the increasing waves of immigration, it is impossible for any state to promote publicly all the irreducible cultures which it houses.

Finally, cosmopolitan multiculturalism values cultural diversity and tolerance. For instance, Vertovec and Cohen (2002) asserted that, like pluralist multiculturalism, the primary concern for cosmopolitan multiculturalists is to defend the rights of different ethnic groups and build a harmonized sphere in which all cultures could co-exist (p. 18). The distinction between the pluralist multiculturalism and cosmopolitan multiculturalism lays in the fact that the former respected and promoted only cultures that existed in a state many years ago, whereas the latter is

timelessly fluid and open to all cultures (Katkin, Landsman & Tyree, 1998, p. 51). It is clear that whereas pluralist multiculturalism focuses on the maintenance and the promotion of the diverse ethnocultures of people who are historically and geographically bounded, cosmopolitan multiculturalism is wary about such tendency. It scores on the necessity of bracketing together all cultures regardless of their historical existence in the state. It highlights the dynamic and flexibility of cultural frontiers through leaving the door open for the inclusion of new coming cultural identities. Additionally, it gives the individuals the freedom to construct their identities.

It is clear from the different meanings assigned to multiculturalism and its different taxonomies that it is a critique to universalism which, according to Beugré (2007), refers to the notion that rules and practices are universal and should apply to everyone (p. 59). Todorov (1993) offered a more clear definition of universalism when he stated that it means "the unwarranted establishing of the specific values of one's own society as universal values" (p. 1). That is, multiculturalism curses cultural assimilation and hegemony, both of which celebrate "monoculturalism," and thus it blesses the reservation and the recognition of cultural diversity. Indeed, Young (1990) came into a similar conclusion when he remarked that the multicultural enterprise is to unveil the false universalism of the dominant group and to give voices to the culturally oppressed groups (p. 59).

Conclusion

The chapter covered two main areas. The first one was a further extension to the first chapter, as it laid out the interplay between language policy and identity. In clearing the ground of this area, some concepts, namely, nation-state and nationalism were looked at. Tersely, the phrase "nation-state" refers to a particular nation living in a state. In mapping the related terminology, the chapter uncovered two definitional divides of the term "nationalism." It was clarified that nationalism refers to both an ideology and a movement. It was also revealed that there are two types of nationalism, civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. After clarifying the conceptual tenets of the heading, the chapter investigated the role of language policy in state-building, the role of language policy in identity construction, and the role of identity in language policy. In the discourse of analyzing the role of language policy in state-building, it was vocalized that language was recognized as a crucial role in a state-building, right after the decline

of the Catholic Church dominance over Europe. From that time on, rulers in building and rebuilding their states depended either on monolingual approach or multilingual approach as a strategy that would unify their diverse multilingual and multicultural people.

Beside its role in state-building, it was demonstrated that language policy plays major role in identity construction on the local level. As language is a crucial marker of identity, decision makers through language policy device affect the way people perceive themselves. For instance, French people as the name suggests identify and are identified based on their language. Furthermore, just as language policy influences identity construction, identity plays a pivotal role in language policy. It was unveiled that language policy of a state is a manifestation of its elites' identity. It was also demonstrated that the identity of the grassroots affects language policy. A case in point is Algeria. The Algerian decision makers' adoption of "Arabization" policy was derived from the fact that the majority of them were Arabs. Their recognition of Tamazight as an official language was also a response to the pressure of the Amazigh linguistic movement.

The second, final area, which was the focus of this chapter, was an investigation to multilingualism and multiculturalism. A widely recognized definition of multilingualism is that it refers to the ability to speak two or more languages. It was also illustrated that, based on different criteria, various attempts have been made to classify multilingualism into different types. Based on the level of competence, one scheme distinguishes three main types of multilingualism, ambilingualism, equilingualism, and semilingualism. Moreover, based on manner of acquisition, linguists classified multilingualism into two main types: natural multilingualism and artificial multilingualism. Lastly, based on grouping, multilingualism is classified into two main categorizations: individual multilingualism and societal multilingualism. Besides, starting with its definition, it was discovered that the meaning of multiculturalism is a context bound. However, across different contexts, it came to be known in one of the following three senses: 1) a description of cultural heterogeneity in the society, 2) an ideology or a movement which aims at maintaining ethnic diversity in the society, and 3) a public policy that, respects, maintains, and promotes all cultures. This chapter also discussed the three common types of multiculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism, and cosmopolitan multiculturalism.

Part Two: Language Policy and Identity in Mauritania: Past and Present

Chapter Three: Socio-political and
Religious Portraits of Mauritania

Introduction

No investigation of contemporary language policy and identity in Mauritania is possible without providing a socio- religious profile to the country. As such, this chapter provides a profile to Mauritania which serves as a preamble to the examination of language policy and identity in the next chapter. In so doing, the chapter starts the journey by touring the historical names of modern-day Mauritania, and special emphasis is given to the terms "Chinguetti" and "Mauritania." This is because the latter is the current name of the state and the former operates as de facto. In other words, Mauritanians are still called Chinguettis even though the country is called Mauritania.

Besides, the chapter maps out the geographical situation of Mauritania. Then, it introduces the people of Mauritania, their tribes and religion. It is important to note that investigating such points requires some appreciation of the history of the region. Indeed, reference to history is important because the recent profile of the country is a product of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial politics, for races and religion of today's Mauritania are the outcomes of the contacts of several civilizations which were carried by different people who came to the territory that is now called Mauritania.

3.1 A journey through the names of Mauritania

Over the ages, present-day Mauritania had been known by various names. Each of these names refers to modern-day Mauritania in a particular historical period and on a particular geographical space. Broadly, the names are either derived from names of particular places, groups of people or descriptions of the geographical location of the region or political organization of the people who lived in this region. Anhwi (1987) wrote that Mauritania was called the "Kingdom of Ghana." In the third century AD, the Kingdom of Ghana, which is not the same as modern-day Ghana, stretched from the center of Niger into Mauritania. Kumbi Saleh, the ruined medieval city in southeast Mauritania, was the capital of the kingdom (p. 18). Additionally, Mauritania was known as the State of Almoravids. In the eleventh century, Yahya

Ibn Ibrahim and Abdullah Ibn Yacin created the state near modern-day capital of Mauritania, Nouakchott. Later, the state expended its border across Morocco till Spain. After the death of the founding fathers, Abi Bakr Ibn Omar, brother of Yahya Ibn Omar, appointed his cousin, Yusuf Ibn Tachifin, as the new leader of the State of Almoravids in Morocco, and he returned to Mauritania where he made the city of Azouggi, which is located near today's city of Atar, the capital of the State of Almoravids in Mauritania (Salem, 2007, p. 43). Another important name was the Islamic Kingdom of Mali which prospered in the middle ages and collapsed in the 15 AD (Anhwi, 1987, p. 18).

In addition to bearing the names of such powerful states, modern-day Mauritania was known by several names that referred either to the nature of the people or the geographical location of the region. For instance, Mohamed Mahmud (2013) asserted that, in the Middle Ages, Mauritania was called "Sahra Al-Moulethamin" (the Desert of the Turbaned People). The Arabic term "al-moulethamin" refers to turbaned males in particular. It was called by this name because Sanhaja, people who lived in that region, used to wrap their heads with turbans. Historians said that they did so because of the harsh weather of the area, the wind, the heat of the sun in the summer and the cold in the winter (pp. 83-84). Such argument is reasonable since Mauritanians (males) today wear the turban for the same reasons. Furthermore, Mauritania was known as "Bilad Takrur" (the Land of Takrur or Taklur). Takrur or Taklur refers to "black" people used to live in a region that covered vast geographical areas in today's Mauritania: Taganet, Adrar, Gbla, Sahl, and Al-Hodh (Anhwi, 1987, p. 19). They are known in today's Mauritania as Hapulaar.

Moreover, "Chinguetti" is Mauritania's most famous name. Mauritanians are still called, in the Arab World, Chanaguitta (Chinguettis). The name is derived from a Mauritanian city called Chinguetti which is located in west central of the country. Anhwi (1987) wrote that the city was founded in 776 AD. After several centuries, the city fell into terminal decline, and it was rebuilt again in 1262 AD (p. 72). The roots and the meanings of the term have been controversial. According to Anhwi (1987), "chinguetti" is a Tamazight term which literally means the horses' eyes (springs of water from which the horses drink) (p. 72). Furthermore, Ahmed Mahmud (n. d.) argued that it is derived from the Arabic term "chiqitti" which is a name of decorative utensils (p. 5). One can also argue that the term might be derived from the Soninke term "senguetti" which is a name for a drink in Mauritania. The drink is a blend of grounded

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millet, water and sugar. This is because Chinguetti was one upon a time a destination to desert caravans. Because of the lack of water in the desert, these caravans might have come thirsty to the city and were given senguetti. As such, the city was referred to as the place of senguetti. Regardless of the roots of the term, the name of Chinguetti eclipsed all other names of modern-day Mauritania, for, asserted Cyr (2001), it is considered one of the most important cities of Islam. Since for centuries, it served as a center of Islamic culture and learning throughout the Muslim world (p. 330).

In the recent ages, Mauritanian writers gave their country several names: "Bilad Saiba" (the Land of Dissidence), "Al-Mankib Al-Barzakhi" (the Barricaded Shoulder), "Bilad Lemghafra" (the Land of Maghafra), and "Trab Al-Bedan" (the Land of the Whites) (Mouhandh, 2010a, pp. 10-11). The phrase "the Land of Dissidence" refers to political and social disorganization and instability and economic resources misconducts in the region at that time. The name "the Barricaded Shoulder" refers to the geographical location and racial composition of Mauritania. That is, Mauritania, on the one hand, bridges the Arab world and western sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, it is composed of Arabs and sub-Saharan Africans. The name "the Land of Maghafra" points out to the Maghafra people, Arabs who transformed the life of the indigenous people of Mauritania, Sanhaja, Baffur and sub-Saharan Africans. As discussed later, their culture and language (Hassaniya, an Arabic dialect) eclipsed some of the existing ones.

The trip reaches the last phase where the country settled on the label "Mauritania." Such label is the most arguable name between ordinary Mauritanians and intellectuals alike. Many Mauritanians are not satisfied with it because it was given by the colonizer and because it might have Latin roots. Many possible interpretations were given to the term "Mauritania." "Mauritania" is a Latin term composed of two terms "mauri," in English "moors," which means brown and "tania" which means land. In this sense, Mauritanian is the land of the Moors (Stokes (Ed.), 2009, p. 448). Some historians argued that Mauritania has a Tamazight root. For instance, according to Salem (2014), Mauritania is a Latin distortion of the Tamazight term "Atmurtnagh" which is also uttered (Murtna), meaning our land. The Imazighen in North Africa called their land by this name. Because Mauritania is part and parcel of North Africa and a region where three-quarters of its population are, the French colonizers subscribed to this name and thus made it the official name of the country (p. 179). The argument entails that Mauritania had long been

known by such name before the term even entered the Latin vocabulary, for the Imazighen used to call their lands Murtna, meaning our land, which the Romans later borrowed and used as Mauritania.

Other accounts attributed the term "Mauritania" to different origins. According to Houtsma, Wensinck, Levi-Provencal, Gibb, and Heffeningterm (Eds.) (1993), Mauritania is derived from the term "mauri" which was a name of a tribe that inhabited North Africa before the Christian era. It was applied in ancient times to describe northern-Morocco (Mauretanian Tingitana) and to the north-west of Algeria (Caesarean Mauretanian). At a later date, by extending the application, the Europeans called the Arab-Imazighen people of Mediterranean and Saharan Africa the Moors. When the Europeans had more contact with the people of this region, they started to distinguish between them. As such, the name Moors was limited to people who live in Spain particularly Muslims, Jews, or Turks of North African's origin. The name was also further narrowed to describe the nomads of the "Western" Sahara (p. 560). Unlike Salem's account, which associated the term "Mauritania" with the Tamazight term "Murtna," this account attributed the origin of the term "Mauritania" to a name of a tribe that lived in North Africa many years ago.

Unlike the pre-existing countries of North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, which were independent entities with their own names, today's Mauritania did not exist as an officially independent entity before the French colonization. Rather, there were different tribes and emirates each of which had its own region and system of government. As such, in 1903, the French officer, Xavier Coppolani, selected the name Mauritania, for the new country in the making, based on the ancient name of the roman era provinces, Mauretanian Tingitana and Caesarean Mauretanian, inhabited by Imazighen whom the Roman called the Mauri (Shoup, 2011, p. xxiii). The French naming of the country in-making was adopted by the founding fathers, Mokhtar Ould Daddah and his backers. The reason behind such adoption was stated in Ould Daddah's words as the following: "we chose to keep the colonial label Mauritania for the country because we did not want others to think that it is part of Morocco, for this reason, we did not choose Chinguetti because it was associated with Morocco's claim of its ownership in the Orient" [*translation is mine*] (Ould Daddah cited in Kleib, March 16, 2010). Such justification is weak, for people in the Arab world and Islamic world have never mixed between Moroccans and

Chinguettis. They call the Mauritanian religious scholars Chinguettis, in reference to Chinguetti, the center of Islamic scholarship. In fact, Mokhtar Ould Daddah's subscription to the colonial name indicated his absolute and blind subordination to the colonizer. To the colonial name Mauritania, Ould Daddah and his backers added two adjective modifiers, Islamic and Republic. In fact, the addition was an appreciative move from the founding fathers to reconcile between the two competing narratives: the Arab-African identities of Mauritania. This is because the two proponents of these "antagonistic" narratives agree on the Islamic identity as a unifying one to all Mauritanians regardless of their racial and linguistic background.

3.2 Geographic situation

Mauritania is situated in northwestern Africa between 15 and 27° N latitude and 5 and 17° W longitude. It occupies a total surface area of 1,030,700 square kilometers (henceforth km) (397,950 square miles) (Rubin (Ed.), 1999, p. 162) and is the fourth largest country in the Arab World and the eleventh on the African continent (The Diagram Group, 2000, p. 329). This surface area extends some 1,287 km from north to south and 1,255 km from east to west (Ould-Mey, 1996, p. 65). As the below map shows, Mauritania is located at the extreme western edge of the Arab world where the North African's civilization (Maghreb's countries') hugged that of the West Africa. The country is bordered by Moroccan Sahara to the north, by Algeria to the northeast, by Mali to the east and southeast, by Senegal to the southwest, and by a lengthy Atlantic coastline of 745 to the west stretching from the delta of the *Mauritanian-Senegal River* to the peninsula of Nouadhibou and Guera. Nouakchott, with a population of 958 thousand people, is located in the extreme west of the country and is the capital of Mauritania. Nouadhibou, which is located in the far northwest and with one hundred twenty-three thousand seven hundred seventy-nine (123,779) inhabitants, is the economic capital of the country (Taah, August 9, 2014).

The above use of the label "Mauritania-Senegal River" instead of Senegal River needs clarification. Such use was due to the fact that the former might be more adequate than the latter. There is a wide spread mistake, in the literature, particularly the one which is composed in non-Arabic writing, about the name of the river. It is mentioned as the Senegal River. Historically, the river was called Sanhaja's River (Mauritanian group of people who arrived in today's

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Mauritania hundreds of years ago and settled along the right shore of river). After that, the Takrur (Mauritanian Africans) called it Senghana. Later, after the contact with the Europeans, they adopted the Takrur's name to the river with slight change in spelling and uttering. In this way, their writing about the regions was and is dotted with the name the Senegal River (Houssein, 2001, p. 50). Additionally, Amirah-Fernández and Zoubir (2008) stated that the Portuguese explorers of the fifteenth century had named the Senegal River after the Zenega [spelled also as Zengagha and Iznaguen (Sanhaja in Arabic)] as Zenega River (p. 83). These three citations reveal that the river was named after the people of present-day Mauritania, Sanhaja and Takrur. As such, it would be appropriate if it is called Mauritania River or at least Mauritania-Senegal River. Moreover, France colonized the two countries, and on the eve of granting them their independence, it decided that the river is the marker of the border between the two countries. As such and since people of both countries have the equal right to its fish, freshwater, and fertile soil and since the purpose of naming in general refers to the belonging, the river should not be mistakenly called Senegal River. Rather, it should be called the Mauritania-Senegal River as the present study does.

Map of Mauritania: Bordering countries, major towns and administrative regions

(Boukhars, 2012, p. 5)

3.3 The people of Mauritania: A tribal profile

The Mauritanian Minister of Economic Affairs and Development, Taah, revealed the figures of the forth general census of the Mauritanian population on the eighth May, 2015. The figures show dramatically the increase of the total numbers of the population of Mauritania from one million three hundred thirty-eight thousand and eight hundred thirty inhabitants (1,338,830) in the census of 1977 to three million five hundred thirty-seven thousand and three hundred sixty-eight inhabitants (3,537,368) in the census of 2013. The total number of the population is distributed over fifteen administrative regions across the country as the following table shows. It is worth noting that the district of Nouakchott was recently, to date in 2015, subdivided into three regions: The northern region of Nouakchott, the western region of Nouakchott, and the southern region of Nouakchott. The government's rationale of such division was to minimize the pressure on the centralized administration and maintain control over the huge number of the residents of Nouakchott, which is constantly growing. It is worth noting also that each region of the fifteen regions is subdivided into several departments or districts called locally mouqataa. The total number of these departments is forty-four (44). Because of the lack of space, they are not listed.

Region	Year 1977	Year 1988	Year 2000	Year 2013	Percentage %
Al-Hodh-Charqi (the Oriental Hodh)	156721	212203	281600	430668	12.7
Al-Hodh Al-Qarbi (the Occidental Hodh)	124194	159296	212156	294109	8.13
Assaba	129162	167123	242265	325897	9.21
Gorgol	149432	184359	242711	335917	9.50
Brakna	151353	192157	247006	312277	8.83
Trarza	216008	202596	268220	272773	7.11
Adrar	55354	61043	69542	62658	1.77
Dakhlet-Nouadhibou	23526	63030	79516	123779	3.50
Tagant	74980	64908	76620	80962	2.29
Gudi-magha	83231	116436	177707	267029	7.55
Tiris-zamour	22554	33147	41121	53261	1.51

Inchiri	17611	14613	11500	19639	0.50
Nouakchott	134704	393325	558195	958399	27.09
Total	1338830	1864236	2508159	3537368	100

(Taah, May 8, 2015)

The figures sum up the number of the different people of the tribes and families that make up the population of Mauritania. Before talking about the tribes, their origin, political organization, and the time of their arrival to Mauritania, it is imperative to begin by defining the term "tribe." Across disciplines, say, anthropology and sociology, scholars are not on the same wave length regarding the definition of the term "tribe." For instance, according to Ouédraogo and Cardoso (2011), the term "tribe" refers to a "homogeneous group, politically and socially autonomous, supposed to descend from a single ancestor by unilinear filiation, organized according to a segmentary and occupying a particular territory… or, on the contrary, a sub-unit of ethnicity" (p. 113). The definition points out to social, political, and geographical unities and autonomy from other existing groups as the main characteristics of a tribe. Additionally, Majumdar (1958) stated that a tribe is a set of families, "bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation" (p. 355). It seems that the main building blocks of the tribe are common territory, culture and language. The above cited definitions of the term "tribe" reveal that there is no conclusive definition of it. As such, one may shy away from scoring on one of the pre-existing definitions, and throw out his own thoughts about the term "tribe." The concept "tribe" refers to a stable political unite the members of which are culturally, linguistically, and socially homogeneous, yet even though they are meant to be genetically so, they may not be. The tribe is named after one family around which the other group of families is united. Indeed, in Mauritania, each tribe is a multiracial hub. For instance, members of Haratin (black people whose origin is subjected to debate and who were enslaved by the other members of the tribe) are found in each tribe. Haratin do not have independent tribes. Details about their origin are given in due time.

Having defined the term "tribe," we proceed to discuss the tribal profile of Mauritania. In so doing, it is useful to highlight that after going over historical books about Mauritanian people,

one immediately recognizes that the tribe was a peripheral marker of identity in Mauritania before the coming of Beni Hassan in the fifteen century. The people who lived in Mauritania, Baffur, Sanhaja and Kwr (Black Africans), before the coming of Beni Hassan, used to define themselves based on ethnicity. Such remark was also noticed by Mohamed Mahmud (2013) who argued that the arrival of Beni Hassan marked the beginning of the spread of the culture of the tribal organization (p. 115). The tribal organization or division was maintained and preserved from that time onward.

The tribes in Mauritania can be divided into seven main categories: Sanhaja, Baffur, Beni Hassan, Chouraffa, Quraysh, Ansar, and Kwr, each of which is subdivided into sub-tribes, and each sub-tribe is segmented into several afakhd (fractions). To start with, "Sanhaja" is an arabized term of the Tamazight one "Iznaguen," a name of one of the biggest tribes that made the people of Imazighen in the Maghreb (Salem, 2007, p. 30). According to Ould-Mey, these people were "pushed southward by a climatic shift toward increasing aridity in what became the Sahara, as well as by the Roman conquest of North Africa following the end of the Punic Wars in 146 BC" (1996, p. 70). Historians did not agree on their origin. According to Anhwi, historians like Ibn Salam, Ibn Lkalabi, Zoubeir Ibn Bakhar, Tabari, Hamadani, Jarjani, Samaani, Ibn Laathir, Soultan Lachraf, Amr Ibn Youssouf Ibn Rassoul, Ibn Khalgan, Ibn Jouzei Lkalabi, Ibn Lkhatib, Fayrouz Abadi, Yaaghoubi and Abd-el-Haq Lmaliki, asserted that the tribes of Sanhaja are Arabs in origin, and they are descendent of Himyar, an Arab Yemeni tribe. Other historians also argued that they are Arabs, yet they traced them back to other Yemeni tribes. For instance, Al-Massoudi said that the tribes of Sanhaja are from Ghassan tribe. Others said that they are descendent of Lakham and Joudham who used to live in Palestine from which they travelled to Egypt and later on to the Maghreb. Other historians such as Ibn Khaldoun and Ibn Hazm doubted the Arab origin of Sanhaja. They argued that they are Imazighen (all of the historians cited in Anhwi, 1987, p. 28).

After tracing the dispute between the historians, it seems that all of them agreed that Sanhaja was a group of the inhabitants of the Maghreb named Imazighen. Sanhaja, reported Khalid Nassiri, represented two-thirds of Imazighen in the Maghreb (1854, p. 3). The difference between the historians lay in the old and new debate about the origin of Imazighen whether they are Arabs or not. Such remark was also observed by Houssein (2000, p. 39). In fact, the dispute

over their Arab origin does exist only in theory at least in Mauritania. That is, in practice, when they, Mauritanian's Sanhaja in particular, are asked about their origin, they promptly vocalize their Arab origin. They swear at and may hurt anyone who doubted their Arab origin. Based on their self identification and based on the majority of historians' accounts, we argue that the tribes of Sanhaja are Arabs.

Even though their lineage is debatable, historians collectively and resoundingly articulated their historical achievement. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, today's Mauritania was named after Sanhaja. It was known as Sahra Al-Moulethamin (the Desert of the Turbaned People). According to Houssein, the first political organization of Sanhaja took place in Aoudaghost in the half of the eight century in the form of a kingdom. The kingdom which was named after Aoudaghost competed with other neighboring political systems over the revenues of trade exchanges in the desert. The competition with the powerful neighbors, say, the Kingdom of Ghana, led to its collapse in the tenth century. From that time on, Sanhaja were politically disorganized and scattered over a century in the desert till their establishment of the State of Almoravids (Houssein, 2000, pp. 110, 111, 120). The State of Almoravids was one of the greatest nation-states in human history founded by Abdullah Ibn Yacin and Yahya Ibn Omar in the eleventh century (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, pp. 118-119). Further information about such state is held for later discussion so as to avert repetition.

The names and numbers of the tribes of Sanhaja in the present are different from their ancient ones. There were some seventy (70) tribes among the Sanhaja, the three main tribes being Gudala, Lamtouna, and Massoufa (Messier, 2010, p. 5). Some of the names still exist yet uttered differently whereas others had changed. The existing ones are mentioned in due time. The number of the tribes has witnessed a huge increasing. Sanhaja are composed of so many tribes each of which is composed of several fractions. Each one of these fractions is composed of several families. However, because of the lack of space, only few tribes are listed: Idwaech, Ideichili, Ladem, Amgarij, Tajakanet, Tendqa, and Meshdhouff. The term "Meshdhouff" is a different uttering to the ancient tribe Massouffa (Hamed, 1994, pp. 30-45).

In addition to Sanhaja, Baffur is a group of people whose origin is debatable. In his well organized historical account of the group, Houssein (2000) reported that historians split into two

main groups in tracing their origin. Whereas some of them asserted the Jewish origin of the group, others argued that they were Imazighen who converted to Judaism. Houssein scored on the latter's account, adding that they belonged to a particular Sanhaji's tribe called Zanattah. He backed up his choice by the following factors. First, the tribe of Zanattah lived in the regions namely, Draa, Taffilalet and Oasis of Tawat, which neighbored the residence of Baffur. Additionally, the tribe had a strong relationship with the Baffur. Moreover, unlike the other tribes of today's Morocco, the tribe of Zanattah was distinguished by its quick openness to, alliance and mingling with foreigners particularly Jews who lived in the mountains of Tazza, oasis of the desert, and other regions close to modern-day Mauritania. Besides, French historians and some of Mauritanian historians, who knew the region more than anyone else, asserted that Baffur people belong to the tribe of Zanattah. What is more, the place where Baffur planted palms was called Ojnatah which is close to the name of the tribe Zanatta. That is, this place might be named after the tribe. After reinforcing the Sanhaji's origin of the Baffur people, Houssein remarked that while some of them fused into other Sanhaji's tribes, others constructed their own: Nmaddi, Imragn (Houssein, 2000, pp. 74-80), Teizega and Ahl Bou-Ahweifer, added Hamed (1994, p. 38).

Additionally, the third tribal category is Beni Hassan, sons or descendants of Hassan. Unlike Sanhaja, all historians assert that Beni (sons) Hassan are a group of Arabian origin and a branch of Beni Maaqil. However, their kinship is subjected to debate. According to Salem (2007), while some historians traced them back to Jaafar Ibn Abi Taleb, the uncle of the Prophet Mohamed, others argued that they are descendants of Kaab Ibn Al-Harth who belongs to the Yemeni tribes of Medhaj (p. 80). As mentioned earlier, they arrived in Mauritania in the fifteenth century. When they entered today's Mauritania, they fought with some tribes of Sanhaja, which were united under the leadership of Nasser-din, in a battle called Sharr Babba (1671-1677). They defeated Sanhaja. As a general rule, the winner imposes his or her conditions on the looser. In this way, Beni Hassan dominated the political, economic, and social life of Mauritania after the war. In the social life, for instance, Hassaniya, the language of Beni Hassan, replaced the Sanhaji languages (Azir and Tamashek) and became the language of the majority of Mauritanians. In the political life, Beni Hassan created emirate systems of governing which controlled the tribes of

Sanhaja. The tribes of Sanhaja abandoned wars and concentrated on Islamic teaching (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, pp. 133-136).

Beni Hassan were five: Abdarahman, Dleim, Ouddai, Oubeidoulah, and Hamou. From each of these sons descended several tribes and fractions. First, Abdrahman (called Rhamna) had many sons, and they lived in Mauritania till the Saadi King, Mohamed Cheikh, who they helped to extend his control over a large area of Mauritania, brought them closer to him in Marrakech as a reward for their help. Yet, few of them remained and still exist in today's Mauritania among whom is Ejeman (Mouhandh, 2010a, p. 265). From the second son of Hassan, Dleim, descended Awlad Sinan and Awlad Emaaraph. The third son of Hassan is Ouddai. He had three sons, namely, Aaroug, Rezg, and Maqfar each of whom had many sons. To start with, Aaroug had three sons: Younes, Aagba, Dawed from each of these sons branched out several tribes. The fourth son of Hassan is Oubeidoulah who had one successor, Ideiqb. The fifth, and the last, son of Hassan is Hamou. The members of the tribes who trace their roots back to Hamou are called Lbrabich (Hamed, 1994, pp. 64-88). The majority of Lbrabich started to move from Timbuktu to Bassiknou (town near the border of Mali) because of the ethnic tensions that erupted in Mali in 1990. With the recent ethnic tensions that developed into a war in Mali in 2013, many people of them moved to Bassiknou.

The third category of the Mauritanian's people is Chouraffa (alternatively called Ashraf). The term "Chouraffa" is plural of Cherif which refers to a descendant of the Prophet Mohamed. Chouraffa are divided between two categories, Idrisids and Alawites, and they represent a small portion of the people of Mauritania. There is no record of the exact time of their arrival to Mauritania. However, the circumstances that led some of them to emigrate from Morocco to Mauritania are widely discussed in the literature. For instance, according to Al-Khazaala (2011), the Idrisids who ruled Morocco for two hundred and sixteen years were overthrown in 925, by Fatimid (alternatively called Al-Oubeidiyin). Being afraid of their influence in the region, one of the leaders of Fatimid, named Moussa Ibn Al-Aafiya who governed Fez, hunted down the Idrisids. As a result, several families of them cleared off the city of Fez, and dispersed in all directions (p. 131).

According to Hamed (1994), seven hundred groups of them fled to the mountains of Qmara, twelve groups flitted to the mountains of Tadlah, seven groups escaped to Feguig, four groups headed to Sijlmassa, five groups went to the extreme Sus, five groups moved toward Draa Valley, and eight groups went to Saqiya Al-Hamra. Later on, after the fall of the State of Almoravids, some families of Chouraffa, who helped the Almoravids and were afraid of Almohads, moved from Morocco and joined their cousins in today's Mauritania. However, to keep the present study on the right track, only families that headed to Mauritania are listed. The majority of Chouraffa in today's Mauritania came from the groups that dwelled in Saqiya Al-Hamra. Other families are descendants of Charif Moulaye Ali Sijlmassi. All of these families are descendants of Idris the second son of Idris the first son of Abdullah Al-Kamel son of Hassan Al-Mouthana son of Hassan Ibn Ali son of Ali Ibn Abi Taleb and Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet Mohamed (p. 66).

Before spelling out some of the families of the Chouraffa, few remarks are worth noting. First, almost all Chouraffa are organized in the form of families instead of tribes. As such, they are genetically homogenous. That is, they descend from a single ancestor. Second, the majority of these families are scattered between the Mauritanian's tribes because the tribe was and still is a strong system of governing in the Mauritanian society. As such, they are referred to as Chouraffa of X or Y (imaginative tribes). The members of the tribes called them our Chouraffa. Some families of Chouraffa are named after their geographical location. For instance, they are called Chouraffa Nema or Walata, yet the neighboring tribes call them our Chouraffa. Third, as aforementioned, because Chouraffa in Mauritania are organized in the forms of families, spelling all of them out requires much space which the present study lacks. Accordingly, the following list includes only some of them.

As said earlier, Chouraffa in Mauritania are divided into two groups: Idrisids and Alawites. To start with, the Idrisids include the sons of Abdulah Ibn Idris, sons of Amr Ibn Idris, and sons of Al-Qassem Ibn Idris. Similar to their Idrisids' cousins, Alawites include several families: Abna (sons of) Moulaye Ali Charif Sijilmassi and Abna Abd Al-Qader Al-Jeilani. Abna Cherif Moulaye Ali Sijilmassi include Ahl Al-Boukhari and Ahl Al-Mourteji who are further divided into the following families: Ahl Moulaye Ismael (lives in the tribe of Ijeman), Ahl Moulaye Ahmed Ibn Sidi, Ahl Moulaye Aly, and Ahl Sidi Bala, Ahl Al-Mourteji (kept the name

of their grandfather) (four of them live in Bassiknou with the tribe of Awlad Dawed). Besides, Abna Cherif Moulaye Ali Sijilmassi include Ahl Moulaye Al-Hassan (in the regions of Nema and Bassiknou with the tribe of Awlad dawed). Besides, Abna Abd Al-Ghader Al-Jeilani include but not limited to Ahl Taleb Ejwed and Ahl Moulaye Al-Aabas (Hamed, 1994, pp. 66-84).

The fourth group of the Mauritanians is Qurachi-Ansari. As the name suggests, they got the label from their ancestral link to the tribes of Quraysh (the tribe of the Prophet Mohamed) and Ansar (the descendents of the "Helpers" of the Prophet Mohamed). According to Salem (2007), they came to Mauritania as families and individuals from the south of Morocco in the sixth century (p. 123). The tribes that have lineage link to Quraysh encompass but not limited to Medlesh, Kenta, Terkz, Lemhajib, Laqlal and Ideiboussat (Hamed, 1994, pp. 50-61).

The fifth, and the last, group is African. They are locally called Kwr (singular kwri). There is no recorded time of the exact time of the first existence of Kwr in modern-day Mauritania. They are an extension of their cousins in Senegal, Mali, and West Africa in general. The Kwr of Mauritania are divided into three categories each of which is subdivided into different tribes: Fulbe, Soninke and Wolof. To begin with, the people of Fulbe are divided into two main groups. One group kept the inclusive name of the tribe Fulbe, and the other group is self-referred Halpulaar, meaning people who speak Pulaar, their language. Both groups speak the same language and include the same tribes. As such, the term "Halpulaar" is used throughout the dissertation to refer to both groups. Mauritania was once named after the people of Halpulaar. As aforementioned, it was called the land of Tuklur or Takrur, the alternative name of Halpulaar. The people of Halpulaar live mainly in the region of Trarza and are distributed between two main tribes: Ororbeh and Tabeh. The tribe of Orarbeh includes the following fractions: Bah and Jalu. The tribe of Tabeh encompasses the fractions of Sow and Bari (Kamara cited in Mouhandh, 2010a, p. 240). Furthermore, the people of Soninke (known also as Sarakole) belong to one of the following tribes: Jawara, Sisse, Sekhna, Jabirre, Gsma, Soumarre, and Camara. They live mainly in the region of Ghidimagha (Hamed, 194, pp. 105-106). Besides, the people of Wolof include the tribes of Juf, Gaye, Deing and others (Sow, 3-24-2016, personal communication).

3.4 Religion

Out of the fourth states around the globe which reflect their Islamic nature in their official names, only one, Mauritania, rightly gets the name. That is, All Mauritanians are Muslim. The first attempts to spread Islam westward from Egypt into North Africa took place in the reign of the second Muslim Caliph Omar Ibn Al-Khatab (634-644). The governor of Egypt, Omar Ibn Al-Aas, walked his army along the coast of North Africa, capturing Cyrenaica in 642 and Tripoli in 643 (Abun-Nasr, 1987, p. 28). For many years, Islam did not go out of the walls of the regions because of the refusal of the Caliph Omar to grant his governor, Omar Ibn Al-Aas, the authorization to proceed westward. The Muslims resumed their march during the reign of the Caliph Othman Ibn Aaffan (644-656). Othman oriented his newly elected governor, Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarh, in Egypt to preach the word of Islam in the western regions. Reinforced by distinguished army that included the best fighters, chouraffa, companions, and their sons such as Al-Hassan and Al-Houssein (the grandsons of the Prophet), Abdullah Ibn Aabbas, Abdullah Ibn Jaaffar Ibn Abi Talib, Abdullah Ibn Omar, and Abdullah Ibn Aamr Ibn Al-Aas, Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarh opened many towns in today's Libya and Tunisia such as Burgha and subaytilah (Mohamed Mahmud, 2013, pp. 40-41).

The turning point of the "Islamization" of North Africa, however, took place in the reign of Omeyah Caliphate (661-750). Oghbah Ibn Nafi was appointed to spread Islam in North Africa by the newly appointed governor of Egypt Omar Ibn Al-Aas who governed it in the reign of the Caliph Omar. Ibn Nafi led his army till he landed in Tunisia where he built the town of Al-Qayrawan in 670. He made it a center of his army and a military advanced base from which he launched his several military campaigns across North Africa till he reached the Atlantic Ocean (Ould-Hanana, 2009, p. 30). The Islamic expansions did not stop with Ibn Nafi's death. In contrast, many military campaigns swept the North African regions, pushing southward to modern-day Mauritania. For instance, the famous leader, Habib Ibn Abi Obeida Ibn Oghbah Ibn Nafi, arrived in Chinguetti in 734 with his army. On his way, he drilled many wells, among which the ancient well of Chinguetti, that would connect the south of North Africa with its north. The network would benefit the Muslims in all parts of the regions in terms of economic and politics. In other words, the Muslim merchants would be able to travel easily to new regions and had their goods sold and their religion spread. The Muslim merchants played, in fact, an

influential role in having the people in modern-day Mauritania embrace Islam. Some of the Merchants inhabited the regions of Chinguetti and Walata, and people willingly started to enter Islam individually and collectively (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, p. 115; Salem, 2007, p. 36), and thus displacing the religions which were followed by the people of the region. The tribes of Sanhaja were followers of Zoroastrianism (Salem, 2007, p. 35), a religion named for its founder, the Persian Prophet Zoroaster, who lived in Persia about 600 years BC. In Zoroastrianism, fire is the supreme symbol of God, Ahura Mazda (Dinshaw & Contractor, 2003, paras. 2, 3, 29). The tribes of Baffur (group of Sanhaja), however, were adherents of Judaism (Houssein, 2000, p. 73), "a monotheistic religion based on principles and ethics embodied in the Hebrew Bible" (Hughes, 2010, p. 7).

The spread of Islam continued and almost all members of the tribes of Sanhaja embraced Islam. What politics and economic had divided was stuck back together by religion. That is, the tribes of Sanhaja were united by religion after they had been scattered in the desert. Additionally, the newly converted people started a mission of islamizing the rest of the people of the regions, say, Kwr who were polytheists (Houssein, 2000, p. 293). Polytheism is a less problematic substitute for what monotheists called "paganism" or "idolatry". It is the belief in and adherence to a religion that worships multiple deities (Johnston, 2007, p. 17). In so doing, the Sanhaja established the Kingdom of Sanhaja, named for Sanhaja, in the end of the eighth century A.D. The most famous king of the kingdom was Touloukakin. After his death, his son, Tiloutan Ibn Touloukakin, became the king and raided many towns of Kwr. As a result, twenty of Kwr Kings used to pay him tributes. Besides, many people of Kwr converted to Islam. After Touloukakin's death in 817, his son, Olatan, followed his steps in preaching Islam. Tamim Ibn Olatan was crowned after his father's death. However, after few years of his rule, the authority of the kingdom crumbled. The chiefs of the tribes overthrew him in 918, putting an end to the kingdom. From that time on, the tribes of Sanhaja were divided again and remained so over the first decades of the tenth century A.D. However, the division did not last for many years. In the first half of the tenth century, a Sanhaji's leader named Abdullah Ibn Tifawet (one of the sons of the ex-royal family) called for restoring the unification of the tribes of Sanhaja. His call was appreciated by all tribes which flocked to his person over twenty years swearing allegiance (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, pp. 115-16).

The tribes reaped the fruits of their alliance under the leadership of Tifawet. For instance, they were able to regain the city of Aoudaghost, the trading center of the Kingdom of Ghana, from Kwr and made it the capital of the newly declared kingdom and named their kingdom after it. What is more, they pushed their ways southward, captured many cities of the Kingdom of Ghana and convinced many people of Kwr to espouse Islam. The Kingdom of Aoudaghost remained powerful over the first decades of the second half of the tenth century (951-971) before it eclipsed in the face of the Kingdom of Ghana. The latter retook the city of Aoudaghost and subjected the tribes of Sanhaja to its rule. However, the tribes did not approve living in the cities governed by the governors of the Kingdom of Ghana; therefore, they retreated to the north in attempts to reorganize their efforts, restore their union, face any possible threats and abuses, and regain the city of Aoudaghost from the Kingdom of Ghana, yet although they were unified under the leadership of Mohamed Ibn Tifawet, known as Ibn Abdullah Tifawet, in 1034, the city of Aoudaghost remained under the rule of the Kingdom of Ghana. Tifawet was succeeded by Yahya Ibn Ibrahim in 1037 (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, p. 117), his brother in law (Salem, 2007, pp. 41-42), and with this name, new era in the Islamic history was about to reborn.

The newly elected chieftain of the tribes of Sanhaja, Yahya Ibn Ibrahim, went to Mecca for pilgrimage in 1039, and on his way back in the same year, he stopped in Al-Qayrawan and expressed concern over un-Islamic practices of his people to the Maliki's teacher Abu Amran Al-Fassi (Salem, 2007, p. 43). Two brackets should be opened to introduce the term Maliki and its related terms and the teacher, Al-Fassi. The term "maliki" refers to an adherent of the Maliki School which is one of the four major schools of religious law, Shafea, Hanafi, and Hanbali, within Sunni Islam. Sunni refers to the corpus of Islamic customs and practices which are founded on the reported words and deeds of the Prophet Mohamed and the four "rightly guided" Caliphs, Abi Bakr Ibn Abi Qouhaffa, Omar Ibn Al-Khatab, Othman Ibn Abi Aaffan, and Ali Ibn Abi Taleb. Belief in the words, deeds, and the successorship of the first three Caliphs is one factor that distinguishes the Sunni sect from their cousin Shea. The latter believes that Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, the Prophet's son-in-law and cousin, was the rightful successor of the Prophet Mohamed and that his sons should succeed him (Koenig & Al Shohaib, 2014, pp. 27-28).

The Maliki School was formed by the end of the eight century by Malik Ibn Anes. Like the other Sunni schools, its laws are based primarily on the Quran then on the Hadith. In the

absence of evidence on an issue from the first reliable references, the Quran and the Hadith, the scholars consult the Ijmaa (consensus on the practices of Islamic behaviors, rituals, legal transactions and habits by the companions of the Prophet, their successors, scholars and Muslim community). The Maliki school is distinguished from the three other Sunni Schools by prioritizing the consensus of the people of Medina in particular (city in Saudi Arabia where the Prophet's Mosque and his tomb are situated) because the Prophet spent most of his prophetic time there. For Shafia, for example, Ijamaa did not refer to a regional consensus, but rather it refers to the entire Muslim community (Neusner & Sonn, 1999, pp. 56-57).

After defining "maliki" and related terms, we can introduce Al-Fassi whom Ibn Ibrahim had asked his help. As his name suggests, he was originally from Fez. He was rooted out from the city for criticizing the injustice of the rulers of the Bani Maghrawa (tribe of Zanatta confederation in Morocco). "They were Kharijite Muslims, heretics according to Abu Imran." After flying from Fez and before dwelling in Al-Qayrawan, Al-Fassi "had studied with some of the great scholars of Muslim law in the East, and he had developed a conservative theology and radical political theory" (Clancy-Smith, 2001, p. 60). After telling him about his people's shallow practices of Islam, Ibn Ibrahim then implored the latter to send with him one of his students to teach his people the true Islamic teachings (Salem, 2007, p. 43). Before making up his mind, Al-Fassi, through his translator, Jawhar Ibn Sakoun, questioned Ibn Ibrahim who spoke Tamazight dialect and whose Arabic competency was very limited, quite thoroughly. He asked him about their tribes, the size of their people, the influence of him on his people, and the school of law they followed. Ibn Ibrahim's answers moved Al-Fassi. He sensed nobility, honesty and righteousness in Ibn Ibrahim and believed that he would be a potential agent in spreading Malikism and thus defeating heresy (Messier, 2010, p. 4).

Al-Fassi agreed to help and told his students Ibn Ibrahim's invitation, but all of them declined the request. Al-Fassi sent Ibn Ibrahim with a letter to his former student, named Wajjaj Ibn Zelu, who lived in Melkous the region of Sus in Morocco, asking him to send a teacher to the tribes of Sanhaja (Salem, 2007, p. 43). Ibn Zelu asked his student, called Yahya Ibn Yacin, to accompany Ibn Brahim in order to teach his people a more orthodox Islam. The latter unhesitantly approved his teacher's request. The reason behind Ibn Yacin's approval is that, on his way back to Sus from his seven years study in Cordoba, he observed the lack of unity among

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the tribes of Imazighen and their un-Islamic practices. The events which he pitied led him to seize the opportunity and go with Ibn Ibrahim, vowing that he would be able to rectify the un-Islamic practices of the tribes of Sanhaja and unite them (Messier, 2010, p. 5).

Short after their arrival, the new Islamic scholar was rejected by some tribes of Sanhaja and asked to leave. The tribes of Sanhaja disapproved his creed which was mainly characterized by rigid formalism and a restrict adherence to the dictates of the Quran and the Hadith. For these tribes, the Islamic laws were harder to follow (Husain Syed, Akhtar & Usmani 2011, p. 136). It seems that the tribes superficially claimed Islam rather than faithfully felt it. Ibn Yacin's rejection and dismissal did not prevent him from pursuing his religious teachings, for according to Hamed (2000), Ibn Yacin, Ibn Ibrahim and seven of their devoted followers retired to a secluded place known as the Island of Tidra on the modern-day Mauritanian's Atlantic coast between Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. On the Island, they built a fortified religious center which they called "ribat" (p. 45), a name which historians disagreed upon its meaning. To name but few, Salem (2007) asserted that it means daawatou al-haq which literally means the righteous call. Mohamed Al-Haddi (1994) wrote that it refers to the people's commitment to staying in the place (p. 118). In addition to such definitions, one can argue that the term "ribat" refers to "steadfast righteousness." That is, after departing from the heretic tribes of Sanhaja, Ibn Yacin and Ibn Brahim decided to raise gatherings of people who were devoted to the Islamic teachings from practicing the tenets of Islam to embarking on Jihad (holy war).

Many people of Sanhaja started to arrive in the island vowing for learning the true Islamic teachings. Ibn Yacin "imposed a penitential scourging on all converts as a purification, and enforced a regular system of discipline for every breach of the law, even on the chiefs. Under such directions,…[they] were brought to excellent order" (Husain Syed, Akhtar & Usmani 2011, p. 136). By the end of the first year, the teachings of Ibn Yacin had attracted almost one thousand (1000) followers (El Hareir & Mbaye, 2011, p. 409). One day, Ibn Yacin summoned his students and preached the importance of Jihad and named them after the ribat as Al-Mourabitoun, Almoravids (Hamed, 2000, p. 46). As the root of the term "ribat" was previously mentioned, the term "Almoravids" suggests spiritual and military loyalty and commitment to the guidance of the Quran and the Hadith. To illustrate an excerpt of his speech, he preached

Almoravids, you are many; you are the chiefs of your tribes and the heads of your clans. The Almighty has reformed you and guided you on the straight path. You must thank Him for His blessings by exhorting men to do good and to shun evil and by striving in the cause of God. (Messier, 2010, p. 12)

The speech singled out the start of the religious movement. Ibn Yacin and Ibn Ibrahim made a division of power between them in accordance with their specialties. Whereas the former was the Imam (the religious leader), the later was the military commander. Their main force was "infantry, armed with javelins in the front ranks and pikes behind, formed into a phalanx and supported by camelmen and horsemen on the flanks" (Husain Syed, Akhtar & Usmani, 2011, p. 136). The leaders launched series of wars against the infidels (Kwr) and the heretics (the tribes of Sanhaja). According to Hamed (2000),

In July 1051 AD, Abdullah Ibn Yacin started the first war against Gudala, defeating and killing six thousand men of them. Then, he battled Lamtouna, Massouffa and the other tribes of Sanhaja till they surrendered. Things were set straight. Quran was recited. Alms were given. Prayer was performed. In the meantime, Almoravids lost the Gudalian Yahya Ibn Ibrahim. His death time was in the year 1055 A.D. [*Translation is mine*] (Hamed, 2000, p. 46)

After Ibn Ibrahim's death, a new leadership to the confederation of Sanhaja was to be appointed according to the customary tribal nomination. The three powerful tribes of Sanhaja, Lamtouna, Massoufa and Gudala, assembled, and after long discussions and debates of the strength, generosity and wisdom (the characteristics based on which the leader is nominated) of each of the distinguished figures of the tribes, they reached an agreement. They nominated Yahya Ibn Omar, chief of the tribe of Lamtouna. In this way, the leadership of the confederation of Sanhaja shifted from the tribe of Gudala to the tribe of Lamtouna. Ibn Yacin shared his power with the newly nominated chieftain, Ibn Omar. On these bases, Ibn Omar became the military leader of Almoravids (Clancy-Smith, 2001, p. 61). Having uniting the confederation of Sanhaja under the Flag of Islam and after reorganizing their leadership, the Almoravids started to create a well organized and well trained army from the tribes of Sanhaja.

In 1054, Ibn Yacin and Ibn Omar received a very touching letter from Ibn Yacin's teacher, Ibn Zelu, and other Islamic scholars of Sijlmassa and Draa, requesting them to come and set them free from the injustice of the Bani Maghrawa in general and their leader, Massoud Ibn Wanoudin, in particular. Ibn Yacin summoned the leaders of Almoravids, read the letter to them

and asked their rede. They collectively said "oh learned shaykh, this is an obligation on you and on us. Let us be off with God's blessing!" Ibn Yacin ordered them to prepare themselves to Jihad (Dajani-Shakeel, Messeir & Ehrenkreutz, 2011, p. 22). In an army of thirty thousand men, Almoravids defeated the army of the Bani Maghrawa and killed their leader. They entered the city of Sijlmassa and austerely applied the principles of Islam. They established a military base in the city and put a Lamtouna's tribesman in charge of it, for unwilling to lose control over the desert, Almoravids returned back to modern-day Mauritania (Messeir, 2010, pp. 14-15).

Coming back as winners and with a powerful army that was strengthened by the weapons, horses and camels they took from the rulers of Sijlmassa, the Almoravids launched a war against the Kingdom of Ghana. They ravaged the city of Aoudaghost in 1054. They controlled all the roads which connect Aoudaghost with Sijlmassa. Aoudaghost was the far south city Almoravids reached during the time of Ibn Yacin (Messeir, 2010, pp. 15-16). In fact, Ibn Yacin kept only his army inside the walls of Aoudaghost, but he sent preachers trained in the ribat to the cities of the Kwr within the Kingdom of Ghana, vowing to convert them into Islam; as a result, Ahrabi Ibn Rabis, the King of Takrur, and his people embraced Islam. The success of his preachers' mission encouraged him to send another group of preachers to other regions. The King of Sala entered Islam, and he, too, started to send preachers to the neighboring towns particularly "pagans" of Qalambu. He invited Almoravids' preachers and requested them to teach his people Islam, so he could have trained preachers who could help in spreading Islam. Group of preachers from Hapulaar, Wolof and Mandju from the land of Takrur started their mission in spreading Islam in the surrounding areas. In this way, Islam started to gain grounds in the region (Mazrui, Dikirr, Ostergard, Toler & Macharia, 2009, section. 3).

The tranquility and the mission of preaching Islam to the Kwr were disturbed by upheavals in the city of Sijlmassa. According to Hamed (2000),

> The people of Sijlmassa bewray the Almoravids. Abdullah Ibn Yacin called upon the Almoravids to conduct a second attack on them. Bani Sanhaja betrayed him and headed to the sea coast. Thus, Abdullah was forced to distribute the army of Almoravids. He put Yahya Ibn Omar in charge of a section of the army and asked him to bulwark in the mountain of Lamtouna against the seceding Gudala, and he appointed his brother, Abi Bakr Ibn Omar, as the leader of the part of the army which was in Draa, and asked him to continue Jihad…. It seems that some

elements of the Sudan [known as the Kingdom of Ghana], Almoravids'
neighbors, participated in this battle. Lebi Ibn Warjabi the head of Tekrour was
with Yahya Ibn Omar in this besiege. Similarly, the name of Emedjoun was
reported among those who were with Abi Bakr Ibn Omar in Draa. [*Translation is
mine*] (p. 47)

Having distributed his army, Ibn Yacin headed to Abi Bakr Ibn Omar whom he had
ordered to carry on Jihad in the surrounding areas of Draa. On his way, he recruited tribesmen
from the Bani Sarta and the Bani Tarja. After his arrival, he joined his force with those of Abi
Bakr Ibn Omar. However, short after his arrival, Ibn Yacin learned about the defeat of Yahya ibn
Omar's force and the death of his person with much other of his warriors. Ibn Yacin returned to
Adrar where the battle took place between Lamtouna and Gudala. He buried the dead and
marched to Tamulet, a place near Sijlmassa, where he regrouped and rebuilt his force and named
Abi Bakr Ibn Omar as the commander of the Almoravids' army in the place of his dead brother
Yahya Ibn Omar. Having reorganized themselves, Ibn Yacin and Abi Bakr Ibn Omar conquered
Sijlmassa and all the region of Sus (Messeir, 2010, p. 17). In the Atlas Mountains, they battled
Berghouta, which followed a heretic established by Salah Ibn Tarif three hundred years earlier.
They were completely conquered by them, and Ibn Omar took the defeated chief of Berghouta's
widow as his wife. Nevertheless, the Almoravids lost their great leader, Ibn Yacin, in this battle
(Husain Syed, Akhtar & Usmani 2011, p. 137).

On Friday 7 May, 1070, Abi Bakr Ibn Omar started to build the city of Marrakech. One
day when he was observing its walls, Abi Bakr Ibn Omar learned about a revolt that erupted in
the desert, today's Mauritania. He made a division of his power. He named his cousin, Ibn
Tachifin, as his viceroy and appointed him on the garrison of Sijlmassa. Because he did not
know that he would survive the war, Ibn Omar divorced his wife, Zaineb, and told Ibn Tachifin
to marry her because she was mubaraka (brings good luck). In 1072, Ibn Omar suppressed the
revolt and brought Gudala back under his control. During his stay in the desert, he learned that
Ibn Tachifin rebuilt a powerful army and established his control over a vast area of Morocco. Ibn
Omar felt that he might lose control over him; therefore, he returned back to Marrakech to
resume power in the same year 1072. Ibn Tachifin learned about his superior's coming, and he
consulted his wife, Zaineb. She told him that Ibn Omar was a devout man who hated bloodshed.
He should receive him and give him money, clothes, foods, camels, horses and all the necessary

needs which the desert lacked. She also told him to treat him with courtesy and tell him about his offer (Hamed, 2000, pp. 49-50).

In so doing, Ibn Tachifin moved, with a huge number of his army with camels that carried what his wife had told him, to receive Ibn Omar before he reached Marrakesh. When they met, Ibn Tachifin did not come down of his horse to greet Ibn Omar. When he asked him why did he bring his army? Ibn Tachifin said that his army was for those who disagree with him. Ibn Omar also asked him why he brought the camels. Ibn Tachifin then told Ibn Omar that they were his gift to him. The camels carried the necessary needs that would help him in the desert. From the events, Ibn Omar realized that his cousin was unwilling to give up power. To avoid conflict, Ibn Omar addressed him: "Oh Ysuf! I cannot set myself apart from helping our brothers in the desert. As such, I did not see a suitable person to govern Morocco but you. I made myself yours and declared you its ruler" [*translation is mine*] (Hamed, 2000, p. 50). This was the beginning of the division of the State of Almoravids, Ibn Tachifin in modern-day Morocco and Ibn Omar in today's Mauritania. Since Islam in Mauritania is the focus of this section, the role of Almoravids in spreading and rectifying Islam in Morocco, part of Algeria and Spain is skipped over.

Ibn Omar went back home accompanied with Abi Bakr Mohamed Ibn Al-Hacen Al-Mouradi, who was considered as the second teacher of Mauritania after Ibn Yacin (Hamed, 2000, pp. 50-51), Ibrahim Al-Amewi, Abdrahman Ibn Abi Bakr Rakaz (the grandfather of one of the tribes in today's Mauritania called Terkz), and Abdullah, the grandfather of Zainabiyin (Anhwi, 1987, p. 65). There is no mention in history about the life of the two last scholars; however, accounts of the two first ones have been written by several historians. Ibn Al-Hacen Al-Mouradi had studied Maliki law in both Al-Qayrawan and Andalusia. Abu Bakr made him ghadi, judge, in Azouggi (Messier, 2010, p. 86). Ibrahim Al-Amewi was a judge and a teacher. He accompanied Ibn Omar on his trips (Anhwi, 1987, p. 65). Almoravids made the city of Azouggi, which is located near today's city of Atar, their capital. The city still houses Almoravids' famous fortress and the grave of the second teacher, Ibn Al-Hacen Al-Mouradi, who died in 1096 (Salem, 2007, pp. 43-44). Ibn Omar launched series of wars against the Kingdom of Ghana, ending its position as a commercial and military power in the region in 1077 (Buck & Jones, 2004, p. 18). He set up besides every mosque of the twelve mosques of the city of Kumbi Saleh (the capital of Ghana) a school for teaching the Quran, Hadith, Arabic language

and sciences. The Ghanaian people appreciated Islam and attended the schools (Mazrui, Dikirr, Ostergard, Toler & Macharia, 2009, sec. 3).

For a decade after the death of Ibn Omar, Ibn Al-Hacen Al-Mouradi continued to preach Islam in the schools, and the Almoravids continued to have some influence over the tribes of Sanhaja (Messier, 2010, p. 86). The political and geographical State of Almoravids came to grief in 1148 and was fragmented into different emirates (Mohamed Mahmud, 2013, p. 173). With the collapse of Ghana, the religions of the people of Kwr diminished as well. That is, "the Almoravids conquest of Ghana institutionalised the process of Islamization as the elites of Ghana converted and Islam spread generally through the population…. In the [Mauritania]-Senegal River Valley, Takrur and Sila appear to have become largely, if not completely Muslim" (Clancy-Smith, 2001, pp. 44-45). Expending Clancy-Smith's account, El Hareir and Mbaye (2011) wrote that from the fall of the Kingdom of Ghana right up the following empires, the people of the modern-day Mauritania have been converted to Islam (p. 325). It can be entailed that the people, particularly Kwr, were not forced to convert to Islam since they retained Islam after the collapse of the State of Almoravids. In contrast, they were truly Muslims.

The Islamization and retention of Islam by the people of today's Mauritania, as the above cited historians reported, were due to two main interrelated factors: the military expansion and the Islamic texts preaching in schools. While the former ended with the collapse of the State of Almoravids in the desert, the latter continued to play its role in rooting the Islam in the society through educating generations that would in turn educate others. The schools which the Almoravids had built in the city of Kumbi Saleh and other cities would be known, after the coming of Beni Hassan and the spread of their dialect Hassaniya, as Al-Mahadher. The term "al-mahadher" is plural of al-mahadhra and has two main possible roots. Anhwi (1987) argued that it might be derived from the term "al-ihtidhar" (stockyard), for people used to enclose themselves in a yard and their animals in a stockyard. In this sense, people who came to their teacher used to sit in a yard, so their schools were named after the setting. The term might also be driven from the terms "al-houdour" or "al-mouhadara" (respectively presence or lecture). One can argue that there is another possible root of the term "al-mahdra." As earlier mentioned, the earliest schools were first built in Kumbi Saleh and Azouggi, the capital metropolises of Almoravids' State. In this regard, Anhwi also argued that all schools were located in the metropolises of the region

such as Chinguetti, Walata, Aoudaghost…etc (1987, p. 66). Since the schools were first located in metropolises, it can be argued that they were named after them. That is, the term "al-mahadhra" was taken from the name of the metropolises, for its Arabic translation, al-hawadhir, is close to it.

The Almoravids' print was not only seen in eclipsing the heresies and idolatry but also in bringing their followers within the sphere of a single guiding Islamic doctrine that is called Sunni particularly the Maliki's School, for, as aforementioned, the leaders of the Almoravids' State rotated on recruiting Maliki's teachers. For instance, the founding father of Almoravids, Yahya Ibn Ibrahim brought Ibn Yacin who was a Maliki scholar. Similarly, Abi Bakr Ibn Omar brought Ibn Al-Hacen Al-Mouradi and Ibrahim Al-Amewi who were Maliki adherents. As a result, all modern-day Mauritanians were introduced to Islam through the Maliki School, and from those days on, the Maliki School remained the only school among the other Sunni Schools which all Mauritanians follow. It should be noted that the Maliki School includes two main disciplines: jurisprudence (in Arabic Fiqh) and belief (in Arabic Aqidda). The people of modern-day Mauritania were and are schooled in both of them; as a result, the Almoravids united the people of the region around both the Maliki's jurisprudence and its belief, Salafism (Salem, 2007, p. 47). Salafism, which is derived from the term "salaf," is Arabic word which means adhering to the Prophet and his companions' deeds and beliefs. Such deeds and beliefs, however, should not be mistaken for some of the current violent movements that claim the adherence to Salafism.

Even though the Maliki's jurisprudence survived the ages and remained the only school in Mauritania, its belief, Salafism, was adjoined by two other beliefs, after the fall of the Almoravids, all of which still exist in today's Mauritania: Ashaarism and Sufism each of which falls within the Sunni Islam. To begin with, according to Sirajul Islam (1967), Ashaarism is a rite founded by the Iraqi Islamic theologian Abu Al-Hacen Al-Ashaari (873-935) after whose name the rite was named (p. 226). It appeared as a rejection to Al-Mutazila's rite which depends heavily on both reason and allegory in their interpretation of Islamic texts. In the meantime, it distanced itself from Salafism. That is, the Ashaarits sometimes inclined toward Mutazilits and inmost times they sided with the Salafistes. They tread a pathway in the middle between the two. For instance, while the Al-Mutazilits asserted that even though God sees, hears, knows, he has neither body nor space, Al-Ashaarites, like Salafists, believed in the literal meaning of those

verses in the Quran which mentioned God's having body (hands, face, etc) and space (throne) without asking how and without drawing comparison with those of human beings (in Arabic, bila keifa w la teshbih) (Naseem, 2001, pp. 33-34).

Because the period of time following the Almoravids was shrouded in obscurity, it is impossible to date for the arrival of Ashaarism in today's Mauritania, for as mentioned earlier, the Almoravids State was divided into two states: one in today's Morocco under the governess of Ibn Tachifin and the other in the desert, which would be known later as the land of Chinguetti, under the rule of Abu Bakr Ibn Omar. Even though historians recorded accounts of the former because it spread in almost all directions, the latter was almost ignored. However, an attempt to find out the date of the arrival of Ashaarism in today's Mauritania can be made. According to Ben Sidi Mohamed Moulaye (2008), Alshaarism prevailed in Morocco with the rule of Almohads (in Arabic Al-Mouwahidin) who imposed it on the people of the region (p. 33). Since today's Mauritania and Morocco have had mutual influence on each other in terms of politics (Almoravids' State) and religion (the Maliki's Salafism), as previously discussed, one can argue that Ashaarism infiltrated today's Mauritania's setting ever since the Almohads' reign. Yet, the arrival of Ashaarism was not welcomed by the people of the region; therefore, it did not spread as it did in Morocco until centuries later. According to Salem (2007), the rationale behind the Mauritanians refusal to Ashaarism in earlier days was their refusal to the Ashaarites' use of science of discourse, known also as Islamic scholastic theology (in Arabic ailm al-kelam), in interpreting some words and phrases in the Quran. They viewed it as a tool which might distort the true meaning of these texts. As such, they refused it so that to blackout any possible pretext (in Arabic sedou darae) (p. 49). Another reason was proffered by Ibn Khaldoun who argued that Mauritanians were people of the desert like those of the land of Hijaz, today's Saudi Arabia. As such, they scored on the Maliki School which was developed in that land instead of the Ashaarism rite which was developed in Iraq (Ibn Khaldoun cited in Salem, 2007, pp. 49-50).

The attempts of curbing the spread of the Ashaarism, however, did not last forever, for the belief of Ashaarism appeared as a competing one with that of the Salafism in the late 17th century. The professor of the Islamic Beliefs in the Islamic University of Ayoun in Mauritania, Ould Babeh (2014), asserted, in a lecture organized in the University, that Al-Mokhtar Ibn Bouna, 1688-1848, was the first religious scholar to announce the adoption of Ashaarism rite. He

was criticized by many of his students and other opponents. Anhwi (1987) reported that among the opponents was the distinguished Salafist's scholar Lemjeidri Al-Yaqoubi who accused him of underestimating, innovating and reversing from religion to the science of discourse. After several intense debates, Al-Yaqoubi and Ibn Bouna came into agreement with everyone hanging on his views. Ibn Bouna wrote many books about the Ashaarism rite among which was his seminal book, the Entreaty (in Arabic al-wassila). His books and his students played a major role in the survival of the Ashaarism rite in today's Mauritania. Some of his students, who became distinguished scholars after his death, were Sidi Abdullah Ould Al-Haj Ibrahim and Abdullah Ould Al-Haj Himahou Allah Al-Qalawi (pp. 196-197).

Beside Ashaarism, Sufism was another addition to today's Mauritanians' beliefs. The terms "sufi" and "sufism" are adopted from Arabic. There is a considerable agreement among scholars that the terms "Sufi" and "Sufism" probably came from "suf," the Arabic term for "wool." In this sense, the term "Sufi" was originally used to designate "wearers of woolen garments" (Cornell, 2007, p. 249). The people were particularly renunciants and pietists. They wore the woolen garments to distance themselves from the life of the other renunciants and the majority of Muslims who wore fashion clothes, say, linen and cotton. On these bases, it can be said that the term "Sufi" refers to someone who self-deprive and self-marginalize himself/or herself as a moral and religious devotion. After its coinage in the eight century to describe individual cases, the epithet "Sufi," in the ninth century, became so popular in Baghdad when group of people or a movement subscribed to its above described religious connotation and thus named themselves after it (Karamustafa, 2007, pp. 6-7).

From the term "sufi," the word "tassawoof," which is the Arabic equivalent of the English term "sufism," was derived to describe the different doctrines and devotional practices of this group. The doctrines, which "revolve around efforts to purify the soul and that in most cases presume the existence of charismatic personalities capable of mediating between ordinary humans and the world of spirits and ultimately God" (Masud, Salvatore & Bruinessen, 2009, p. 149), are manifested in organized brotherhoods, generally known as orders (in Arabic tariqa, plural touruoq which means paths). Each of these orders has its own repertoire of *dikr*, prayers, litanies, and spiritual techniques that may, to some extent, overlap with its cousins. The dikr, which literally means chanting God's names and other short phrases that praise Him [and his

Messenger Mohamed], is accompanied by bodily movements and breathing techniques. Other spiritual techniques include listening to music and poems (Masud, Salvatore & Bruinessen, 2009, p. 127). The Orders are most of the time named after the founding saints and/or devout Sheiks. Each order is headed by Sheik, whose many functions encompass leading prayers, performing rites that "heal" the sick, guiding the disciples and offering them "baraka," "a supernatural gift that has been defined variously as a blessing or mystical power" (Berry, 1990, p. 63).

Since the number of the Sufi orders is so huge to assemble, only those that have a remarkable existence in Mauritania, namely, Qadiriya, Tijaniya, and Shadhiliya, are briefly discussed. Before laying out each one of the orders, it is important to note that the membership of each one of these orders cuts across all ethnics and tribe-based identity. To begin with, according to Anhwi (1987), the Qadiriya was founded in Iraq by Abd Al-Qader Al-Jilani (died 1167) and carried into Morocco by Abi Medyan Shaib Al-Ansari Al-Andalussi (died 1197). This Sufi order was disseminated in Mauritania by Sheik Sidaamr Ibn Sheik Sidahmed Al-Bekkay Ibn Sidi Mohamed Al-Kenty Chinguetti who took it from Sheik Mohamed Abd Al-Karim Lemqili Tilmsani Twati (died 1533). After its coming to today's Mauritania, the Qadiriya developed into two main branches: Bakkeayya and Fadiliya. The Bakkeayya was named after its founder, Sheik Sidaamr Ibn Sheik Sidahmed Al-Bakkay. The branch spread widely with the preaching of one of its influential Sheiks called Sheik Sidi Al-Mokhtar Al-Kenty. (pp. 120-121). The Fadiliya, the second offshoot of the Qadiriya, took its name from its founder Mohamed Fadel Ibn Mamin Al-Qalqami (died 1879) (Anhwi, 1987, pp. 121-122). Thanks to the Fadiliya's Sheiks preaching and to those of the Bakkeayya's, the Qadiriya has been the largest Sufi order in Mauritania, noted Berry (1990, p. 63).

Furthermore, the Shadhiliya has gained an important presence in Mauritania. Founded by Abu Madyan Shuaib (died. 1197), the Shadhiliya derived its name from that of his disciple, Abu Hacen Ali Al-Shadhili (died. 1258) (McCloud, Hibbard & Saud, 2013, p. 187). According to Anhwi (1987), the Sufi order was exposed first to Moroccans and later to Mauritanians by the two great Moroccan scholars: Ahmed Zarouq (died 1493) and Mohamed Ibn Nasr Darai (died 1626). The two Moroccan scholars introduced many Mauritanian religious figures to this Sufi order. For instance, whereas Mohamed Chinguetti received his formal affiliation when he visited Morocco namely from the Moroccan scholar Ahmed Zarouq, Sidi Mohamed Ibn Sidi Othman

Ibn Sidi Omar Al-Wali Al-Mahjoubi, Sidi Abdullah Tinwajiwi, and Al-Mokhtar Ibn Al-Moustapha were introduced to this order by Mohamed Ibn Nasr Darai. The scholars went back to Mauritania and established their own al-Mahadher which attracted many people (pp. 122-123).

The third major Sufi order penetrating today's Mauritanian landscape was the Tijaniya. It was founded by the Sheik Sidi Ahmed Ibn Mohamed Salim Tijani who died in Fez in 1815. Although the brotherhood was relatively young by comparison with the Qadiriya and Shadhiliya, its expansion in Mauritania was very rapid. The fast diffusion was attributed to the two brothers Ahmed Ibn Al-Imam and Mohamed Ibn El-Imam (nicknamed Salick), Sidi Abdrahman Ibn Ahmed Chinguetti, Sidi Mohamed Taleb Jeddou Ibn Sheik, the Judge of Chingeutti, and Sheik Mohamed Al-Havedh Ibn Al-Mokhtar Ibn Habib, all of whom were direct disciples of the founder of the Tijaniya order (Anhwi, 1987, p. 123).

Conclusion

In this chapter, an attempt was made to pursue some of Mauritania and Mauritanians' identity markers. In so doing, it was revealed that modern-day Mauritania has been known over the centuries by several names based on several identifiers. The geographical space of modern-day Mauritania was known as the Kingdom of Ghana, the State of Almoravids and the Kingdom of Mali. Additionally, Mauritania has been named after its people as the Land of Takrur, the Desert of the Turbaned People, the Land of Maghafira and the Land of the Whites. It was also named after the city of Chinguetti. Furthermore, today's Mauritania bore the name of the Land of Dissidence, a description to its political disarray, and the Barricaded Shoulder, a description to its geographical location that separates the Arab and the African Worlds. In relation to the last name, this chapter demonstrated that Mauritania is bordered from the north by Morocco, northeast by Algeria, east and southeast by Mali, southwest by Senegal and west by a lengthy Atlantic coastline of 745 km. The country occupies a total surface area of 1,030,700 square km.

Furthermore, the chapter showed that the people of Mauritania are composed of different races each of which is organized into several political, cultural, economic and social units which are known as tribes. The Arabs were composed of the families of Chouraffa, the tribes of Beni Hassan, Quraysh, Sanhaja and Baffur. It is worth noting that the racial origin of the two latter

tribal groups was contested. However, the majority of historians scored on the Arab origin of Sanhaja. While some historians traced the lineage of Baffur all the way back to Jews, others argued that they were descendents of Zanatta, a group of Sanhaja. Besides, a group of sub-saharan Africans inhabited Mauritania. This group is further subdivided into other groups, Hapulaar, Soninke and Wolof, each of which has several tribes. This racial heterogeneity of the country is the most homogeneous one on the dimension of religion. As soon as Islam was introduced to them by Oghbah Ibn Nafi and his successors in the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth centuries, the people of modern-day Mauritania started to embrace Islam individually and collectively. With the end of the State of Almoravids in the twelfth century, the people of the region overthrew all their religions, Judaism (adhered by Baffur), Zoroastrianism (adhered by Sanhaja) and Polytheism (adhered by Kwr), and became Sunni Muslims of the Maliki School of jurisprudence. Even though the Maliki's jurisprudence survived the ages and remained the only Islamic school in Mauritania, its belief, Salafism, was adjoined by two other beliefs, namely, Ashaarism and Sufism, all of which fall within the Sunni Islam and still exist in today's Mauritania.

Chapter Four: Language Policy
and Identity in Mauritania

Introduction

Some of the most remarkable features about human beings which distinguish them from other species are their self-awareness, ability to self-reflect and self-communication through linguistic means. Just as they distinguish human beings from other species, the nature of these features set apart some human beings from their fellows. Indeed, anyone with a passing knowledge of the Maghreb past and present knows that it is painted with an ethnic diversity that sets it apart from its cousins in the rest of the Arab world. The countries are composed of both Arabs and Imazighen.

Further uniqueness is to be found within the Maghreb itself. Mauritania, for instance, is composed of African and Arab ethnicities. It is this unique ethnic makeup which is investigated in this chapter. Besides, national identity is discussed. Moreover, the linguistic map of Mauritania is charted out. In other words, the different languages that are used in the state are discussed in terms of their use and domains. Additionally, the language policies which have been adopted in modern-day Mauritania are thoroughly investigated.

4.1 Identity in Mauritania

Mauritania is, par excellence, the site of all possible identities human beings have perceived themselves and have been perceived by others. Every Mauritanian has an unwritten identification card of himself or herself that carries the name of his or her father, family, fraction, tribe, race, ethnicity, caste, and region. One can adventure and say that unlike the convention of identification where identity is context-bound, as previously discussed in part one of the study, all of the identities work simultaneously. In other words, a Mauritanian is likely to embroider himself or herself or be embroidered by others with all of the above mentioned markers of identity upon introduction to others. Nevertheless, because of the lack of space and because ethnic and national identities are the most inclusive ones, their discussion is enough for the purpose of the study. Their inclusiveness is clear in the reached understanding of the two identities in the first part of the present study. Ethnic identity, it was argued, is the use of some

elements by an individual or a group of people to distinguish themselves from another individual or groups of people. The elements include, but not limited to, language, race, religion, and culture. National identity embraces the primacy of the geographical and political entity of the state over other markers, say, tribe, and ethnicity to name but few. National identity is a sense of belonging to the state as a cohesive whole.

4.1.1 Ethnic identity

Chronicles dated back the existence of what would be known hundreds if not thousands years later as Bedan and Kwr in present-day Mauritania to the 3rd century CE (Pazzanita, 2008, p. 264). Before discussing ethnic identity of each group and emblazoning the significance of ethnic identity in modern-day Mauritania, it is imperative to begin with the appellations of "Bedan" and "Kwar." "Bedan" (singular Bedani) is a Hassaniya term which literally refers to Whites though many of them are "Caucasian." According to Salem (2007), the term "Bedan" was used first by Arab Geographers in the 10th century to distinguish people who are known today as Bedan from "Black Africans" who lived in the south of modern-day Mauritania. In the 17th century, the term described only the Nobles as a result of a strict stratification of the society. The two casts, Igawn (*griot*s, or bards) and Maalmin, called also Issenaa, (blacksmiths) were called Kehlan (Blacks) (p. 109) even though their skin color was not black. As such, the people were certainly called so as a way of degrading them since the casts are one stratum above the bottom of the social ladder of the Moorish society. Short after, Salem added, the term restored its old use, and all people who spoke Hassaniya regardless of their color and social stratification were called Bedan (2007, p. 109). It is observable that non-Arab writers used the terms "Moors," "Maures" and "Arabs" to refer to the Bedan.

The term "Kwr," (singular Kwri) has received no etymological explanation in both oral and written Mauritanian literature. Bedan used it to refer to "Black Africans." However, we looked for close or remote possible ancestry that might give clue to the root of the term "Kwri" and its meaning. As a result, we came across the Moroccan and Algerian's term "Gwri" (plural Gwr) which is an orthographic neighbor with "Kwri." The two terms also are used by their speakers to refer to the distinguished other, Europeans by Algerians and Moroccans, and Africans by the Bedan community. As such, it can be entailed that the words are cognates.

Furthermore, given the fact that the cultural, religious and racial borders between Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania are imaginary, it is likely that the Moroccan and Algerian's term "Gwr" had crossed freely into the linguistic repertoire of the Mauritanian's dialect, Hassaniya. The likelihood of such sameness is extended by the fact the linguistic borders between the countries are fragile. Based on the evidences, one can argue that the two terms "Gwr" and "Kwr" are etymologically twins.

The historical etymology of the cognate terms, Kwr" and "Gwr," is not clear. They have neither Arabic nor Tamazight origin. As such, Heath's argument that the term "Gwr" is probably related to Turkish Gâwur, which means infidels, is possibly true, for the Ottoman Turkey had a direct influence on Algeria. Thus, the term was adopted first by Algerians and crossed freely into Moroccans (1989, p. 278) and Mauritanians. It is worth noting, however, that the meaning of the term witnessed a considerable change. For instance, the meaning of the Moroccans and the Algerians' form of the Turkish term "gâwur" is based primarily on racial axe instead of the Turkish religious one which may also exist but in a peripheral position. In other words, the term "Gwr" means primarily White Europeans or Westerners. Likewise, the Bedan community used the term "Kwr" to refer to a distinguished race as their cousins in Morocco and Algeria do. Nevertheless, they used it to refer to a different colored people, afro-Mauritanians or "Black" Africans in general. It is worth mentioning that color is not the only marker of people who are called Kwr, for within the Bedan community itself, there is a group called Haratin who are Blacks. This is to say that the term "Kwr" refers to not only people who are Blacks but also whose mother tongue is not Hassaniya, say, Fulani, Yourba, Swahili, to name but some. The Turkish religious meaning of the term is not assigned to it by Bedan at least in the present. This is because all of Mauritanian Kwr people are Muslims. This does not mean that the term was not assigned the Turkish religious meaning in the past. In fact, it might be because the Kwr had embraced Islam at the hands of the Bedan. The term might have been used in the religious sense of the Turkish in the past.

Another term related to Bedan is "Haratin." The term "Haratin" (singular Hartani) is controversial in both origin and meaning. Salem (2007) wrote that it came from the Tamazight term "Ihradan" which refers to a hybrid person whose father is from Imazighen and mother from al-Ahbash (the Ethiopians) or vice versa (p. 108). Others said the term is derived from the phrase

"al-Hur al-Thanni" or second class (second group of free people) (Shoup, 2011, p. 115). Regardless of the root of the term, Haratin is a name for black people who are fully assimilated by Arabs in Mauritania. They have no ethnic identity outside that of the Bedan. They belong to the same tribe as the Bedan. They are called in literature "Black Moors." As a side note, Haratin are not found only in Mauritania. In fact, they live in all North African countries yet with different names. In Moroccan Sahara, they are called Haratin, but in the other parts of Morocco, they are labeled as Aawaza. In Algeria and Tunisia, they are called Kehalish (Blacks). Just as in Mauritania, Haratin are fully assimilated by people of the countries. As such, they are either Arabs or Imazighen.

Having traced the roots and meanings of the terms "Bedan" and "Kwr," we discuss separately the particularities of the two ethnic groups, Bedan and Kwr. To begin with, in the absence of the exact number of each ethnic group, the existing statistics are only approximate. Officially, the Bedan group represents 80% of the total population. The UN documents confirm the statistic (Ould-Mey, 1996, p. 71). Such statistic reflects the number of three main sub-ethnic groups namely, Beni Hassan, Sanhaja and Haratin, that formed the ethnicity of Bedan. The essentials of the construction of the current ethnic identity of Bedan are dated back to hundred years ago or so. The achievement of the Hassani/Arab/Bedan's hegemony was accomplished by both means of consent and coercion. When Beni Hassan arrived in present-day Mauritania in the 15th century, the Sanhaja people received them with the utmost courtesy. Such welcome was due to two main factors, religion and race. The Sanhaja people traced their roots back to the Arabs as mentioned in the previous chapter. As such, they viewed Beni Hassan as their cousins. In such situation, intermarriage was a normal habit between the two parties. The Sanhaja people were also Muslim and so were Beni Hassan. Since Arabic is the language of the Quran, the Sanhaja people tried to learn Hassaniya. Similarly, Haratin followed the steps of Sanhaja who were either their masters or neighbors.

However, the final stage of the foundation of the Bedan ethnic identity took place after the battle of Sharr Babba (1671-1677). The six years war, which was launched by the tribes of Sanhaja, was a fight back to the political and cultural domination of the tribes of Beni Hassan. In other words, the war represented the tribes of Sanhaja's final attempt to preserve their cultural and political identity. However, the result was the utter defeat for the tribes of Sanhaja; therefore,

they ended up politically under more subdue and subjection as the severe terms of the Peace of Tin Yedfad showed. "They pledged forever to abandon 'the sword for the book'" (Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, p. 3). They pledged to desert war and devote themselves to Islamic teaching and learning. As such, they became known as the tribes of Zawaya (Arabic term which means corner or school). Their counterparts bore the name of the tribes of Arabs. "Arabness" came to mean devotion to war.

Additionally, the tribe of Beni Hassan fully assimilated Sanhaja and Haratin culturally. For example, Salem (2007) argued that the tribes dropped their languages which, according to Houssein (2000), were known as Tamshkit (spelled also Tamashek and henceforth used) and Azir. The former was a codified language, and its alphabetical script was called Tifinagh. Tifinagh inscriptions are found today in Mauritania inscribed on rocks (p. 203). The nature of the latter was controversial. According to Devisse (Ed.), among many other researchers, Azir was a pidgin language. It was a mixture of Tamashek and Soninke, language of afro-Mauritanian group, and used for communication between Imazighen and the Kwr (1983, p. 529). Ould Al-Amin Chinguetti, nevertheless, insisted that before the arrival of Beni Hassan, Imazighen were divided linguistically into two parts. One spoke Tamashek, and the other spoke Azir. Thus, Azir was just a variety of Tamashek (1989, p. 511). Such account might be the adequate one, reported Houssein (2000), since the term "Azir" is a distortion of the name of an Imazighen tribe called Ajir. Azir was the language of the tribe of Ajir from which it got its name (pp. 203-204). Going back to the assimilation of the tribes of Sanhaja, Salem (2007) argued that instead of wrapping the head, leaving only the eyes uncovered, the tribes' men of Sanhaja adopted the tribes' men of Beni Hassan's way of dressing, leaving the face uncovered. Broadly, Sanhaja hugged Beni Hassan's way of life, dress, marriage, housing... etc (pp. 108-110). The way of life marks the life of the Bedan community nowadays. Drawing on this point, De Chassey remarked that

> [l]a société maure traditionnelle comporte tous les caractères objectives que nous avons reconnus à l'ethnie: mode de production et genre de vie analogues ; territoire commun à peu prés délimité (le trab el Beizani, la terre des maures) ; structures tribo- familiales et stratification sociale se retrouvent partout ; enfin, traits les plus apparents, langue commun (les « hassanophone »…), unité culturelle et historique fortement marquée.

The traditional Moorish society is endowed with all objective characteristics which we have known about ethnicity; mode of production and similar way of life; roughly limited common territory (the land of the Moors); tribal and familial structures and social stratification are shared by all. Finally, the most obvious traits [are] common language (the 'hassanophone'), cultural unity and a strongly marked history. (*Translation is mine*) (De Chassey, 1993, p. 153)

The Kwr ethnic group forms 20% of the total population of the country (Ould-Mey, 1996, p. 71). Similar to the Bedan, the Kwr ethnic group is an amalgamation of three main sub-ethnic groups, Soninke, Wolof and Halpulaar. The common threads between the sub-ethnic groups are skin color, place of residence, economic activities, and shared history. For instance, all of them are black. Besides, the communities live mainly on the shore of the Mauritania-Senegal River. Moreover, in contrast with the Bedan ethnic group whose members are mainly traders and herders, the Kwr ethnic group depends heavily on farming their fertile lands. In addition, the sub-ethnic groups are an extension of other ethnic groups in the neighboring countries: Mali and Senegal. Indeed, in terms of culture, linguistics and history, one can say that they are Senegalese and Malians who are relocated. In this regard, Minahan (2002) observed that the three sub-ethnic groups that make up the Kwr ethnic identity "share a common history and a kinship system in which family is preserved by social interaction, shared religious observances, and rituals celebrating the stages of life" (p. 974). Unlike the Bedan, the Kwr ethnic group does not have a common language, for every sub- ethnic group has its own language. In a nutshell, it can be said that the Kwr ethnic identity embraces all aspects of ethnicity apart from the linguistic one.

Even though the two main ethnic groups, as discussed earlier, were formed hundred years ago as a result of racial, political, religious, and geographical factors, the idea of a Mauritanian ethnic identity remained relative before the coming of the French colonization. Geographical, political and religious factors were the reason behind placing ethnicity in peripheral position. To begin with, the two ethnic groups were geographically separated. For instance, whereas the Kwr ethnic group lived mainly in the south of the country particularly on the borders with Mali and Senegal in the southeast and south respectively, the Bedan ethnic group inhabited the center, the north, the east and the southwest of the country. The reason behind such distribution is the geographical location of Mauritania as it links North Africa and West Africa. In other words, the Bedan ethnic group is an extension of their cousins in Morocco and Algeria, and the Kwr ethnic group is also an extension of their cousins in Senegal and Mali. In relation to the geographical

factor, the two ethnic groups were not brought together under the same political system in the sense of modern-day firm nation-state system. The Kingdom of Sanhaja, for example, as the name suggested, was founded by the Bedan community, and it ruled mainly over the community. Similarly, the Rulers and the Ruled of the Kingdoms of Ghana and Mali were also mainly Kwr. For instance, the kingdoms were founded respectively by Soninke (Middleton, 2005, p. 872) and Maninka (Simpson, 2008, p. 100) (related to Soninke) (Cavendish, 2007, p. 1320) who constituted the bulk population of them (Diakité, 1989, p. 136).

Furthermore, emirates and tribal presidencies, which, as Mohamed Mahmud (2013) argued, were created after the fall of the State of Almoravids 1148 (p. 173), were ethnically constructed. Their rulers were also appointed from within. The Kwr people, who were organized in tribal system, had also their rulers appointed from within. The tribal political system which cut across the two ethnic groups limited the possibility of identification based on ethnicity. Extending such account, Ould Daddah (2007) pointed out that friendships and alliances were formed across ethnic groups, and wars, which irrupted in the region, were not ethnic in nature. Evidencing his point, Ould Daddah wrote that the tribe of Ahl Sidi Mahmud, in the regions of Asaba and Gorgol, formed alliance with group of Soninke. The interethnic tribal alliance acted at times against tribes of Soninke while in others against tribes of Bedan and interethnic tribal alliances. Besides, in the region of Trarza, the tribe of Awlad Ahmed formed an alliance with some tribes of Wolof in Wallo. The political interethnic tribal alliances were accompanied also by social ones. That is, interethnic marriages, which foster kinship and shore up social ties beside the material one, occurred between the Bedan and the Kwr. The famous marriage of the Emir Mohamed Lehbib (Emir of the emirate of Trarza) from Princess Jambat (daughter of the Emir of Wallo) was a case in point (Ould Daddah, 2007, p. 190). To sum up, it is clear that ethnicity was a peripheral marker of identity in pre-colonized Mauritania.

In addition to geography and politics, religion played an important role in lessening the identification based on ethnicity. This is because the very nature of Islam gives primacy to faith over ethnicity and any other possible axes of identity: "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted" (Quran, chapter. 49, verse. 13). The religious precedence, which

acted as a unifying force, prevailed in pre-colonial Mauritania, observed Ould Daddah (2007, pp. 128-129). This was because the Mauritanian communities were religious to the core. Besides, Sheikdoms operated strongly beside tribal presidencies and emirates. Some tribal presidencies namely maraboutic tribes were and are even organized in the form of Sheikdoms. Their rulers were selected based on their vast knowledge of the Islamic teachings. The Sheikdoms, noted Ould el-Bara (2004) and Ould Ahmed Salem (2012), which cut across all ethnic groups, have served as spiritual anchors to both Kwr and Bedan, and their words were respected by all. As such, they were able to lock in ethnic loyalties and activate the religious one.

The establishment of the French foothold, in present-day Mauritania, in 1905, however, singled a new phase of the people's identification. Instead of identifying mainly based on tribe, people added ethnicity as a strong marker of their identities. As a general knowledge, France like many other colonial powers followed the policy of "divide and rule." In Mauritania, for instance, France was keen to drive a wedge between Bedan and Kwr identities by vigorously constructing several narratives pitting Kwr against Bedan. Indeed, the French colonizer planted the seeds of ethnicity in the minds of the Kwr people through psychological, political, social and economic narratives. In other words, through the multiple narratives the colonizer raised ethnic consciousness. This is because ethnic consciousness "needs to be created for it to have an impact on collective consciousness" (Bangura, 1994, p. 5). To begin with, the French colonizer propagated the possible hegemony of the Bedan on the political, cultural and economic life of the country in making. The reason behind composing the nefarious plot was to instill fear and insecurity in the minds of the Kwr. At the same time, the colonizer promised an unconditioned protection to the Kwr people from the Bedan (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, p. 158). In other words, the "civilized Whites" preached to the "Black Africans" that they were in danger from the "monstrous uncivilized brown Arab people," and they would protect them. Saving some people from their co-nationals is a colonial rhetoric which was reiterated by all colonial powers. For example, echoing the way British dealt with Indians, Spivak stated "white men are saving brown women from brown men" (1994, p. 93). Such multiple strategies have bred periodic bouts of anxiety, fear, and hostility of the Kwr toward their yesterday brothers and sisters, the Bedan. As such, ethnicity was introduced in present-day Mauritania as a strong marker of identity beside the existing one, tribe.

As a result of the fallacious narratives, the Kwr people gave the lead to their French overlords, and thus they opened their minds, hearts and arms to them. In Gerteiny's words, the specialist of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Kwr people were "readily adoptable and willing to learn, modernize and work" in contrast with the Bedan who were reluctant "to submit to the culture, ways and yoke of the 'infidels'" (n. d., p. 1). For example, Ould Daddah remarked that the Kwr formed the bulk of the colonizer's troops in the colony. In contrast, only small portion of volunteers of Bedan were *theoretically* recruited in the army. The term "theoretically" refers to the fact that the volunteers were not given an intensive military training like that of their would-be co-nationals as Ould Daddah mentioned. They were also organized in military units that were separated from French forces and led by French officers or non-commissioned officers. The role of such units was mainly to patrol remote desert areas by camels (2007, p. 141). Furthermore, the French colonial administrators employed the Kwr in most positions of the administration sector (Berry, 1990, p. 65). In fact, the Kwr were privileged in all governmental posts (Boukhars, 2012, pp. 7-8). More importantly, in line with the standard Orientalist blueprint, the French colonizer concentrated on the academic and intellectual side to strengthen the Bedan-Kwr dichotomy. The French schools were largely located in the south on the shore of the Mauritania-Senegal River Valley, the Kwr areas, and the Kwr enrolled in large numbers. In the Bedan's areas, however, there were few French schools and the Bedan were reluctant to go to them, favoring al-mahadher (Berry, 1990, p. 70).

As a result of such colonial policies, ethnicity as a marker of identity was mature enough on the eve of the independence. In other words, as present-day Mauritania was going through its birth, ethnicity as a marker of identity was having its maturity. Indeed, the colonizer had fueled ethnic sentiment of the Kwr and their pride of the colonizer legacy, say French language. For example, political movements were created based on ethnicity. According to McLaughlin, in the mid of 1950, Mauritanian Youth Association (Association de la Jeuneusse Mauritanienne) was created. The association had pan-Arab inclinations, "the ideology of establishing one Arab nation" (Abdel Rahim, 2005, p. 34). The Kwr people refuted such tendency, and, in response, they started the Gorgol Democratic Bloc (le Bloc Democratique du Gorgol) from which they called for close tie with Senegal and Mali (McLaughlin, 2015, para. 11). Furthermore, in 1958, there was an ethnic split over the naming of the country. Each ethnic group wanted its ethnic

identity to be reflected in the name of the country. The Bedan said that it should be called "the Arab Republic of Mauritania" whereas the Kwr proposed the name "the African Republic of Mauritania" for the state. A compromise was made to name the state as the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (Ibn Ahmedou, 2003).

The birth of the state on November 28, 1960 did not breakdown the well-entrenched ethnic division and neither did the following 57 years of co-existence. For instance, in 1961, one year after the independence, a flagrant conflict erupted between the Kwr and the Bedan during the founding conference of the Mauritanian People's Party. In the conference, the dispute was over the Kwr's level of representation in the party. They vocalized that the positions assigned to them did not reflect their number in the state (Mauritanian People's Party, 1961). In addition, Spolsky (2004) remarked that the first years of the independence, to date in 1966, marked deadly clashes between the Bedan and the Kwr over the Arabization policy (p. 2). Further elaboration on this point is hold for due time discussion. The stratification based on ethnic lines is even seen in the distribution of people in the capital Nouakchott, which was created in 1957. The departments of Sabkha, Al-Mina, and Riyad are populated mainly by the Kwr. The remaining departments of the capital are mainly populated by the Bedan.

Moreover, ethnic identities manifestations were seen in the recurring incidents in the state. For instance, in 1983, an outlawed organization called the African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (Forces de Liberation Africaine de Mauritanie-FLAM) (henceforth FLAM), was founded. As the name implies, it bore an ethnic stamp. The organization famed and stimulated the ethnic divisions both internally and externally. Its members showed enmity toward the Bedan, looting their stores, robbing and threatening them frequently. Internationally, FLAM adherents also allegedly perpetuated that their ethnic group was discriminated against through the distribution of fifty-page pamphlet entitled "The Manifesto of the Oppressed Black Mauritanian" (Le Manifesto du Negro-Mauritanien Opprime) (Handloff, 1990, pp. 138-139). Furthermore, in 1987, a failed coup d'état that has an ethnic orientation was staged by officers who belonged to the Kwr ethnic group. In addition, the events escalated tensions between Mauritania and Senegal. This was because Senegal has always considered itself the champions of the Kwr's rights on the grounds that they were and are ethnically similar to its fellow citizens. Dakar hosted FLAM, and its press was and is always stressing the ethnic division in Mauritania.

As such, in early April 1989, a war was about to erupt between Senegal and Mauritania. Hundreds of the Bedan were slaughtered in Senegal, and thousands were expelled to Mauritania. Mauritania also acted in the same way (Handloff, 1990, xxv). The events give the premise that ethnicity is bubbling over the surfaces of all other markers of identity in Mauritania.

The state has tried several times to lessen identification based on ethnicity. The latest of such attempts were in 2007, 2012 and 2016. In 2007, the government called on the Kwr, who were expelled to Senegal in the events of 1989, to return back. The Returnees were given special cares, housings and compensations for their losses. In 2012 attempt, "parliament passed a number of constitutional amendments, affirming the multiethnic character of the state" (Boukhars, 2012, p. 10). In October 2016, the government called on all political parties to engage in a national dialogue. Among the points which were discussed in the dialogue was strengthening social cohesion and thus ending ethnic politicization. The attempts were meant to manage the Kwr mobilization.

However, the government's efforts went unheeded, for stratification over ethnic lines kept reappearing. The composition of the present study is timely in this regard as it started few months before ethnically tinged violent incidents erupted in Nouakchott. The incidents, which occurred in the mid-2015, were caused as usual by the Arabization policy. The Kwr students were alarmed when the President of the Urban Community of Nouakchott announced that Arabic was to be the only language used in formal correspondence. More recently, on November 17, 2016, some students of the Kwr ethnic group staged a protest in the Modern University of Nouakchott against the introduction of some subjects in Arabic. In the end, it can be said that the pervasiveness of ethnicity as a strong marker of identity is not going to fade away at least in the foreseeable future.

One main factor, namely, the fragility of the state, has been behind such pervasiveness. More than 10 coups and attempts coups have been launched in Mauritania. Such fact has put the successive residents of the gray palace in Nouakchott under international and national pressures. As such, they have looked for any way that would appease the citizens as well as foreign powers. In fact, language policy has always been considered the wining card of the rulers. Its formulation and implementation are meant for political goals rather than for social justice. Indeed, several

scholars of language policy (Spolsky, 2004, Tollefson, 2002, Ruiz, 1984, Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000 & Paulston, 1994) have argued that the main goal of language policy has often been symbolic. Language policy is always conceived as a political move to deflect international and national pressures. Rarely, if any, it is formulated and implemented for the sake of social justice and maintain the rights of the majority as well as the minority group language. Indeed, the successive governments have avoided deciding at once on the issue of language policy. On the national level, they appeased the Bedan by associating the de jour status to Arabic and the Kwr by making French language a de facto. On the international level, the illegitimacy of the military juntas made it impossible to confront foreign powers and stop their meddling in internal affairs. For instance, the state could not stop France and Senegal's manipulation of the Kwr. As mentioned above, Senegal and France exploited ethnic cleavage in the state for their own interests, say, political and/or economic. Even other countries become aware of the fruits that might be reaped from playing on the ethnic lines. For instance, in its renewal of the 4 years fishing agreement in 2015, the European Union used the ethnic card in order to get some concessions, including but not limited to the type of fish, fishing areas, cutch volume, and the total sum of money paid per year. To mention but one example, some European television channels invited some extremists of the Kwr who vilified the state as an ethnic one.

4.1.2 National identity

As discussed earlier, the idea of nation-state system is relatively of recent origin. To date, the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, as was argued in the first part of the dissertation, marked the end of sovereignty of the Holy Roman Empire over most of European countries and thus the right of such countries of self-determination. As such, they created their own states based on nations-state system. The system is based on the premises that the state has its own complete sovereignty over its land, politics, culture, economic and religion. In order to unite their heterogeneous communities and thus establish their common national identities, these European states adopted either civic nationalism or ethnic nationalism. These nationalisms were first adopted by France and Germany respectively and later crossed freely into the rest of European countries and the globe community at large. The French type of nationalism was more popular than that of Germany. The founding fathers of present-day Mauritania, like almost all other founding fathers of the African states, adopted the French civic nationalism in their quest for

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establishing a common national identity of their state which they built from scratch. Before embarking on the discussion of national identity in Mauritania, it is helpful to pin down a synopsis of the phrase even though it was thoroughly discussed in the first part of this dissertation. The reached understanding of national identity is that it refers to the common attributes and beliefs that bind and make people identify with a particular state.

Mauritanians' sense of belonging to the state or construction of a national identity was recently felt. It is recent because Mauritania as a state, in the sense of nation-state system, is a newly born state in comparison with its neighbors. As aforementioned, before the arrival of the French colonizer, present-day Mauritania was known by several names (the Land of the Whites, Chinguetti, the Land of the Turbaned People…etc) the last of which was "the Land of Dissidence." As the name implies, it was a land that survived without statehood. Indeed, as mentioned above, pre-colonial present-day Mauritania was ruled by segmentary political organizations, namely, tribal presidencies and emirates. According to Mohamed Mahmud, after the fall of the State of Almoravids in 1148, the geographical space of modern-day Mauritania was fractured into several Sanhaji Emirates each of which had its own independency. The political system continued after the coming of Beni Hassan who defeated Sanhaja in the war of Sharr Babba (1671-1677) and formed their own emirates and powerful tribal presidencies (2013, pp. 173-177). The tribal presidencies, remarked Salem (2007), were less organized politically than emirates, yet they were not militarily weaker than them (p. 192). The emirates and tribal presidencies were subjected to neither direct control nor indirect one of any of the neighboring states before the French colonization in January 12, 1920, wrote De Chassey (2013, p. 42). In fact, the political systems exist in today Mauritania but as primarily a civil organization within a civil and military bigger organization, the state. It was until the end of 1970s and the beginning of 1980s that the State of Mauritania was eating away at the power of the emirates and tribal presidencies. Consequently, the inhabitants of the region drew their identity from tribe or region, and they were concerned only with tribal and regional interests. Therefore, the sense of belonging to the state or the establishment of a national identity was recently felt and developed.

Indeed, Mauritanians continued to identify mainly based on tribe and region even after the coming of the French colonizer. This was because the coming of this colonizer did not change these political systems even though this colonizer invented the region as a separate

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political entity and called it "the Land of the Maures/Moors' – Mauritania" (Jourde, 2007, p. 83) "under the ministerial decree issued on December 1899" (Grote & Röder, 2016, p. 357). In this regard, Warner (1990) stated that

> the French policy of assimilation and direct rule, however, was never applied with any vigor in Mauritania, where a system that corresponded more to Britain's colonial policies of association and indirect rule developed. Colonial administrators relied extensively on Islamic religious leaders and the traditional warrior groups to maintain their rule and carry out their policies. (p. 4)

Clearly, the French administrators made no attempt in changing the political systems in the region. Instead of provoking a sense of nationalism, they supported the tribal and emirate dividing lines through their alliances with their leaders as well as Islamic figures. In fact, they would not do that because generally speaking division of the local communities served the colonial interests based on the general rule "divide and govern." The interests included but not limited to thwarting cross-tribal and ethnic anti-colonial mobilization. It was clear in their contribution of further segmentation of the people of the region based on ethnic marker. It was discussed earlier that the French colonizer created ethnic consciousness among the two ethnic groups, the Bedan and the Kwr, and played the latter against the former.

This laissez-faire attitudes toward the tribal and emirate systems persisted until the 1940s. According to Warner (1990),

> [a]fter World War II, Mauritania, along with the rest of French West Africa, was involved in a series of reforms of the French colonial system... These reforms were part of a trend away from the official policies of assimilation and direct rule in favor of administrative decentralization and internal autonomy. Although the nationalistic fervor sweeping French West Africa at this time was largely absent in Mauritania, continuous politicking (averaging one election every eighteen months between 1946 and 1958) provided training for political leaders and awakened a political consciousness among the populace. (p. 4)

France was late in implementing political changes in present-day Mauritania that corresponded to reforms demanded by nation-state system. As Warner stated, in the above citation, it was until 1946 that France raised political awareness, trained political leaders and encouraged the foundation of political parties.

Indeed, before 1946, argued Warner (1990), the territory of present-day Mauritania formed one electoral unit with Senegal (p. 19). The French constitution of 1946, nevertheless, recognized present-day Mauritania as an independent political unit, giving it a seat in the French National Assembly (Olson & Shadle, 1991, p. 400). Such move paved the way to the creation of political parties the first of which was the Mauritanian Entente, headed by Horma Ould Babana who represented the first Mauritanian deputy to the French National Assembly. The territory's second party was the Mauritanian Progressive Union, created in 1948 and led by Sidi el Mokhtar Ndiaye. In the 1952, the President of the Mauritanian Progressive Union, Mokhtar Ould Daddah won the elections and served as the deputy of Mauritanian to the French National Assembly (Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, p. xxii).

The construction of the political parties, however, was unable to eclipse the well-entrenched tribal, regional, and ethnic divisions. In other words, political parties failed to lock in tribal, ethnic and regional loyalties and activate a sense of belonging to one state, for, once internal independence was about to be clinched in 1958, political movements and political parties were created based on the ethnic, tribal and regional lines. For instance, according to Pazzanita and Gerteiny (1996), by 1958, two major political parties in the country namely, Mauritanian Youth Association and the Gorgol Democratic Bloc, had become associated with the two ethnic groups in the country: the Bedan and the Kwr, respectively (pp. 52, 61). Apparently, the political level of the country in making was embryonic. It seems also that the challenges awaiting the new state were enormous. The challenges included mainly the reversal of hundred years of loyalties to tribe and region and the systematic colonial division of the people based on ethnic lines. Additionally, Morocco's challenge to the state in making mounted. Besides, the state in making had no capital city on its own territory.

In their attempt to overcome the challenges and thus legitimize their claim of the ability to build the state, the founding fathers constructed the first Mauritanian government in May 1957. The government, under the leadership of Ould Daddah, and its French backers sought to fill the gap of the lack of capital for the territory, for before 1957, present-day Mauritania was administered from St. Louis, located just across the Mauritania-Senegal River in Senegal. According to Ould Daddah (2007), Nouakchott, Nouadhibou and Rosso were selected as possible candidates for the capital; nevertheless, the last two cities were excluded because of two

main factors. First, they were located, respectively, on the far western north and western south of the territory, physical setting that made them on the borders with the neighboring countries, Morocco and Senegal. As such, in case of war and for national security, neither of them could be a suitable candidate. Second, the two cities Nouadhibou and Rosso, are located in areas predominantly populated by the Bedan and the Kwr, respectively (p. 134). As such, selecting one of them would threaten national unity, independence and brush aside the establishment of a common national identity.

Located on the west shore of the Atlantic coast, Nouakchott (from the Tamazight term "Nouaksut" which means "place of the winds"), however, was the most adequate city for the capital of the territory. First, it is relatively far from the bordering countries since it was located roughly halfway between St. Louis and Nouadhibou. Thus, it gave a secure place to the state in making. Second, its geographical location offered the possibility of creating deepwater port that would benefit the state in making economically. Third, Nouakchott is situated between the Bedan stronghold in Adrar and the Kwr stronghold on the shore of the Mauritania-Senegal River Valley. Finally, Nouakchott was believed to be the place of the "ribat," the place in which the Almoravids movement was created and from which they conquered many areas in North Africa and Europe (Ould Daddah, 2007, p. 135). In short, the choice of Nouakchott set the tone for Ould Daddah and his compatriots backers' approach to the internal and external problems surrounding the state in making and the national identity: compromise and conciliation for the sake of national unity and the development of a common national identity. That is, Ould Daddah, as mentioned earlier, adopted the civic nationalism in establishing the state.

Based on the same approach through which he and his backers ended a long-time appendage to Senegal, they, Ould Daddah and his backers, approached the internal and external threats to the state in making. In other words, in order to establish an independent state and a common national identity, nationalists, in this case Ould Daddah and his backers, looked for what Smith called "deep resources," which he identified as territorial attachments, myths of election and memories especially those of a Golden age or golden ages-periods when the community was wealthy, creative and powerful (Smith, 2001, p. 23-24). Such views were clear in their approach toward the various challenges that appeared in the Congress of Aleg in May 1958. In the Congress, which was convened by Ould Daddah, the various elites gave vent to their

interests which were ethnically, racially, tribally and regionally oriented. In a tone of reconciliation, Ould Daddah reported that he and his backers zeroed in on the fact that all of them are Muslim, and they have coexisted peacefully for hundreds of years. The rhetoric was convincing to the various elites. Consequently, the various elites papered their differences in order to establish a common national identity, refute Morocco's irredentism, and wrest power from the colonial master. As such, the following decisions were made beside others. The Mauritanian Progressive Union, the Mauritanian Entente, and the black-oriented Gorgol Democratic Bloc agreed to merge to form the Mauritanian Regroupment Party (the Parti de Regroupement Mauritanien-PRM)), a party that would serve a common national identity. They rejected federation with either Mali or Morocco under any terms. They agreed on the representation of the ethnic groups. They also decided to boost the status of Arabic language (Ould Daddah, 2007, pp. 139-144).

Short time later, Ould Daddah and his co-national and French backers had to face the reappearance of fragmentation and political instability which were not only nurtured by ethnic, tribal, and regional axes but also by ideological attitudes. For example, Warner (1990) remarked that when they felt that the Mauritanian Regroupment Party favored close tie with France and when they felt that they were secluded from decision making, progressive youth leaders, led by Ahmed Baba Ould Meske, formed a party named Mauritanian National Renaissance (or Awakening) (Anahda al-Wataniya) in May 1958. The party also called for immediate independence from France. It also endorsed the idea of Greater "Morocco." It had a pan-Arab orientation. Such tendencies attracted some members in the old party "the Mauritanian Entente" (p. 23). Evoking a nationalist rhetoric and stressing the shared history, religion, and tradition, Ould Daddah and his backers were able to co-opt the discordant elements once again, ensuring that unity was the only way through which they could build a unified and an independent state (Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, p. 5).

Having relatively united the different people or more accurately alleviated their sharpening differences, Ould Daddah and his backers continued steadily on the path that all colonized countries took in order to announce their independence. They headed toward determining the trappings of the statehood, the name, flag, anthem, and institution. To begin with, two years before the independence, the dual nationalisms surfaced again when the name of

the territory was under discussion. In order to create the state, ensure their credibility, keep the state running, the founding fathers had to opt for a republic (type of state that is organized around a form of government in which power is handed to elected people by the citizen body) instead of monarchy or any other form of a state. Indeed, Ould Daddah (2007) wrote that the leadership of the Mauritanian Regroupment Party (hizb tejjemoua elmouritanie), which was created by Ould Daddah and which won all seats in the last pre-independence legislative election in 1958, proclaimed, in the newly created capital Nouakchott, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on 28 November from the same year (pp. 156-158). Otherwise, the tribes would refuse to heed the state's decisions. The leaders of the tribes were not accustomed to getting orders from equal ones let alone other people who might be or definitely some of them were ranking low in the social hierarchy. In other words, they would not approve kingdom or any other form of a state.

Additionally, as mentioned above, the Bedan insisted that the country should be named "the Arab Republic of Mauritania." The Kwr, however, insisted that the state should bear the name of its geographical location. It should be called "the African Republic of Mauritania." Ould Daddah and his backers leaned back on Islam as they always did in order to make a compromise. They proposed the name "the Islamic Republic of Mauritania" for the state. That is to say, Islam was the sole factor that guarantees unity of the people. Indeed, as observed earlier, the founding fathers recognized the role of Islam in constituting a common national identity. As such, an Islamic touch was present along the way of the construction of national identity. For instance, in 1959, one year before the independence, the adopted national flag was composed of Islamic symbols, yellow star and crescent as well as the color green (Philip, 2002, p. 157).

Flag of Mauritania (Smith, 2013)

Equipped with relatively a higher level of a common national identity, the founding fathers declared on November 28, 1960 the independence of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Recognizing the key role of Islam in the arrangement of a common national identity, the

founding fathers kept constantly using it in order to build a strong and virile state, for its accomplishment requires maintaining the love and commitment of the diverse citizens of the newly born country. The national anthem symbolized such overriding concern. The genre of words of the anthem deviated from the convention. For instance, instead of stressing the struggle against the colonizer, tradition and history, as all anthems of the ex-colonized countries do, the national anthem of Mauritania, which was written by Baba Ould Sheikh and "adopted after independence in 1960" (National Anthem of Mauritania," n. d.), evoked only the principles of the Islamic faith, tawhid (unity of God) and following his messenger, Mohammed. It is quite understandable because what united the diverse people of present-day Mauritania was and is Islam.

Furthermore, the struggle against the colonizer could not be a theme in the national anthem because of the fact that Mauritania was France creation. Additionally, the first President, Ould Daddah, and his advisors were the main allay of the French colonizer. In fact, Ould Daddah and some of his advisors were "sons" of the colonizer. He owed his rise to the colonizer. His cousin Sheik Sidiya Baba was the godfather of the colonization as is shown in due time. He was educated by them in France and worked for them as a translator. Later, he married a French woman who was the mother of his siblings. He also appointed many French men as his advisors. In fact, if he had not been helped by the French, he would never become a remarkable person. This was because the reputation or power in the Mauritanian society was primarily based on such attributes such as lineage and the nature of the tribe. In this light, Ould Daddah was not the son of his tribe chief, and his tribe also was Zawaya. The tribe was affiliated with the surrounding powerful tribes and emirates of Beni Hassan. As such, it became clear that he would not support an anthem that glorified the resistance of the French.

Similarly, in recognition of the powerful role Islam played in managing ethnic, tribal, regional, and ideological differences and thus achieving a common national identity, an Islamic touch was present in the constitution. Indeed, the first Mauritanian Constitution of May 20, 1961, which "is still in force to day and has been subject to only two amendments," took cognizance of this when it stated that the state is an Islamic republic, Islam is the official religion and the president must be a Muslim (Salacuse, 1969, p. 172). It is expected since all Mauritanians are Muslim, a unique feature the Mauritanians enjoy. However, such formal Islamic constitutional

declarations did not imply that Mauritania is a practicing Muslim state. For instance, Handloff (1990) said that the 1961 Constitution of Mauritania "clearly reflected the influence of the Constitution of the French Fifth Republic in its dedication to liberal democratic principles and inalienable human rights as expressed in the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (p. 126). Indeed, Pazzanita and Gerteiny observed that the government was not theocratic. Instead, "its government structures were westernized and liberal democratic in form from 1960 onward. In addition, its legal and judicial system… gave short shrift to sharia except in some domestic relation matters" (1996, p. 159).

Having succeeded in ratifying an institution that represented and equally guaranteed the rights of all Mauritanians and thus unite them, Ould Daddah, the newly elected president in August 1961, felt that a common national identity would be strengthened by unifying the existing particularist-ethnic political parties. They were particularist-ethnic parties because some of them claimed that they served the interest of their ethnic groups whereas others took a more unifying orientation, Islamic one. Through constitutional revision in 1956, Ould Daddah and his government formed legal single party system. The Mauritanian People's Party (Parti du Peuple Mauritanienne-PPM) which in 1961 was born out of the fusion of the Mauritanian Regroupment Party, Mauritanian National Renaissance [represented the Bedan], the Mauritanian National Union [represented the Kwr], and the Mauritanian Muslim Socialist Union was recognized as the only party of the state (Heyns, 2001, p. 351). In addition to their national concerns, Ould Daddah and his government thought that the single-party system would unite their forces (Jones, 2001, p. 1561) and thus overcome the regional and international challenges, Moroccan irredentism, the Arab countries recognition, and admission to the United Nation (Handloff, 1990, p. 144). In fact, the single-party system and the myth of its bless were not sought only by Ould Daddah. Rather, several of the independence leaders in Africa adopted one-party political system, with power concentrated in the center. The leaders insisted that it was the only viable means through which the state could bring together the many ethnic and religious groups (Mbaku & Ihonvbere, 2003, p. 6).

The institutionalization of one single party, coupled with painting all the trappings of the statehood with the Islamic faith succeeded in preserving the fledgling state over eighteen years, the period of Ould Daddah's stay in office. In other words, based on the two instruments, Islam

and one-party system, which operated as a sort of compromise between the extremes Arab and African Nationalisms, Ould Daddah and his governments galvanized a unified internal front that was able to face the international threats. For instance, sponsored by France, Mauritania admitted the United Nation in 1961 even though Morocco, which rejected the Mauritanian independence, with full support of the Arab League (except Tunisia) and Guinea and Mali, tried hard to prevent its membership by mobilizing a Soviet veto in the earlier year. The Soviet Union vetoed Mauritania's United Nation membership in retaliation for Western power's support of nationalist China's veto of Outer Mongolia's UN membership. In a super-power bargain, Mauritanian and Mongolia were admitted concurrently to the United Nation. Additionally, armed with membership in the United Nation, Ould Daddah had the Arab League to drop the Moroccan case in 1961 (Miall, 1992, p. 250). By the mid-1960s, Mauritania entered into diplomatic and economic relations with the Arab countries (Shillington, 2005, p. 959). Failing to secure a prolonged support in international and regional organizations (UN and Arab League), Morocco formally abandoned its claim of Mauritania in 1969, and in the next year, the two countries concluded a Treaty of Solidarity (Mayall, 1990, p. 63; Smith & Hutchinson, 1994, p. 275).

Although Islam and one-party system were able to get Mauritania out of the woods as an independent state as shown above, they proved inability to neutralize what one can terme as the "sleeping dual national identities," Arab and African. In other words, even though Islam and single-party system galvanized nationalist cry that generated regional and international recognitions of the state, they were not able to mask the deep rooted nationalisms and thus establish a common national identity. In 1965, for example, when Ould Daddah tried to establish national individuality as he did on international level, the Kwr collectively and resoundingly opposed moving the sate outside the French legacy. The government's decisions of departure from the OAM *(Organisation Africaine et Malgache)* and the promulgation of laws, 65–025 and 65-026, which mandated Arabic in all primary and secondary schools, were interpreted by the Kwr as an Arab domination (Baduel, 1989, p. 24). As such, they staged protests that left several dead and dozens wounded (Magistro, 1999, p. 188). Drawing on the events which were triggered by Arabization policy, the President Ould Daddah (2007) argued that the protests represented the most serious challenges to the state national cohesion, and they were about to collapse the newly born state. The Kwr students protested in Rosso and Nouakchott, and they were backed up by

two well organized groups. The most dangerous thing was that the groups were composed of higher state officials, Alman Mamadou Kan (minister) and Mamadou Samba Ba Boly (the head of the national Assembly), to name but few, who were expected to be nationalist rather than ethnically oriented. The groups were also fully supported by Senegal and France. In the events, the Kwr outcried separatist sentiments (pp. 298-307). To calm down the Kwr, the government went back on its decisions. According to Hasan, the government agreed to the continuation of the bilingual system (French and Arabic) (2011, p. 19).

In its quest to establish Arab national individuality and thus renouncing French hegemony, the government took the following measures. Mauritania created a national currency, ouguiya, abandoned the zone franc in 1973, admitted the Arab League in 1973, and nationalized the mining industry in 1974 (Baduel, 1989, pp. 22-24). "Between 1972 and 1974, Mauritania steered a new course in international relations, shifting its political allegiances away from the West in favor of the Arab Middle East" (Magistro, 1999, p. 188). Such steps reflected the government's assertion of the state's individuality. The individuality was successfully established as the decisions reflected particularly on the political and economic levels even though as argued Gates and Appiah (2005) the Kwr resisted such moves (p. 302). However, the cultural level was not fully established, even though as the above decisions showed, the government joined the Arab League. Such partial failure is clear in the state inability of implementing Arabic even though it recognized it constitutionally as the national and official language. For instance, after the 1966 failure of full Arabization, the government embarked on Arabization policy in 1973. With full support of France and Senegal, the Kwr refused the policy. Thus, the government reversed again to bilingual system (Jones, 2001, pp. 1560-1561). Operating in one party system virtually from independence till July 1978, Ould Daddah and his government have walked the country all the way toward developing an independent personality and partially a common national identity as the above discussion revealed.

During the period of the military juntas (1978-1991) that replaced the first civilian regime, the elites of the Kwr kept inflaming the ethnic nationalism and thus impeding the establishment of a common national identity. In 1979, numbers of the Kwr advocated the use of ethnic quotas to fill government jobs (Winslow, n. d., para. 16). In fact, the Kwr have ridden their status as an ethnic minority in order to fulfill their economic interests. The elites of the

Kwr, observed Grote and Röder, would take any decision taken by the successive governments as a detriment to their interests and aiming at their exclusion (2016, p. 357). Indeed, the 1983/84 tenure reforms, which were designed to address the value of the river basin land, were interpreted by the Kwr as an attempt of the Bedan to dominate their land (Bruce, 1998, pp. 96-97). Furthermore, in their attempt to intensify the Kwr ethnic nationalism, a prominent number of the Kwr founded, in 1986, an illegal organization in Dakar which they called the African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (Forces de Libération Africaine de Mauritanie- FLAM). The organization distributed nationally and internationally a pamphlet that vilified the Bedan and the state as a whole, describing it as the state of the Bedan (Seddon, 2005, pp. 327-328). Senegal explicitly provided full support to the illegal organization (Alao & Oyebade, 1998, p. 127). The Kwr anti-cohesion movement reached its peak in 1987 when Ould Taya (brought by coup in 1984) declared that he foiled a military coup d'état attempt by officers and non-commissioned officers of the Kwr who sought to remove him from the seat of power and dominate the state. Following the declaration, the government acted lastly and purged the army from anyone who had an ethnic orientation. Ould Taya was the first president to brush aside internal instability caused by the Kwr (Notholt, 2010, p. 33).

Ould Taya's active defense policy has helped the country to escape the cycles of crises caused by the Kwr since the inception of the state and prepared for the establishment of a truly national identity. He faced France and Senegal who have always manipulated the Kwr people. Murison (2004) wrote that the relation between France and Mauritania deteriorated in 1990 when France arrested Ould Dah, a captain who was attending a military training in France. France charged Ould Dah of torturing the Kwr soldiers who participated in the unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the regime in 1990. In response, Mauritanian government suspended military co-operation with France and introduced visas for French visiting Mauritania. France released Ould Dah. It also stopped interfering explicitly in the ethnic issue. Concerning Senegal, its involvement in the ethnic tension in Mauritania is exemplified in the events of 1989. A minor border dispute between Senegalese and Mauritanian livestock breeders was about to erupt a war between the two states. In the aftermath of the incident, Mauritanians living in Senegal were attacked, murdered, raped, looted and expelled to Mauritania. By the same token, Senegalese nationals with some elites of the Kwr who used to inflame ethnic tensions in Mauritania were

murdered, pillaged and expelled to Senegal. Furthermore, the government called on Senegal to stop supporting a group hostile to the ethnic cohesion in Mauritania. As such, Abdoulaye Wad, the Senegalese president, said his country supported the ethnic cohesion, and it would not involve in the Mauritanian internal affairs (pp. 703-704). The events show that Ould Taya governments forced Senegal and France to stop or more accurately reduce their manipulation of the Kwr people and thus hampering the state efforts of developing a common national identity.

Simultaneously, the governments of Ould Taya sought to enhance the Arab national identity both nationally and internationally. For instance, in 1989, Mauritania became a founded member of the "Arab" Maghreb Union with Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Algeria. As the name suggests and as the members' identities reflect, the union was based on Arab grounding. Indeed, the following excerpt of the treaty establishing the "Arab" Maghreb Union stressed the Arab identity of the states: "the leaders of the member states having faith in the solid links that unite the people of the "Arab" Maghreb and that are founded on a communal history, religion and language… having resolved the following…article 3…safeguard the national Arab identity" (Tanoh & Ebobrah, 2010, pp. 1-2).

Furthermore, Mauritania loosened its ties with Francophone Africa. In a major decision, Mauritania announced in December 2000 its withdrawal from the Economic Community of Western African States (henceforth ECOWAS) (Lansford, 2012, p. 920). Francis (2006) advanced two plausible interpretations for Mauritania's withdrawal. First, the state has "developed a robust self-identification as an Arab country and thus privilege[d] its membership with the Maghreb Union over the predominantly "black African" ECOWAS. Second, the uneasy relationship with its black- african ECOWAS over its alleged human rights violations and treatment of its black citizens" (p. 145). Robson and Cline-Cole (2014) offered a third interpretation for Mauritania's action. "Mauritania withdrew from ECOWAS…ostensibly because it was opposed to plans for the establishment of a single monetary zone and currency, which it insisted would undermine its sovereignty" (p. 147). Such decisions show that Mauritania has gone all the way to establishing a national Arab identity. In the meantime, it asserted its non-African aspirations, yet the state is a member of the African Union.

To reflect the state's national Arab identity in the institutions of the state, the regime embarked on Arabization policy in the 1990s. Under international pressure, Ould Taya converted his regime into a civilian one with a new constitution and multiparty elections in 1992. The constitution killed two birds with one stone. It accorded the general policy adopted by the government and responded to the Mauritanian Arab nationalists' calls, who were influenced by the rise of Arab nationalism in North Africa and the Middle East, when it recognized Arabic as the official and national language (Lapidus, 2014, p. 765) without mention to French language (Jones, 2001, p. 1561). Kalu and Kieh (2013) wrote that all armed forces branches were arabized (p. 111). In media, institutions, and education, however, French enjoyed a significant role beside Arabic. In other words, like Morocco, French is de facto in Mauritania. Even though the Arabization policy was fully established, the regime of Ould Taya was certainly the first one that created national identity in the sense of "super-ordinate" identity, for supper-ordinate identity, according to Spinner-Halev and Theiss-Morse, refers to incorporating two or more groups and thus decreasing their conflict (2003, p. 524). Indeed, through purging the military from those who were ethnically oriented and ruining the divisive plans of the ethnic-oriented organizations, Ould Taya regime was able to establish a national cohesion and thus a common national identity. Drawing on such point, "CIA World Factbook" spelled out that Ould Taya's regime was able to wear off the long lasted ethnic discord by 1990 onward (n. d., para. 5). Thus, it established a sense of national integration.

The regimes that succeeded Ould Taya stepped into a stable state with a super-national identity. However, since state-building and the development of a common national identity, as aforementioned, are ongoing processes, the governments sought a strong integration of the two ethnic groups and thus strengthening national cohesion and establishing a common national identity. For instance, as discussed earlier, the Kwr who were expelled to Senegal in the ethnic events of 1989 were called on back. Furthermore, the successive governments took several measures in order to strengthen ethnic harmony. To start with, the successive presidents, Sidi Ould Cheik Abdallahi, Ely Ould Mohamed Vall and Mohamed Ould Abd Al-Aziz, have acknowledged publically and frequently that Mauritania treats equally its citizens regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Then, in March 2012, the parliament passed constitutional amendments that recognized the multi-ethnic character of the state (Boukhars, 2012, p. 10).

Furthermore, whether on purpose or by coincidence, the Ministry of Interior's decision to use biometrics in the latest census (2013) and thus revamp the production of the country's national identification documents played an important role in the state stability and national cohesion. The technical measures and legal framework combined with papers required made it impossible for Senegalese and non-Mauritanian Kwr in general, who are ethnically undistinguished from the Mauritanian Kwr, to obtain national documents. Such measures prevented also those who had fraudulently obtained national documents from getting the new ones. As such, Senegalese and non-Mauritanian Kwr, in general, would not be able to fame ethnic protests and intervene in local issues. Moreover, in a further step to mollify the Kwr, disturb their ethnic loyalty and thus strengthen national cohesion, the governments, in October 2016, proposed the status of the Kwr languages for debate in the held national dialogue. The need for an end to ethnic politicization was also vocalized in the national dialogue. The results of the dialogue are to be ratified by the parliament in the coming months.

Beside the above discussed measures, which were taken to promote national integration of the ethnic groups, the current government asserted and consolidated the Arab national identity of the state and the people internationally and nationally. For example, Mauritania has always been skipped when the alphabetical cycle, which the Arab League Summits followed, reached it because of the lack of the required logistics, five-star hotels, airports, roads…etc. Nevertheless, when Morocco decided not to host the 2016 Arab League Summit, Mauritania seemed so adamant to hold the summit even if in a tent if needed, the President Abd Al-Aziz voiced frequently. Thus, Mauritania held for the first time the 27th Arab League Summit from 25-27 June 2016. As a result, Mauritania consolidated and asserted its international and regional status as an Arab country. Such consideration would certainly boost the profile of the state politically, socially, culturally and economically. As such, a new spirit was (and is) given to the Arab national identity. Indeed, even locally, many Arabization measures were taken days before the day of the Arab League Summit. The government issued a decree that prohibited and punished over the use of French in the street signs, shop signs, advertisement hoardings and markings of all kinds. The decree was put into practice, and markings of all kinds in the Capital were written in Arabic instead of French or written in the former first and the latter second.

Even though the successive governments were able to subside ethnic conflicts, establish national cohesion and consolidate Arab identity of the state in the recent years through the use of Islamic rhetoric and recognizing the languages and culture of the Kwr minority beside the Bedani's ones, a truly common national identity needs further molding. The state officials have to decide at once and forever on the issue of language policy for the sake of a strong national identity. In fact, they have decided theoretically (constitution) but not practically. In other words, whereas Arabic has legal or de jure status as the official language of the state, French is the de facto. The discord between theory and practice hampers or more accurately leads to incomplete celebration of truly common national identity in Mauritania. This is because, as thoroughly discussed in part one of the present study, language is an important factor in structuring a truly national identity. Unified educational and administrative systems give equal job opportunities to the diverse people of the state. As Loden argued, "experiences of fair treatment seem to be decisive for feelings of attachment to a superordinate national identity" (2010, p. 16). Equal access to the market will also certainly reduce tension between the diverse people of the state.

The concern over language policy is expressed frequently by intellectuals, presidents of parties, historians, philosophers, or says by the Bedan ethnic group at large. They call on daily basis for establishing a common national identity by implementing Arabic as the only language of administration since the constitution says so and since they (the Bedan) represent the majority of the state (80%). They also express the desire to separate themselves from their French colonial past. Such calls might be legitimate. For instance, as a general rule any state which is not federate (e. g. Canada) has to adopt the language of the majority as an official and national language. In Mali, for example, French is the official language even though there are Arab minority group in the state. Furthermore, the fact that French is a de facto is, in fact, a colonial dependency rather than an academic necessity is totally true, for it is English not French which is economically, politically, academically the viable option. Such fact has prompted, for example, some of the Moroccan officials lately to call for gradual replacement of French by English.

As such, the militancy of Kwr ethnic group or some of them against Arabization policy might be "invalid." Now and then, the Kwr students or some of them are alarmed whenever there is an attempt to implement Arabic in schools. As aforementioned, the Kwr ethnic organizations feed on many issues central to which is language. They are financially supported by foreign

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countries the most visible of which are France and Senegal. As such, they manipulated their ethnic fellows whenever there is an attempt to introduce Arabic as the medium of instruction in schools. On November 17, 2016, the Kwr students boycotted classes in the Faculty of Art and Human Sciences in the Modern University of Nouakchott because some courses were introduced in Arabic instead of French. The state should introduce Arabic language in education and all the state institutions. If another language is to be introduced, English should be that language rather than French. Carrying such act might up-hold national cohesion, integration, and promotes a truly common national identity. It would also incorporate more national individuality to the state and thus moves it beyond its colonial past.

4.2 Language policy in Mauritania

Language policy in present-day Mauritania has a political, religious and historical context of matchless complexity, even when compared with the neighboring post-colonial countries, say, Morocco and Algeria, which are more or less composed of the same linguistic communities. Because of its geographical position as it falls within the Sahara and straddles West Africa and the Maghreb, Mauritania has been for centuries open to a variety of political, cultural, and linguistic influences. Such influences left a profound effect on various aspects of Mauritanian life, religion, culture…etc, as has been discussed above. The influences are clearly seen at the level of the language use. For instance, some languages and dialects namely, Tamshek and Azir, were abandoned whereas others were added, Arabic and Hassaniya. Regardless of such changes, a varied nature of Mauritanian speech community has survived the ages, making the linguistic situation in present-day Mauritania an intricate and dynamic state of Multilingualism. For example, the languages and dialects which interact and co-exist with each other in present-day Mauritania are respectively Arabic, French, English, Hassaniya, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke. The following pages aimed at unearthing the status of the languages and dialects. The language policies which have been carried in Mauritania before, during and after the French colonization are also outlined.

4.2.1 Languages of Mauritania: Functions and Domains

Languages and dialects in Mauritania can be divided into two main categories: native languages and dialects (Arabic, Hassaniya, Pulaar, Wolof and Soninke) and foreign languages (French and English). To start with native languages and dialects in general and Arabic in particular, Mauritania, like all the Arab countries, is characterized by triglossia. As Ennaji (2005) argued, Ferguson's (1959) diglossia which specifies that in the Arab world there are two varieties of Arabic: a high variety (Classical Arabic) and a low variety (Colloquial spoken Arabic) does not fit the description of Arabic in the Maghreb, for, in the North African countries, there are three Arabic varieties which are in a triglossic relation: Classical Arabic, Standard Arabic and local Arabic (p. 48), Hassaniya in Mauritania. Classical Arabic (henceforth CA) is learned only at school and written from the left to the right. It is known in Arabic as "al-fus ha" which literally means pure and eloquent. Being the language of the Quran, CA is the most prestigious high variety and enjoys a great literary and religious tradition not only in Mauritania and the Arab world but also in the Islamic World at large. Because of its religious status as well as its cultural role as the language of Arabs, article 6 declares that the CA is the official and national language in Mauritania (Constitute, 2016, p. 4) since all Mauritanians are Muslim and 80% percent of them Arabs.

As such, it is used in traditional schools (al-mahadher) and in a lesser extent in modern schools. It is also the language of prayers for all Muslims over the world. As such, all the Bedan people and some of the Kwr send their children to al-mahadher as soon as they reach the age of four. In al-mahadher, they are taught how to read and write the letters of the alphabet of the CA. Beside the specialized courses, the children learn Arabic through their memorization of the Quran. The classes continue over three years. Around the age of 7, the children become versed in CA, and they are sent to the secular school. Some Mauritanians make their children attend both the traditional and the modern schools whereas others opt for one of them. However, generally, the Bedan people initiate their children in Arabic and religious teaching in general before sending them to modern schools. It might be due to such early teachings in Arabic that Mauritanians are said to be more versed in CA than their cousins in the Arab world. As such, Mauritania is nicknamed in the Arab world as the land of one million poets.

Like CA, Standard Arabic (henceforth SA) is codified and standardized. Similar to CA, it is also learned and called al-fus ha, yet according to Ennaji (2005), CA is superior to SA because it is the language of religion, the official language (p. 53) and "because most Arabs and Muslims consider it to be the archetype of linguistic purity, the most logical language, and the language of truth" (Errihani, 1996, p. 30). Drawing on Ennaji's argument, one can agree with the argument that CA is most prestigious than SA in the sense that the former is the language of the Quran. However, it should be made clear that Ennaji's assignment of the official status to only CA might not be "accurate," for no Arab constitution has made a distinction between CA and SA. All of them including Mauritania and Morocco declare that Arabic is the official language without further distinction. Departing from this fact, it can be argued that SA is the official and national language of Mauritania beside CA, article 6 (Constitute, 2016, page. 4). In fact, SA is a modernized and secularized version of CA. The distinction between SA and CA is that the former is more flexible in syntax, phonology and morphology than the latter; for example, according to Ennaji and Sadiqi (2008), SA lacks the case marking affixes of CA, as in the case of CA *kutubun* (books) →SA *kutub* (books). Unlike CA, SA also shows an "alternative new word order of Subject–Verb–Object in addition to the Verb–Subject–Object word order of CA, which might seem to be an influence of French morphosyntax. Standard Arabic has also borrowed a host of words and phrases from French" (p. 47). Such characteristics make SA easier to learn and understand than CA. In Mauritania, SA is used in education, administration, media, and formal speeches.

The third and the last variety of Arabic in Mauritania is Hassaniya known also as "Klam Al-Bedan" (the speech of the White). That is, Hassaniya is the mother tongue of the Bedan. The majority of the Kwr speaks also Hassaniya as a second language. As such, it can be said that Hassaniya is the national lingua franca of Mauritania. Lingua franca means "a common language between people who do not share a mother tongue" (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 13); accordingly, Hassaniya as a lingua franca denotes communication in Hassaniya between speakers with different first languages. As the name suggests, it is named after Beni Hassan who imported it to present-day Mauritania in the 15th century, as mentioned earlier. Article 6 in the 1991 Constitution declares that Hassaniya is a national language (Constitute, 2016, p. 4). Hassaniya is Afro-Asiatic known also as Hamito-Semetic or Chamito-Semetic language. As all other local

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dialects in the Arab world, it is the low variety of Arabic. Such low status can be ascribed to the fact that it is not codified and standardized. However, unlike other Arabic dialects across the Arab world, Hassaniya, noted Pazzanita and Gerteiny, is the purest Arabic dialect in Arabic. As such, it comes as the closest Arabic dialect to Arabic (1996, p. 147). Similarly, several scholars among whom was Palmberg illustrated that Hassaniya is the purest Arabic dialect one can find in the Arab world today (1983, p. 4). The accounts chimed with Ould Ebbah's (Mauritanian scholar) argument. He said that Hassaniya is the closest Arabic dialect to CA due to several factors. It has all Arabic letters, reserved most of CA grammar, does not substitute phonemes for others, and understood by all Arabs, to name but some (2003, p. 16). Such characteristics might be due to the fact that people of present-day Mauritania were living in the desert cut almost from their surroundings. Even after the creation of Mauritania as an independent state, Mauritanians and Mauritania remained an "island" if compared with the Arab countries. Anyone with a passing knowledge of the Bedan many years ago or even today, s/he recognizes that they are hesitant toward opening up to non-Bedani cultures. Such facts might be the main factors that led to the reservation of huge CA repertoire in Hassaniya. It is worth noting that Hassaniya is spoken in the Moroccan Sahara, south of Algeria, Timbuktu (region in Mali), and part of Niger.

Beside Arabic varieties, there are three different African languages in Mauritania, Pulaar, Soninke and Wolof. The languages bear the names of the Kwr communities that speak them. All of them are national languages in Mauritania (Constitute, 2016, p. 4). The fact that the communities reside in the same region and constitute one ethnic bloc, the Kwr, does not mean that each community understands the language of the other. In fact, the members of each community are more knowledgeable in Hassaniya than in the languages of their ethnic cousins. This is due to the fact that the Bedan constitute the majority and control the political and economic life of the state. On the contrary, very few of the Bedan know the Kwr languages. For instance, Martinich and Stewart reported that among all languages in Mauritania, Hassaniya enjoys the highest numerical advantage 92%. Pulaar, which is known also by a variety of names as their speakers, Fulbe, Fulani, Fula, and Fulfude, is spoken only by 6% of the total population. Soninke and Wolof are spoken by 1% for each (n. d., para. 3). The Kwr languages are spoken mainly in the south of the country where the Kwr mainly reside as noted earlier. Pulaar is spoken primarily in the regions of Brakna, Trarza and Gorgole. Wolof is spoken mainly in the regions of

Trarza and Brakna. Soninke is spoken mainly in the regions of Guidimagha and Gorgol. All of the languages are also spoken in the capital Nouakchott, for there is an important portion of the Kwr. The Kwr languages are used in Mauritania in broadcast media, particularly televisions and radios. Worthy of note is the fairly widespread of such languages in African countries. For instance, it was stated in "World Languages: Mauritania" (n. d.) that Pulaar, a language of West Atlantic branch of Niger-Congo language family, is spoken in Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, and Cameroon. According to Austin (2008), Soninke, a language of the Mande branch of Niger-Congo language family, is used in Mali, Gambia, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau (p. 82). Wolof is a member of the Atlantic sub-branch of Niger-Congo language family and is spoken in Senegal, Gambia, Mali, and Guinea-Bissau (Paperno & Keenan, 2012, p. 891).

In addition to native languages and dialects, two foreign languages, namely, French and English have won a considerable ground in Mauritania. To start with, the long standing of the French colonial policy resulted in the consolidation of French language in Mauritania despite the successive governments' attempts to get read of it ever since 1966 as mentioned earlier. French language is a de facto. It is used in education, administration, media and private businesses. Its strong presence has been due to the fact that the Kwr ethnic group combats to keep it used in the state. The members of the Kwr communities used it as a medium of communication. Some of the Kwr elites use it also when they communicate with the Bedan.

Unlike French, English is a newcomer in Mauritania, for there has never been a direct contact between present-day Mauritania and the Anglophone states. Because of the status of English as the world first ranking language, nonetheless, it becomes widely recognized at all levels and sectors of the Mauritanian society. Such value is shown in the high demand on English language speakers in the state in general and in the national and international companies in particular which work in mining and other fields. Such value is also reflected in the fact that the English department in the Modern University of Nouakchott and other affiliated institutions become the first choice for most of baccalaureate holders, yet the number of graduates does not much the need in the market. Additionally, because there are no English postgraduate studies (Master's and PhD programs) and because almost no-one can afford the economic needs of education abroad, there is a great shortage of English PhD degrees. For instance, in the Modern

University of Nouakchott, there are only four English PhD holders. The other professors are either Master holders or foreigners, mainly Americans. Moreover, in September 2016, the government announced a recruitment of 12 university professors with the requirement of PhD in English, yet in January 2017, the Admission Committee announced that only two English PhD holders have been found.

4.2.2 Language policy in pre-colonial Mauritania

Even though present-day Mauritania was not a state in the sense of nation-state system in pre-colonial eras, but rather several emirates and tribal presidencies, there was a language policy which remarkably changed the linguistic landscape of the region. Such language policy was known as Arabization. The nature of the Arabization policy in Mauritania was both similar and different from those which were carried out in the Maghreb. It is similar in the sense that Arabization policy in the Maghreb in general was a result of an Islamization process that started in the 7th century. Until then, the inhabitants of the Maghreb, wrote Errihani (1996), were Imazighen, and the language that was in the region was only Tamazight. The Arab conquest of the Maghreb, however, "established Islam as the new religion, [and]… it also introduced a new language, Arabic, a language closely associated with Islam and religious rituals.... As the Berbers became *islamized* [*italics in the source*], a language shift from Berber to Arabic started to take place" (p. 22). Similarly, Ennaji (2005) remarked that Arabization policy was easily enforced because of the strong relationship between Arabic and Islam. This is because in order to understand the Qur'an, one has to be literate in Arabic. As such Qur'anic schools were opened to educate people in Islamic studies among which would be definitely Arabic. In this way, Arabic had gradually established the dominance over Tamazight (p. 10). It is clear then that the Maghreb was a non-Arabic speaking region before the coming of the Arabs in the 7th century. In other words, Arabic was introduced to the Imazighen, the inhabitants of the region, in the same period, by the same people, and as a result of an Islamization process.

Nevertheless, the Arabization policy of the people of present-day Mauritania had three main unique features, the belatedness of Arabization, the completeness of Arabization in terms of language and culture, and the reconstruction of lineage and genealogy. To begin with, whereas Arabic spread quickly in the Maghreb countries from the very beginning of the Islamization

process, the people of present-day Mauritania remained for three centuries later illiterate in Arabic. For instance, Montagne (1931) estimated the number of Imazighen, who had not fallen under the influence of Arabic during the first Arab invasion of North Africa in the 7th century, to be between 40% and 45% of the total population of the region. Clearly, the majority of the Imazighen in the Maghreb region were arabized. In addition, other historians argued that an important number of the people of present-day North African countries were arabized, yet the majority remained Tamazight-speaking (Mantran, 1975; Marcais, 1961; Rossi 1954, 1968). Likewise, Crystal wrote that Arabic came "to be spoken so widely across northern Africa and the Middle East…" following "the spread of Islam, carried along by the force of the Moorish armies from the eighth century" (Crystal, 2003, p. 8). The people of present-day Mauritania were an exception. Even though present-day Mauritania was (and is) part and parcel of the Maghreb and even though historians reported that the famous leader, Habib Ibn Abi Obeida Ibn Oghbah Ibn Nafi and his army reached Chinguetti in 734 and some Muslim merchants inhabited the regions of Wallata and Chinguetti and preached Islam (Mohamed Al-Haddi, 1994, p. 115; Salem, 2007, p. 36), Arabic did not flourish in region known today as Mauritania until the 11th century. Such argument can be inferred from the fact that Ibn Ibrahim, the Sanhaji's leader, who in his way back from pilgrimage in 1039 stopped in Tunisia, was not able to communicate in Arabic to the Maliki's teacher, Abu Amran Al-Fassi, his concern over un-Islamic practices of his people (Messier, 2010, p. 4). Based on this, we argue that Arabic started to spread at quick pace in the region known today as Mauritania after the coming back of Ibn Ibrahim accompanied with the Islamic Scholar Ibn Yacin. This is because both of them started, as Hamed (2000) wrote, a fortified religious center which they called "ribat" (p. 45) and which attracted thousands of people (El Hareir & Mbaye, 2011, p. 409). Since the Quran is in Arabic, people were likely to have become literate in it. In a nutshell, Arabization started in present-day Mauritania with the founding of the Almoravids state in the 11th century.

The second unique feature of Arabization policy in the pre-colonial Mauritania was the completeness of Arabization in terms of language. As mentioned above, literacy in Arabic started with the founding of the Almoravids state. In all likelihood, the literacy was accomplished through teaching Arabic and the Quran in al-mahadher since there was no record of direct contact between Arabs and the tribes of Sanhaja. Historians did not provide information

about the degree of Arabization in the span of time before the coming of the tribes of Beni Hassan. Nevertheless, countless narratives spelled out that the arrival of the tribes of Beni Hassan singled out linguistic and cultural transformations in present-day Mauritania. The transformations were both smooth and coercive, and they were complete by the end of the 17th century. The political factor is often-cited as the main reason behind the transformations. For instance, Salem (2007), Jeddou (2015), and Taine-Cheikh (2007), among others, observed that the tribes of Beni Hassan from the first years of their coming in the 15th century tried to dominate the tribes of Sanhaja, and they had the upper hand in almost all military encounters with the tribes of Sanhaja. In an attempt to end the tribes of Beni Hassan's domination, the tribes of Sanhaja came into head with them in a war called Sharr Babba (1671-1677); nonetheless, the resulting victory of the tribes of Beni Hassan sealed the fate of the tribes of Sanhaja as an arabized community. Such event led the tribes of Sanhaja to abandon their languages which were known as Tamashek (Tamazight) and Azir, a mixture of Tamashek and Soninke (Salem, 2007, pp. 108-110; Jeddou, 2015, paras; 3-10; Taine-Cheikh, 2007, pp. 37-38). Unlike Salem, Jeddou and many others, who argued that Tamashek and Azir disappeared in the 17th century, Taine-Cheikh (2007) guessed that they did not disappear totally until the 19th century (p. 37).

We, as we argued somewhere, insisted that if the Arabization was coercively reinforced as the above scholars argued, it was also smoothly established, for since the tribes of Sanhaja considered themselves Arabs, they were likely to drop their non-Arabic languages and replace them with the Arabic dialect, Hassaniya, of their cousins who had migrated to them, the tribes of Beni Hassan. Furthermore, since Sanhaja had been converted to Islam centuries ago, they might have seen Hassaniya as their suitable pathway to internalizing CA. In this way, they had willingly dropped their languages. Such factors might be the truly reasons behind language shift in present-day Mauritania, for the tribes of Beni Hassan were unlikely to try to impose their languages. They were Bedouin scattered in the desert. The primary object of each tribe was to secure economic revenue. As such, they were not likely concerned with assimilating the tribes of Sanhaja culturally. Extending our argument, Naylor (2015) stated that the tribes of Sanhaja opted willingly for Hassaniya and dropped completely their languages because they had been impregnated with Arab culture ever since the Arab invasion in the 7th century (p. 85). To sum up, unlike their cousins in the rest of the Maghreb who have retained their language, Tamazight,

the tribes of Sanhaja, in what would be known Mauritania, had dropped for ever their languages, Tamashek and Azir, centuries before the coming of the French colonization in 20th century.

In addition, a perfect command of CA by the diverse people of present-day Mauritania was unavoidably established since it was (and is) the language of the Quran. For example, the al-mahadher of present-day Mauritania have taught Arabic extensively both as a medium of instruction and as a subject ever since the founding of the first one known as "ribat" in 1039 after which Almoravids named themselves. This was because the curricula of the schools were (and are), in fact, designed to meet the religious needs of the people. As such, literacy in Arabic was a must. In this way, the al-mahadher taught the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh… *grammar*, *rhetoric*, *logic*, *poetry*, and *literature*. The al-mahadher cut across both ethnic lines and urban and rural areas. Some of the al-mahadher were located in Wallata, Chinguetti, Wadan, Tichit and many other cities (Anhwi, 1987, pp. 53, 54. 65, 75). Others were mobile schools since the nomadic communities were always on the move. The al-mahadher were often called l'école à dos de chameau (the school of the camel back), wrote Ould Ahmedou (1997). The name refers to the fact that the students recited and discussed their lessons while they were riding camels behind their teachers. The name was accurate, for, as Pettigrew remarked, "Islamic education among rural populations knew no boundaries to its access. Whether sitting under a tent in the middle of the desert or herding cattle in the Sahel, students sought knowledge from their teachers" (Pettigrew, 2007, p. 71). It seems that the people of present-day Mauritania were keen to learn CA as well as Islamic studies.

Indeed, the Egyptian Arabic literary critic and historian Daif (1995) wrote that as a result of the widespread distribution of al-mahadher between the tribes in the region, illiteracy was totally eradicated by the 16th century in the tribes of Zawaya, almost eradicated in the tribes of Arab and was low among the Kwr (pp. 568-569). Statistically, Anhwi reported that 80% of the total populations of the present-day Mauritania were literate because of the spread of al-mahadher (1987, p. 287). The statistics reflect the widespread command of CA among the diverse people of present-day Mauritania in the pre-colonial period. It might be due to such widespread command of CA that Mauritania earned the reputation of the land of one million poets.

Beside language, the tribes of Sanhaja were arabized culturally. Several Arab customs and beliefs were internalized by the tribes of Sanhaja ever since their contact with the tribes of Beni Hassan. This was because they converted to Islam ever since the 7th century as mentioned earlier. It is truism, then, that they had adopted Arab culture, for Islam was (and is) inseparable from Arab culture. However, such acculturation was likely to become quick and solid after the direct contact between the Arab tribes of Beni Hassan and the tribes of Sanhaja. Indeed, Tordoff and Fage (2001) wrote that after the arrival of the tribes of Beni Hassan, the tribes of Sanhaja were culturally fully assimilated. For example, matrilinealism and the veiling of the lower part of the face by men had completely disappeared after the arrival of the tribes of Beni Hassan (p. 192). Salem (2007) also argued that many customs of the tribes of Beni Hassan, the way of dress, hair cut (long hair), housing, marriages, to name but some, had been adopted by the tribes of Sanhaja (2007, pp. 108-110).

The last feature of Arabization policy in the pre-colonial Mauritania, which was inseparable from the above discussed features, was the completeness of Arabization in terms of lineage. The tribes of Sanhaja reconfigured their local lineage and connected the updated one to the Arabs. For example, Ibn Khaldoun stated that as early as the 10th century, the Zenagha (another name for Imazighen) claimed ancient Yemeni ancestry for political reasons (Ibn Khaldoun quoted in Bratt & Fentress, 1996, p. 131). Furthermore, Keenan (2007) insisted that the Almoravids claimed that they were of Yemeni Arab (Himyerite) origins after attaining power in North Africa. Such origin, he insisted, was based on past facto ideology worked out in North Africa (p. 94). As the times progress, the process of identification based on Arab genealogy became a common good actions between the inhabitants of the desert. For instance, Norris noted that between 1400 and 1500 many of the people of present-day Mauritania "redesigned their lineages and genealogies. This may have taken place with a marked switch from semi-matrilineal kinship nomenclature to that of patrilineal eponyms, many of them alleged descendents of the Prophet himself or one of his Companions, or else family trees which illustrated later ties with eponyms of the Ma'qil bedouin," Arab tribes (Norris cited in Krause & Boudraa, 2007, p. 308). It seems that Arab identity had achieved hegemony over the Sanhaji one in present-day Mauritania hundreds of years ago.

Likewise, several Mauritanian historians illustrated that the tribes of Sanhaja reconstructed their lineage and genealogy before and after the arrival of the tribes of Beni Hassan in the 15th century. Instead of following matrilineal kinship, they switched to the Arabs patrilineal decent system. Furthermore, they alleged Arab origin, tracing their roots to Himyerite, Yemeni tribe. Worth of note was that many historians credit the tribes of Sanhaja's claims. Moreover, some tribes refused even to be linked with Sanhaja. Some claimed decent from Quraysh tribes and others from the Companions of the Prophet and even the Prophet himself. Such shift toward Arab origin was perfected with the birth of the present-day Mauritania in 1960 as many writer started to compose their Arab origin in books. The switch of the non-Beni Hassan tribes toward Arab lineage and genealogy was politically and socially motivated since the Arab tribes of Beni Hassan had established superior status over them (Salem, 2014; Jeddou, 2015). True or false, all tribes of Sanhaja in present-day Mauritania consider themselves Arab in origin and, as discussed earlier, formed together with the tribes of Beni Hassan one ethnic bloc, the Bedan, ever since the 17th century. The Arab identity is boasted and considered politically, religiously and socially a prestige since the Prophet Mohamed is an Arab. Such factor might be the main reason behind switching identity to fit the circumstances. In the end, Arabization was complete in present-day Mauritania unlike the other Maghreb countries, for in such countries, a large portion of Imazighen have jealously preserved their tribal origin and boasted their ethnicity.

4.2.3 Language policy in the colonial period

More than eight centuries after the founding of the Almoravids state and thus the extensive introduction of Arabic to the diverse people of modern-day Mauritania, the first French administrators came and created later in 1920 the colony of Mauritania. There was no record of the numbers of people who had real competence in French at the coming of the colonizer, yet based on the nature of the people (negative attitudes toward change in general and to the European cultures who they considered as infidel), one can argue that few, if any, knew French language. However, it is truism to say that figures of French-speakers went on the rise after the pacification of present-day Mauritania in 1901. This was because, as Warner argued, from the time of the French Revolution in 1789, the main characteristic of the French colonial policy in Africa was the cultural assimilation of the indigenous populations (1990, pp. 15-16). "The realm of education became a central focus because of its role in cultural socialization" (Pettigrew,

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2007, p. 72). The reason behind opening schools and thus carrying out the policy of assimilation was to consolidate the political and the cultural presence and secure the material sources without wholesale of violence. For example, De Chassey (2013) reported: the objectives behind the reinforcement of the cultural assimilation were to civilize the indigenous, advertize the French civilization, and prepare interpreters, judges, secretaries and other workers who would facilitate the operation of the colonizer. All of the goals would certainly help the colonizer to milk the economic resources at the cheapest cost (pp. 98-100).

In present-day Mauritania, nevertheless, the policy of assimilation was different from the ones carried out in other countries in West Africa. In other words, the French administrators divided present-day Mauritania based on ethnic lines: the Kwr region in the south and the Bedan regions in the rest of the sate in-making. In the region of the former, direct rule and assimilation were applied whereas the latter's regions were subjected to policy of non-intervention. To begin with, the Kwr were subjected to direct assimilation because the French administrators, wrote Pettigrew, defined them as "very recently and superficially converted to Islam"; therefore, they were more vulnerable to adopt French culture (2007, p. 72). Furthermore, they also viewed the Kwr as more penetrable than the Bedan since they needed protection from the latter's raids. Moreover, as aforementioned, the Kwr were minority and thus more able to convert to pro-French sentiment. This was because minority groups are easily manipulated, controlled, and mobilized if the discourses of the possible oppression and discrimination by their co-nationals are used. Moreover, De Chassey argued since the Kwr languages were multiple and not codified, the French administrators viewed that the Kwr elites would learn French language (De Chassey, 2013, pp. 303-304). Besides, the reason behind applying extensive assimilative approach in the region of the Kwr might be due to the fact that the French administrators had won the sentiment of their ethnic cousins in Senegal. Accordingly, they would easily have access to the minds of them.

Based on the above discussed rationales, the Kwr were the first to be targeted by an attempt of acculturation through means of education. "Les Français n'ont pas attendu la pénétration officielle de 1901 pour fonder des écoles en Mauritanie. La première école fut donc créée… en 1898, sur la rive droite du fleuve Sénégal, à Kaédi". "The French did not wait till the official penetration of 1901 to create schools in Mauritania, for the first school was created… in

1898 on the right bank of the Senegal River in Kaedi" (*translation is mine*) (Queffélec & Ould Zein, 1997, p. 19). Queffélec and Ould Zein (1997) added that the school was opened in 1899, and it had 48 students. It worked very well, and the progress the students made at the end of the first year was satisfactory. All of them were able to read and write French (p. 20). In 1912, the French founded the second school in the region of the Kwr namely in the town of Bogue. As the former school, the school of Bogue attracted considerable number of the Kwr students (45) and worked very well (De Chassey, 2013, p. 147). The schools of Kaedi and Bogue were made regional schools. The school of Kaedi included three classes which schooled totally 104 pupils in 1927. With the same number of classes and in the same year, the number of pupils in the school of Bogue was 85 (Queffélec & Ould Zein, 1997, p. 21). The considerable number of enrollees in the schools in their first year and the relatively increase in the following years reflected that the Kwr welcomed the French policy. In other words, the French administrators won many Kwr converts to their assimilative plans. It was worth noting that even though the Kwr were Muslims, Arabic was not taught to them. In this regard, Pettigrew remarked that French was both the language of instruction and subject in such schools (2007, p. 77).

Furthermore, the French colonial administration was determined to disseminate their language and culture in the Kwr region. Their public schools were constantly founded. For example, Queffélec and Ould Zein (1997) wrote that the French administrators founded schools in the towns of Maqam and Selibaby which are respectively located in the regions of Gorgol and Guidimagha. The schools attracted a considerable number of students. 82 pupils registered in the school of Maqam and 72 pupils in the school of Selibaby (p. 22). In addition, the schools that were founded in the regions of the Bedan were attended by the Kwr who settle in those areas. For example, one colonial officer on the ground stated that when the Bedan refused to send their children to schools, the Kwr "filled their spot on the school benches" (officer cited in Pettigrew, 2007, p. 78). Moreover, in 1957, the secondary school of Rosso started to train teachers. Another school was opened in the town of Boutilimit (Bedan region) for the same purpose. However, Berry stated that "because public schools were concentrated in the south, black Africans enrolled in large numbers. As a result, the overwhelming majority of public school teachers were black, and blacks came to dominate the nation's secular intelligentsia" (1990, p. 70).

Equal importance to French education in integrating the French language and culture in the regions of the Kwr was the informal contact between them and the French. The colonial regime was based in Senegal. It did not create a capital for the newly pacified territory. Instead, the colonizer governed present-day Mauritania first from Dakar and then from St. Louis (Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, p. 13), on the mouth of the Mauritania-Senegal River. The Senegalese town remained the capital of present-day Mauritania till the founding of Nouakchott in 1957. The geographical proximity of the Kwr to the heavy presence of the French in Senegal in general and to their capital in particular made the frequent contacts between the two parties unavoidable; in consequence, the contacts contributed to the integration of French in the regions of the Kwr on the north bank of the river. Moreover, Pazzanita and Gerteiny (1996) added that many Europeans had moved and settled the north bank of the Mauritania-Senegal River after the pacification of present-day Mauritania (p. 109). The Kwr had established informal contacts with the settlers. Therefore, they developed oral communication skills in French. Furthermore, the colonial administrators recruited huge number of the Kwr in all administrative and governmental posts. According to Berry, by 1960, the Kwr were the majority of workers in the newly born state (1990, p. 65). Similarly, Boukhars (2012) stated that "[t]he French colonial powers had privileged black Africans in administrative and other governmental posts" (pp. 7-8). The informal contacts, which the works dictated, nurtured vastly the dissemination of French language and culture among the Kwr. This was certain since, as Pettigrew stated, the colonial policy imposed French in every realm, save that of religion (2007, p. 76).

In contrast with their policy in the Kwr regions, the French administrators were reluctant to embark on assimilating the Bedan. This was because the French administrators viewed them as immensely difficult to be penetrated. Pettigrew (2007) stated that "[b]ecause the *Bidan* [*italics in the source*] were the more 'natural' Muslims, the administration [French] viewed them as less penetrable and less able to be converted to pro-French sentiment" (p. 72). Indeed, when the French penetrated present-day Mauritania, the Bedan were alarmed. Individual and collective raids were carried against the French. Religious scholars, emirs and presidents of tribes, mostly Beni Hassan tribes, urged a jihad to drive the colonizer back across Mauritania-Senegal River. In 1905, Sidi Ould Moulaye Zein killed Xavier Coppolani who planned and reinforced the pacification of present-day Mauritania. They also defeated the French soldiers many times. The

Bedan adopted the tactics and strategies of guerilla warfare. The French were not able to subdue the warrior tribes (Arab tribes called also Beni Hassan tribes) until 1934 (Warner, 1990, pp. 14-15; Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, pp. 91-92). Such resistance explained the reluctance of the French to try to impose their language and culture on the Bedan as they did with the Kwr. Furthermore, even those Sheiks who facilitated the peaceful penetration of the colonizer to the region refused the interference of the colonizer in the religious and cultural life of the people. For example, Sheik Sidiya Baba, who had spiritual influence in the regions of Trarza and Brakna, and Sheik Saad Buh, who had spiritual sway over not only the regions of Taganet and Trarza but also along the Mauritania-Senegal Valley, gave their support to Coppolani in return for protection from the raids of the tribes of Beni Hassan, financial rewards, and *respect and noninterference in the culture and religion of the people* (Pazzanita & Gerteiny, 1996, pp. 91-92; Mouhandh, 2010b, p. 333). The French knew that the cultural assimilation was a red line for the Bedan even for those who sided with them.

As such, the French administrators did not introduce their language until they got the green light from their Bedan allies. According to De Chassey, some enlightened figures in the region of Taganet, namely, Sheik Sidiya Baba, the godfather of the colonization, his brother, Sidi Al-Mokhtar, and Sheik Souleiman Deimani, expressed their desires of having a school which blend the Arab traditional schooling with French language and basic sciences. The figures wanted communication skills in French for commercial purposes and communication with the colonial administration. Thus, the project to open public school was mature (2013, pp. 147-148). In 1913, the first school in the regions of the Bedan was created in Boutilimit, home town of the above figures. "La médersa de Boutilimit est une école destinée exclusivement aux fils de chefs et de notables. Appelée à l'origine École des fils de chefs" (the school of Boutilimit was intended exclusively to the sons of chiefs and notables. It was called the School of Sons of Chiefs) [*translation is mine*] (Queffélec & Ould Zein, 1997, p. 23). The reason behind such exclusiveness was "la formation d'une élite éclairée, capable de collaborer et de servir de trait d'union entre nous et les tribus" (the formation of enlightened elites able to corporate and serve as a bridge between us and the tribes) [*translation is mine*] (Dubié, 1941, 3). In the first year, the school attracted 9 students among whom were two sons of the chief of the tribe of Awlad Deiman and two sons of the Amir of Trarza. They studied 12 hours of Arabic (the Quran,

Fiqh…etc) and 13 hours of French language (De Chassey, 2013, p. 148). Based on such curriculum, the Bedan school can be described as a Franco-Arabic one.

In search for more students, the school's French Director, M. Rouis Bou, made a general reform in 1929. Instead of having the school staff (4 tutors and the director) composed of non-Bedan, the director recruited locally two tutors beside two French ones. In addition, the curriculum was changed. It adopted subjects that were taught in al-mahadher. The curriculum included 18 hours in French and 8 hours in Arabic (De Chassey, 2013, p. 149). The decrease of the number of hours of Arabic is clear. As mentioned above, French and Arabic were introduced in equal number of hours in the first founded school. Such fact gives the premise that the French were gradually assimilating the Bedan. However, the results of the reform were striking. According to De Chassey (2013), the number of the enrollees increased from 10 to 90 students. In 1938, the French director of the school was replaced by a Bedani called Siyid Ould Moussa Moustapha, and all the tutors were from Bedan. As a result, another rise in the demands for enrollment was observed. People from remote places brought their children to the school. As such, the school staff had to make selection (p. 149). Clearly, the Bedan's attitudes toward the Franco-Arabic education improved.

The relative success of the school of Boutilimit led the French colonizer to open more schools in the regions of the Bedan. Indeed, De Chassey (2013) reported that, because the recruitment of pupils to the school of Boutilimit between 1930 and 1940 had become easier, the colonial authorities decided to open additional schools in the regions of the Bedan (p. 19). As such, Ould Cheikh (1996) wrote: in 1933, a school was opened in the region of Timbedra which at that time was affiliated with the French Sudan (present-day Mali). In 1934, the school had 48 attendants, but the number decreased in the next years (p. 44). On January 13, 1936, another school was opened in the region of Atar. At the end of the first year, there were 39 enrollees in such school. The number increased relatively in the next years, but because of the lack of economic sources, the school director refused many applicants and reduced the number of scholarships. Three years later, to date on September 20, 1939, another school was founded in the region of Kiffa. In the school year of 1944-1945, the school had 56 attendants (Queffélec & Ould Zein, 1997, pp. 26-27). In addition, as they opened preparatory schools in the region of the Kwr, the colonial authorities founded them in the regions of the Bedan. Preparatory school refers

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to primary school. Regional school includes both primary and secondary levels. In 1935, De Chassey wrote that each of the following towns hosted a preparatory school: Chinguetti, Mederdra, Kiffa, Tejgja, Atar, Nema, Aleg. In 1941, their numbers became 14 (2013, pp. 148, 157). However, according to Queffélec and Ould Zein (1997), the number of students in the schools was very few; in fact, some schools existed only on papers. Besides, the schools were deserted by the type of people the assimilation targeted, sons of chiefs. The attendants were sons of soldiers or the Kwr who lived in the regions (p. 27).

The end of the Second World War signaled a new phase of colonial politics in its colonies in general. Adloff and Thompson (1958) wrote that France adopted a new constitution in 1946 which divide the French former empire into four categories, the Associated States, the Associated Territories, the Overseas Departments, and the Overseas Territories. The last two groups, together with the Metropole, formed the French Republic, one and indivisible. Present-day Mauritania was categorized as an overseas territory like the other West African colonies (pp. 44-45). The reform was accompanied by many others among which was the one concerned with language policy in the colonies. Queffélec and Ould Zein (1997) stated that education was made compulsory in 1949. As such, efforts were made to bring as much as possible numbers of students to the schools. Responding to the problems posed by nomadic nature of the Bedan communities, camps were organized (p. 28). In the school year 1956-1957, the number of the camp schools was 28. Chiefs of tribes were paid to bring students to the tent schools (De Chassey, 2013, p. 176). Additionally, the preference shown in the early decades toward sons of Chiefs was considered undemocratic. As such, schools opened their doors wide open to all pupils regardless of their reputation (Pettigrew, 2007, p. 81). De Chassey (2013) further argued that education in present-day Mauritania was affiliated with the Primary School Inspectorate in Senegal. In 1945, the soon-to-be ex-colonial power, nevertheless, had its own educational administration. Furthermore, all preparatory schools were turned into secondary schools. Between 1957 and 1960, the number of primary and secondary schools was multiplied. The educational syllabus was unified. In other words, the duality of French and Arabic which was exclusive to the regions of the Bedan in the earliest decades was extended to include the regions of the Kwr as well. The students, nonetheless, studied Arabic only 6 hours and French 30 hours a week (pp. 151, 172, 176-177).

The success of the French colonial authorities' intensified attempts, over the last two decades of the colonial rule, in the dissemination of the French language, in the soon-to-be ex-colonial power, was very limited. Statistically, the percentage of participation in the Franco-Arabic education rose from 1.6% in 1944 to 7.3% in 1960. The enrollment number increased from 1500 students in 1946 to 5500 in 1957 and 11200 in 1960 (De Chassey, 2013, p. 173). The enrollment rate and number reflected mainly the participation of the Kwr in education. The small numbers of the Bedan who attended the schools were mainly sons of soldiers, and lower casts of the Bedan who used them as means of access to positions of power which they have had no access to them before. Almost all Bedan refused to attend the Franco-Arabic schools. Al-mahadher were the forefront means through which the Bedan in particular had staunchly resisted the French authorities' attempts at cultural assimilation and participation in the colonial system of Franco-Arabic education. In this regard, Queffélec and Ould Zein remarked that

Au temps de la colonisation, ells [al-mahadher] ont été le grand rempart qui a permis la résistance à une culture étrangère et la préservation de l'héritage national». De fait, durant toute la période coloniale, l'enseignement traditionnel l'a emporté - et de très loin -tant en prestige qu'en nombre d'élèves scolarisés sur l'enseignement colonial.

At the time of colonization, they [al-mahadher] were the great bulwark which enabled the resistance of foreign culture and the reservation of the national heritage. In fact, during the colonial period, traditional education has won- and by far- both prestige and in number of pupils in comparison with the enrollees in colonial education. (*Translation is mine*) (1997, p. 15)

Additionally, Religious Scholars and Sheiks of al-mahadher made fatwas (Islamic ruling by authorized authority) which forbade the enrollment of pupils in the Franco-Arabic schools. The following poem illustrated the parents' refusal to send their children to schools. It represents also a fatwa that asserted the validity of the parents' decision.

O, scholars of the country, how
To respond to he who asks
The status of the law just imposed
In regard to putting our young
Children in French schools?
(...)
Mohammed Lemine Ibn Mohammed Mawlud responds:
Learning the Infidel's writing is authorized

For adults, according to the scholars,
But they forbid that they (adults) send their child
To an unbeliever so that he be sent to school.
The sin, if the child becomes Christian,
Is that of the father who put his son there.
Opinions differ on the rule
For teaching our alphabet to the Infidel.
(Mohammed Ibn al-Mustafa cited in Pettigrew, 2007, pp. 77-78)

The poem reveals that parents, scholars and the Bedan community at large viewed the Franco-Arabic schools as a possible ground for Christian conquest. As such, they emphatically opposed sending their children to them. Indeed, Ould Ziyad said that the Bedan community considered the French schools as means of blurring the community character and distorting its cultural identity; accordingly, parents faced the French compulsory education through the following strategies, hiding children, denying children birth, trekking further into remote places which did not fell within the French influence, and frequent truancy of those who were forced to attend schools (2007, p. 27). It is clear that the Bedan community could not be coerced into complying.

The boycott left the door wide open to the Kwr to fill out the colonial administrative and governmental positions. Indeed, Perrin (1983) stated that "du fait de leur éducation reçue en langue française, les Noirs ont pu accéder en grand nombre aux postes administratifs et techniques du secteur public où ils étaient surreprésentés par rapport à leur poids dans l'ensemble de la population" (because of their French education, "Blacks" were able to access in large numbers administrative and technical positions in the public sector. They were overrepresented in relation to their weight in the population as a whole) [*translation is mine*] (p. 16). It is clear then that the colonial language policy did not only divide the co-nationals of the soon-to-be ex-colonial power politically and economically but also ended their social and cultural harmony which were maintained and communicated through their religious elites who shared the same language, Arabic, and the same sacred book, the Quran. Indeed, prior to the French colonization in 1900, the culture of the Kwr communities could be described as a hybrid variant of the Bedan culture though they were recognized as distinct racial groups. The policy of division was unavoidable since it was the sole guarantee for the colonial continuity as the rule "divide and conquer" goes. Thus, the French colonizer played the role of the mother who teaches, guides, supports, and protects her devoted little child (the Kwr) from his ingrate old "aggressive"

brother, the Bedan. Immediately, after their mother's "death" ("end" of colonialism), the two brothers or sisters were left to deal with a legacy of difference, suspicion and hostility. The hostility and suspicion were famed when the old brother tried to reinforce new way of life, say language, in the house, the state. The discussion of the following title walks the reader through the different phases the roommates have gone through after the "death" of their mother.

4.2.4 Language policy in post-colonial Mauritania

Proper and "complete" independence was relatively established late in Mauritania. Gaining its independence in 1960, the state did not usher in post-colonial "individual policies." Rather, there was a simple continuation of dominance of the well-entrenched pre-independence French policies in general and that concerned with language in particular. Such fact was mirrored in the national constitution which "was unanimously adopted by the Constituent Assembly [Mauritania's first National Assembly, formerly known as the Territorial Assembly] in March 1959 in place of the French constitution" (Warner, 1990, p. 23). The article 3 of the constitution stated that French is the official language, and Arabic is the national language. One year after the independence, to date on May 20, 1961, the 1959 constitution was replaced by a new constitution, yet the constitution kept the article 3 unchanged (Constitution du 20 mai 1961). Although the article assigned Arabic the national status, it could not pretend to assume any national dimension. This was because the official status, which was granted to the French language, marks the predominance of a language. Indeed, in addition to its de jure status as the language of parliament, administration, and national discussion, the French language's dominance in the schools syllabus remained unaffected. In this regard, Queffélec and Ould Zein observed that the 1959 constitution kept the pre-independence status given to English language and gave slightly more importance to Arabic. English was introduced in third year of secondary school with 4 hours per week. Concerning Arabic, instead of 6 hours teaching out of a total of 30 hours per week prior to independence, it was taught 10 hours in preparatory course, 8 hours in elementary and middle courses, and French was respectively reduced to 23 and 25 hours (1997, p. 35). The aim of the slight change was, as observed Chartrand, to adjust the school to its social and cultural environment and to meet the cultural, economic and political of the majority of Population (1977, p. 67).

The caution and restraint exercised with regard to boosting the status of Arabic in the early post-independence years were motivated by worries that the newly born state was not in a stable enough condition to initiate significant linguistic changes. Indeed, the inception of the state was characterized with tribal, ethnic, regional, and international tensions. According to Ould Daddah (2007), at the negotiating table of the Congress of Aleg, in May 1958, the political parties of the day and a number of movements were divided around the issue of language policy of the soon-to-be an independent state. On the one hand, the Kwr regarded Arabization policy as a means of cultural domination; in consequence, they collectively called for the preservation of the pre-independence status of French. On the other hand, the Bedan said that the French is the language of the colonizer. It distorted their Islamic culture. Additionally, since they formed the majority of the people, Arabic should be immediately implemented. In such an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicious, the Congress attendees agreed to delay the linguistic issue for the sake of the state. They should stand united and face Morocco's irredentism (p. 140). The decision of postponing the linguistic change was adequately taken, for the state in-making could not afford ethnic divisions and protests which were unavoidable, given the historical backdrop of the Kwr determination of preventing any elevation of the status of Arabic. For instance, Jourde (2004) argued that when the French colonial authorities responded positively to the Bedan's demands and instituted a reform introducing an Arabic exam as part of the standardized education syllabus, the Kwr vigorously protested. They feared that Arabization would limit their access to governmental positions (pp. 71-72).

Only toward the end of the 1960s did Mauritania begin the journey of the decolonization in general and that of linguistic in particular that had taken place a decade earlier in the neighboring countries, Morocco in 1957 (one year after independence) (Segalla, 2009, p. 250) and Algeria in 1962, the year of the independence (Ben Said & Rubdy, 2015, p. 261). For example, Baduel (1989) remarked that the government enacted laws, 65-025 and 65-026, mandating Arabic in primary and secondary schools in 1965 (p. 24). As expected, the Arabization Acts had the incendiary effect of provoking deadly clashes between the Bedan students and the Kwr ones who were backed formally by several high ranking positions holders. According to Magistro (1999), the incident left many casualties, 6 death and an estimated 70 injured (p. 188). The incident, nevertheless, did not impede the government Arabization efforts.

For instance, Queffélec and Ould Zein (1997) illustrated that, in Jun 1966, the Congress of the People's Party, single party, was held in the region of Aioun from 24 to 26, and the attendees decided to institute bilingual (French and Arabic) education. However, although more hours of instruction in Arabic were offered at all educational levels, their numbers remained less than that of French. In 1967, the reform was put into practice. In 1968, the article 3 of the Constitution was revised; as a result, Arabic jointly with French language became the official language of the state (p. 36). In other words, Arabic beside French was used in administrative correspondences, formal speeches…etc. The time of initiating such significant linguistic change (elevation of Arabic) and determination to carry it on regardless of the Kwr's astute opposition were due to the newly won individuality both internationally and regionally. In other words, feeling safe after winning the United Nations' admission and the Arab League's recognition in 1961 as well as Morocco's abandonment of its claim in 1969, the government embarked on shifting away from the colonial linguistic policy.

Furthermore, in the 1970s, Mauritania seemed determined toward strengthening the status of Arabic. For instance, the government issued the educational decree number 75.533 on March 30, 1973, increasing the role of Arabic in education (Ould Ziyad, 2007, p. 40). The aim of the reform was to establish a genuine cultural independence through the promotion of Arabic and Islamic culture (Lemrabet, 1995, p. 169). The reform increased the hours of Arabic to exceed that of French for the first time. In elementary school which was reduced from 7 years to 6 years, the distribution of time of the two languages is as follows. The first and the second years were entirely arabized. The scheduled hours of Arabic and French were equal in third and forth years. In the last two years, however, French language dominated two-third of the 30 hours total (Mohameda, 2005, p. 24). The distribution of languages varied in secondary school. Secondary school was (and is) divided into two cycles, and each cycle had three years. There were two types of secondary schools: Arabic and bilingual. Queffélec and Ould Zein stated that, in Arabic secondary school, Arabic was the medium of instruction and French was taught as foreign language for only 3 to 5 hours out of a total 30 a week throughout the years. In bilingual secondary school, Arabic was given a span of time of 11 hours per week. French language enjoyed the remaining 19 hours (1997, p. 38).

The reform remained shortly unaffected. In 1978, the first language policy makers were toppled in a military coup which marked the beginning of series of coups d'états. In 1979, a junta self-referred the Military Committee for National Salvation took the lead after removing Ould Saleck, the head of the first military junta, the Military Committee for National Recovery. To facilitate its operation, the junta tried to ease the ethnic tension which was caused by the Arabization policy. In so doing, they initiated an educational reform that aimed at codifying the Kwr languages which were recently recognized as national languages. The languages would also be taught in a newly created institution in Nouakchott and primary schools which were in areas along the Mauritania-Senegal River, the Kwr's areas (Ould Zein, 2010, pp. 50-51). The objective of introducing the languages was to gradually replace French language with them and Arabic. In early 1980s, the codification of national languages in Latin script was complete, and they were introduced in the school curriculum in 1982. Nevertheless, the first experiment courses of national languages failed due to their inability to attract students. The Kwr students fell back on the bilingual (Arabic and French) and thus dropping their languages. That is, the courses of the Kwr languages were deserted. Thus, the experimental classes were shut down one after another (Queffélec & Ould Zein, 1997, p. 41).

Responding to an international pressure, the state shifted from a military regime toward a civil one. The government adopted a new institution in 1991. The constitution, which still operates today, met the calls of the full Arabization advocates. For example, as aforementioned, Article 6 stated that Arabic is the official and national language of the state. The article reserved the national status which was given to the Kwr languages, Wolof, Soninke and Pulaar in 1978 by the first military junta (the Military Committee for National Recovery) which ousted the first civilian regime. The constitution made no mention to French language. However, it has remained the absent present. In other words, even though Arabic had (and has) de jure status, French was (and is) a de facto. The former adopted reform remained in place. The two languages operated jointly in the education sector. Arabic dominated the courses of Arabic stream, and French was extensively used in bilingual sector. In the latter, Arabic was used as a subject and as a medium of instruction for the cultural subjects, Hadith, Quran, history…etc. It is clear then that the language policy adopted in education sectors was and is unconstitutional. Such fact is stressed on

daily basis by the Bedan who as elsewhere mentioned call for immediate full Arabization and unification of education.

As discussed above, the language policy reforms which were at the center of each educational reform resulted in two separated systems of education: Arabic branch and bilingual branch. In each branch, only few hours of the other language were taught. The existence of the two separate systems was the main friction between the Kwr and the Bedan. The already existing distinctions seemed to grow, dividing them apart. Furthermore, in spite of the efforts of the government who used "to invest a great part of his budget in public schools (one fourth in 1998), the education standards were falling drastically year by year. Reports of 1998 show[ed] that only 30% of the students pass the examination of the BAC" ("Profile of the Education," n. d., para. 3). In 1999, the government decided to remedy the situation by embarking on another educational reform which was, as the preceding ones, mainly a reform of language policy. In so doing, the government enacted a law 99-012 which was approved by the parliament at an extraordinary session held on April 26, 1999 (Bureau International d' Education, 2010, p. 4). Article 1 of the law stated that the teaching provided by the various levels of education, primary, secondary and tertiary are unified. They are insured under the same conditions to all pupils and students enrolled in schools and universities, both public and private. The unification was to be guaranteed by bilingual education (French and Arabic) which are detailed in the following Acts.

a. The introduction of Arabic (the national language of the country under Article 6 of the Constitution of 20 July 1991) as "the only language of instruction in the first year (of the fundamental school) for all pupils enrolled in national, public and private institutions" (Article 2)

b. "The teaching of French is dispensed from the second year" of the basic order (Article 3).

c. Introduction of the teaching of English "from the first year" of the secondary cycle (Article 7)

d. The teaching of the physical sciences and informatics "in French, respectively from the third and fourth years" of the first cycle (article 7).

e. The establishment within the University of Nouakchott of a department of national languages "within the framework of the further promotion and

development of the national languages Pulaar, Soninke and Wolof ..." (article 12). (Ould Mohamed Lemine, 2002, pp. 5-6)

The acts of the educational law reveal that all pupils and students are exposed to a single education system. In the system, French and Arabic became the languages of instruction for all. Arabic was the medium of instruction for cultural subjects, religion, history…etc. Scientific courses, say, math, physics…etc, were taught in French for all. Seemingly, the Mauritanian decision makers thought that carrying out such language policy would lead to the creation of a speech community in the sense given by Ramaine (1994): "a speech community is a group of people who do not necessarily share the same language, but share a set of norms and rules for the use of language" (p. 23). Otherwise stated, the decision makers hoped that the bilingual policy would in the long run breed positive attitudes of the two ethnic parties toward the languages and thus ease ethnic tensions. However, the antagonist parties were still unsatisfied. As mentioned earlier, the Bedan called for full Arabization policy whereas the Kwr were pressing for the maintenance of the French language. The bilingual language policy which was carried in the state was fertile ground for ideological warfare. Aside from French and Arabic, the reform boosted the status of English. It is introduced in the first year of the first cycle of the secondary school. In all of the preceding reforms, English language was taught only in the first year of the second cycle of the secondary school as mentioned earlier. Such policy was expected since English was and is a de facto universal language of business, sciences, technology…etc. The role of English worldwide was certainly behind the general consensus among the antagonist parties over the elevation of the status of English. Worth of note also was that departments of national languages which the reform stipulated did not succeed in attracting students. As such, they were closed.

The post-colonial language policy was not directed only toward education but also toward every realm in which the colonizer implemented its language. Put differently, the Mauritanian government aimed at giving Arabic the same status the French had not only in modern education and administration but also in currency. As aforementioned, the French administrators outlawed the use of Arabic in every realm of the colony in 1911. As such, the nascent Republic had to decolonize the linguistic imperialism. For instance, Coats (1990) stated that Mauritania withdrew from the French-backed West African Monetary Union in 1973 and

created an independent central bank and national currency, the ouguiya (p. 82). Instead of using the monolingual (French) coins and banknotes of CFA, Mauritania issued a separate currency (ouguiya) and made its coins and banknotes bilingual, Arabic and French. Moreover, the government took additional measures that boosted the status of Arabic. The measures included but not limited to markings. According to Taine-Cheikh (2007), before 1990s, shop and road signs and inscription on walls were primarily done in French. However, the government steered a new language policy which consolidated bilingualism in markings of all kinds. Shop and road signs, advertisement hoardings were composed in both Arabic and French (p. 46). Some of them were written only in Arabic. Recently, as aforementioned, just before hosting the 27th Arab League Summit, the government enacted a law that prevent the use of French only or the French first and Arabic second on shops signs and all markings . As a result of the policy, markings of all kinds become either bilingual (Arabic and French) or monolingual, Arabic.

Conclusion

This chapter traced the past and witnessed the present language policies and ethnic and national identities in Mauritania. It was demonstrated that for millennia, Mauritania has been, to use Pratt's words (1991), "a contact zone" between the tribes of Sanhaja, the tribes of Beni Hassan and the Kwr communities. Even though the groups were racially distinct, their seldom clashes were politically rather than racially motivated. However, the penetration of the French colonizer disrupted the long-established social harmony between the Bedan ethnic group and the Kwr communities, introducing ethnicity as a marker of identity.

In addition to ethnic identity, the establishment of national identity was discussed. Before the twentieth century, Mauritania was a stateless state organized in the forms of tribes, emirates and later ethnic groups. As such, people's loyalties were distributed between their tribes, regions and ethnicities. To establish a common national identity, the founding fathers had to lock in such segmenting loyalties. Shared history, territory and religion were the main factors which were evoked to unify the people and bring them together to a common national identity. However, after the independence, ethnic tensions bubbled over the surface when the government stressed the necessity of clean break from the colonial legacy. The Kwr were keen to maintain the colonial financial and cultural policies. They protested, created ethnic organization, and launched

a military coup d'état to outset the regime. However, the successive regimes were also determined to push the state outside the French legacy and establish individuality. They replaced the French CFA with ouguiya, implemented Arabic, joined the "Arab" League, and demilitarized the Kwr's soldiers and officers who had an ethnic nationalism, to name but few. Such policies combined with the endless stress of the shared territory, religion, and history have succeeded in easing ethnic tension and thus forged a common Arab-Islamic national identity.

It was revealed also that even though Mauritania was relatively a new born state, its people have gone through two language policies (monolingualism and bilingualism) ever since the 11th century. The culminating process of Islamization which started with the arrival of Ibn Yacin to Mauritania in 1039 was accompanied with an Arabization policy. Such policy accelerated with the first influxes of the tribes of Beni Hassan and culminated after the war of Sharr Babba. Toward the 19th century, the tribes of Sanhaja dropped their languages (Tamashek and Azir), adopted Hassaniya, supplanted older matrilineal genealogies with patrilineal Arab genealogies, and solidified their old claim of Arab social identity. At the same time, the region witnessed a great expansion in the knowledge and use of CA and SA as the result of deliberate acts of promotion such as the use in the educational system known as al-mahadher, religious sermons, and correspondence, as well as via less planned inter-ethnic communication.

Ever since the first incursion into present-day Mauritania, the colonial authorities were keen to reverse the existing monolonigual Arabization policy. They followed two types of language policy, monolingual (French) and bilingual (French and Arabic). In the region of the Kwr, they opened several schools and implemented Francization. The Kwr welcomed the full assimilationist policy, and most, if not all, children were enrolled in such schools; nonetheless, the few schools, which were founded in the regions of the Bedan, attracted few of pupils even though bilingual policy (Arabic and French) was implemented. As a result of such policy, the post-colonial Mauritania was marked by ideological clashes over the nature of the adequate language policy. The Kwr, who were fully assimilated by the French, rebuffed the Bedan's call for implementing Arabization policy. However, the successive governments were determined to elevate Arabic at the detriment of French. They gradually carried out policies that strengthen its status in the administration, constitution, and education. The last educational reform in 1999 instituted bilingualism in the state.

Part Three: Language Policy and Identity in Mauritania

Chapter Five: Methodological Framework

Introduction

In the chapter, an attempt is made to provide a description of the research design used in the present study. Tersely, study design refers to "the plan and architecture of the research" (Wellenius & Savitz, 2016, p. 8). In outlining the plan and architecture, the aim and the questions, which guided the present study, are restated. The investigative approach used in the study is both quantitative and qualitative. As such, a two-fold methodology of an interview and a questionnaire is used in order to investigate issues related to identity and language policy in Mauritania. Even though the application of two-fold methodology in one research is time consuming and effort taking, it is deemed necessary to obtain a fuller understanding of the way the Mauritanians identify themselves as well as their views about language policy. The methodology is tested also prior to embarking on the study in order to ensure that the raised questions are understood by the respondents. The type of sampling, the setting and the respondents are also illustrated. The chapter ends up describing the ways through which the elicited data are analyzed.

5.1 Hypotheses and research questions

As the title of the study suggests and as mentioned earlier in the general introduction, the study endeavors to unveil the nature of identity the Mauritanians subscribe to as well as their attitudes toward language policy. It also tries to unearth the relationship between such identity and language policy in particular. In this respect, the study hypothesizes that

a. Ethnic identity is stronger than any other identity.
b. Language policy is ethnically oriented.

To meet the overall aim of the study the following questions are raised.

a. How do the Mauritanians identify themselves?
b. Which language policy do they prefer?
c. Is there any relationship between their choice of language policy and their identity?

5.2 Data collection techniques

As aforementioned, the study uses triangulated approach in gathering data. According to Pace, Scott and McMurray (2004) triangulated approach refers to the use of more than one technique to the investigation of a research question (p. 263). The techniques used in the study are questionnaire and interview. The reason behind the use of such approach is to enhance confidence and ensure the finding. For instance, Rahman and Yeasmin (2012) stated that triangulated techniques "are helpful for cross-checking and used to provide confirmation…, completeness…, and increase the credibility and validity of the results" (p. 157). Clearly, the use of two techniques helps in overcoming weakness and intrinsic biases. Indeed, Dornyei (2007) asserted that the use of the questionnaire and interview make numbers adds meaning to words and words add meaning to numbers (p. 45). In other words, the data elicited from questionnaire, which is quantitative, (numerically counted) is explained by the data collected by means of interview which is qualitative in nature (thematically described).

5.2.1 Questionnaire

According to Pathak (2008), a questionnaire refers to a "group of or sequence of questions designed to elicit information upon a subject". The questions are filled by the respondents (p. 110). A questionnaire has long been known to be an effective tool in gathering data. Jolley and Mitchell (2010) remarked that a questionnaire is an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. It is relatively objective in nature and requires only few minutes to respond to the questions. Such characteristic helps the respondents to stay focused. Additionally, because of anonymity, the participants are likely to give honest answers (p. 263).

Having briefly introduced the questionnaire in general, its description becomes possible. The questionnaire consists of five sections of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions take the form of justification as in the following wording: justify your choice. The reason behind the use of the two types of questions in the questionnaire is as mentioned earlier to make words (answers to open-ended questions in this case justification) "add meaning

to numbers" (answers to closed-ended questions, in this case yes/no or rating scale) and numbers "add precision to words." The type of questions is included in the questionnaire in order to have data that reflect "the richness and complexity of the views held by the respondent" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 166). Put differently, such use enables the researcher to know why the participants answer in the particular way. The first section (A) is intended to elicit personal information. It is composed of one item. The item is meant to reveal the ethnicity of the subjects. In order to avoid misconception which might negatively affect the responses of the participants in the rest of the items of the questionnaire, direct question which uses the term ethnicity was avoided. Instead, the participants were asked about their mother tongues.

The second section (B) is entitled "Identity" and is broken down into 6 items (2-7). As its title implies, it aims at eliciting information about the way the Mauritanians describe themselves. It tries also to measure their ethnic orientation and nationalism. In the second item, the respondents are given a likert scale and requested to select the first most important, the second most important and the third most important markers of identity which they adhere to when describing themselves. The third item weighs up the respondents ethnic and national identities. The fourth item elicits information about the respondents' intimacy with their own ethnic group. The fifth item is also designed in the form of likert scale and seeks to measure the degree of intimacy between the ethnic groups. The respondents are asked to justify their choices. The sixth and the seventh items seek respectively to gather information about the respondents' national identity.

The third section (C) is on language function and consists of one item. The item (8) tries to uncover the respondents' use of language in different contexts, house, university…etc. The fourth section (D) is on language policy and includes four items (9-12). Questions 9 and 10 are meant to probe the participants' attitudes toward the elevation of the status of Arabic and French respectively in both education and administration. The respondents are also requested to justify their answers. Such step is meant to see the reasons behind the respondents' selection of the dichotomous questions yes/no. Question 11 enquires about the participants' views of Arabic-French bilingualism. Question 12 is intended to reveal whether the Mauritanians are keen on maintaining the current status of French or not. In so doing, a proposal of replacing French with English is given to the participants. The fifth section (E) seeks to see the relationship between

language policy and identity and includes five items (13-17). Revealing the relationship helps the researcher to explain the nature of the ongoing debate over language policy in Mauritania.

Question 13 is aimed at revealing which language or languages the participants consider part of their identities. Question 14 is meant to check the previous one. It tries to see whether the participants consider the current Arabic-French bilingual system a cultural necessity or not. Questions 15 and 16 are meant to see respectively what Arabization and Francization policies represent to Mauritanians in terms of identity. Finally, in question 17, the main reason behind the ongoing debate and protests over language policy is shown. The questionnaire is printed and administered by the researcher in order to make sure that the respondents answer all the questions. The questionnaire is translated into both Arabic and French because the participants do not speak English. Whereas some of them speak French, others speak Arabic. For the actual questionnaire, see Appendix I for the English version, Appendix II for the Arabic version, and Appendix III for the French version.

5.2.2 Interview

Dunstan (2013) stated that interview is a technique of "collecting qualitative data that allow[s] the researcher to attempt to gain an understanding of the unique and perspectives of participants" (p. 69). The reason behind the use of the technique was to get more comprehensible information from the respondents. Additionally, it enables the researcher to probe for more responses and also to benefit from the respondents' gestures and other visual cues. Moreover, the interviewer can make sure that all questions are answered (Bailey, 1994, p. 174). Furthermore, Hilton, DeJong, Sullivan, and Monette (2014) argued that it offers the opportunity to explain questions which the participants may not otherwise understand (p. 182).

After defining and illustrating the diverse advantages of the interview, we describe the interview undertook in the present study. The interview is conducted face to face and one-to-one. That is, the researcher speaks directly with one interviewee at a time. The interview is composed of 9 open-ended questions in order to elicit qualitative data. The questions are covered with all participants. The first question is meant to elicit information about the interviewees' identity. Question 2 is intended to measure the ethnic cohesion in the country.

Questions 3 and 4 aimed at revealing the interviewees' attitudes toward elevating the status of Arabic to the detriment of French and vice versa in educational and administrative institutions. Question 5 seeks out information on the Arabic-French bilingualism. Questions 6 and 7 are designed to reveal the interviewees' views about Arabic and French. Question 8 is meant to see the degree to which the interviewees hang on the use of French in the realms of the state. Question 9 is directed toward unearthing the main reason behind the persistence of the divergence over the language policy.

The interviews are audio taped because audio recording, argued Ruane, is the preferred tool for interviews as it enables a word-for-word, permanent record of the interaction (2016, p. 205). Audio recording also enables the researcher to capture the interviewees' self-correction, hesitation and the like made during the course of interview (Knobel & Lankshear, 2004, p. 199). Furthermore, as the interviews are running, the interviewer writes down the interviewee's facial expression and body movement which are of help in interpreting the data. Each participant is interviewed once, and each interview lasts for approximately 30 minutes. The interview is translated into Hassaniya because the subject does not speak English. Moreover, it is assumed that the respondent would feel free from constrains when he speaks in his mother tongue. It is also translated into French because the chair-person of Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal said that he prefers the interview to be conducted in French. The schedule of the interviews is shown in the following table.

names	roles	interview schedules
Daoud Ahmed Aicha	Chair-person of Call of the Motherland	March 7, 2017
Ibrahima Mokhtar Sar	Chair-person of Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal	March 13, 2017

The questions included in the interview cover the same points raised in the questionnaire. The rational, as mentioned earlier, was twofold. First, it enables the researcher to gather more information about the issue from ordinary people as well as the state officials. As such, the collected data would be representative. Second, the researcher can compare and contrast the ordinary people's view of the issue of language policy and identity with that of the state

officials. As such, the researcher would be able to investigate the topic more thoroughly. Appendix IV illustrates the items which are covered in the interview.

5.3 The piloting of the instruments

All research instruments should be piloted; in fact, many, if not all, researchers, among whom were Hughes and Davies, noted piloting the instrument is a must, and it should be tried out on subjects as similar as possible to the targeted population (2014, p. 48). The desirability of piloting the research instruments prior to starting data collection is not solely to do with trying to ensure the items of the instruments are understood by the subjects (Birmingham & Wilkinson, 2003, p. 52) but identifying questions which make respondents uncomfortable and lose their interest as well (Bryman, 2016, p. 260). Abiding by the convention and trying to benefit from the different advantages of piloting, the items included in the instruments discussed above are tested on 10 students for questionnaire and 3 students for interview. The subjects' answers and feedbacks showed that they triggered the target data.

5.4 Sampling procedures

The aim of a researcher is to come up with findings which can be generalized to some extent. That is to say every researcher would like his or her findings to have a wider application and have relevance and implications beyond the subjects who are involved in the study. As such, s/he has to scrutinize the sampling procedures available to the researcher and choose the adequate sample. Sampling procedures refer to the techniques which the researcher uses in order to use an adequate sample. Before discussing the techniques, it is imperative to define the term "sample." According to Webster, a sample refers to "a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole" (1985). "When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey" (Mugo, n. d., para. 3).

As aforementioned, there are two types of sampling procedures, probability sampling and non probability sampling, each of which is subdivided into different sub-types. To begin with, probability sampling refers to selection procedures in which subjects are randomly chosen from

"the sampling frame and each element has a known, nonzero chance of being selected. This does not require that all elements have an equal probability, nor does it preclude some elements from having a certain… probability of selection" (Judd & Reis, 2000, p. 230). Probability sampling is subdivided into three types: simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, and stratified random sampling. In simple random sampling, members are selected literally at random from the frame (Coleman & Briggs, 2007, p. 132). Systematic random sampling refers to "the selection of elements using a sampling interval and a random start" (Lavrakas (Ed.), 2008, p. 234). "When the population is partitioned into strata and a sample is selected from each stratum, then the sampling scheme is called stratified sampling" (Salkind, (Ed.), 2010, p. 1212). The outlined definitions of the subtypes of probability sampling indicate that they are neither feasible nor adequate to randomly select subject from the whole population. This is because the topic of the study requires a selective approach since Mauritania, as mentioned previously, is composed of different ethnic groups.

Unlike probability sampling, non probability sampling, stated Dane, refers to "any procedure in which elements have unequal chances of being included. If one chooses elements on the basis of how they look, how they live, or some other criteria, the researcher limits the chances of those who do not meet the criteria" (2011, p. 121). It branches out into four branches, namely, snowball sampling, judgment sampling, convenience sampling, and quota sampling. Snowball sampling refers to "a variety of procedures in which initial respondents are selected by probability methods and additional respondents are obtained from information provided by the initial respondents" (Walliman, 2016, p. 115). It seems that such type of sampling is useful of recruiting members of rare population. Judgment sampling, wrote Maryam, Pathic, and Hbib, is known also as purposive sampling (2014, p. 32). Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P, and Borg (2007) stated that it refers to "the practice of selecting cases that are likely to be information-rich with respect to the purposes of a qualitative study" (p. 178).

Convenience sampling denotes choosing sampling units on the basis of their availability (p. 131). Such type shows that it can only be used if the topic of the study is generic and does not take into consideration criteria of the sampling units. Finally, quota sampling begins with designing a matrix which describes the target population's attributes: what portion of the population is white and black; literate and illiterate and the like (Babbie & Rubin, 2010, p. 148).

After designing the matrix, the researcher selects a quota from each category (DeJong, Sullivan & Monette, 2011, p. 152). The type seems to be the most adequate one to the present study. This is because the case study, Mauritania, hosts diverse ethnic groups. Since the topic is identity and language, it is imperative to have the different views of the diverse people of the state. We take each quota from each ethnic group and try to get their attitudes toward issues related to language policy and identity.

5.5 The setting and the target population

As shown in the title of the present study, the setting is Mauritania. As such, the researcher who is always in touch with the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Sais-Fez, attending conferences, study days and all activities, which are part of the requirement of PhD, has to travel from Morocco to Mauritania from February 25, 2017 to March 20, 2017. Coming to Mauritania, the researcher spotted two faculties of the Modern University of Nouakchott, namely, the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Sciences and Technology, as the adequate locations for carrying his study. Three interrelated reasons were behind the choice. First, the topic of the study is about language policy and identity, and the university is one of the institutions where the policy is carried out. Second, since the Modern University of Nouakchott is the only public university in Mauritania, it is undoubtedly true that it hosts the largest number of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, the researcher can easily recruit his respondents. Third, because the current language policy of the state stipulates that scientific courses are taught in French and literary and cultural courses are taught in Arabic, the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Sciences and Technology are chosen. Such choice enables the researcher to gather the views of the students of both streams.

Having located the setting and stated the reason behind its selection, further details about the target population are to be described. As aforementioned, the sampling opted for in the current study is quota sampling. As such, quotas are formed based on occupation (students) and ethnic background. The selection of the criteria is not hit or miss. In contrast, it is done on purpose. To begin with, as mentioned elsewhere, the aim of the study is to investigate the Mauritanians' views about the language policy and identity. As such, it is truism to say that the students are the first to be concerned when it comes to language policy. Additionally, students

are the mirrors of their communities. In other words, their thoughts are likely to be similar to that of their parents, relatives and the community at large. As also mentioned earlier, Mauritania is the site of two main ethnic groups the Kwr and the Bedan. In order to come up with trustworthy findings that reflect the views of the diverse people of Mauritania, ethnicity was taken as another characteristic of the target population. Therefore, the quotas sampling are formed based on occupation and ethnicity in the following way. 506 questionnaires were administered 254 on the *Kwr students* and 252 on the *Bedan students*.

Moreover, the study is carried out in another setting and with other subjects. The settings are the headquarters of the political parties, the Call of the Motherland, and Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal. The choice of the settings is decided by the respondents. The questions might be asked: why did you choose political parties' chair-persons as your target population? On which basis did you select such political parties? The answer to the first question is expressed in nature of the functions of the political parties. Broadly, literature on political parties listed a long list of functions the political parties carry out. The functions can be categorized under three headings, parties in electorate, parties as organizations, and parties in government. In electorate, parties, noted Clark (2012), educate citizens, generate symbols of political identification and loyalty, and mobilize people to participate. As organizations, parties seek governmental office, aggregate political interests, and train political elites. In government, parties create majority, organize the government, implement policy objectives, and organize dissent and opposition (p. 22). The functions show that political parties socialize, influence and even reinforce the policy of the state. As such, any research carried out on language policy and identity in a particular state should involve the views and attitudes of the leaders of the political parties of that state. This is because language policy as discussed in the first part is either top-down or bottom-up. In both cases, the political parties as civil organizations and as government officials are the first to decide on the issue of language policy and socialize people.

The answer to the second question is that the chosen parties have one main characteristic which made them representative of more than 100 parties in the state and thus serve the interest of the topic as well as any other topics related to the people of Mauritania. The two parties, the Call of the Motherland and Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal, were chosen on the basis of their ethnic orientations. Whereas the former represents itself as the

champion of the Arab nationalism, the latter's discourse is establishing the Kwr's interests. As such, both of them are considered a representative sample of the parties as well as the people in Mauritania.

5.6 Data analysis procedures

Data analysis is the heart of research. Just as the researcher is obliged to equip himself or herself with the necessary instruments for eliciting data, s/he has to pay attention to the procedures which would enable him/or her to harvest the data. Otherwise stated, data analysis acts like a machine which filters out the information in the raw data. Such role is clearly expressed in the definition of the phrase "data analysis." According to Myatt (2007), data analysis refers to "the process of organizing, summarizing, and visualizing data in order to draw conclusion and make decisions" (p. 266). The nature of analytical procedures correlates positively with the type of data, quantitative and qualitative. Since the study has sought both types, two procedures are adopted in analyzing the data as the following pages reveal.

5.6.1 Quantitative analysis

We use content analysis in approaching the collected data. Holsti (1969) offered a broad definition of content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (p. 14). Content analysis enables the treatment of both quantitative and qualitative data. As such, it can be said that there are two types or forms of content analysis, quantitative and qualitative, each of which has its own definition. According to Heath and Halperin (2017), quantitative content analysis involves "examining numerical data… drawing inferences based on frequency, amount, salience, or intensity of a category (e. g. the intensity of person's opinions and attitudes)" (p. 353). As revealed in the definition, quantitative content analysis involves coding numerically raw data. To do so, the quantitative data elicited from the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire are treated by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (henceforth SPSS) for three reasons. First, it is the software package which is "the most commonly used in applied linguistic and educational research" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 198). Second, it is able to perform the statistical operations needed in the study. Third, as Dornyei (2007, p. 198) suggested, it is "highly refined"

and "easy to install and start." Each participant's answer was entered in SPSS. Then, a summary was made in the form of diagrams and tables which showed the percentages of each variable as well as the relation between the variables.

Since some questions in the questionnaire are open-ended, a qualitative content analysis is carried out. Qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding, categorizing and identifying themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278; Tavakoli, 2013, p. 102). It is clear that qualitative content analysis involves a process designed to condense row data into codes, categories and themes. According to Hedlund-de Witt (2013), coding involves breaking the data into small unites of concepts and looking for consistent, repetitive, or different concepts. Additionally, coding involves characterizing patterns based on causation (one appears to cause another) and correspondence (one happens in relation to other activities or events) (p. 3).

Categorizing refers to the organization of the coded segments into relatively small groupings with respect to generic properties in order to reduce their numbers (Taylor & Lindlof, 2002, p. 214). A theme is a higher level of categorization. As Saldaña (2009) noted, a theme "is an *outcome* [*italics in the source*] of coding, categorization and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded" (p. 13). Arriving at the themes, the researcher connected them to the statistics which are established by SPSS. In other words, the researcher showed why some of the participants selected a particular response. As such, the researcher engaged in representing and interpreting the information.

5.6.2 Qualitative analysis

In this part, the data is elicited from interviews which are composed in open-ended questions. As early mentioned, data was audio taped. As such, in order to prepare data for analysis, the interviews were transcribed. The transcription is carried out by us for one main reason. As Patton (2002) argued, "doing your own transcription" is "another opportunity to immerse yourself in the data" (p. 441). Indeed, transcribing the data helps the researcher to develop acquaintance with it as s/he plays and replays the interaction. Furthermore, s/he can capture intonations and hesitation of the interviewees which are of great importance in analyzing

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the data. After completing the transcription, the researcher processes the data by means of qualitative content analysis. This is because qualitative data analysis is "fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 121). Such process "involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 461). As previously detailed, the process involves breaking the data into smaller and meaningful units (codes). The codes are pieced together to form less numerous categories. Based on generic properties, the categories are classified into several themes. The themes are presented and interpreted based on "the context of the content in order to expose the ideological, the latent meaning behind the surface of the texts" (Minsch, Goldblatt, Flüeler & Spreng, 2012, p. 51).

5.7 Limitations

Completeness is unattained goal. In other words, no one's work is beyond limitations. As such, work perfection is measured by the ability of the researcher to overcome as much as possible limitations his or her work might pose. The researcher invested efforts to minimize the limitations the nature of the study might pose; nevertheless, some limitations are inescapable. Due to time and other constrains, the researcher could not administer the questionnaire as extensively as desired. However, to lessen the effect of the limitation, equal opportunities were given to the two ethnic groups that make up Mauritania.

Conclusion

The chapter was devoted to the description and explanation of the methodology used in order to answer and test respectively the research questions and hypotheses about language policy and identity in Mauritania. Because language policy and identity issues are two complex phenomena, and they become even more complex when brought together in one research study, the present study considered that neither the quantitative method nor the qualitative one can alone account for the multi-faceted aspects of the dynamics of the Mauritanians' identification, attitudes toward the language policy as well as the hidden ideologies behind such attitudes. As

such, two data collection techniques, namely questionnaire and interview were opted for in the research study. The questionnaire, which was printed and administered on 506 students of the Modern University of Nouakchott, included 17 mixed closed-ended and open-ended questions in order to elicit a clear and comprehensive data which helps in understanding the participants' manifest and latent ideologies. The participants were selected based on non probability quota sampling in order to give all the ethnic groups equal rights to voice their perceptions of themselves and of their co-nationals as well as their attitudes toward the language policy of the state. By the same token, list of 9 open-ended items were posed to two party chair-persons in one-to-one interview. Finally, the processes, through which the collected data were analyzed, were described.

Chapter Six: Data Presentation and Interpretation

Introduction

In the chapter, we analyze the findings yielded from the investigation carried out by the methodology described in the previous chapter. In so doing, the results obtained with both the questionnaire and interview are presented. The results of each item of the 17 items and the 9 items included respectively in both the questionnaire and interview are presented. Then, the findings are discussed separately and jointly to find the similarities and the differences between the responses of the students in the questionnaire and those of the party chair-persons in the interview. Having drawn a clear picture about the topic, the researcher tests the hypotheses and discussed the results.

6.1 Presentation of the results

All the results revolve around the following research questions:

a. How do the Mauritanians identify themselves?
b. Which language policy do they prefer?
c. Is there any relationship between their choice of language policy and their identity?

6.1.1 Questionnaire results

Personal information

Item 1: What is your mother tongue?

As mentioned earlier, the question is meant for eliciting information about the respondents' ethnic groups. Even though the afro-Mauritanian groups are segmented in the result of the question because they are not linguistically homogeneous, we group them into one main group, Kwr, in the analysis as we have done in the research questions and hypotheses. The following pie chart displays the respondents' ethnic groups.
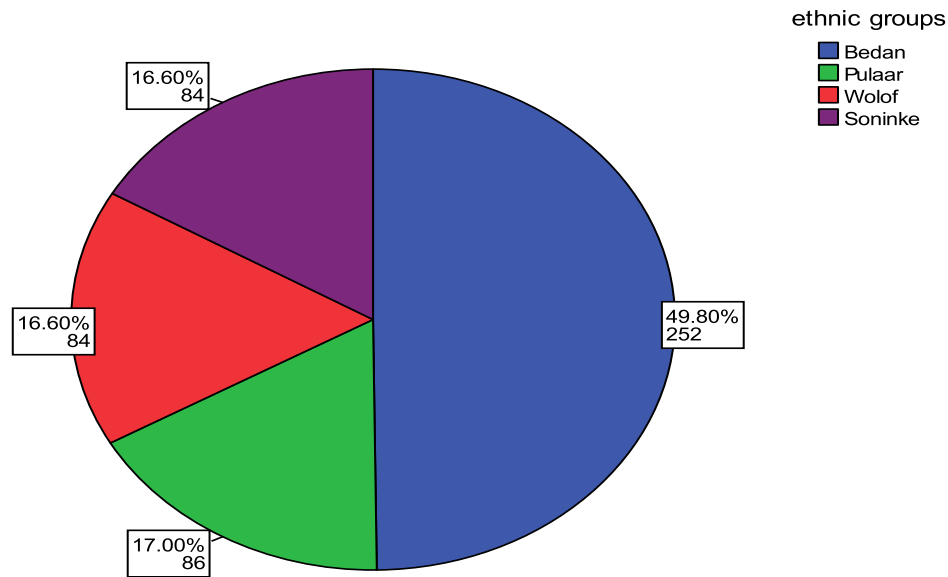
Ethnic Groups of the Respondents

As figures in the above chart show, the total sum of the respondents is 506. The Bedan form nearly 50% of the respondents. The remaining 50% represents the sub ethnic groups of the Kwr, Pulaar 16.60%, Wolof 16.60%, and Soninke 17%.

Identity

The section is meant to uncover the nature of the Mauritanians identity. In so doing, it was composed of seven different items. Some of the items are likert scales. Each item read out several statements and the respondents were requested to scale each one of them. Other items also were phrased in the form of multiple choice questions. In other words, the respondents were requested to select the choice which suited them.

Item 2: Choosing three markers of identity by order of importance.

In the item, the respondents are given several markers of identity and are asked to select the first important marker, the second most important and the third most important that describe who they are. The results are displayed in separate tables.

Ethnic Groups * the First Most Important Marker Crosstabulation

| | | | the first most important marker | | | | |
			ethnicity	Islam	nationality	regional	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	0	250	2	0	252
		% within ethnic group	0%	99.2%	0.8%	.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	8	61	2	15	86
		% within ethnic group	9.3%	70.9%	2.3%	17.4%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	0	83	0	1	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	98.8%	.0%	1.2%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	7	75	1	1	84
		% within ethnic groups	8.3%	89.3%	1.2%	1.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	15	469	5	17	506
			3.0%	92.7%	1.0%	3.4%	100.0%

Table 2.1: The First Most Important Marker of Identity

The table reveals that out of the seven markers of identity, tribe, ethnicity, caste, Islam, nationality, region (national), and regional (international), which were given to them, the respondents rotated on selecting among only four markers, ethnicity, Islam, nationality and regional, as the most important markers of their identities. Out of the four markers also, almost all the respondents 92.7% (469) mentioned Islam as the first important marker of their identity. The tiny remaining portion of the respondents 7.3% opted for either regional and ethnicity, or nationality. 3.4% (17) and 3% (15) of the respondents selected respectively Regional (the Arab Maghreb or West Africa) and ethnicity as the most important markers of their identity, and 1% (5) of the respondents identified primarily based on nationality.

Interesting results about the respondents' primary identification in relation to their ethnic background were also revealed in the table. Whereas almost all Bedan respondents 99.2% (250) opted for Islam as the most important marker of their identity, considerable numbers of the Kwr

respondents identified primarily based on ethnicity (9.3% (8) of Pulaar, 8.3% (7) of Soninke) and regional 17.4% (15) of Pulaar and 1.2% (1) for each of Wolof and Soninke.

In addition to their selection of the first marker of identity that describes who they are, the respondents reported the second most important marker. Unlike their choices for the first marker of their identity where they selected only one from four markers, the respondents' second identifications covered almost all the markers which were given to them as the following table shows.

Ethnic Groups * the Second Most Important marker Crosstabulation

| | | | second most important | | | | | | |
			tribe	ethnicity	caste	Islam	nationality	regional	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	34	29	1	2	186	0	252
		% within ethnic group	13.5%	11.5%	.4%	0.8%	73.8%	.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	5	55	2	10	11	3	86
		% within ethnic group	5.8%	64.0%	2.3%	11.6%	12.8%	3.5%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	0	36	1	0	46	1	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	42.9%	1.2%	.0%	54.8%	1.2%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	0	48	3	3	26	4	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	57.1%	3.6%	3.6%	31.0%	4.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	39	168	7	15	269	8	506
			7.7%	33.2%	1.4%	3.0%	53.2%	1.6%	100.0%

Table 2.2: the Second Most Important Marker of Identity

The findings show that the respondents neglected only the marker of region and voted on the remaining markers of identity as the second most important ones for them. Nevertheless, some markers were more popular than others. Nationality and ethnicity won the majority of the votes. For instance, 53.2% (269) of the respondents checked nationality as the second most important

marker for them, and 33.2% (168) marked ethnicity as the second marker of their identity. Tribe came in the third position with 7.7% (39) of the total respondents. Islam ranked the fourth 3% (15) as the second marker of identity. Regional marker and caste were chosen by small portion of the respondents as the second most important markers of identity, 1.6% (8) for regional and 1.4% (7) for caste.

Remarkable results, pertaining to the respondents' choice of the second marker of their identity in relation with their ethnic background were also obtained. For instance, the majority of the Bedan 73.8% (186) selected nationality as the second marker of their identity, and the majority of the rest of them opted for either tribe 13.5% (34) or ethnicity 11.5% (29). However, the majority of the Kwr (64% (55) of Pulaar, 42.9% (36) of Wolof and 57.1% (48) of Soninke) picked up ethnicity as the second marker of their identity. Unlike the Bedan, nationality scored the second as the second marker of identity for the Kwr, 12.8% (11) of Pulaar, 54% (46) of Wolof and 31% (26) of Soninke. It is observable also that the Kwr did not give importance to the tribe the way the Bedan did.

In addition to the first most important marker and the second most important marker, the respondents were asked to choose the third most important marker which describes who they are. The following table displays the results.

Ethnic Groups * the Third Most Important Marker Crosstabulation

			third most important marker							
			tribe	ethnicity	caste	Islam	nationality	region	regional	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	142	75	18	0	2	4	11	252
		% within ethnic group	56.3%	29.8%	7.1%	.0%	0.8%	1.6%	4.4%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	15	0	3	39	0	29	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	17.4%	.0%	3.5%	45.3%	.0%	33.7%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	5	41	4	0	24	0	10	84
		% within ethnic group	6.0%	48.8%	4.8%	.0%	28.6%	.0%	11.9%	100.0%
	Sonink	Count	2	21	1	2	45	0	13	84

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e	% within ethnic group	2.4%	25.0%	1.2%	2.4%	53.6%	.0%	15.5%	100.0%
Total	Count	149	152	23	5	110	4	63	506
		29.4%	30.0%	4.5%	1.0%	21.7%	0.8%	12.5%	100.0%

Table 2.3: the Third Most Important Marker of Identity

Figures mirrored that none of the 7 markers of identity was agreed on by the majority of the respondents as the third most important marker of identity. For instance, 30% (152) of the respondents marked ethnicity as the third marker of their identity, and almost the same number of the respondents 29.4% (149) opted for tribe. 21.7% (110) opted for nationality as their adequate choice. 12.5% (63), 4.5%, (23) and 0.8% (4) checked respectively caste, regional (international) and region (national) as their third markers of identity.

Nonetheless, reading the figures based on ethnic background, it seems that each ethnic group prioritized one marker over the remaining ones, and such marker was different across ethnic groups. For example, the majority of the members of the Bedan community 56.3% (142) selected tribe as their third marker of identity. Another considerable number of the Bedan ethnic group 29.8% (75) opted for ethnicity. The other ethnic markers were identified with by few members of the Bedan ethnic group, caste 7.1% (18), regional 4.4% (11), region 1.6% (4), and nationality 0.8% (2). Islam was selected but by no one as his or her marker of identity. This was because all the respondents of the Bedan selected it in table 2.1 as their first marker of identity.

Similar to their co-nationals, the vast majority of the respondents of the Kwr (45.3% (39) of Pulaar, 28.6% (24) of Wolof, and 53.6% (45) of Soninke) agreed on one marker, namely, nationality, as their third marker of identity. Ethnicity scored the second for the Kwr (17.4% (15) of Pulaar, 48.8% (41) of Wolof, and 25% (21) of Soninke) as their third identity marker. Regional marker which is not far from ethnicity came in the third place, for it got a considerable share of the respondents' votes, 33.7% (29) of Pulaar, 11.9% (10) of Wolof, and 15.5% (13) of Soninke. The other ethnic markers were almost neglected by the Kwr respondents.

Item 3: Some people think of themselves first as Mauritanian. Others may think of themselves first as Bedan or Kwr. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?

a. only Bedani/Kwri ☐   b. only Mauritanian ☐ c. more Bedani/Kwri than Mauritanian ☐
d. more Mauritanian than Bedani/Kwri ☐ e. as Mauritanian as Bedani/Kwri ☐ f. other ☐
g. none ☐

The item is intended to measure jointly the ethnic and national identities of the Mauritanians and separately the ethnic and national identities of each ethnic group. The table 3.1 presents the results.

Ethnic Groups * Measuring Ethnic and National Identities Crosstabulation

			measuring ethnic and national identities					
			only bedani/kwri	only Mauritanian	more Bedani/Kwri than Mauritanian	more Mauritanian than Bedani/Kwri	as Mauritanian as Bedani/Kwri	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	0	248	0	2	2	252
		% within ethnic group	.0%	98.4%	.0%	0.8%	0.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	35	0	0	51	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	40.7%	.0%	.0%	59.3%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	0	54	0	0	30	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	64.3%	.0%	.0%	35.7%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	2	53	3	0	26	84
		% within ethnic group	2.4%	63.1%	3.6%	.0%	31.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	2	390	3	2	109	506
			0.4%	77.1%	0.6%	0.4%	21.5%	100.0%

Table 3: Measuring Ethnic and National Identities

As figures display, national identity is stronger than ethnic one in Mauritania. 77.1% (390) of all the respondents preferred to identify as only Mauritanians, yet it seems that such majority is constructed mainly by the respondents of the Bedan. For instance, while almost all of the Bedan respondents nearly 99% identified as only Mauritanians, the number of the Kwr (40.7% (35) of Pulaar, 64.3% (54) of Wolof, and 63.1% (53) of Soninke) who identified as only Mauritanians was smaller than that of the Bedan's.

The second preference of the Mauritanians was as Mauritanian as Bedani/Kwri. 21.5% (109) of the total respondents checked the marker as the best to describe who they are. It is observable also that the respondents who opted for the marker were made up mainly of the Kwr, 59.3% (51) of Pulaar, 35.7% (30) of Wolof, and 31% (26) of Soninke. Less than 1% (2) of the Bedan respondents chose such marker as their identity.

Item 4: How close to your ethnic group do you feel?
a.   very close ☐   b. close ☐   c. not very close ☐   d. not close at all ☐

By asking the respondents about their distance to their own ethnic groups, the researcher tries to measure their ethnic identity. Table 4.1 below displays the results.

Ethnic Groups * Distance from One's Ethnic Group Crosstabulation

			How close to your ethnic group do you feel?		Total
			very close	close	
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	104	148	252
		% within ethnic groups	41.3%	58.7%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	81	5	86
		% within ethnic groups	94.2%	5.8%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	62	22	84
		% within ethnic groups	73.8%	26.2%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	82	2	84

		% within ethnic groups	97.6%	2.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	329	177	506
			65.0%	35.0%	100.0%

Table 4: Measuring Ethnic Identity

The figures are quite revealing. They made it clear that ethnicity is a strong marker of identity in Mauritania. For example, 65% (329) of the total number of the respondents said that they are very closely related to their own ethnic groups. The above figures show also that ethnicity as a marker of identity is stronger among the Kwr than the Bedan. For instance, whereas only 43.1% (104) of the Bedan respondents confessed that they are very close to their ethnic group, the overwhelming majority of the Kwr (94.2% (81) of Pulaar, 73.8% (62) of Wolof, and 97.6% (82) of Soninke) said that they are very closely affiliated with their ethnic group.

Item 5: How close to your ethnic counterpart (Bedan or Kwr) do you feel? Why?
   a.   very close ☐   b. close ☐   c. not very close ☐   d. not close at all ☐

To further measure ethnicity in Mauritania, the respondents were requested to report their distance to their ethnic counterpart. The answers reveal the mobilization and the stratification of the Mauritanian society based on ethnic lines. To see the reason behind the respondents' choices, they were requested to justify their answers. Table 5.1 below reveals the results, and the justifications given by the respondents are listed after presenting the results in numbers.

Ethnic Groups * Distance from One's Ethnic Counterpart Crosstabulation

			How close to your ethnic counterpart do you feel?					
			very close	close	not very close	not close at all	no opinion	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	1	157	75	18	1	252
		% within ethnic group	.4%	62.3%	29.8%	7.1%	.4%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	29	51	6	0	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	33.7%	59.3%	7.0%	.0%	100.0%

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Wolof	Count	4	48	32	0	0	84
	% within ethnic group	4.8%	57.1%	38.1%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Sonink e	Count	0	45	39	0	0	84
	% within ethnic group	.0%	53.6%	46.4%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	5	279	197	24	1	506
		1.0%	55.1%	38.9%	4.7%	.2%	100.0%

Table 5: Measuring Ethnic Identity

Very telling figures about ethnicity as a strong marker of identity in Mauritania are obtained. The Mauritanian society seems to be divided based on ethnic lines. The findings in the table confirm the above displayed figures in table 4.1 about the significance of ethnicity in Mauritania. It is shown that almost none of the respondents 1% (5) confessed that s/he is very close to their ethnic counterpart. Additionally, only 55.1% (279) of the total respondents said that they are close to their ethnic counter parts. Furthermore, nearly 39% (197) of the respondents openly declared that they are not very close to their ethnic counterparts. Moreover, nearly 5% (24) of the respondents expressed openly their extreme distance from their ethnic counterparts. The different figures give the premise that ethnic tension and national disintegration mark the Mauritanian society.

Looking at figures from the lenses of each ethnic group, it seems that the respondents of the Bedan ethnic group are less mobilized ethnically than those of the Kwr. For instance, 62.3% (157) of the Bedan respondents said that they feel close to the Kwr. The percentage of the Kwr who felt close to the Bedan is smaller than that of the Bedan, 33.7% (29) of Pulaar, 57.1% (48) of Wolof, and 53.6% (45) of Soninke. Furthermore, whereas only 29.8% of the Bedan reported that they were not very close to the Kwr, a bigger portion of the Kwr felt they were not very close to the Bedan, 59.3% (51) of Pulaar, 38.1% (32) of Wolof, and 46.4% (39) of Soninke.

After scrutinizing the different justifications, which the respondents stated as the main reasons for their choices, it seems that all of them, regardless of their ethnic groups, gave the same answers. Generally, the answers can be categorized into 8 different themes, religious, nationalistic, social, economic, political, cultural, linguistic, and personal. Out of the themes,

religion, nationalism, and personality, were used by all respondents as the main reason behind feeling close to their ethnic counterparts as the following examples show. By geography, the researcher means identification based on continent, say, Africa.

a. "I feel close to the Kwr because they are my brothers and sisters in Islam." (theme of religion)

b. "I feel close to them because we are Mauritanians and live in an African Islamic state." (religion and nationalism)

c. "Even if I am Arab, by the end of the day I am an African. Thus, I am close to them because we are nationals of the same state." (nationalism)

d. "I cannot hate Arabs because the Prophet is an Arab. Politics is the reason behind our division. All of us are Muslims, Mauritanians and Africans." (religion and nationalism)

e. "We are Mauritanian society open-minded and intellectual. Each of us has his ethnic group, yet this ethnic group does give neither advantage nor disadvantage. Our religion is one and unites us. There is no virtue of an Arab over a foreigner except by righteousness." (religion)

f. "Because the most important for me is not his or her ethnicity but rather his or her personality, I feel close to them." (personality)

g. "I feel close to everyone in the world." (personality)

The following justifications are given by those who felt that they were not very close to their ethnic counterpart. The justifications revolve around social, economy, political, cultural, and linguistic themes.

a. "Because they are racist, I do not like them." (social theme)

b. "I do not live near to them, so I do not feel close to them." (social)

c. "Due to social disintegration and because we live in separate places." (social)

d. "We are not close to them because they are manipulated by foreign powers." (politics)

e. "There is no democratic. They dominate the country, so I do not feel very close to them." (politics and economics)

f. "We do not share the same language, customs and traditions." (linguistic and cultural)

g. "We have not mixed with each other. They live in their places and so we do" (social)

h. "They have killed many of us in 1989 events." (socio-politics)

Even though all the respondents' justifications revolved around the above listed ones, it seems that the same types of justifications are ethnically influenced. In other words, some of the above listed themes are more reported by one ethnic group than the other. Such finding was particularly true for those who felt that they were not close to their ethnic counterparts. For instance, the Bedan, on the one hand, reported that they do not feel close to the Kwr because they are racists and manipulated by foreigners. On the other hand, the Kwr attributed their distance as well as their extreme distance from the Bedan to political, socio-economic, and socio-political factors. The factors take the form of grievances. They said that the Bedan discriminated them politically, economically and socially.

Item 6: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The statements are all about Mauritania, say, its citizenship, its people, and its politics. They are meant to measure national identity. The results for each statement are presented in a separate table.

Ethnic Groups * Preference of Citizenship of Mauritania Crosstabulation

			I would rather be a citizen of Mauritania than any other country.					
			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	63	187	1	0	1	252
		% within ethnic group	25.0%	74.2%	0.4%	.0%	0.4%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	2	23	17	17	27	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	26.7%	19.8%	19.8%	31.4%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	5	28	16	6	29	84

		strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
	% within ethnic group	6.0%	33.3%	19.0%	7.1%	34.5%	100.0%
Soninke	Count	9	32	16	6	21	84
	% within ethnic group	10.7%	38.1%	19.0%	7.1%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	79	270	50	29	78	506
		15.6%	53.4%	9.9%	5.7%	15.4%	100.0%

Table 6.1: Measuring National Identity

The figures give the premise that national identity is relatively strong in Mauritania as the figures reveal that 53.4% (270) and 15.6% (79) of the total respondents respectively agreed and strongly agreed to have Mauritanian citizenship rather any other one. Looking at the figures for each ethnic group, however, it seems that it is strong among the Bedan and weak among the Kwr. In fact, almost all the Bedan preferred the citizenship of Mauritania over any other one. For instance, 74.2% (187) and 25% (63) of the Bedan respondents said respectively that they agree and strongly agree on being citizens of Mauritania than of any other country. However, less than half of the Kwr (26.7% (23) of Pulaar, 33.3% (28) of Wolof, and 38.1% (32) of Soninke) preferred the citizenship of Mauritania. In fact, the majority of them expressed their disagreement on the preference of the Mauritanian citizenship over those of other countries.

Ethnic Groups * Preference of Mauritania Crosstabulation

			Generally, Mauritania is better than any other country.					
			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	110	136	1	2	3	252
		% within ethnic group	43.7%	54.0%	.4%	.8%	1.2%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	1	24	1	16	44	86
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	27.9%	1.2%	18.6%	51.2%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	6	40	1	1	36	84

			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
		% within ethnic group	7.1%	47.6%	1.2%	1.2%	42.9%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	3	32	5	4	40	84
		% within ethnic group	3.6%	38.1%	6.0%	4.8%	47.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	120	232	8	23	123	506
			23.7%	45.8%	1.6%	4.5%	24.3%	100.0%

Table 6.2: Measuring National Identity

The majority of the respondents agree that Mauritania is better than other countries as the following figures show 45.8% (232) for agree and 23.7% (120) for strongly agree. By segmenting the figures and thus looking at each ethnic group's views, it seems that the vast majority of the Bedan respondents about 98% (246) considered Mauritania as the best country in the world. However, only about 40% of the Kwr respondents considered Mauritania as the best country.

Ethnic Groups * Love of the People of Mauritania Crosstabulation

			people of Mauritania are better than many others					
			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	97	140	1	1	13	252
		% within ethnic groups	38.5%	55.6%	.4%	.4%	5.2%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	2	20	12	4	48	86
		% within ethnic groups	2.3%	23.3%	14.0%	4.7%	55.8%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	6	44	2	2	30	84
		% within ethnic groups	7.1%	52.4%	2.4%	2.4%	35.7%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	2	43	2	1	36	84
		% within ethnic groups	2.4%	51.2%	2.4%	1.2%	42.9%	100.0%

Total	Count		107	247	17	8	127	506
			21.1%	48.8%	3.4%	1.6%	25.1%	100.0%

Table 6.3: Measuring National Identity

Clearly, the vast majority of Mauritanians are comfortable with their ethnic make-up. For instance, not only 48.8% (247) of them said they like their own co-nationals but also 21.1% (107) strongly viewed the people of Mauritania as better than many other ones. On the other front, only about 27% (135) of them did not consider Mauritanians as better than other people. A look at each ethnic group's views shows diversified sights. Whereas the majority of the Bedan 94% (237) vocalized their predilection to their co-nationals, less than a half of the Kwr did so.

Ethnic Groups * Unlimited Support of Mauritania Crosstabulation

			I would support my country even if it is wrong.					
			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	193	55	0	0	4	252
		% within ethnic group	76.6%	21.8%	.0%	.0%	1.6%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	1	23	19	4	39	86
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	26.7%	22.1%	4.7%	45.3%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	1	39	20	2	22	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	46.4%	23.8%	2.4%	26.2%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	1	26	32	2	23	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	31.0%	38.1%	2.4%	27.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	196	143	71	8	88	506
			38.7%	28.3%	14.0%	1.6%	17.4%	100.0%

Table 6.4: Measuring National Identity

Concerning the readiness to offer a limitless support for the state even if it is wrong, interesting findings were found. Surprisingly, it seems that the majority of the Mauritanians (38.7% (196) strongly agree and 28.3% (143) agree) were ready to stand still with their country regardless of the context, yet the spread of the readiness varied across ethnic groups. For instance, nearly all the Bedan respondents about 99% (248) agreed to shore up their state in any circumstances and at any prize. This is clear in the fact that out of the 99%, nearly 77% (193) of them opted for the choice *strongly agree* to support the country even if it is wrong. The percentages of acceptance 35.8% (91) and rejection 36.2% (92) of supporting the state were almost the same among the Kwr. It is remarkable also that a considerable number of the Kwr respondents seemed reluctant to get out of the woods. For instance, 22.1% (19) of Pulaar, 23.8% (20) of Wolof, and 38.1% (32) of Soninke checked the box of undecided.

Ethnic Groups * Sacrificing ethnicity for the Sake of the Country Crosstabulation

			I would sacrifice my ethnicity for the sake of my country.					
			strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	243	9	0	0	0	252
		% within ethnic group	96.4%	3.6%	0%	0%	0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	2	17	46	7	14	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	19.8%	53.5%	8.1%	16.3%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	5	72	2	1	4	84
		% within ethnic group	6.0%	85.7%	2.4%	1.2%	4.8%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	5	67	4	3	5	84
		% within ethnic group	6.0%	79.8%	4.8%	3.6%	6.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	255	165	52	11	23	506
			50.4%	32.6%	10.3%	2.2%	4.5%	100.0%

Table 6.5: Measuring National Identity

Unexpectedly, it seems that the majority of the Mauritanians have developed a strong sense of national identity at the detriment of ethnic one. For instance, half of the respondents 50.4% (255)

vocalized their strong readiness to sacrifice their ethnic identity for the sake of the country. What is more, 32.6% (165) of the respondents also said that they agree to prioritize the state over their ethnicity. In fact, only about 6% of the respondents opposed sacrificing their ethnicity for the sake of the state. The figures reveal also that the views of the Bedan and the Kwr are similar toward the issue of pushing aside their ethnicity when their country requires doing so.

Item 7: How proud are you of Mauritania in each of the following fields?

The fields include its people tolerance and social solidarity, its religiosity, its social equality, its democracy, its armed forces, and its sports team. As in the preceding items, the degree to which Mauritanians are proud and thus attached to their country is revealed. The data gathered for each of the fields are presented in a separate table. Below is the table which displays the results of the respondents' views toward their co-nationals.

Ethnic Groups * Tolerance and Social Solidarity Crosstabulation

			its people's tolerance and social solidarity					
			very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	172	66	0	12	2	252
		% within ethnic group	68.3%	26.2%	.0%	4.8%	.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	2	33	0	10	41	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	38.4%	.0%	11.6%	47.7%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	4	54	3	12	11	84
		% within ethnic group	4.8%	64.3%	3.6%	14.3%	13.1%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	1	50	3	21	9	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	59.5%	3.6%	25.0%	10.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	179	203	6	55	63	506
			35.4%	40.1%	1.2%	10.9%	12.5%	100.0%

Table 7.1: Mauritanians' Views about their Tolerance and Social Solidarity

The majority of the Mauritanians are satisfied with their tolerance and social solidarity. For example, 40.1% (203) and 35.4% (179) of the respondents respectively felt proud and very proud of their tolerance and social solidarity. A look under the hats of each ethnic group, however, reveals that the two ethnic make ups of the state do not share the same view about the issue at hand. While the majority of the Bedan respondents said they are very proud 68.3% (172) and proud 26.2% (66) of the Mauritanians' tolerance and social solidarity, only nearly half of the Kwr share the Bedan's view.

Ethnic Groups * Religiosity Crosstabulation

| | | | its religiosity | | Total |
			very proud	proud	
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	250	2	252
		% within ethnic groups	99.2%	.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	35	51	86
		% within ethnic groups	40.7%	59.3%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	44	40	84
		% within ethnic groups	52.4%	47.6%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	69	15	84
		% within ethnic groups	82.1%	17.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	398	108	506
			78.7%	21.3%	100.0%

Table 7.2: Mauritanians' Views of their Religiosity

The Mauritanians, in the above table, collectively and resoundingly expressed their pride in their religiosity.

Ethnic Groups * Social Justice Crosstabulation

	its treatment of all people in society	Total

			very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all	
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	21	93	7	121	10	252
		% within ethnic group	14.3%	38.1%	2.8%	48.0%	4.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	3	5	14	64	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	3.5%	5.8%	16.3%	74.4%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	4	21	0	31	28	84
		% within ethnic group	4.8%	25.0%	.0%	36.9%	33.3%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	0	22	0	5	57	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	26.2%	.0%	6.0%	67.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	25	139	12	171	159	506
			4.9%	27.5%	2.4%	33.8%	31.4%	100.0%

Table 7.3: Mauritanians' View about Social Equality

Unlike their positive views on the previously presented points, the majority of the Mauritanians expressed their dissatisfaction with the state's social equality. 33.8% (171) and 31.4% (159) said that they were respectively not very proud and not proud at all of the state's treatment of them. It is also noticeable that neither of the ethnic group seems satisfied with the social justice in the state.

Ethnic Groups * Democracy Crosstabulation

			its democracy					
			very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	1	71	5	168	7	252
		% within ethnic group	0.4%	28.2%	2.0%	66.7%	2.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	0	1	23	62	86

							Total
	% within ethnic group	.0%	.0%	1.2%	26.7%	72.1%	100.0%
Wolof	Count	4	19	1	9	51	84
	% within ethnic group	4.8%	22.6%	1.2%	10.7%	60.7%	100.0%
Soninke	Count	0	0	0	8	76	84
	% within ethnic group	.0%	.0%	.0%	9.5%	90.5%	100.0%
Total	Count	5	90	7	208	196	506
		1.0%	17.8%	1.4%	41.1%	38.7%	100.0%

Table 7.4: Mauritanians' Views about their State Democracy

Just like the previous item, the majority of the Mauritanians are not proud of their democracy. It seems also that neither of the ethnic groups is proud of it.

Ethnic Groups * Armed Forces Crosstabulation

			its armed forces					
			very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	140	109	1	2	0	252
		% within ethnic group	55.6%	43.3%	.4%	.8%	.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	4	18	12	34	18	86
		% within ethnic group	4.7%	20.9%	14.0%	39.5%	20.9%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	9	51	7	0	17	84
		% within ethnic group	10.7%	60.7%	8.3%	.0%	20.2%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	2	52	3	3	24	84
		% within ethnic group	2.4%	61.9%	3.6%	3.6%	28.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	155	230	23	39	59	506
			30.6%	45.5%	4.5%	7.7%	11.7%	100.0%

Table 7.5: Mauritanians' Views of Their Armed Forces

Regardless of ethnic background, the figures paint a positive picture about the Armed Forces of Mauritania as 30.6% (155) and 45.5% (230) of the respondents vocalized respectively their pride in them.

Ethnic Groups * Sports Team Crosstabulation

| | | | its sports team | | | | | |
			very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	2	72	0	121	57	252
		% within ethnic group	0.8%	28.6%	.0%	48.0%	22.6%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	33	45	1	1	6	86
		% within ethnic group	38.4%	52.3%	1.2%	1.2%	7.0%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	8	68	0	0	8	84
		% within ethnic group	9.5%	81.0%	.0%	.0%	9.5%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	14	47	2	5	16	84
		% within ethnic group	16.7%	56.0%	2.4%	6.0%	19.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	57	232	3	127	87	506
			11.3%	45.8%	.6%	25.1%	17.2%	100.0%

Table 7.6: Mauritanians' Views of Their Sports Team

In the table, about 56% (289) of the Mauritanians are proud of their sports team. Such pride, however, seems to be widely felt only within one ethnic group, the Kwr. The vast majority of the Kwr felt they were proud and very proud of the state sports team. Only nearly 29% (74) of the Bedan respondents expressed their pride toward the state sports team. The overwhelming majority of them said that they were not proud of it.

Language function

The Mauritanians' use of languages in their everyday life is investigated in this section. As such, the researcher would be able to see the importance of Mauritanian language for Mauritanians in general as well as for each ethnic group. The respondents were given seven contexts and requested to check the language(s) that apply to their use in such contexts. The results obtained for the language use in each context are displayed in a separate table.

Item 8: Please tick the language which you use for the following functions. (NB: You can choose more than one language for each context.)

Ethnic Groups * Talking to Family Members Crosstabulation

			talking to family			
			taking to my family members Arabic	taking to my family members French	taking to my family members other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	9	0	252	252
		% within ethnic group	3.6%	.0%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	0	28	86	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	32.6%	100.0%	100%
	Wolof	Count	0	14	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	16.7%	100.0%	100%
	Soninke	Count	0	20	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	23.8%	100.0%	100%
Total		Count	9	62	506	506
			1.7%	12.2%	100%	100%

Table 8.1: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language between Family Members

All the respondents 100% (506) said that they used other language when they speak to their family members. The languages are likely to be their mother tongues. Only 12.2% (62) and 1.7% (9) said they used respectively both French and Arabic in the house. The findings are very telling concerning the use of Arabic and French. It seems that not even one respondent of the Bedan reported his or her use of French when talking to family members. In contrast, a considerable number of the Kwr 24.4% (62) (distribution of figures 32.6% (28), of Pulaar), 16.7% (14) of Wolof, and 23.8% (20) of Soninke) talked French in their houses. Concerning Arabic, all of the Kwr respondents said that they do not use Arabic whereas 3.6% (9) of the Bedan respondents spoke Arabic with their family members.

Ethnic Groups * Socializing with Friends Crosstabulation

			socializing with friends			
			socializing with friends Arabic	socializing with friends French	socializing with friends other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	43	4	252	252
		% within ethnic group	17.1%	1.6%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	2	85	85	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	98.8%	98.8%	100%
	Wolof	Count	3	75	84	84
		% within ethnic group	3.6%	89.3%	100.0%	100%
	Soninke	Count	1	84	83	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	100.0%	98.8%	100%
Total		Count	49	248	504	506
			9.7%	49%	99.6%	100%

Table 8.2: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Socializing with Friends

All the subjects 100% (506) reported the use of other language when socializing with friends which might be their mother tongues. For the use of Arabic and French, however, it seems that

each ethnic group had its linguistic particularity. For example, whereas 17.1% (43) of the Bedan respondents reported their use of Arabic with their friends, only few respondents of the Kwr (2.3% (2) of Pulaar, 3.6% (3) of Wolof, and 1.2% (1) of Soninke) communicate with their friends in it. Concerning French, almost all the Kwr respondents (98.8% (85) of Pulaar, 89.3% (75) of Wolof, and 100% (84) of Soninke) used French when socializing with friends while only 1.6% (4) of the Bedan respondents talked with their friends in French.

Ethnic Groups * Chatting Online Crosstabulation

			chatting online			
			chatting online Arabic	chatting online French	chatting online other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	83	4	252	252
		% within ethnic group	32.9%	1.6%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	1	86	24	86
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	100.0%	27.9%	100%
	Wolof	Count	6	84	65	84
		% within ethnic group	7.1%	100.0%	77.4%	100%
	Soninke	Count	14	84	59	84
		% within ethnic group	16.7%	100.0%	70.2%	100%
Total		Count	104	258	400	506
			20.5%	50.9%	79%	100%

Table 8.3: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Online Chatting

The majority of the respondents 79% (400) used other language, possibly their mother tongues, when chatting online. Following other language, French scored the second as it was used by about 51% (258) of the respondents. Arabic was used by the least respondents 20.5% (104). It is clear also that language use in online chatting is ethnically influenced. That is to say whereas all the Kwr respondents reported their use of French in online chatting, almost no one 1.6% (4) of

the Bedan respondents made use of it. Arabic was used by a considerable number of the Bedan 32.9% (83) in their online chats. In contrast, a small number of the Kwr respondents (1.2% (1) of Pulaar, 7.1% (6) of Wolof, and 16.7% (14) of Soninke) reported their use of Arabic in online chats.

Ethnic Groups * Discussing Politics Crosstabulation

			discussing politics			
			discussing political issues Arabic	discussing political issues French	discussing political issues other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	105	6	252	252
		% within ethnic group	41.7%	2.4%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	8	86	85	86
		% within ethnic group	9.3%	100.0%	98.8%	100%
	Wolof	Count	22	84	84	84
		% within ethnic group	26.2%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
	Soninke	Count	7	84	83	84
		% within ethnic group	8.3%	100.0%	98.8%	100%
Total		Count	142	260	504	506
			28%	51.3	99.6%	100%

Table 8.4: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Online Chatting

Almost all the respondents 99.6% (504) said they discussed political issues in language(s) other than Arabic and French. However, French and Arabic were used in political discussion by only few people. Cross ethnic groups' scrutiny reveals that, on the one hand, all the Kwr respondents reported their use of French in political discussion, and only small number of them (9.3% (8) of Pulaar, 26.2% (22) of Wolof, and 8.3% (7) of Soninke) used Arabic for such purpose. On the other hand, Arabic dominated the political discussion of the Bedan 41.7% (105), and a tiny portion of them 2.4% (6) spoke French in political debates.

Ethnic Groups * Shopping Crosstabulation

			shopping			
			shopping Arabic	shopping French	shopping other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	9	0	252	252
		% within ethnic group	3.6%	.0%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	2	11	86	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	12.8%	100.0%	100%
	Wolof	Count	0	2	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	2.4%	100.0%	100%
	Soninke	Count	0	2	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	2.4%	100.0%	100%
Total		Count	11	15	506	506
			2.1%	2.9%	100%	100%

Table 8.5: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Shopping

Arabic and French are rarely used by the Mauritanians in shopping, yet the use of the languages witness a considerable increase when taking into consideration ethnic background. For instance, it seems that French was used more by members of the Kwr ethnic groups as reported 12.8% of Pulaar respondents and 2.4% of each of Wolof and Soninke respondents. In fact, it is clear that no respondent of the Bedan reported speaking French in shopping activity. It is also clear that all the respondents reported the use of a language(s) other than French and Arabic in their shopping activity.

Ethnic Groups * Speaking in Campus Crosstabulation

	speaking in campus			
	speaking in campus Arabic	speaking in campus French	speaking in campus other	Total

ethnic groups						
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	21	21	252	252
		% within ethnic group	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	2	86	86	86
		% within ethnic group	2.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
	Wolof	Count	0	84	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%
	Soninke	Count	0	84	83	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	100.0%	98.8%	100%
Total		Count	23	275	505	506
			4.5%	54.3%	99.8%	100%

Table 8.6: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Campus

Languages other than French and Arabic prevailed in campus as almost all the respondents 99.8% (505) articulated. Unlike Arabic, French was also loudly heard in campus as the figures 54.3% (275) show, yet it seems that such figures represented mainly the Kwr ethnic groups , for all of them said they used French in campus while only a tiny number of the Bedan respondents 8.3% (21) reported their use of it in campus.

Ethnic Groups * Reading for Leisure Crosstabulation

			reading for leisure			
			reading for leisure Arabic	reading for leisure French	reading for leisure other	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	252	3	1	252
		% within ethnic group	100.0%	1.2%	.4%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	1	86	1	86
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	100.0%	1.2%	100%

	Wolof	Count	3	84	2	84
		% within ethnic group	3.6%	100.0%	2.4%	100%
	Soninke	Count	1	84	0	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	100.0%	.0%	100%
Total		Count	257	257	4	506
			50.7%	50.7%	0.7	100%

Table 8.7: the Uses of Arabic, French, and Other Language in Reading for Leisure

Each ethnic group members are monolingual when reading for leisure. Otherwise stated, all the Bedan respondents said that they use Arabic when reading for leisure, and all the respondents of the Kwr used French for the same purpose.

Language policy

In the section, the Mauritanians' views about the language policy were consulted. In so doing, the subjects were given four multiple response items and requested to select the answers that reflected their views. The results of each one of the items are presented in a separate table.

Item 9: Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration?

yes ☐   no ☐

Please justify.

The item is intended to discover whether or not the Mauritanians support increasing the amount of time allotted to teaching Arabic in education as a communicative tool as well as a means of knowledge acquisition in scientific fields. At the same time, the item seeks to see whether or not the Mauritanians were in favor of increasing the role of Arabic in administration. The respondents were requested to justify their answers. The justifications are coded, grouped, and categorized into themes. They are presented after the representation of the obtained figures which are presented in the below table.

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Ethnic Groups * the Status of Arabic Crosstabulation

			Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration?		
			yes	no	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	252	0	252
		% within ethnic group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	86	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	1	83	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	98.8%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	0	84	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	253	253	506
			50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Table 9: Views about Increasing Arabic Status in Education and Administration

All the Bedan respondents supported increasing the status of Arabic in education and administration, and all the Kwr respondents were against such idea. The members of the ethnic groups gave justifications to their choices. The justifications were coded, grouped, and categorized into several themes as presented below.

The Bedan respondents' justifications to their support of increasing Arabic status revolved around three main themes: religion, identity, and pedagogy. The following are examples of the justifications.

a. "Japan teaches in Japanese, France teaches in French and every developed and prosperous country teaches in its language except the developing and ex-colonized countries. Why should not we study in our language?" (identity and pedagogy)

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b. "Definitely, Arabic should be increased because it is the mother tongue of the majority of the Mauritanians and because no scientific renaissance can be established unless all sciences are taught to the students in their mother tongue." (identity and pedagogy)

c. "Arabic language should be increased in education and administration because it is our mother tongue as Muslims and Arabs." (religion and identity)

The respondents of the Kwr, who were the only ones to rebuff increasing the status of Arabic as mentioned above, gave several justifications which can be categorized into two main themes, identity and pedagogy. Some examples of these justifications are listed below.

a. "It should not be increased because we are not Arabs." (theme of identity)

b. "It should not be increased because it is not the language of sciences" (theme of pedagogy)

Item 10: Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration?

yes ☐   no ☐

Please justify.

The Mauritanians' views about augmenting the role of French in both education and administration are investigated in the item. The results obtained are presented first in numbers and then in words.

Ethnic Groups * the Status of French Crosstabulation

			Do you think that the status of French should be increased in education and administration?		Total
			yes	no	
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	8	244	252
		% within ethnic group	3.2%	96.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	86	0	86

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		% within ethnic group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	82	2	84
		% within ethnic group	97.6%	2.4%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	84	0	84
		% within ethnic group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	260	246	506
			51.4%	48.6%	100.0%

Table 10: Views about Increasing French Status in Education and Administration

The sharp division of the Mauritanians over the language issue is clear. Whereas almost all the Bedan respondents rebuffed increasing the status of French in the state, all of the Kwr respondents are in favor of such orientation. It was observable also that a tiny portion of the Bedan respondents 3.2% (8) vocalized their support of the augmentation of the role of the French in the state education and administration.

The justifications, which were given by the proponents of increasing the role of French, can be grouped into four main themes: identity, culture, pedagogy, and socialization. The following are examples of the justifications.

a. "French should be the dominant language because we are Africans and live in Africa." (theme of identity)

b. "French is necessary because it is an international language, and it enables us to understand other cultures." (culture)

c. "Of course, it should be increased because French is the language of sciences." (pedagogy)

d. "It should be increased because we are taught in it." (socialization)

The following are examples of the arguments made by opponents (the Bedan) of the increase of the status of French in education and administration. The arguments revolved around two main themes: colonialism, identity, pedagogy.

a. "It should not be increased because it is the language of the colonizer. Additionally, it is not the language of innovations and sciences." (themes of colonialism and pedagogy)

b. "French is neither the mother tongue of the Mauritanians nor the official language of the state, so we should get rid of it as we did to the colonizer." (colonialism and identity)

c. "We are Arabs, so we should use mainly Arabic. French should be taught just as a foreign language." (identity)

d. "It is already increased." (identity)

Item 11: What do think of Arabic-French bilingualism?
a. favorable ☐   b. unfavorable ☐   c. no opinion ☐

Information about the Mauritanians' attitudes toward Arabic-French bilingualism is elicited in this item. The obtained results are displayed in the following table.

Ethnic Groups * Arabic-French Bilingualism Crosstabulation

			What do you think of Arabic-French bilingualism?			
			favorable	unfavorable	no opinion	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	29	221	2	252
		% within ethnic group	11.5%	87.7%	.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	84	2	0	86
		% within ethnic group	97.7%	2.3%	.0%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	84	0	0	84
		% within ethnic group	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	78	6	0	84

	% within ethnic group	92.9%	7.1%	.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	275	229	2	506
		54.3%	45.3%	.4%	100.0%

Table 11: Attitudes of Arabic-French Bilingualism

Although 54.3% (275) of the respondents were in favor of bilingualism, it seems that the majority of the Mauritanians were not in favor of it given the fact that those who supported it were mainly from the Kwr minority ethnic group in the state. Indeed, all the Kwr respondents were in favor of bilingualism. In contrast, the majority of the Bedan respondents 87.7% (221) disapproved the bilingual policy. Interestingly, a significant portion of the Bedan respondents 11.5% (29) favored Arabic-French bilingualism.

Item 12: Given the fact that English is the international language of science, technology and business, would you like its status in education to be increased at the detriment of French?

yes ☐   no ☐

The item is designed to check the degree to which the Mauritanians are adhering to French. At the same time, it is an attempt to uncover the French advocates' ideologies. It is widely known that French advocates across Africa in general and Mauritania in particular claim that their support to French is due to "the fact" that it is the "language of sciences." If this was the main reason, French advocates would certainly be in favor of English since it is the international language of sciences par excellence. The following table displays the results.

Ethnic Groups * English or French? Crosstabulation

	Given the fact that English is the international language of science, technology and business, would you like its status in education to be increased at the detriment of French?		
	yes	no	Total

ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	249	3	252
		% within ethnic group	98.8%	1.2%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	5	81	86
		% within ethnic group	5.8%	94.2%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	30	54	84
		% within ethnic group	35.7%	64.3%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	24	60	84
		% within ethnic group	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	308	198	506
			60.9%	39.1%	100.0%

Table 12: Languages (French and English) Preference

The majority of the respondents 60.9% (308) favor increasing the amount of time allotted to English on the detriment of that given to French. Surprisingly, it is clear also that a considerable number of the respondents were against increasing the status of English at the detriment of French. Across ethnic groups figures reveal that the opponents were mainly composed of the Kwr ethnic group (94.2% (81) of Pulaar, 64.3% (54) of Wolof, and 71.4% (60) of Soninke). It is clear also that nearly all the Bedan respondents 98.8% (249) were in favor of increasing English status at the detriment of French.

Language policy and identity

In the last section of the questionnaire, an attempt is made to elicit information about the interplay of language and identity in Mauritania. The section was composed of 5 items. The results of each item are presented in a separate table.

Item 13: Which of the languages is part of your identity?

a. Arabic ☐   b. French ☐   c. both of them ☐   d. none of them ☐

In the item, the respondents were requested to select the languages, if any, which they considered part of their identity. The following table presents the obtained results.

Ethnic Groups * Language as an identity Crosstabulation

| | | | Which of these languages is part of your identity? | | | | |
			Arabic	French	both of them	none of them	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	251	0	1	0	252
		% within ethnic group	99.6%	.0%	.4%	.0%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	1	24	1	60	86
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	27.9%	1.2%	69.8%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	5	14	3	62	84
		% within ethnic group	6.0%	16.7%	3.6%	73.8%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	2	17	1	64	84
		% within ethnic group	2.4%	20.2%	1.2%	76.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	259	55	6	186	506
			51.2%	10.9%	1.2%	36.8%	100.0%

Table 13: Language as a Marker of Identity

As figures show, the respondents did not agree on one language as part of their identity. On the one hand, nearly all the Bedan respondents 99.6% (251) selected Arabic as the only marker of their identity. On the other hand, the majority of the Kwr respondents (69.8% (60) of Pulaar, 73.8% (62) of Wolof, and 76.2% (64) of Soninke) said neither Arabic nor French were part of their identity. Nevertheless, a considerable number of the Kwr (27.9% (24) of Pulaar, 16.7% (14) of Wolof, and 20.2% (17) of Soninke) considered French as their marker of identity.

Item 14: Do you think that Arabic-French bilingualism is necessary for the promotion of the Mauritanian culture?

yes ☐   no ☐

The item was intended to show the respondents' views toward bilingualism in terms of culture. That is to say it enables the researcher to know whether the respondents were keen to the preservation of bilingualism or not, for if they considered it necessary for the promotion of culture, they are likely to struggle hard in order to keep it operating.

Ethnic Groups * Arabic-French Bilingualism and Culture? Crosstabulation

			Do you think that Arabic-French bilingualism is necessary for the promotion of the Mauritanian culture?		
			yes	no	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	3	249	252
		% within ethnic groups	1.2%	98.8%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	85	1	86
		% within ethnic groups	98.8%	1.2%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	80	4	84
		% within ethnic groups	95.2%	4.8%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	83	1	84
		% within ethnic groups	98.8%	1.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	251	255	506
			49.6%	50.4%	100.0%

Table 14: Bilingualism and Culture

It seems that the respondents' views about the interplay between Arabic-French bilingualism and culture were different. It is clear also that the ethnic background was the main reason behind such difference in opinions. For example, whereas nearly all the Bedan respondents 98.8% (249) said that Arabic-French bilingualism was not essential for the promotion of culture, almost all of the Kwr respondents (98.8% (85) of Pulaar, 95.2% (80) of Wolof, and 98.8% (83) of Soninke) asserted the role of this bilingualism in preserving culture.

Item 15: What does Arabization policy represent for you?

a. threat to your identity ☐   b. protection of your identity ☐   c. no opinion ☐

The fact that someone does not consider a language part of his or her identity does not necessarily mean that s/he does consider it a menace to his or her identity. Item 13 and 14 were meant to reveal only the languages which the respondents considered part of their identity. The present item and the following one (item 16) seek to uncover the other side of the picture. In other words, they enabled the researcher to see to what extent the respondents distance themselves from the languages which they did not consider as parts of their identity. The results obtained are displayed in the following table.

Ethnic Groups * Arabization Policy and Identity Crosstabulation

| | | | What does Arabization policy represent for you? | | | |
			threat to your identity	protection of your identity	no opinion	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	0	251	1	252
		% within ethnic group	.0%	99.6%	0.4%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	84	0	2	86
		% within ethnic group	97.7%	.0%	2.3%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	48	4	32	84
		% within ethnic group	57.1%	4.8%	38.1%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	52	5	27	84
		% within ethnic group	61.9%	6.0%	32.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	184	260	62	506
			36.4%	51.4%	12.3%	100.0%

Table 15: Arabization and Identity

Slightly more than half of the respondents considered Arabization policy as a protection of their identity. The percentage is reasonable since figures of each ethnic group show that only the Bedan respondents 99.6% (251) considered Arabic as a protection to their identity. The majority of the Kwr (97.7% (84) of Pulaar, 57.1% (48) of Wolof and 61.9% (52) of Soninke), however, viewed Arabization as a menace to their identity. It is remarkable that an important portion of the Kwr respondents said that they did not have an opinion about the issue.

Item 16: What does Francization policy represent for you?

a. threat to your identity ☐   b. protection of your identity ☐   c. no opinion ☐

Ethnic Groups * Francization policy and Identity Crosstabulation

| | | | What does francization policy represent for you? | | | |
			threat to your identity	protection of your identity	no opinion	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	248	0	4	252
		% within ethnic group	98.4%	.0%	1.6%	100.0%
	Pulaar	Count	0	77	9	86
		% within ethnic group	.0%	89.5%	10.5%	100.0%
	Wolof	Count	0	65	19	84
		% within ethnic group	.0%	77.4%	22.6%	100.0%
	Soninke	Count	1	71	12	84
		% within ethnic group	1.2%	84.5%	14.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	249	213	44	506
			49.2%	42.1%	8.7%	100.0%

Table 16: Francization and Identity

The figures complete the picture that was drawn in the previous table. That is to say ethnic groups in Mauritania are strongly divided over the language issue. It seems that all the Bedan

respondents did not only consider Arabic as protection of their identity, as shown in table 16, but also considered French a threat to their identity. By the same token, unlike their suspicious perceptions about Arabic, the majority of the Kwr considered French as a means that protected their identity.

Item 17: In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country? (N. B: you can select all that apply.)

a. political ☐   b. cultural ☐   d. economic ☐

The item seeks out to reveal the factor(s) which feed up the longstanding protests and uprisings over language policy. The protests have been ongoing ever since the inception of the independence of the country. Because each respondent was likely to have his or her view about the issue, the question was put in the form of multiple choice responses, and the respondents were requested to choose all that apply. Table 17 shows the results.

Ethnic Groups * Causes of Protests Crosstabulation

			Causes of protests			
			In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country? political	In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country? cultural	In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country? economic	Total
ethnic groups	Bedan	Count	221	212	9	252
		% within ethnic group	87.7%	84.1%	3.6%	100%
	Pulaar	Count	4	83	84	86
		% within ethnic group	4.7%	96.5%	97.7%	100%
	Wolof	Count	12	77	77	84

		14.3%	91.7%	91.7%	100%
	% within ethnic group	14.3%	91.7%	91.7%	100%
Soninke	Count	7	75	77	84
	% within ethnic group	8.3%	89.3%	91.7%	100%
Total	Count	244	447	247	506
		48.2%	88.3%	48.8%	100%

Table 17: the Nature of the Protests over Language Policy

The majority of the respondents 88.3% (447) agreed on the cultural nature of the long standing protests in the state. It seems also that half of the respondents scored on politics and the other half selected economy as the main reason behind these protests. The reason behind the division seems to be the different ethnic background of the respondents. Whereas the vast majority of the Bedan respondents 87.7% (212) spotted politics as the main reason behind the protests, the vast majority of the Kwr respondents (97.7% (84) of Pulaar and 91.7% (77) of each of Wolof and Soninke) considered economy as the main engine that has been driving the protests.

6.1.2 Interview Results

As previously mentioned, the interview included 9 open-ended items, and two parties' chair-persons were interviewed. The parties represent the one hundred parties in the state, for each one of them represents itself as the champion of one of the ethnic groups' interests in the country: the Bedan and the Kwr.

Item 1: How do you identify yourself?

In their responses to the question, the two chair-persons introduced themselves differently. To start with, the chair-person of the Call of the Motherland said "my name is Daoud Ould Ahmed Aicha. I am a Mauritanian national who is interested in local affairs and longs for a country where all ethnic groups are fused." The chair-person of Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal vocalized:

My name is Ibrahima Mohktar Sar. I was born in 1949. I am journalist by training. I worked for the Mauritania's radio and TV stations. I am the chair-person of this political party which is called Alliance for Justice and Democracy/Movement for Renewal. I was three times a candidate to the presidency of the republic of Mauritania. Today, I am a member of the National Assembly. I am also interested in the cultural issues. I am a poet, but I write in my mother tongue, Pulaar. I inspired many musicians, Senegalese and Mauritanians.

The introductory statements reveal that each of the chair-persons introduced himself based on a different marker of identity. Ould Ahmed Aicha identified himself based on marker of nationality (Mauritanian). It is also interesting that ethnicity was present in his identification. For instance, he said that he longs for a state "where all ethnic groups are fused." It seems that he confessed that ethnicity is a strong marker of identity in Mauritania. Mokhtar Sar identified based on markers of age (1949), role (e.g. journalist, member of National Assembly), and ethnicity (e.g. my mother tongue Pulaar, I influenced Senegalese).

Item 2: To what extent do you think the Kwr and the Bedan are integrating with each other?

Generally speaking, Ould Ahmed Aicha and Mokhtar Sar agreed that weak ties and disharmony characterize the relationship between the Bedan and the Kwr in modern-day Mauritania. Both of them also said that the ethnic tension is a newcomer to the Mauritanian society. For instance, Ould Ahmed Aicha and Mokhtar Sar respectively argued:

Over the ages and centuries, integrity and unity were the main markers of the ethnic groups of modern-day Mauritania. The members of these ethnic groups were united under the umbrella of Islam. We had the same culture. The only difference between us was in language. Nevertheless, the Kwr used to speak Arabic. They were proud of Arabic. Ethnic tension was caused by the state since the intellectuals were the ones who divided people ever since the inception of independence. They were "francized" ideologically. (Ould Ahmed Aicha)

In my opinion, Mauritania is composed of four ethnic groups: Wolof, Soninke, Pulaar, and Arabs. These ethnic groups have lived in modern-day Mauritania for centuries, but unfortunately all that have been done to unite people went unheeded. We live on the same territory, but people are not mingling with each other. The Moors live in one side, and what we call Negro-Africans live in another side. Cultures are different. Intermarriage does not exist. Sometimes, you find mosques that are attended only by one ethnic group because Arabs have their neighborhoods and so are Negro-Africans. Frequent meetings do not exist outside the workplace. They did exist in the beginning of the independence, but now they

are less than one percent. Ever since the events of 1989, the relationships between the Arabs and Africans were destroyed. (Mokhtar Sar)

In the above excerpts, the interviewees articulated that interethnic integration is weak and fragile in present-day Mauritania. They added that such characteristic is a new phenomenon because mobility, social interaction, or say unity in general, characterized pre-independence Mauritania.

Item 3: Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration? Why?

The interviewees gave different answers to the question. Ould Ahmed Aicha remarked that he strongly supports increasing the status of Arabic in both education and administration. What is more, he said that Arabic should be the only language used in administration. To support his argument, he said that the constitution stipulates that Arabic is the official language of the state. As such, all administrative correspondences, debates, and public speeches must be made in Arabic, and anyone who wants to work in the Mauritanian administration must learn the language of the country whether s/he is a Mauritanian or foreigner. At the same time, he said that he does not oppose speaking the national languages in the National Assembly. What he does refuse, nevertheless, is speaking French in the National Assembly, for "there is no parliament in the world in which a foreign language is spoken." Concerning education, he said that language should not be imposed on people. Each one is free to learn in the language s/he likes. Mokhtar Sar, however, said that Arabic should not be increased in education and administration because it is the official and national language of the state. Additionally, its present status is enough, and should not be imposed on people.

Item 4: Do you think that the status of French should be increased in education and administration? Why?

As they held different views about increasing the status of Arabic, they have different views on augmenting the role of French. On the one hand, Ould Ahmed Aicha asserted that he does not favor increasing the status of French in Mauritania. For instance, he said:

French is not our mother tongue, and it is not endangered. Its status should not be increased in the country. In fact, it should be decreased. I do support the teaching

of Chinese, English, French or German. I support the teaching of any language that might benefit the Mauritanian student but not at the expense of the language of identity, the language of the majority and the language of the society, Arabic. We look at French as an international language. It is a language of a great nation that had many scholars who enlightened the world such as Sartre, Voltaire and many others. However, we look at it as Mauritanians not as French. Our role is not to defend the French language and to consolidate its status. In fact, our language is more important than French even in today's classification of languages in terms of importance, let alone the bright history of the Muslim civilization. Our language's status should be increased at the detriment of French. To recapitulate, French should be decreased and taught as a language course only.

On the other hand, Mokhtar Sar's answer was terse. Even though he refused the idea of increasing the status of French, he said that it should not be decreased. He added that no language should be imposed on people. Languages should be left competing with each other.

Item 5: What do you think about Arabic-French bilingualism?

The interviewee's opinions about Arabic-French bilingualism were similar and different. That is to say both of them hailed bilingualism in general. However, each one of them had a different view toward the nature of the Arabic-French bilingualism. Ould Ahmed Aicha said that bilingualism in general serves the state and the citizens. This is because the more state official or student acquires languages (Arabic, English and French) the more s/he becomes a real state official or student, for the state official will be able to communicate with and benefit from the world. Bilingualism also holds cognitive and social benefits for the student. However, he stressed that bilingualism should not be at the expense of Arabic which is the language of unity to all the Mauritanians. Outlining further his views, Ould Ahmed Aicha articulated:

We can teach scientific subjects in English or French, but all correspondences and the administration in general should be arabized." Street signs, tenders and official documents are in French. This is dangerous. A state without an identity and a language cannot stand on its feet. We should preserve our identity and language; otherwise, we will fall apart one day.

Similarly, Mokhtar Sar said that he is in favor of bilingualism in general, yet he does not like Arabic-French bilingualism. The bilingualism which he likes the most is intercultural one. In other words, he prefers bilingualism to be between the Mauritanian languages, say, Arabic-(Pulaar, Wolof, or Soninke) bilingualism. For him, such languages are codified, scientific and

can function the same way other languages do. There is an institution for national languages, and some Arab pupils are enrolled in this institution, and this is a good idea, added Mokhtar Sar. He also mentioned the importance of improving the status of national languages. In this regard, he said that languages are cultures. If they are not practiced, they will be lost, and they will neither accept nor let that happens.

Item 6: What does French represent for you?

French meant several things to the interviewees as the following quotes summarize:

For us, French is an international language. It is language of culture and science, but if we have a look on the world classification of languages based on their importance, we will find that Arabic is more important than French. Its learning is beneficial as the learning of any other language, English, German, Spanish and so on so forth. However, we cannot prioritize it over our mother tongue which is a language of culture, science before French, and religion. (Ould Ahmed Aicha)

French does mean many things to me. We were colonized by the French. I have studied French culture. French is a language of assimilation. French is an international language. French enables me to communicate with people in Francophone countries. I love French. When I was journalist, I worked in French language, but after that I carried on my journalism in Pulaar, and I composed my poems in Pulaar. (Mokhtar Sar)

Item: 7: What does Arabic represent for you?

The two interviewees stressed the importance of Arabic. The very importance of Arabic to them was due to its strong connection with religion and its official status in the state. To begin with religion, they mentioned that the Holy Quran was revealed to the Prophet Mohamed in Arabic. It is also the language of their daily prayers. Additionally, Arabic language is the language of the Prophet Mohamed. Apart from such common reason, each of the interviewees expressed his unique perceptions about Arabic. Ould Ahmed Aicha mentioned the roles of Arabic as his identity, as pedagogic necessity, and as an international language. Such additional factors made Arabic as part and parcel of him. Indeed, revealing his strong attachment to Arabic in the opening words of his answer, he said Arabic is "the mother. We breastfeed Arabic. It is the language of the majority of the people of Mauritania. The Bedouin speaks it. The graduate of al-

mahdra speaks it." Concerning its pedagogic benefits, he said "without Arabic, we lose 90% of the state cadres. If Arabic was the only language used in the administration, the state cadres would do far better than what they are doing today." This is because, he added, "when you study in Arabic and work in the administration, you use only 10% of your skills because the administration uses language you do not know." Additionally, he said that "anthropological, sociological, and psychiatric studies proved no one can do well in his or her research and study except in his mother tongue."

At the end of his response, Ould Ahmed Aicha said that Arabic meant everything to him because of its international status and its role as the core of his identity. He said:

> Our language is a language of culture not race because all Arabic literature was written by people who were not Arabs. Among these people, the most outstanding poets, Arabic linguists, grammarians, and Muslim leaders throughout history were not Arabs such as Ibn Zabadi who wrote the dictionary. He is an Iranian. Similarly, Arabic grammar was written by Sibawayh. Arabness is a culture that unites all the spectrums. Furthermore, Saladin (Salah al-Din) and Qutuz were great leaders. These people are considered Arabs, and the Arab world and the Muslim world are proud of them. Arabic is a language that unites all races and all ethnic groups and races. Arabic is not like other languages. Arabness is culture not race.

In his answer to the question, Mokhtar Sar had unique views about Arabic. He, for example, stated the national status of Arabic as another characteristic which make Arabic an important language to him. However, he seemed not very attached to Arabic as Ould Ahmed Aicha was. In fact, he voiced that the importance of Arabic should not be exaggerated. The following quote runs his words.

> We do not like the way the politicians use Arabic. They use it for their interests. They want to impose it. It is true that Arabic is the language of Islam, yet it is also the language of Christians, certain Christians. There are Christians who are Arabs. Thus, Arabic is the language of the Prophet, but it is also the language of Abu Jehal.

Clearly, even though the two parties recognize the importance of Arabic as the language of religion, they did not rate it in the same way. Whereas Ould Ahmed Aicha rated it as *very dear* to him, Mokhtar Sar marked it as *dear only*.

Item 8: Given the international status of English would you accept the replacement of French by English in education? Please justify.

The interviewees' responses were different. Ould Ahmed Aicha said that he strongly agrees with replacing French by English because of its international status. As such, "it is the best and the most beneficial to the people of Mauritania." At the same time, French should be given a place in Mauritania since the state has historical and cultural relations with France and since generations were educated in French. However, he added:

> We should not keep it as our mother tongue. There should be no one among us who defends French as his language and puts himself as its champion. This is the biggest mistake in Mauritania. There are Mauritanians who defend French. Why do not they defend English and Spanish? According to the classification of languages in the world, all these languages are more important than French. We do not have something against French, but we do not want anyone to defend it. What is the relationship between the Zunuj [Kwr] and French? There is no relationship at all. Their ancestors used to write in Arabic their contracts and all of identification documents. When the colonizer comes, it always plays the minority. As such, the Francophone started to secure its place in this territory. The minority wants to secure its place at the expense of the majority, and this is not acceptable.

Mokhtar Sar said that even though English is the most important language in the world, it should not replace French in Mauritania. The following quote presents his views.

> No. I think we should study English. The Mauritanians should study both English and French. This is because of our relation with the ancient colonizer. French also is a national language as well as international. We must study English because English is the language of all technology and sciences; thus, studying English is important.

The interviewees' views reflect that the use of French in Mauritania is due to ideological agendas.

Item 9: In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country?

The question took the bulk of the interview time nearly one third of it. Each of the interviewees tried to take his breath when answering it. They reinforced their arguments through recalling the past and outlining the present. From the interviewees' tone and physical expression,

the question seemed to capture their interests. In fact, when he was handed over the list of questions before the start of the interview, Mokhtar Sar, said that the question was the most interesting one to him. Then, he added questions 8, 7, 6, and 2 were very interesting too.

Ould Ahmed Aicha said that the only reason behind the protests over language policy in Mauritania is political. He said that "the biggest problem in Mauritania is that the minorities do not recognize their status. They look at themselves as the majority, and they are the decision makers in the country." Ould Ahmed Aicha added that there is a reason behind such views. At the "inception of the independence, the francophones were the rulers. The majority of the francophone intellectuals was composed of the minorities. Therefore, it was installed in their brains that they should be the ones who make the policies of the country." As a result, "the minorities live on worries, and they do not want Arabic implementation in the state because from the independence onward the number of the Arab intellectuals was constantly increasing." He also added that some of the francophones say that their rejection to Arabic was on the basis that the Arab pupils would do better in schools than theirs, if Arabic becomes the language of education. However, for Ould Ahmed Aicha, such view is not an excuse, for they have proposed solutions to the issue, and the minorities did not listen to them because the Kwr are keen to preserve French in Mauritania. Such view proves that their protests and objection to Arabic is political. It is indeed, he added, for "if they were otherwise, the Kwr would have tried to impose their own languages. Nevertheless, they want only to impose French language on the Mauritanians." More importantly, Ould Ahmed Aicha argued that the Kwr's support of French and rebuff of Arabic was due to their strong affiliation with France. For instance, he remarked:

> The French colonialism is cultural in it its nature. Additionally, it is known that the Francophone budget which is allocated for enhancing and supporting French is larger than the budgets of all African countries. France has some people whom it uses for the purpose of consolidating French. The people are not only composed of Zunuj [Kwr] but also from the Arabs themselves.

In his reaction to the Kwr's position, Ould Ahmed Aicha said that the Kwr's stance on Arabic is rebuffed by the people of Mauritania. It is rejected by al-mahader, the mosques, and from the traditionalist groups. He mentioned that there are groups of the Kwr who support Arabic.

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The Nobel families of the Kwr in this country teach their children Arabic. They send them to al-mahader. They compose poetry in Arabic, and they are proud of it. It is the language of their religion. All the traditionalists defend Arabic, but there is a minority of the francophone which rejects Arabic.

In the light of such facts, for Ould Ahmed Aicha,

it is impossible that 90% of the population would drop their mother tongue language and adopt a foreign language. I cannot accept the support of foreign language and the rejection of a national language. It is wrong. Such view is the main problem that caused sensitivities between the Arabs and Zunuj in Mauritania. The main problem is the issue of defending French language. In such case, I look at you not as nationalist, but an enemy to the motherland. It is in the Zunuj's interest to study Arabic. On the international level, all agree that Arabic is more important than French in the world. On the national level, Arabic is the language of your co-nationals. If you are after the interest of this world, and if you are after the hereafter, Arabic is the language of Quran and the language of the hereafter.

Mokhtar Sar's account regarding the reasons behind the protests over language policy was different. For him, the reasons are economic and cultural. He said that they were assimilated by the French colonizer, and they cannot accept a new colonialism by the Arabs. For instance, he articulated:

The colonizer came to us, imposed its language and went out. Be it Nigerian, Senegalese, or Mauritanian, each one wants to retrieve his or her culture. The language is the essence of culture. The tradition, the historical tradition of your state, your tradition, songs, dances, and history are known through no means but language. Thus, we would like to know Arabic, but it is the language of the little Arab. A little child of Soninke does not know it. Language is the vehicle of culture. The child will not learn his culture, but he will acquire the Arab culture. This is because language is a vehicle of institution, culture and individuals. As such, we cannot accept Arabic. We have already been acculturated through French language as I told you before, and we have already deacculturated the French language, and now they want to acculturate us in Arabic. [laugh]. I thought that I was saved, and now Arabic comes.

Additionally, Mokhtar Sar asserted that the other reason behind protests is economy. The Arabs want to dominate the workforce at the expense of the Kwr. For instance, he said:

I was among the pupils on whom Arabic was imposed in 1966. On the 6th February, I was at school. There was a governmental decree that aimed at imposing Arabic. Chaos spread in high school. Some people were killed. These

events were similar to those of 1989. There were cadres who wrote a manifesto which was known as the manifesto of the nineteen. They were arrested and tortured. From those days on, Arabic was privileged, and we were excluded. They wanted to use Arabic in order to diminish the advance of the Negro-Africans/the French over them. Such fact was their main purpose because in Mauritania after the independence the French were Negro-Africans. They were educated in French, and they were the workers in the administration because the Moors refused to attend French schools. If you did not get a good mark you would be eliminated. Nowadays, the Negro-Africans are excluded from the Mauritanian administration. No one is there. The administration is fully arabized, so the Negro-Africans are excluded. These are the results. I spent four years in prison because of such thing. I was arrested because the manifesto of the 19 in 1966, we wrote in 1986 another manifesto. Four of us were imprisoned. Such situation continues till today. Ould Taya imprisoned anyone who protested over language policy. This is why the problem persists. In the parliament, I speak in Pulaar because people to whom I speak understand me. I do not care about the others. If they want to understand me, they should translate my speech as they do to Arabic and French. This is the problem that persists today. Recently, chaos spread in the house of the parliament because a member of the National Assembly, Bor [Kwri] said that we do not want to study Arabic. They called him racist.

Mokhtar Sar's response summarizes his views about language policy in general and the economic reason behind their protests against the implementation of Arabic in education and administration. Tersely, he said that the persistence of protests over language policy was due to the arabization of education and administration and thus the marginalization of the Kwr who are francophones.

In the end, the interviewees were requested to add any additional remarks, if any, about the topic, and each one of them had some concluding remarks. Apart from hailing the topic, each one of the interviewees gave general views about language policy and identity in Mauritania. The following quotes summarize them.

We want to draw the attention of people who are against the implementation of Arabic to the point that if they are looking for a strong national state, the state must have an identity. This identity cannot have a unifying language but Arabic because it is the language of the majority and the unifying religion in Mauritania. (Ould Ahmed Aicha)

Regarding the issue of language Allah says, "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most

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righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted" (the Quran, chapter 49, verse. 13). If Allah wanted to create us as Kwri, He would have created all Kwri, so Allah created us in different tribe. Allah created languages. It is true that the Quran was revealed in Arabic, but neither the Gospel nor the Zephyr was revealed in Arabic. The Books of Abraham and Moses and all of the other Holy Books were not revealed in Arabic. Allah sent every Prophet in the language He spoke. Pulaar, Wolof, Soninke, and Chinese were created by Allah, and Allah wanted us to speak in them. You have to translate. The Prophet said speak to the people in the language they understand. In mosques, Friday prayer should be explained in the languages the attendees understand. Allah wanted them to understand. You have to broadcast in television and radio all religious programs in the languages people understand. Otherwise, people will not comprehend what Allah said. Hdith stipulates, "know Me before you worship Me," so how can people know Allah? Allah will judge all the decision makers. Mahmoud Ba arabized many people. He was Pullar not Arab. Pulaar were the ones who made the Islamic revolution in the 17th century. People do not know the history. Now, we live in the biggest confusion, the Arab nationalism. Today we are in a big unending problem. We do not want such situation. (Mokhtar Sar)

In the concluding remarks, the interviewees asserted that the issue of language policy and identity is the main problem in Mauritania. Moreover, each one of them seemed to hold the other responsible for impeding the construction of strong national cohesion.

6.2 Testing the hypotheses and discussing the results

As outlined above, the questionnaire was composed of five sections each of which was subdivided into several items. It was also mentioned earlier that the interview's items reiterated the same items included in the questionnaire. All of the items were meant to answer the research questions which tested the three main hypotheses guiding the study. As such, in the following pages, the hypotheses are tested, and the obtained results are discussed.

6.2.1. Discussion of the first hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Ethnic identity is stronger than any other identity.

The hypothesis implies that Mauritanians, as any other people, perceive themselves in many ways; however, they prioritize ethnicity over the other markers of identity. In other words, Mauritanians hold several identifications, yet ethnic identity is the most important one. To test the hypothesis, the respondents were asked to identify themselves. They were also given several

identities and requested to choose the most important ones. Then, each identity was measured solely. Additionally, the respondents were asked to report their distance from their ethnic group as well as their counterpart ethnic group.

The results obtained by means of questionnaire and interview refuted the first hypothesis of the study. Such refute was clearly indicated in both students' and chair-persons' answers to the items about identity included in the questionnaires and interviews. For instance, when the participants were requested to pick, from a list of markers of identity, the first most important marker, the second most important marker, and the third most important marker which described who they are, the vast majority of the respondents, over 92%, (see table 2.1) opted for Islam as their first important marker of identity. In addition, it was nationality, not ethnicity, which was selected by the majority of the respondents 53.2% (269) (see table 2.2) as the second most important marker of identity. Moreover, when the participants were requested, in item 3, to choose between ethnicity and nationality as markers of their identity, the majority of them over 77% (see table 3) opted for nationality.

Besides, the respondents' answers to the item 5 about their distance from their counter ethnic groups clearly indicated that ethnicity is not the strongest marker of identity in Mauritania. Figures in table 5 showed over half of the respondents 55.1% (279) vocalizing their close distance to their ethnic counterpart. The respondents gave several justifications to their placement of ethnicity on the margin. The justifications revolved around two main themes: religion and nationalism. The following quotes are representatives of the respondents' justifications.

a. "I cannot hate Arabs because the Prophet is an Arab. Politics is the reason behind our division. All of us are Muslims, Mauritanians and Africans." (themes of religion and nationalism)

b. "We are Mauritanian society open-minded and intellectual. Each of us has his ethnic group, yet this ethnic group does give neither advantage nor disadvantage. Our religion is one and unites us. There is no virtue of an Arab over a foreigner except by righteousness." (religion)

Surprisingly, the findings reveal that Mauritanians prioritized religion and nationalism over ethnicity as the respondents used the pronouns "we" and "us" in relation with Islam and the state.

They wanted to show unity in diversity. The respondents, in the above statements, did not only mention that religious and national identities were the most important ones to them but also downplayed ethnicity as a rivalry marker of identity. This was done when they rephrased the Quranic verse which stipulates that "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted" (Quran, chapter. 49, verse. 13).

Moreover, figures in table 6.1 show that national identity is strong in Mauritania. For instance, 53.4% (270) and 15.6% (79) voiced respectively their preference and strong preference of the Mauritanian citizenship over any other one. Similarly, the results obtained in tables 6.2 and 6.3 indicated the satisfaction of the majority of the Mauritanians about the state and their co-nationals. For example, 45.8% (232) and 23.7% (120) of the respondents articulated respectively their agreement and strong agreement with the statement which ran that Mauritania is better than any other country. Besides, not only 48.8% (247) of the respondents said they like their own co-nationals but also 21.1% (107) strongly viewed them as better than many other people.

More importantly, figures in tables 6.4 and 6.5 point out that national identity is stronger than the ethnic one in Mauritania. The majority of the Mauritanians (38.7% (196) strongly agree and 28.3% (143) agree) articulated their readiness to support their country even if it is wrong. Above all, the overwhelming majority 80% of the respondents said they agree to sacrifice their ethnicity for the sake of the state. What is more, out of such percentage, 50.4% (255) vocalized their *strong agreement* to pushing aside their ethnic identity and bring about their national identity. In fact, only 6% of the respondents (see table 6.5) rebuffed prioritizing their national identity over their ethnic one.

In addition, figures in table 7.2 revealed that all the respondents 100% said that they were proud of religiosity in Mauritania. It is noticeable that all of the respondents did not agree on any issue but the salience of religious identity. The attainment of religion and the strong attachment to it is observed also in the various justifications given to the items 5 and 9. In fact, religion is invoked by the respondents in all of their responses (see the results of the questionnaire). In a

nutshell, the results of the questionnaire clarifies that the Mauritanians prioritize religious and national identities over the ethnic one.

Likewise, the chairpersons did not prioritize ethnic identity in their introductory statements about who they are. For instance, Ould Ahmed Aicha identified himself based of nationality marker (see item 1). Similarly, Mokhtar Sar did not embroider himself with ethnicity until the end of his introductory statement. Age and role were the first markers through which he identified himself. For instance, he said "I was born in 1949. I am journalist by training…. Today, I am a member of the National Assembly (see item 1). Clearly, he did not prioritize ethnicity. Even though the chair-persons embroider themselves with markers of identity that were different from those in which the students introduced themselves, both parties did not introduce themselves based on their ethnic background. Thus, as mentioned earlier, the first hypothesis seems to be groundless, for religious and national commitments proved to be acing those of ethnicity.

The findings of questionnaire and interview seem to prove one main point. Islam and *to a lesser extent* nationalism seem to be able to brush aside all other markers of identity, as they still seem to unify Mauritanians across ethnic groups. Before interpreting the results, it is necessary to clarify the use of the italicized phrase "*to a lesser extent*." We modified the term "nationalism" by such phrase because the findings, as mentioned above, showed that religion was the only marker which was prioritized by all the respondents regardless of their ethnicity. Nationalism was strong, but its strength was not like that of religion. It was prioritized by less number of the respondents and it was stronger among one ethnic group than the other as shown later.

Going back to interpreting the results (the strength of Islam and nationality), from the first day of its penetration of modern-day Mauritania, Islam unified the diverse people in the region as mentioned in the second part of the present study. Sheikdoms cut across ethnic and tribal groups. The effectiveness of Islam was also clearly seen in its ability to unify the ethnic and sectarian tensions which were bubbling above the surface on the eve of the independence. In fact, Ould Daddah and his backers, as argued earlier, reported that Islam and shared history were the main factors that led to the establishment of Mauritania in the first place. In the Congress of Aleg in 1958, two years before the independence, Ould Daddah reported that after reminding the

attendees that Islam and territory unified them, the various elites papered their differences and vocalized their preparedness for facing the challenges together, the establishment of a common national identity, refutation of Morocco's irredentism, and wrest of power from the colonial master.

Furthermore, the religious discourse was able to knit together the Kwr and the Bedan's enmity after the deadly clashes over language policy in 1966, 1973, and 1989. According to Lapidus, the successive governments of Mauritania promoted religion to reinforce their authority. "Islam was declared the religion of the state and the sharia the only valid source of law" (2014, p. 765). Besides, the state officials have always stressed the need for dismissing grouping based on ethnicity, and the need for identifying based on Islam particularly Sunni Islam. In June 9, 2017, the National Assembly, in a public session, ratified a bill which criminalizes discrimination. The amendments included article 10 of the law. The new reading of the law stipulated that anyone who encourages an inflammatory speech against the official doctrine (Sunni) of the state shall be punished by imprisonment from one to five years. In his address to the deputies about the law, the Minister of Justice, Ibrahim Ould Daddah, said that such law is part of a planned action adopted by the state to prevent and combat speeches and actions which target the unity of the people of the country (the National Assembly, June 9, 2017).

Furthermore, because of the tense categorization based on ethnicity, public figures, civil society activists, and politicians have also always been active in trying to naturalize ethnic identity and activate a sense of belonging to the state based on the shared religion. Mauritanian "facebookers" are active in addressing such issue and clarifying its negative side on the social integration and the state as a whole. Likewise, Religious scholars, among whom is Mohamed El Hacen Ould Deddew, and politicians have always been hosted on the national broadcasting networks to enlighten people about the danger of ethnic mobilization. The emphasis has been laid on Islam in order to harness the diversity of the state's population. Apparently, the state and such influential figures have been trying to create a community united by Islam and nationalism. The findings showed that such attempts were successful, for all the respondents reported that Islam was the first important marker of their identity, and the majority of them selected the state as their second preferred marker of identity. It seems that the importance of religious identity is

not going to fade away at least in the foreseeable future. Similar prediction is made by Pazzanita and Gerteiny (1996) who argued that even though ethnic tensions remain a challenge, "a common, fervent Islamic faith… seems destined to remain a significant presence" in the people's lives for the foreseeable future (p. 10).

Moreover, two main interpretations can be given to the fact that the chair-persons steered clear of identifying based on ethnicity marker, preferring instead to identify based on nationality, age, role marker and personal interest. First, because age and role, among other markers such as sex, cut across all societies, they preferred to identify based on them in order to avoid being misinterpreted as racist. In other words, people, particularly public figures, are likely to be perceived negatively if they projected themselves as ethnically oriented. Thus, upon introducing themselves, they try to pick markers of identity which are not biased and have indeterminate borders such as role and age. Second, public figures tend to identify with the nation as whole because they want to galvanize supporters from the different ethnic make-up of the state. In fact, public figures are usually aware of the political and social misfortunes one might bring on himself or herself when s/he identified based on ethnicity. This is because such action is likely to dishearten his or her ethnic counterpart. Indeed, Sidanius and Pratto (2001) remarked that "arbitrary set" groups are persistent across cultures and are the main reason behind much group-based animus.

The fact that ethnic identity was not the strongest one in Mauritania does not necessarily imply its weakness. In contrast, ethnic identity proved to be great in Mauritania. For instance, figures in table 2.1 showed that 3% and 3.4% of the respondents stated respectively that ethnicity and international region (West Africa/Arab Maghreb) are the first important markers of their identity. Such numbers, though they are relatively small, made ethnicity the most chosen marker by the respondents after religion. Furthermore, over 33% of the respondents (see table 2.2) selected ethnicity as the second most important marker of identity. Moreover, ethnicity was selected by the majority of the respondents as their third marker of identity as figures in table 2.3 showed. Besides, the respondents' answers to the items about their distance from their ethnic group and their counter ethnic group indicated clearly how strong ethnicity in Mauritania is. In table 4, 65% of the respondents stated that they were very close to their ethnic group. Such statistics give the premise that there is an ethnic mobilization. Had been otherwise, the majority

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of the respondents would have said that they were close to their ethnic group instead of the very close option.

Figures in table 5 also displayed nearly 40% of the respondents declaring that they were not very closely affiliated with their ethnic counterpart. Some of the reasons behind the ethnic distance, as outlined earlier, were political, economic, cultural, and social as the following excerpts point out.

a. "Because they are racist, I do not like them." (Bedani) (social theme)

b. "We are not close to them because they are manipulated by foreign powers." (Bedani) (politics)

c. "There is no democratic. They dominate the country, so I do not feel very close to them." (Kwri) (politics and economics)

d. "They have killed many of us in 1989 events." (Kwri) (socio-politics)

The statements point out that ethnic tension is rooted in the Mauritanian society. Each ethnic group projects the other as an enemy. The Kwr projected the Bedan as killers, oppressive and unjust, and the Bedan mirrored the Kwr as secret agents for foreign countries.

In addition, the results obtained by means of interview revealed that ethnicity is an important component of identity in Mauritania. Such importance was reiterated throughout the interviews. For instance, Ould Ahmed Aicha said, in his answer to item 1, that he longs for a country where all ethnic groups are fully integrated. The wish gives the premise that ethnic mobilization is strong in the state. In addition, Mokhtar Sar embroidered himself with ethnicity upon introducing himself. Furthermore, in their answers to item 2 about ethnic integration, Ould Ahmed Aicha and Mokhtar Sar confessed that mobilization of the ethnic groups has been strong ever since the independence. Mokhtar Sar stressed that the strength of ethnic identity in Mauritania was even reflected in the geographical distribution of the people. Some neighborhoods, in the capital Nouakchott, are populated only by the Kwr and others by the Bedan. They also remarked that the ethnic groups are not integrated. Moreover, in their concluding remarks, both of the interviewees argued that ethnic mobilization and thus ethnic identity were strong in the state, and they would remain so in the foreseeable future.

The findings of the study revealed also that ethnic identity was more salience among the Kwr than the Bedan. For example, figures in table 2.1 displayed that while almost all Bedan respondents 99.2% (250) selected Islam as the most important marker of their identity, considerable numbers of the Kwr respondents identified primarily based on ethnicity (9.3% (8) of Pulaar, 8.3% (7) of Soninke) and regional 17.4% (15) of Pulaar and 1.2% (1) for each of Wolof and Soninke. Additionally, figures in table 2.2 showed that the majority of the Kwr (64% (55) of Pulaar, 42.9% (36) of Wolof and 57.1% (48) of Soninke) opted for ethnicity as their second most important marker of identity. The majority of Bedan respondents nearly 74% (186) (see table 2.2) selected nationality as their second important marker of identity. Moreover, when the respondents were requested to select the identity they preferred, the majority of Kwr respondents 59.3% (51) of Pulaar, 35.7% (30) of Wolof, and 31% (26) of Soninke said that they were as Kwr as Mauritanians. Less than 1% (2) (see table 3) of the Bedan respondents described themselves in this way. In fact, the overwhelming majority of the Bedan over 70% (see table 3) described themselves as only Mauritanians. Furthermore, the vast majority of Kwr respondents said that they were proud of the national football team which is nicknamed Almoravids. Such approval was likely due to the fact that almost all players of the team are from the Kwr, for the team had never established regional or international reputations which would make it deserve a big approval. The Bedan disapproval of the team might also be due to the fact that few players are Bedani. In both cases, it seems that ethnicity is present in the choice of the respondents regardless of their ethnic back ground.

The findings show that the salience of ethnic identity for the Kwr made their attachments with the state fragile. By the same token, the weak presence of ethnic identity in the Bedan's life led to their strong identification with the state. Such conclusion is further consolidated by figures presented in tables 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4. Figures in the tables showed that the overwhelming majority of the Bedan respondents said that they see Mauritania and its people as the best. They also added that they would support the country even if it was wrong and would sacrifice their ethnicity for the sake of their state. In contrast, the majority of Kwr respondents were unsatisfied with the state. Similarly, the findings presented in tables 7.1, 7.3, 7.5, and 7.6 indicated clearly that national identity was strong among the Bedan and fragile among the Kwr. The majority of the Bedan respondents said that they were proud of the tolerance and solidarity in the country,

social justice, and armed forces. The majority of Kwr respondents, however, were not proud of them.

Several interpretations can be given to the salience of ethnic identity in Mauritania in general and among the Kwr in particular. As aforementioned, the seeds of ethnicity were planted from the first days of the coming of the French colonizer. The French administrators followed the rule "divide and govern." They opened schools in the regions of the Kwr, and they made French the only medium of instruction there. They recruited all of their workers from the Kwr. The Bedan were reluctant to join any colonial project be it their schools or their administration. As such, the Kwr were fully assimilated by the French, and from that day on, they have become the champions of French culture, values and language. For instance, at the inception of the independence, ethnic tensions were colonizing the content of everyday speech because every ethnic group wanted to assert its political, social, and economic positions in the new state. The Kwr minority was afraid that the Bedan majority would push the new state outside its colonial legacy and thus dominate the state politically, culturally and economically.

The Kwr's fear might be justified, for the state was proclaimed as a republic and the implantation of democracy was requested by all ethnic groups. In a democratic republic where ethnic affiliation is strong, the minority members may not be able to construct the bulk of the workforce and neither may they be the decision makers of the state. The Bedan took control of the state and tried to assert the state individuality, implemented Arabization policy and reoriented the state toward the Arab world, to name but few. The steps were and are emphatically rejected by the Kwr. They are the main issues that have kept the ethnic tensions frying and consolidated ethnic identity among the diverse ethnic groups in general and the Kwr in particular. Such fact was also remarked by the respondents as shown later. The strong attachment of the Kwr to their ethnic group was the main reason behind their fragile national identity.

6.2.2 Discussion of the second hypothesis

Hypothesis 2: language policy is ethnically oriented.

The hypothesis stipulates that the Mauritanians' preference of language policy is influenced by their ethnic background. To test the hypothesis, the participants in both questionnaires and interviews were requested to answer questions about their use of and attitudes toward Arabic and French. The researcher asked them directly whether they considered such languages as part of their identities.

Unlike the previous hypothesis, the results obtained through means of questionnaire and interview confirmed the hypothesis. For instance, table 8.1 showed that whereas a considerable number of the Kwr 24.4% (62) communicated in French with their family members, 0% of the Bedan reported their use of French in the house. Reversely, no-one of the Kwr reported his or her use of Arabic while 3.6% (9) of the Bedan said they talked in Arabic with their family members. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of the Kwr (98.8% (85) of Pulaar, 89.3% (75) of Wolof, and 100% (84) of Soninke) asserted that they socialize with their friends in French, and almost no one of them said s/he spoke Arabic with his or her friends. In contrast, the number of the Bedan, who talked to their friends in French, was small, 1.6% (4) (see table 8.2). In fact, the results concerning the function of languages were quite revealing. Tables 8.3, 8.4, 8.6, and 8.7 revealed respectively that whereas almost all of the Kwr respondents used only French when chatting online, discussing politics, speaking in campus, and reading for leisure, the Bedan used mainly Arabic in such activities.

To assert their attachment to the languages, the results showed that each ethnic group wanted its preferred language to be used in the state institutions. For instance, all the Bedan respondents (see table 9) said they support increasing the status of Arabic in education and administration. Almost all of them 96.8% (244) (see table 10) also said that they were against the increase of French status. Furthermore, the Arab respondents seemed emphatically against the use of French. For instance, figures in table 11 showed over 87% of the Bedan respondents saying they were unfavourable of Arabic-French bilingualism. In contrast, all the Kwr respondents (see table 9 and 10) opposed the increase of Arabic status and support the increase of French. Unlike the Bedan, all the Kwr (see table 11) were in favour of Arabic-French bilingualism. Surprisingly enough, the majority of the Kwr seemed to have a strong attachment to French. Unlike the Bedan, the vast majority of them expressed their opposition of the increase of English status at the expense of French (see table 12). Such findings pointed out that the Kwr

consider French as more than a language of science or a means which prevents them from getting assimilated by the Arabs. In other words, the Kwr might have regard French as part of their identity since they refuse the decrease of its status at the detriment of English.

The results of section 5 in the questionnaire consolidated the previous discussed findings, for the respondents revealed in plain terms that identity was behind their language's use and preference. For example, figures in table 13 presented that all the Bedan respondents considered Arabic as part of their identity. Additionally, figures in tables 15 and 16 displayed respectively that nearly all of them looked at Arabization policy as a protection of their identity and Frencization policy as a threat to their identity. The Kwr, however, were very supportive of the use of French and insistently refused Arabic. For instance, even though all of the Kwr said that neither Arabic nor French was part of their identity, a considerable number of them (27.9% (24) of Pulaar, 16.7% (14) of Wolof, and 20.2% (17) of Soninke) (see table 13) deemed the latter as a part of their identity. Moreover, the majority of the Kwr (97.7% (84) of Pulaar, 57.1% (48) of Wolof and 61.9% (52) of Soninke) (look at table 15) regarded Arabization policy as a threat to their identity, and a greater majority of them, over 80%, (see table 16) viewed French as a protection to their identity. Unlike the Bedan, all the Kwr respondents (see table 14) considered Arabic-French bilingualism as a necessary means for promoting Mauritanian culture. The Kwr also painted their protests, over the attempt of implementing Arabization policy, with cultural and economic flavours. In other words, they regarded Arabic as the Bedan's means of dominating the country and marginalizing them. However, the Bedan considered the protests as politically motivated. The Kwr, for them, were reinforcing foreign agendas.

In addition to the results obtained by means of questionnaire, the interviews' results confirmed the above hypothesis. Predictably, the views of each of the chair-persons were similar to that of the students with whom they shared the ethnic background. On the one hand, Ould Ahmed Aicha said he was very supportive of increasing the status of Arabic at the detriment of French. In fact, he said the administration should be fully arabized. His answers to the questions about the significations of Arabic and French revealed his tremendous attachment to the former and distance from the latter. For example, he vocalized: Arabic is the "mother." Throughout the interview, he reiterated that Arabic was part and parcel of his identity. In fact, he viewed it as the essence of his identity. Ould Ahmed Aicha contended that the long-standing protests of the Kwr

over language policy were politically motivated. He considered the Kwr's calls for preserving the role of French as an advancement of the French interests. He said that the French paid the advocates of French and supported them politically. Furthermore, in his concluding remarks, Ould Ahmed Aicha stressed that he wanted the opponents of the implementation of Arabic to know that Mauritania must have an identity and that such identity cannot be but Arabic.

On the other hand, Mokhtar Sar also proved to be the Champion of French advocates. Similar to the Kwr students, he kept, throughout the interview, insisting that the role of French should not be decreased in Mauritania. He said he rebuffed the increase of Arabic because its current status as a national language is enough. Surprisingly enough, Mokhtar Sar said he did not support the increase of French either. Rather, he favoured the current Arabic-French bilingualism. He uttered: "languages should be left competing and none of them should be imposed." Clearly, he was calling for adopting the policy of non-intervention. Moreover, Mokhtar Sar declared that French represented for him culture and economic. He was assimilated by the French; as a result, the Kwr were given the bulk of the positions in the administration. However, as a result of the Arabization policy, they were marginalized. His attachment to French was also clear in his refusal of the replacement of French by English. It should be note that such views were also vocalized by the Kwr students. It seems that his views of French were not merely pedagogic as it is "the language of science and technology," a justification which is commonly perpetuated by the Kwr. Concerning Arabic, he pointed out it is dear to him because of its religious role, but such role was not assigned only to Arabic, for Islam united all people regardless of their ethnic groups. As such, its language might play the religious role. In a nutshell, the interviewees' views confirmed that the preference of language policy is influenced by the ethnic background.

The confirmation of the above hypothesis was expected for several reasons some of which were even given by both the students in the questionnaires and the chair-persons in the interviews. On the one hand, the fact that the findings showed that all the Bedan respondents scored on Arabic, not French, reported their extensive use of it in their everyday life activities, and regarded it as part of their identity was unsurprising due to the religious, linguistic, cultural, political, and geographical importance which Arabic has had in Mauritania.

To start with, Islam is the only religion of Mauritania and Mauritanians. As discussed earlier, Islam was embraced by all the Mauritanians ever since the Almoravids' period. It is known that the Prophet of Islam was an Arab, and the Quran was revealed in Arabic as the following verse stipulates. "Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may understand" (Quran, chapter. 12, verse. 2). Such role has given Arabic a special status in Mauritania, as well as in the rest of the Islamic world, as all the respondents of the study had mentioned. Additionally, it is widely held across the Arab world that preserving Arabic means assuring the understanding of the Quran, Hadith, and related Islamic literature. Besides, the Bedan considered French language as the colonizer's way to convert them into Christianity and eclipse their Arab culture. As such, they refused to attend French schools in the colonial period as discussed earlier. The religious dimension might have been the main reason behind the Bedan's attachment to Arabic and distance from French.

Moreover, as discussed somewhere, Sanhaja started their Arabic cultural transformation ever since the arrival of Beni Hassan in the 15th century. In the 17th century, the transformation was complete, and the two groups fused into what was known as the Bedan ethnic group. The ethnic group shared all the characteristics which are known to be assigned to a particular ethnic group, from language, Hassaniya, Arab culture, Arab origin, and all way of life of the Arabs. Since Arabic is first and foremost is the language of Arabs, the Bedan considered it as part and parcel of their identity, for as discussed earlier, language is strongly linked to identity. In this regard, Joseph (2010) argued "in reality, our very sense of who we are, where we belong and why, and how we relate to those around us, all have language at their centre" (p. 1). Joseph further added that "researchers have been analysing how people's choices of languages, and ways of speaking, do not simply reflect who they are, but make them who they are— or more precisely, allow them to make themselves" (2010, p. 1). Thus, preserving one language rather than another is of extreme importance in identifying people's identities. This does not only explain why the Bedan were so attached to Arabic but also why they rebuffed French language. Indeed, the Bedan respondents pointed out that French was as a menace to their culture.

Besides, the Bedan formed the overwhelming majority, over 80% of the population, and Arabic is their language. As such, they identified with it and were keen to have it implemented in the state institutions. Such request and desire have been stressed several times by Ould Ahmed

Aicha in the interview as well as the Bedan students in the questionnaires. The Bedan participants in the study considered the current use of French as unfair and a threat to their identity, for as they argued, the minority (the Kwr) was dominating the majority (the Bedan) and making the state advances the Kwr's self-interests.

Furthermore, politics played an important role in making the Bedan identify with Arabic and keen to elevate its functionality and use in the state at the expense of French. Indeed, at the inception of independence, political movements were calling for asserting the Arabic-Islamic status of the state. They even desired the Arab identity to be reflected on the name of the state. Such calls were carried out into actions by the first president of the state. For instance, ever since the independence, several measures were taken, whether in education or in administration, in order to elevate the status of Arabic at the detriment of French. As discussed earlier, in 1965, the government issued a decree stipulating Arabic as the language of primary schools. Additionally, the successive governments tried, throughout the following decades, to elevate the status of Arabic. The Arabization policy gave the Bedan a sense of belonging to their identity, for the advocates of Arabization policy argued constantly that their aim was to recover their Arabic identity and get rid of the French one. In fact, this campaign was waged in all the Arab Maghreb countries. As a result, the people of the states developed a sense of belonging to an Arab identity.

In addition, the geographical location of Mauritania might have influenced the Bedan preference of Arabic and their identification with it. Mauritania is bordered from the north by two Arab countries, Morocco and Algeria. The people of the countries have not been just neighbours to the people of modern-day Mauritania but rather they have been mothers, fathers, sons and daughters to them. In other words, the people of today's Mauritania are an extension to those of Morocco and Algeria. Indeed, when one looks at the people of the Moroccan Sahara, s/he would immediately recognize the imaginary borders between the two countries in terms of race, religion, tradition, customs, and all ways of life. Such fact led the Mauritanians to identify strongly with Moroccans. Additionally, the creation of the Arab Maghreb Union in 1989 also played an important role in developing a sense of unity between the people of the union. Such unity, as the preamble of the Maghreb stipulates and even the name of the union suggests, was around Arabic and Arab culture.

Besides, the Bedan's identification with and adherence to Arabic and fear from French were manifested in their support of the increasing role of English at the expense of French. Almost all the Bedan participants (see table 12), including Ould Ahmed Aicha in the interview (see item 8), favored increasing the role of English at the detriment of French (see table). The positive attitudes toward English can be attributed to two underlying causes. First, the Bedan were keen to replace French because they regarded it as a threat to their identity, for France and Senegal have always been involved in inflaming protests over language policy in Mauritania. Very recently, in March 2017, the Ambassador of France in Nouakchott, made statements which colonized the headings of the Mauritanian newspapers and were widely discussed between Mauritanian "facebookers." He said French should be used as a medium of instruction in Mauritania. Senegal also, as discussed earlier, was not immune from inflaming the protests over language policy in Mauritania. Such countries have openly supported the Kwr minority politically and financially. They hosted some of the Kwr extremists who call even for dividing the state based on ethnic lines. On April 13, 2017, some of the extremists, who are affiliated with FLAM, followed the president procession of Mohamed Abel Aziz, who was visiting France, and verbally assaulted him and labeled him as a racist. They also chanted that they were objecting Arabization policy. The Video which depicted the incident went viral on the net. The Bedan were very critiques to the protesters' behaviors though some of them said they were not fans of the president. That is to say the Bedan would prefer English, Spanish, German, or any other language over French language because they consider French language as France and its Francophone ally's way of eclipsing the Arab culture. In fact, such preference was mentioned by Ould Ahmed Aicha several times in the interview.

Second, with the globalization era, one can venture and say: English becomes the lingua franca of the world. Before revealing the importance of English in globalized world, it is imperative to pin down the term. Globalization, as Sifakis and Sougari (2003), argued is a slippery term (p. 60). It is defined across disciplines, yet the following definition captures many aspects of it and thus gives the reader a close picture of it. Held (2006) stated

> [g]lobalisation today implies two distinct phenomena. First, it suggests that there are many chains of political, economic and social activity which are becoming worldwide in scope, and second, it suggests that there has been an intensification

of levels of interaction and interconnectedness within and between states and societies. (pp. 293-294)

It is truism to say that English is the purveyor of the cultural, political and economic aspects of the globalization which are stressed in the definition. Indeed, even developed and ex-colonial countries that have always tried to spread their cultures outside their borders confess now that English language is taking over their languages and call for its use. A case in point would be France. As a former French Education Minister, Claude Alègre summarized it in a speech in 1997: "English had become a commodity, similar in kind to computers or the internet….The French have got to stop thinking of English as a foreign language" (Alègre cited in Wright, 2004, p. 125). The quotation stresses loudly the instrumental importance of English since it has been made by a French minister. The likelihood is that the instrumental importance was at play when the Bedan participants in both questionnaire and interview said they support increasing the status of English at the detriment of French. Worth of note is the fact that many people across the Arab Maghreb are calling for the replacement of French by English. For instance, in his study of the attitudes toward English and French in Tunisia, Battenburg observed "a gradual decline in use and preference of French is apparent in the Maghreb" (1997, p. 282). Additionally, some of the Moroccan officials and intellectuals call for the use of English instead of French.

On the other hand, a variety of factors were at play when the Kwr respondents favoured the use of and identification with French instead of Arabic. The factors were cultural, economic, political, geographical, and linguistics. As aforementioned, the French penetrated modern-day Mauritania in 1898 from the south, the Kwr residence, and their presence remained in the area for decades later. Institutions were located in the area, and the French citizens dwelled mainly in the Kwr region. This was because, unlike the Bedan, the Kwr did not resist the coming of the colonizer. The heavy presence of the colonizer in the Kwr region was meant to show them that they were not enemy but rather friends. As such, they would develop a close relationship with them.

In addition, the first French schools were built in the area, and they drew great numbers of the Kwr pupils. Unlike the Arabic-French bilingual policy, which was adopted in the few schools in the regions of the Bedan, the schools took French as medium of instruction. Arabic

was restricted to private religious use. The schools were meant to assimilate the Kwr not only linguistically but also culturally. In this regard, Pettigrew (2007) observed that "school, in the administration's eyes became a place not only for the development of technical skills but also a stage for a cultural and linguistic indoctrination that would benefit colonial interests" (p. 74). In the same vein, Governor Carde explains "circumstances have put civilized France into contact with a less evolved race and she [France] is responsible for directing [this race] on the path of progress" (Carde cited in Circulatres Breviè, 1933, p. 105). Thus, the Kwr were culturally assimilated by the French, a fact which was confessed by Mokhtar Sar and the Kwr students. As such, they considered it as part of their identity as a considerable number of the Kwr respondents in the study reported.

Furthermore, the French colonizer arrived in modern-day Mauritania bearing notion of economic divide which placed the Kwri worker above the Bedani one. As mentioned earlier, the French administrators employed mainly the Kwr in the administration. Besides, the Kwr were recruited in the French army as soldiers and commissioned-officers. At the same time, few of the Bedan accepted to work for the French administrators. When the state got its independence, the Kwr opposed the elevation of Arabic because they did not want the Bedan to penetrate the state posts. In other words, they thought that Arabization policy was meant to decrease their numbers in the administration jobs. Such factor was reiterated by Mokhtar Sar, and the respondents also considered it as the main reason behind their long standing protests over the language policy. Mokhtar Sar also added that they could not accept Arabization policy because the Bedan pupils would do better in schools than the Kwr pupils since Arabic is the mother tongue of the former. It is worth noting that such reason might not be convincing, for the Bedan children acquire Arabic from their study in al-mahader and schools. It is not their mother tongue. In fact, CA is no one's mother tongue worldwide. As such, just as the Bedan children acquire CA, the Kwr children could acquire it too. The idea of better and worse depends on the child's ability and strategy in acquiring a language.

Moreover, politics has played an important role in shaping positive attitudes toward French and negative ones toward Arabic. Indeed, several organizations and movements say, the manifesto of 19 and FLAM, which were created in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, aimed first at objecting the implementation of Arabic in both education and institutions as was reported by

Mokhtar Sar. They propagated that Arabic was meant to marginalize the Kwr. Setting themselves as the champions of the Kwr's interests, the organizations secured many supporters. It was the issue of language policy which might have earned many public figures of the Kwr their popularity. They used the issue in order to galvanize support for their own interests in the elections. Furthermore, France spends huge sums of money on projects which are intended for preserving French outside France. It gives also money to individuals who defend and call for the use of French. For instance, Fishman argued France now pays out huge amounts of money on an annually basis to maintain the functionality and use of French language and culture outside France (2000). The likelihood is that influential figures of the Kwr get shares of the money and spend it both in their campaigns in the elections and for their own personal purposes. Worth of note is the Kwr's denial to the political factor as the main reason behind their protests over language policy, and the Bedan assertion of it (see table 17 and item 9 of the interview).

Equally important, the geographical location of Mauritania might be another factor that led the Kwr to favor French over Arabic. Mauritania is bordered from the south by Senegal which its capital Dakar is nicknamed by Senegalese as the small Paris (petit Paris). French language is the official language of Senegal. French culture is also overtaking in Senegal. The people of Senegal are also Kwr. Just as the Bedan are extension of Moroccans, the Kwr in Mauritania are extension of their cousins in Senegal. As such, the geographical proximity of Mauritania from Senegal might have influenced the Kwr's attitudes toward the state policy in general and French language in particular. The Kwr have always expressed that they wanted Mauritania to be oriented toward Africa and France. As discussed earlier, the Gorgel Bloc, which was created before the independence, aimed at establishing an African identity with French language as its essence.

Finally, the Kwr attitudes toward English were influenced by their attitudes toward French. The attitudes which were negative as the findings revealed were influenced by two main factors. First, the Kwr identified with French as discussed earlier. Indeed, such factor was clear in the fact that even though the Kwr recognized the international status of English, the majority of them (see table 12 and item 8 of the interview) refused its increase at the expense of French.

The second possible factor might be their good commend of French. As aforementioned, the Kwr were fully assimilated culturally and linguistically by the French colonizer. They have been protesting over the implementation of Arabic ever since the independence. When the state introduced two educational systems, one monolingual and the other bilingual, the Kwr opted for the latter. Even today, when someone visits the Modern university of Nouakchott, s/he would observe that their numbers are high in the Faculty of Sciences and Technology and low in the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences. This is because, as argued before, the last reform in 1999 stipulated that French is the medium of instruction of scientific subjects, and Arabic is the medium of instruction of humanities and non literary subjects in general. That is to say the Kwr have been immersed in French for centuries, and they would not accept the language which they know to be replaced. If the question was about replacing Arabic by English, it is likely that the Kwr would have approved. This is because, as thoroughly discussed earlier, just as the Bedan identify with Arabic, the Kwr perceive French as part of their identity or at least a guardian of it.

Conclusion

The chapter was devoted to charting the results, testing the hypotheses and discussing the results. The results of the 17 items, which were obtained by means of questionnaire, were presented in cross tabulation tables. Besides, the results elicited by means of interview were thematically presented. Some of the results were surprising, and others met the expectations. To begin with, the findings revealed that the first hypothesis, which stipulated that ethnic identity was stronger than any other identity, was groundless. The strongest identities, in Mauritania, were found to be religious and national as almost all the participants in the questionnaire vocalized in rotation. Additionally, even though notable divergences between the students' answers and chair-persons' introductory statements were observed, the latter did not introduce themselves based on ethnic marker. Rather, they opted either for nationality or role identity. Ethnic identity ranked in third place on the scale of strength and importance.

The second hypothesis, which laid out that language policy was ethnically oriented, was, nevertheless, confirmed. On the one hand, all the Bedan's behaviors and attitudes showed their support and call for a profound arabized Mauritania. For instance participants of the Bedan, in both questionnaire and interview, reported their extensive use of Arabic and asserted their

identification with Arabic language. At the same time, almost all of them said they did not use French in everyday life activities. They viewed it as a colonial language and thus denounced its use in Mauritania. Generally speaking, the Bedan seemed to favor both Arabic monolingual policy and Arabic–English bilingual policy. The reason behind their support of English, not French, was the importance of its instrumental role as it is the language of technology, business and sciences. The Kwr, on the other hand, were very attached to French and distanced from Arabic. The results showed that they used French as medium of communication in almost all of their everyday life activities. They also strongly supported both the increase of French at the expense of Arabic and the current Arabic-French bilingualism. Even though the majority of them considered, national languages, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke, not French, as part of their identity, almost all of them viewed Arabic as a threat to their identity. They also refused increasing the status of English at the detriment of French. In contrast, the Kwr regarded Arabic as a threat to their identity. In a nutshell, the findings of the present study made clear that the preference of and attitudes toward language policy in Mauritania were influenced by the ethnic background of the respondents.

General Conclusion

To the best of this researcher's knowledge, the present study constitutes a first foray into investigating language policy and identity in Mauritania. As such, it is an attempt to build from scratch a complete body of literature on the topic though, admittedly, no single piece of work can capture all sides of an issue. In so doing, it deployed two methodologies and dedicated two parts to examining language policy and identity in Mauritania. The data collected through consulting primary and secondary sources revealed that, before the coming of the French colonizer, Islam and tribe were markers of Mauritanians' identity sufficient enough to neutralize all other axes of identity such as ethnicity, culture, race, region to state but some. Islam was used as an inclusive marker of all Mauritanians regardless of all other differentiating attributes. An Arabization policy dominated also in pre-colonial Mauritania.

With the coming of the French colonizer in 1900, the stateless state (several emirates and tribes without one governing body) was considered a colony. In order to control the people of the state, the colonizer followed the rule: "divide and conquer." The French administrators opened many schools in the regions of the Kwr, and French was the medium of instruction in them. In fact, the use of Arabic was forbidden in all realms except religion. As such, the Kwr were fully assimilated. In the regions of the Bedan, few schools were opened, and the Bedan refused to attend them even though Arabic-French bilingualism was adopted in such schools. They viewed the schools as a threat to their culture, language and religion. As a result of such language policy, ethnicity was introduced as a marker of identity.

In 1960, Mauritania was declared an independent state in the sense of nation-state system. Thus, national identity was added to the existing identities. Such identity was defined based on shared religion, history, and territory. Nevertheless, in the first years of the independence, the national coat was not suitable to all Mauritanians when the governments started to increase the status of Arabic at the detriment of French and thus making it as essential component of national identity. The Kwr refused such move considering it as a threat to their identity and economic status. As such, ethnic tensions over language policy characterized the post-independence period in Mauritania. The tensions consolidated ethnic identity and relatively

weakened the national one though the successive governments have been trying to reverse such identifications and thus establish a national cohesion.

In teasing out a more detailed understanding of language policy and identity in Mauritania, the study carried out also an empirical investigation. A field work was conducted in order to unveil which identities and language policy do Mauritanians subscribe to and see if there is a relationship between their choice of language policy and their identities. As such, the following two hypotheses were formulated:

a. Ethnic identity is stronger than any other identity.
b. Language policy is ethnically oriented.

To meet the overall aim of the study the following questions were raised.

a. How do Mauritanians identify themselves?
b. Which language policy do they prefer?
c. Is there any relationship between their choice of language policy and their identity?

In order to answer the questions and thus test the hypotheses, 506 students from the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Sciences and Technology, Nouakchott and 2 chair-persons of Mauritanian political parties were recruited as participants. The participants were selected by means of quota sampling. They were exposed to two different data collection techniques, questionnaire and interview. 252 questionnaires were distributed on the Bedan students and 254 questionnaires on the Kwr students. The questionnaire included 17 items composed of different types of close-ended questions, dichotomous questions, likert scale, multiple choice as well as open-ended why-questions. The interview consisted of 9 open-ended items. All the questions in both questionnaire and interview revolved around the above research questions.

The findings revealed that the Mauritanians, as any other people, had multiple identities: religious, national, ethnic, tribal, regional, role, and regional. Whereas some of the identities were of similar importance to all the respondents, others were not rated in the same degree of importance. All respondents reported that religious identity is the most important one to them.

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The respondents also regarded national identity as the second most important one. Ethnic identity rated third in terms of importance. Based on the findings, it was clear that the first hypothesis was groundless since it stipulated that ethnic identity was the strongest one in Mauritania. The fact that ethnicity was not the strongest one in Mauritania, however, did not imply the strength of Mauritanian national cohesion and integration, for the pervasiveness and strength of ethnic identity were strongly felt in the interviews and reported also by the students in the results of the questionnaire.

The results of inter-ethnic groups showed that each ethnic group prioritized some markers of identities over others and thus tended to identify differently from its ethnic counterpart. For instance, ethnic sentiments were found to be higher among the members of the Kwr, for the majority of them considered ethnicity as the second most important one after religion. The findings showed that the reasons behind the strength of ethnic identity among the Kwr were political, cultural, and economic. The Kwr said the Bedan were dominating the politics and economics of the state. Additionally, they stressed their cultural assimilation by the French colonizer. As such, they felt the Arabization policy adopted by the successive governments after the independence was meant to decrease their numbers in the administration jobs as well as assimilate them culturally.

In contrast, ethnic identity was weak among the Bedan. For example, few of them said they were very close to their ethnic group and not very close from the Kwr. They also stressed Islam and nationality as unifying factors which led them to feel close to the Kwr. Unlike the Kwr, the Bedan had developed a strong national identity as revealed in the fact that the majority of them reported that national identity was the second most important identity. They also were satisfied and proud of most of the symbols of the state, citizenship, armed forces, social justice, culture to name but some. Additionally, the Bedan had relatively a strong affiliation with their tribes. It was tribe, not ethnicity, which was reported by the Bedan as the third important marker of identity.

Concerning the findings related to the second hypothesis, it was found that there was no agreement between Mauritanians over language policy. Besides, language policy and ethnic identity in Mauritania were found to be interlocked and thus the second hypothesis was

confirmed. On the one hand, the Kwr supported the continuation of the current Arabic-French language policy. They were also in favor of everything French. Put differently, they refused the increase of English status at the expense of French. They seemed to be unaffected by the international reputation English language has earned. Furthermore, they were in favor of increasing French and decreasing Arabic status in education and administration. What is more, considerable numbers of the Kwr respondents considered French as part of their identity and Arabic as a threat to their identity. They also considered their long standing protests over language policy as cultural in nature.

On the other hand, it was found that the Bedan were strongly affiliated with Arabic. In their justifications to the reason behind such sentiments, they vocalized emphasized the religious and cultural status of Arabic. They were also emphatically against the use of French as a second language in Mauritania. This was because, as they argued, it was the language of the French colonizer. Moreover, they considered it as a language which was not as important as Arabic and English. As such, they scored on Arabic-English, not Arabic-French, bilingualism.

The findings revealed today's Mauritanians identifying primarily based on the equation, one people = one religion and one state, which was mooted respectively as early as their Islamazation in the Almoravids' era and toward the independence of Mauritania. Nevertheless, the strong cohesive and inclusive religious and national identities of the people should not be misleading, for, as discussed in the second part of the present study and as the above findings exposed, the religious and national identities were not able to brush aside permanently the stratification based on the ethnic lines. Such stratification, as discussed earlier, was caused primarily by the issue of language policy and identity. As such, linguists, decision makers and all stakeholders should find a way out that might consolidate the social cohesion and end the ethnic tensions which have been primarily caused by the issue of language policy. The study, hereby, proposed several recommendations.

To begin with, the country should drop out the attempt of full Arabization policy. On the one hand, several factors prevent the implications of such policy at least in the foreseeable future. The most significant of such factors are politics and economics. Ever since its birth in 1960, the state has been exposed to more than 10 coups and attempted coups. Such fact

weakened the stakeholders' positions internationally and nationally. Because of their illegitimacy, they had to appease the Kwr and the international community, say, France, through keeping the Arabic-French bilingualism. As such, they could not implement full Arabization. Additionally, the state has not been economically independent. Like all other Arab and African countries, Mauritania relied heavily on western states. Technology and even food are imported from outside. It is known that foreign languages, say, English, French, and Spanish, are the languages of technologies, information and the process of knowledge acquisition and knowledge dissemination. As such, Mauritania may not be able to establish a monolingual Arab policy. On the other hand, the attempt of Arabization policy, as the findings revealed, has created more problems instead of solutions. For instance, ethnic tensions have been frying over this issue between the Bedan and the Kwr.

Alternatively, Mauritania should enforce Mauritanian nationalism characterized by multilingualism. Such multilingualism should be carried out through native languages and English. Otherwise stated, Arabic-English bilingualism should be implemented in education. English is the medium of instruction of scientific subjects and Arabic for religious, literary and all humanities. For, as mentioned several times, English is the global language of business, technology, and science. As such, it is unnecessary to chart out the myriad advantages the Mauritanians might reap from the heavy exposure to English. It is worth noting that the policy should be enforced gradually. The implementation should start in primary schools. It should accompany the progress of those pupils who have been exposed to it. That is to say, when they reach higher school and university, they should be exposed to English-Arabic bilingualism. As a side note, it is worth noting that officials in Morocco have been lately calling for the adoption of English-Arabic bilingualism.

At the same time, the Kwr languages, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke, should be taught. The syllabus of all training schools for state employees should include the teaching of such languages. As a result, the employees, say, workers of civil status and registration office, police, instructors, to name but few, are likely to be able to communicate with all people of the state. Primary school tutors are likely also to become able to instruct pupils in their mother tongue throughout the first years of primary school. Such step is also beneficial for the pupils. Indeed, UNESCO stated a "LinguaFranca [Hassaniya in Mauritania] or a language of wider

communication cannot be a substitute for the mother-tongue, and it should be avoided until the child fully acquired their mother-tongue" (1953, p. 11). This is because, further argued UNESCO, "a child will find it difficult to grasp any new concept which is so alien to his cultural environment that it cannot readily find expression in his mother tongue…every effort should be made to provide education in the mother tongue" (1953, p. 47). Additionally, the languages will be elevated and preserved.

All private and public educational institutions should promote the formation of comprehensive campus inter-ethnic centers which actively engage all the members (students, staff, and professors) of the institutions communities in inter-ethnic activities that celebrate the cultural differences and appreciate the similarities. Shared history and religion should also be stressed. Such step is likely to foster national integration and consolidate the national identity. Lowering the ethnic tension may also boost the academic achievement of the students. For instance, they are likely to help each other. Indeed, Cole (2007) argued that a racially and ethnically integrated campus increases the students' intellectual development. In the same vein, Hurtado (2007) observed that an ethnically diverse and harmonious campus environment contributes to higher complex and critical thinking skills. In fact, some scholars and researchers, if not all, (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen & Allen, 1998; Rudenstine, 2001) argued that inter-ethnic centers in educational institutions are advantageous not only to the students and staff members but also to the community at large. Interactions, which the inter-ethnic centers provide, contribute to the stability and national cohesion of the state.

Furthermore, Arabic should be the only language of administration. Public servants should prove their knowledge of Arabic language by providing a certificate. Free courses in Arabic should be given to all employees of the state who are illiterate in Arabic. The employees, who refused to learn Arabic, should be dismissed. Voluntary Arabic courses should be provided to all the citizens. This is because all states, except federate ones, use the language of the majority only in the administration. It is impossible to use all languages in administration even if the country is rich. To use Mehdi's words, "[n]ation [does] not embrace individuals as religious systems do" (2012, p. 14). They should align their policies with the culture of the majority yet without forgetting the minority. The state character is reflected in the language used in the

correspondences and public speeches. As such, Arabic should be the language of the administration since it is the language of more than 80% of the population. Moreover, the language of the judicial system should be Arabic, but free translation of the legal hearing should be offered. Besides, private and public broadcasting media should transmit in Arabic, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke. Cinema films should also be shown in all national languages.

Another worthwhile recommendation would be to avoid undertaking top-down language policy. Rather, a far more effective path to an effective and efficient program is through carrying out a bottom-up policy. In other words, a commission composed of educational, governmental organization, and civil society should be given the responsibility of formulating a language policy which meets the needs of all ethnic groups in Mauritania. This is because educational policy better serves transnational community when all parties are involved in forming such policy. Additionally, people are likely to be satisfied since their views are taken into consideration. Furthermore, legal certainty should be guaranteed so that no ethnic group can violate the law without punishment. In a nutshell, carrying out such policies is likely to anchor the national identity in Mauritanian young generations, enrich their training and strengthen their sense of pride vis-à-vis their country's culture, history, and languages.

In addition, the state should dissolve the existing political parties and non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations which are ethnically oriented and forbid their creation in the future. Mauritania should also follow the steps of Morocco which lately sent letters to all embassies in the kingdom asking them to stop funding organizations without the consent and control of the authorities ("the Background of Foreign Funding," July 7, 2008). Mauritania should issue a resolution banning international donors from funding organizations without state supervision. This is because even though all of the organizations are created under glamorous humanitarian banners, many of them might be a servant of individual and international agendas. That is to say, some people create the organizations in order to gather money and establish political and social reputations. The national and international donors also give their money to the organizations in exchange of some services such as political manipulations and gathering information about the society and the state, to name but few. As such, supervising the funding of the organizations might limit their danger on the society and the state.

Finally, it should be mentioned that even though the present study made a significant contribution, generalization of the findings should be made with caution. This is because of one main limitation underlying the study. The limitation is the size of the sample, for only 506 students and only two chair-persons of political parties were involved in the study. Research studies with bigger samples are likely to obtain more conclusive findings, yet regardless of such limitation, the study remains the first to be done on language policy and identity in Mauritania. As such, it facilitates and smoothes the path to follow up related studies which are clearly needed, for no single piece of work can credibly claim capturing all angles of such dynamic, fluid, and diachronic processes as the formation of identity and the attitudes toward and formulation of language policy.

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Appendix I

Student Questionnaire

In this questionnaire, you are requested to answer questions regarding your identity and your attitudes about language policy in Mauritania. The information you will provide will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic research. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is highly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Section A: Personal information

1. What is your mother tongue?

a. Hassaniya ☐   b. Pulaar ☐   c. Wolof ☐   d. Soninke ☐

Section B: Identity

2. Each person picks one, two or many identity markers when s/he identifies himself/or herself. The following table provides some markers that you identify with. Please tick the first most important marker, the second most important and the third most important that describe who you are.

markers of identity	first most important	second most important	third most important
Tribe			
Ethnicity (Arab/African)			
Caste (Chourafa, worriors, Zawaya..)			
Islam			
Nationality (Mauritanian)			

Region (Al-Gbla, Chargue…)			
Regional (the Arab Maghreb,West Africa)			

3. Some people think of themselves first as Mauritanian. Others may think of themselves first as Bedan or Kwr. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?

a. only Bedani/Kwri ☐   b. only Mauritanian ☐

c. more Bedani/Kwri than Mauritanian ☐ d. more Mauritanian than Bedani/Kwri ☐

e. as Mauritanian as Bedani/Kwri ☐   f. other ☐   g. none ☐

4. How close to your ethnic group do you feel?

a. very close ☐   b. close ☐   c. not very close ☐   d. not close at all ☐

5. How close to your ethnic counterpart (Bedan or Kwr) do you feel?

a. very close ☐   b. close ☐   c. not very close ☐   d. not close at all ☐

e. no opinion ☐

Please justify………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

statements	strongly agree	agree	undecided	strongly disagree	disagree
I would rather be a citizen of Mauritania than any other country.					
Generally, Mauritania is better than many other countries.					
People of Mauritania are better than many others.					
I would support my country even if it is					

wrong.				
I would sacrifice my ethnicity for the sake of my country.				

7. How proud are you of Mauritania in each of the following fields?

fields	very proud	proud	undecided	not very proud	not proud at all
Its people's tolerance and social solidarity					
Its religiosity					
Its treatment of all people in society					
Its democracy					
Its armed forces					
Its sports team					

Section C. Language function

8. Please tick the language which you use for the following functions. (NB: You can choose more than one language for each context.)

contexts	Arabic	French	others
Talking to family members			
Socializing with friends			
Chatting Online			
Discussing political issues			
Shopping			
Speaking in campus			

Reading for leisure			

Section D: Language policy

9. Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration?

yes ☐   no ☐

Please

justify…………………………………………………………………………............

……………………………………………………………………………………………

10. Do you think that the status of French should be increased in education and administration?

yes ☐   no ☐

Please Justify……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………

11. What do think of Arabic-French bilingualism?

a. favorable ☐   b. unfavorable ☐   c. no opinion ☐

12. Given the fact that English is the international language of science, technology and business, would you like its status in education to be increased at the detriment of French?

yes ☐   no ☐

Section E: Language policy and identity

13. Which of these languages is part of your identity?

a. Arabic ☐   b. French ☐   c. both of them ☐   d. none of them ☐

14. Do you think that Arabic-French bilingualism is necessary for the promotion of the Mauritanian culture?

yes ☐   no ☐

15. What does Arabization policy represent for you?

a. threat to your identity ☐   b. protection of your identity ☐   c. no opinion ☐

16. What does Francization policy represent for you?

a. threat to your identity ☐   b. protection of your identity ☐   c. no opinion ☐

17. In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country? (N. B: you can select all that apply.)

a. political ☐   b. cultural ☐   d. economic ☐

If you have any additional remarks or comments, please insert them here:

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Thank you very much for your cooperation

Appendix II

إستبيان الطالب

في هذا الإستبيان يرجى منك الإجابة علي أسئلة تتعلق بهويتك والسياسات اللغوية في موريتانيا. المعلومات التي ستقدمها ستبقي سرية و لن تستخدم إلا لأغراض البحث الأكاديمي. تعأونكم في ملء هذا الإستبيان هو محل تقدير.

شكرا جزيلا علي تعأونكم

القسم ا: معلومات شخصية

1. ماهي لغتك الأم؟

السوننكية ☐   الوالفية ☐   البولارية ☐   الحسانية ☐

القسم ب: الهوية

2. كل شخص يختار واحدة أو إثنتين أو العدديد من علامات الهوية عند تعريفه(ا) لنفسه(ا). الجدول التالي يقدم بعض العلامات التي تعرف نفسك على أساسها. المرجو وضع إشارة مقابل أول اهم علامة وثاني أهم علامة وثالث أهم علامة تصفك.

الثالثة من حيث الأهمية	الثانية من حيث الاهمية	الأولى من حيث الأهمية	علامات الهوية
			القبيلة
			الإثنية (عربي أو افريقي)
			الشريحة (الشرفاء, الزوايا..)
			الإسلام
			الجنسية (موريتاني(ة))
			الجهة (الشرق, القبلة..)
			المنطقة (المغرب العربي أو افريقيا الغربية)

3. بعض الناس يفكرون في انفسهم أولا على أنهم موريتانيين والبعض الاخر يفكر في نفسه كبيظاني أو كوري. أي من الصفات التالية , إن وجدت, هي الأقرب في وصفك؟

أكثر بيظاني أو كوري من موريتاني ☐   موريتاني فقط ☐   بيظاني أو كوري فقط ☐

أكثر موريتاني من بيظاني(ة) أو كوري(ة) ☐   موريتاني(ة) وبيظاني(ة)وكوري(ة) في نفس الوقت ☐

لايوجد ☐   آخر ☐

4. كيف تحس بقربك من مجموعتك العرقية؟

قريب جدا ☐   قريب ☐   لست قريبا جدا ☐   لست قريبا على الاطلاق ☐

5. كيف تحس بقربك من نظيرة مجموعتك العرقية (العرب أو الافارقة)؟

قريب جدا ☐   قريب ☐   لست قريبا جدا ☐   لست قريبا على الاطلاق ☐

علل من فضلك..

....

6. إلي أي درجة توافق أو تختلف مع التعابير التالية؟

لاأوافق	لاأوافق بشدة	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	التعابير
					أفضل ان اكون مواطنا موريتانيا علي أن اكون من أي بلد اخر.
					عموما موريتانيا أفضل من العديد من الدول الاخري.
					الشعب الموريتاني أفضل من العديد من الشعوب الاخري.
					أؤيد بلدي حتي وان كان مخطئا.
					أضحي بعرقيتي في سبيل وطني.

7. إلي أي مدي أنت فخور بموريتانيا في المجالات التالية؟

لست فخورا	لست فخورا جدا	متردد	فخور	فخور جدا	المجالات
					تسامح شعبها وتضامنه الإجتماعي
					التدين فيها
					معاملتها لجميع الناس في المجتمع
					ديمقراطيتها
					قواتها المسلحة
					فريقها الوطني

القسم ج: وظيفة اللغة

8. يرجى وضع علامة مقابل اللغة التى تستخدمها للقيام بالمهام التالية. ملاحظة: يمكنك إختيار أكثر من لغة في كل سياق.

السياقات	العربية	الفرنسية	اخر
التحدث مع افراد العائلة			
معاشرة الأصدقاء			
الدردشة على الانترنت			
نقاش القضايا السياسية			
التسوق			
التحدث فى الحرم الجامعي			
القرائة من أجل الترف الفكري			

القسم د: السياسات اللغوية

9. هل تعتقد أنه يجب زيادة مكانة اللغة العربية في التعليم والإدارة؟

نعم ☐   لا ☐

علل من فضلك...

....

10. هل تعتقد أنه يجب زيادة مكانة اللغة الفرنسية في التعليم والإدارة؟

نعم ☐   لا ☐

علل من فضلك...

....

11. ماهو رأيك في إزدواجية اللغة العربية والفرنسية؟

مؤيد ☐   لست مؤيد ☐   لا رأي ☐

12. إنطلاقا من حقيقة أن اللغة الانجليزية هي اللغة العالمية للعلوم والتكنولوجيا والأعمال فهل ترضى بزيادة مكانتها على حساب مكانة اللغة الفرنسية؟

نعم ☐   لا ☐

القسم ٥: السياسات اللغوية والهوية

13. أي من هذه اللغات هي جزء من هويتك

العربية ☐   الفرنسية ☐   الإثنتين معا ☐   لاواحدة منهم ☐

14. هل تعتقد أن إزدواجية اللغة العربية والفرنيسة ضرورية لتعزيز الثقافة الموريتانية؟

نعم ☐   لا ☐

15. ماذا تمثل سياسة التعريب بالنسبة لك؟

تهديد لهويتك ☐   حماية لهويتك ☐   لاراي ☐

16. ماذا تمثل سياسة الفرنسة بالنسبة لك؟

تهديد لهويتك ☐   حماية لهويتك ☐   لاراي ☐

17. في رأيك ماهو السبب وراء الإحتجاجات الموجودة منذ فترة طويلة على السياسات اللغوية فى البلد؟

سياسية ☐   ثقافية ☐   اقتصادية ☐

إذا كانت لديك أي ملاحظات أوتعليقات يرجي إدراجها هنا:

....

....

....

....

....

....

شكرا جزيلا علي تعأونكم

Appendix III

Questionnaire Étudiant

Dans ce questionnaire, vous êtes invité à répondre à des questions concernant votre identité et vos attitudes envers la politique linguistique en Mauritanie. Toute information que vous fournirez sera strictement confidentielle et sera utilisée uniquement pour la recherche académique. Ainsi, votre coopération à remplir ce questionnaire est vivement souhaitée.

Merci beaucoup pour votre coopération

Section A : Informations Personnelles

1. Quelle est votre langue maternelle?

a. Hassaniya ☐   b. Pulaar ☐   c. Wolof ☐   d. Soninké ☐

Section B: Identité

2. Chaque personne choisit un, deux ou plusieurs marqueurs d'identité lorsqu'il s'identifie lui-même. Le tableau suivant présente certains marqueurs que vous identifiez. Veuillez cocher le premier marqueur le plus important, le deuxième plus important et le troisième plus important qui décrit qui vous êtes.

marqueurs d'identité	premier le plus important	deuxième plus important	troisième plus important
Tribu			
Ethnicité (Arabe/africain)			
Caste (Chourafa, guerriers, Zawya ..)			
Islam			
Nationalité (Mauritanien)			
Région (Al-Gbla, Chargue ...)			
Régional (le Maghreb Arabe, Afrique de			

l'Ouest)			

3. Certaines personnes se considèrent d'abord comme mauritaniennes. D'autres peuvent se considérer d'abord comme Bedan ou Kwr. Lequel des suivants, si il ya, qui décrit le mieux qui décrit qui vous êtes?

a. Bedani/Kwri seulement ☐   b. Mauritanien seulement ☐

c. plus Bedani/Kwri que Mauritanien ☐   d. plus Mauritanien que Bedani/Kwri ☐

 e. comme mauritanien comme Badani/Krwi ☐   f. d'autre ☐   g. aucun ☐

4. A quelle distance de votre groupe ethnique vous sentez-vous?

a. très proche ☐   b. proche ☐   c. pas très proche ☐   d. pas proche du tout ☐

5. A quelle distance de votre homologue ethnique vous sentez-vous (arabe ou africain)?

   a. très proche ☐   b. proche ☐   c. pas très proche ☐   d. pas proche du tout ☐

Donnez vos raisons ……………………………………………………………………………...

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

6. Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous d'accord ou non avec les énoncés suivants?

les énoncés	Fortement d'accord	d'accord	indécis	Fortement désaccord	désaccord
Je préférerais être un citoyen de la Mauritanie que n'importe quel autre pays.					
En général, la Mauritanie est mieux que beaucoup d'autres pays.					
Le peuple mauritanien est mieux que beaucoup d'autres.					
Je soutiens mon pays même si c'est faux.					
Je sacrifie mon origine ethnique					

pour le bien de mon pays.					

7. Comment êtes-vous fier de la Mauritanie dans chacun des domaines suivants?

des domaines	très fier	fier	indécis	pas très fier	pas fier du tout
La tolérance et la solidarité sociale de ses peuples					
Sa religiosité					
son traitement de toutes les personnes dans la société					
Sa démocratie					
Ses forces armées					
Son équipe sportive					

Section C. Fonction de la langue

8. Veuillez cocher la langue que vous utilisez pour les fonctions suivantes. (NB: Vous pouvez choisir plus d'une langue pour chaque contexte.)

contextes	Arabe	Français	d'autres
Parler aux membres de la famille			
Socialiser avec des amis			
Discuter en ligne			
Discuter des problèmes politiques			
achats			
Parler au campus			
lectures de détente			

Section D: Politique linguistique

9. Pensez-vous que le statut de l'arabe devrait être augmenté dans l'éducation et l'administration?

oui ☐   no ☐

Donnez vos raisons……………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

10. Pensez-vous que le statut de français devrait être augmenté dans l'éducation et l'administration?

oui ☐   no ☐

Donnez vos raisons……………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

11. Que pensez-vous du bilinguisme arabe-français?

   a. favorable ☐   b. défavorable   c. pas d'opinion

12. Étant donné que l'anglais est la langue internationale de la science, de la technologie et des affaires, aimeriez-vous que son statut en éducation soit augmenté au détriment du français?

   oui ☐   no ☐

Section E: Politique linguistique et identité

13. Laquelle de ces langues fait partie de votre identité?

a. Arabe ☐   b. Français ☐   c. les deux ☐   d. aucun d'entre eux ☐

14. Pensez-vous que le bilinguisme arabe-français est nécessaire pour la promotion de la culture mauritanienne?

oui ☐   no ☐

15. Qu'est-ce que la politique d'arabisation représente pour vous?

a. menace pour votre identité ☐   b. protection de votre identité ☐ c. pas d'opinion ☐

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16. Qu'est-ce que la politique de francisation représente pour vous?

a. menace pour votre identité ☐   b. protection de votre identité ☐

c.   pas d'opinion ☐

17. À votre avis, quelle est la raison derrière les protestations de longue date sur la politique linguistique dans le pays?

a. politique ☐   b. culturel ☐   c. économique ☐

Si vous avez d'autres remarques ou commentaires, veuillez les insérer ici:

……

……

……

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Merci beaucoup pour votre coopération

Appendix IV

Party chair-person interview

1. How do you identify yourself?

2. To what extent do you think the Kwr and the Bedan are integrating with each other?

3. Do you think that the status of Arabic should be increased in education and administration? Why?

4. Do you think that the status of French should be increased in education and administration? Why?

5. What do you think about Arabic-French bilingualism?

6. What does French mean to you?

7. What does Arabic mean to you?

8. Given the international status of English would you accept the replacement of French by English in education? Please justify.

9. In your opinion, what is the reason behind the long-standing protests over language policy in the country?

If you have any additional remarks, they are welcome.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Report

Language and identity are strongly interrelated. The inseparable relationship between language and identity led some linguists to neglect the other components of identity (e.g. culture, age, and religion) and consider the phenomenon of identity as a linguistic one. In the context of the intertwined relation between language and identity, the co-existence between multilingual communities and their agreements over the language policy have created many problems for many countries that have multicultural diversity, for a state has to decide which language(s) should be selected and adopted as the official language(s), and some groups tend to refuse such policy and thus stage their protests. Indeed, in modern-day Mauritania, officially the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, tension over the language policy and identity is a case in point. Tensions between the two ethnic groups (Arab and afro-Mauritanian) have been frying ever since the inception of independence.

The rationale of selecting the topic of the study is neither an arbitrary effort nor an intellectual luxury. In contrast, it is a response to several interrelated factors. Generally speaking, language policy and identity is one of the most commonly discussed topics across disciplines because many problems in modern-day world are caused directly or indirectly by them as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, there is not even one single piece of work that has addressed the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania. As such, the present study seeks to build the first body of literature on the issue of language policy and identity in Mauritania and thus fills a crucial gap. Moreover, the importance of the study stems from the fact that it is not only a thorough introduction to unfamiliar territory, Mauritania, but also a complementary contribution to knowledge about the Arab Maghreb in the Anglo-American academia.

In order to investigate thoroughly the language policy and identity in Mauritania, two main complementary methodologies are adopted. The first one involves a descriptive and analytical synthesis of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include but not limited to accounts of the founding fathers and governmental documents (e.g. memories and census data). Concerning secondary sources, the study draws on innumerable articles, books, monographs, PhD dissertations, videos, to name but some (see bibliography). The first methodology is

adopted in the first and the second part of the present study. The second methodology deployed questionnaire and interview in order to collect data about the Mauritanians' identity and their language policy preference. The methodology is used in the third part of the present study.

As aforementioned, the study comprises three parts each of which is subdivided into two chapters. The introductory part is intended to provide a conceptual aerial map, covering key concepts and theoretical debates over language policy and identity. The first chapter of the first part is devoted to defining key concepts, language, language policy, and identity. Types of language policy and identity are also charted out in the chapter. Besides, factors that affect language policy and markers of identity are discussed. The second chapter examines the interplay between language policy and identity. It discusses the role of language policy in nation-building and identity formation. It also investigates the role of identity in devising a particular language policy. Other issues discussed in the chapter are multilingualism and multiculturalism. Definitions and types of each one of them are outlined.

In the second part, themes and related themes of language policy and identity in Mauritania were investigated based on data collected from government documents, founding fathers testimonies and accounts, books monographs, and articles… etc. It was found that before the coming of the French colonizer, Islam and tribe were markers of Mauritanians' identity sufficient enough to neutralize all other axes of identity such as ethnicity, culture, race, region to state but some. Islam was used as an inclusive marker of all Mauritanians regardless of all other differentiating attributes. An Arabization policy dominated also in pre-colonial Mauritania.

With the coming of the French colonizer in 1900, the present-day Mauritania was considered a colony. In order to control the people of the state, the colonizer followed the rule: "divide and conquer." The French administrators opened many schools in the regions of the Kwr, and French was the medium of instruction in them. In fact, the use of Arabic was forbidden in all realms except religion. As such, the Kwr were fully assimilated. In the regions of the Bedan, few schools were opened, and the Bedan refused to attend them even though Arabic-French bilingualism was adopted in such schools. They viewed the schools as a threat to their culture, language and religion. As a result of such language policy, ethnicity was introduced as a marker of identity.

In 1960, Mauritania was declared an independent state in the sense of nation-state system. Thus, national identity was added to the existing identities. Such identity was defined based on shared religion, history, and territory. Nevertheless, in the first years of the independence, the national coat was not suitable to all Mauritanians when the governments started to increase the status of Arabic at the detriment of French and thus making it as essential component of national identity. The Kwr refused such move considering it as a threat to their identity and economic status. As such, ethnic tensions over language policy characterized the post-independence period in Mauritania. The tensions consolidated ethnic identity and relatively weakened the national one though the successive governments have been trying to reverse such identifications and thus establish a national cohesion.

The third, and final, part is empirical and is devoted to discussing the methodology and the obtained results. Two hypotheses were formulated in order to guide the study:

a. Ethnic identity is stronger than any other identity.
b. Language policy is ethnically oriented.

To meet the overall aim of the study the following questions were raised.

a. How do Mauritanians identify themselves?
b. Which language policy do they prefer?
c. Is there any relationship between their choice of language policy and their identity?

In order to answer the questions and thus test the hypotheses, 506 students from the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Sciences and Technology, Nouakchott and 2 chair-persons of Mauritanian political parties were recruited as participants. The participants were selected by means of quota sampling. They were exposed to two different data collection techniques, questionnaire and interview. 252 questionnaires were distributed on the Bedan students and 254 questionnaires on the Kwr students. The questionnaire included 17 items composed of different types of close-ended questions, dichotomous questions, likert scale, multiple choice as well as open-ended why-questions. The interview consisted of 9 open-ended

items. All the questions in both questionnaire and interview revolved around the above research questions.

The findings revealed that the Mauritanians, as any other people, had multiple identities: religious, national, ethnic, tribal, regional, role, and regional. Whereas some of the identities were of similar importance to all the respondents, others were not rated in the same degree of importance. All respondents reported that religious identity is the most important one to them. The respondents also regarded national identity as the second most important one. Ethnic identity rated third in terms of importance. Based on the findings, it was clear that the first hypothesis was groundless since it stipulated that ethnic identity was the strongest one in Mauritania. The fact that ethnicity was not the strongest one in Mauritania, however, did not imply the strength of Mauritanian national cohesion and integration, for the pervasiveness and strength of ethnic identity were strongly felt in the interviews and reported also by the students in the results of the questionnaire.

The results of inter-ethnic groups showed that each ethnic group prioritized some markers of identities over others and thus tended to identify differently from its ethnic counterpart. For instance, ethnic sentiments were found to be higher among the members of the Kwr, for the majority of them considered ethnicity as the second most important one after religion. The findings showed that the reasons behind the strength of ethnic identity among the Kwr were political, cultural, and economic. The Kwr said the Bedan were dominating the politics and economics of the state. Additionally, they stressed their cultural assimilation by the French colonizer. As such, they felt the Arabization policy adopted by the successive governments after the independence was meant to decrease their numbers in the administration jobs as well as assimilate them culturally.

In contrast, ethnic identity was weak among the Bedan. For example, few of them said they were very close to their ethnic group and not very close from the Kwr. They also stressed Islam and nationality as unifying factors which led them to feel close to the Kwr. Unlike the Kwr, the Bedan had developed a strong national identity as revealed in the fact that the majority of them reported that national identity was the second most important identity. They also were satisfied and proud of most of the symbols of the state, citizenship, armed forces, social justice,

culture to name but some. Additionally, the Bedan had relatively a strong affiliation with their tribes. It was tribe, not ethnicity, which was reported by the Bedan as the third important marker of identity.

Concerning the findings related to the second hypothesis, it was found that there was no agreement between Mauritanians over language policy. Besides, language policy and ethnic identity in Mauritania were found to be interlocked and thus the second hypothesis was confirmed. On the one hand, the Kwr supported the continuation of the current Arabic-French language policy. They were also in favor of everything French. Put differently, they refused the increase of English status at the expense of French. They seemed to be unaffected by the international reputation English language has earned. Furthermore, they were in favor of increasing French and decreasing Arabic status in education and administration. What is more, considerable numbers of the Kwr respondents considered French as part of their identity and Arabic as a threat to their identity. They also considered their long standing protests over language policy as cultural in nature.

On the other hand, it was found that the Bedan were strongly affiliated with Arabic. In their justifications to the reason behind such sentiments, they vocalized emphasized the religious and cultural status of Arabic. They were also emphatically against the use of French as a second language in Mauritania. This was because, as they argued, it was the language of the French colonizer. Moreover, they considered it as a language which was not as important as Arabic and English. As such, they scored on Arabic-English, not Arabic-French, bilingualism.

The findings revealed today's Mauritanians identifying primarily based on the equation, one people = one religion and one state, which was mooted respectively as early as their Islamazation in the Almoravids' era and toward the independence of Mauritania. Nevertheless, the strong cohesive and inclusive religious and national identities of the people should not be misleading, for, as discussed in the second part of the present study and as the above findings exposed, the religious and national identities were not able to brush aside permanently the stratification based on the ethnic lines. Such stratification, as discussed earlier, was caused primarily by the issue of language policy and identity. As such, linguists, decision makers and all stakeholders should find a way out that might consolidate the social cohesion and end the ethnic

tensions which have been primarily caused by the issue of language policy. The study, hereby, proposed several recommendations.

To begin with, the country should drop out the attempt of full Arabization policy. On the one hand, several factors prevent the implications of such policy at least in the foreseeable future. The most significant of such factors are politics and economics. Ever since its birth in 1960, the state has been exposed to more than 10 coups and attempted coups. Such fact weakened the stakeholders' positions internationally and nationally. Because of their illegitimacy, they had to appease the Kwr and the international community, say, France, through keeping the Arabic-French bilingualism. As such, they could not implement full Arabization. Additionally, the state has not been economically independent. Like all other Arab and African countries, Mauritania relied heavily on western states. Technology and even food are imported from outside. It is known that foreign languages, say, English, French, and Spanish, are the languages of technologies, information and the process of knowledge acquisition and knowledge dissemination. As such, Mauritania may not be able to establish a monolingual Arab policy. On the other hand, the attempt of Arabization policy, as the findings revealed, has created more problems instead of solutions. For instance, ethnic tensions have been frying over this issue between the Bedan and the Kwr.

Alternatively, Mauritania should enforce Mauritanian nationalism characterized by multilingualism. Such multilingualism should be carried out through native languages and English. Otherwise stated, Arabic-English bilingualism should be implemented in education. English is the medium of instruction of scientific subjects and Arabic for religious, literary and all humanities. For, as mentioned several times, English is the global language of business, technology, and science. As such, it is unnecessary to chart out the myriad advantages the Mauritanians might reap from the heavy exposure to English. It is worth noting that the policy should be enforced gradually. The implementation should start in primary schools. It should accompany the progress of those pupils who have been exposed to it. That is to say, when they reach higher school and university, they should be exposed to English-Arabic bilingualism. As a side note, it is worth noting that officials in Morocco have been lately calling for the adoption of English-Arabic bilingualism.

At the same time, the Kwr languages, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke, should be taught. The syllabus of all training schools for state employees should include the teaching of such languages. As a result, the employees, say, workers of civil status and registration office, police, instructors, to name but few, are likely to be able to communicate with all people of the state. Primary school tutors are likely also to become able to instruct pupils in their mother tongue throughout the first years of primary school. Such step is also beneficial for the pupils. Indeed, LinguaFranca [Hassaniya in Mauritania] cannot be a substitute for the mother-tongue, the child should not be fully exposed to lingua franca until s/he acquire their mother tongue. It is imposible for the child to grasp new concepts which is alien to his culture unless it is explained in his mother tongue. Additionally, the languages will be elevated and preserved.

All private and public educational institutions should promote the formation of comprehensive campus inter-ethnic centers which actively engage all the members (students, staff, and professors) of the institutions communities in inter-ethnic activities that celebrate the cultural differences and appreciate the similarities. Shared history and religion should also be stressed. Such step is likely to foster national integration and consolidate the national identity. Lowering the ethnic tension may also boost the academic achievement of the students. For instance, they are likely to help each other.

Furthermore, Arabic should be the only language of administration. Public servants should prove their knowledge of Arabic language by providing a certificate. Free courses in Arabic should be given to all employees of the state who are illiterate in Arabic. The employees, who refused to learn Arabic, should be dismissed. Voluntary Arabic courses should be provided to all the citizens. This is because all states, except federate ones, use the language of the majority only in the administration. It is impossible to use all languages in administration even if the country is rich. They should align their policies with the culture of the majority yet without forgetting the minority. The state character is reflected in the language used in the correspondences and public speeches. As such, Arabic should be the language of the administration since it is the language of more than 80% of the population. Moreover, the language of the judicial system should be Arabic, but free translation of the legal hearing should be offered. Besides, private and public broadcasting media should transmit in Arabic, Pulaar, Wolof, and Soninke. Cinema films should also be shown in all national languages.

Another worthwhile recommendation would be to avoid undertaking top-down language policy. Rather, a far more effective path to a successive program is through carrying out a bottom-up policy. In other words, a commission composed of educational, governmental organization, and civil society should be given the responsibility of formulating a language policy which meets the needs of all ethnic groups in Mauritania. This is because educational policy better serves transnational community when all parties are involved in forming such policy. Additionally, people are likely to be satisfied since their views are taken into consideration. Furthermore, legal certainty should be guaranteed so that no ethnic group can violate the law without punishment. In a nutshell, carrying out such policies is likely to anchor the national identity in Mauritanian young generations, enrich their training and strengthen their sense of pride vis-à-vis their country's culture, history, and languages.

In addition, the state should dissolve the existing political parties and non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations which are ethnically oriented and forbid their creation in the future. Mauritania should also follow the steps of Morocco which lately sent letters to all embassies in the kingdom asking them to stop funding organizations without the consent and control of the authorities ("the Background of Foreign Funding," July 7, 2008). Mauritania should issue a resolution banning international donors from funding organizations without state supervision. This is because even though all of the organizations are created under glamorous humanitarian banners, many of them might be a servant of individual and international agendas. That is to say, some people create the organizations in order to gather money and establish political and social reputations. The national and international donors also give their money to the organizations in exchange of some services such as political manipulations and gathering information about the society and the state, to name but few. As such, supervising the funding of the organizations might limit their danger on the society and the state.

Finally, it should be mentioned that even though the present study made a significant contribution, generalization of the findings should be made with caution. This is because of one main limitation underlying the study. The limitation is the size of the sample, for only 506 students and only two chair-persons of political parties were involved in the study. Research

studies with bigger samples are likely to obtain more conclusive findings, yet regardless of such limitation, the study remains the first to be done on language policy and identity in Mauritania. As such, it facilitates and smoothes the path to follow up related studies which are clearly needed, for no single piece of work can credibly claim capturing all angles of such dynamic, fluid, and diachronic processes as the formation of identity and the attitudes toward and formulation of language policy.