

## Ghanaian Languages: An Essential Regulatory Instrument that Promote Culture

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### ABSTRACT

This investigation examined the Ghanaian language is an essential regulatory instrument that promotes the culture of the Ghanaian people. This is because language is the primary means through which culture is transmitted from one generation to another. The design adapted for this study was descriptive and the approached was qualitative. Fifty (50) participants were interviewed for the investigation. The participants were drawn from Ashanti region and Bono East region to foster evidential generation. The theory that underpinned the investigation was socio- cultural theory which was propounded by Lev Vygotsky in (1978). The investigation revealed that promotion of Ghanaian language and culture is crucial in today's globalized world, where Western cultural values dominate. The government and other stakeholders have recognized the importance of language as a means of preserving Ghanaian culture and have implemented policies and programs aimed at promoting the use of local languages. The Ghanaian media is increasingly using local languages in programming, such as news and entertainment shows. This has helped to promote the use of local languages among the general population, including the youth. The Ghanaian government has made it mandatory for all public schools to teach and learn local languages, especially in the primary schools.

**Keywords-** Regulatory, essential, Ghanaian Language, Cultural Identity, Instrument.

### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Ghanaian Languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture and preserves the country's linguistic diversity. The use of indigenous languages in education, governance, and communication is critical to the sustainable development of Ghana. But how many Ghanaians know Ghanaian Languages promote our culture? Ghana is home to over 80 ethnic groups, each with its unique language and culture. The use of indigenous languages in education, governance, and communication is critical to preserving the country's linguistic diversity. Promoting the use of local languages, we end up strengthen our sense of identity and pride in our cultural heritage. Children taught in their mother tongue, are more likely to understand and retain what they learn. This approach can also bridge the gap between the classroom and the community, as it allows for more effective communication between

teachers, students, and parents. In governance, the use of local languages can promote transparency, accountability, and citizen participation.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Ghana is a West African country that is home to over 100 different languages, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. These languages are classified into two main groups: Akan and non-Akan languages. The Akan language group includes Twi, Fante, Asante, and Akuapem, among others, while the non-Akan language group includes languages such as Ewe, Ga, Dagbani, and Dagaare, among others. Ghanaian languages play a crucial role in the country's culture, history, and social cohesion. They serve as a medium of communication, not just for everyday conversations but also for passing down cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions from one generation to

the next. Ghanaian languages are also a source of national pride and identity, as they distinguish Ghanaians from other nationalities.

Despite the importance of Ghanaian languages, there has been a gradual decline in their usage and preservation over the years. This decline is due to several factors, including the adoption of foreign languages such as English as the official language of education and governance, urbanization, and the impact of globalization. As a result, many Ghanaian languages are at risk of becoming extinct, and this poses a significant threat to Ghana's cultural diversity and heritage. Various initiatives have been undertaken to promote the use and preservation of Ghanaian languages. These initiatives include the establishment of language schools, the development of language curricula, the publication of literature in Ghanaian languages, and the organization of language festivals. These efforts have helped to raise awareness about the importance of Ghanaian languages and to create a sense of pride and ownership among Ghanaians in their linguistic heritage.

Ghanaian languages are essential regulatory instruments that promote culture and identity in Ghana. Their preservation and promotion are crucial for maintaining the country's cultural diversity, fostering social cohesion, and ensuring that Ghanaian traditions and practices are passed down to future generations. The importance of Ghanaian languages cannot be overstated in promoting and preserving Ghanaian culture. These languages are an essential regulatory instrument that helps to preserve the cultural heritage of the various ethnic groups in Ghana. Language is an integral part of culture, and it is through language that culture is transmitted from one generation to the next. Ghanaian languages carry within them the history, traditions, and values of the Ghanaian people. They serve as a medium of communication and interaction among people of the same ethnic group, fostering a sense of community and identity.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW/ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Socio-cultural theory, also known as sociocultural psychology, is a framework developed by Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky in the 1920s and 1930s. It emphasizes the importance of social and cultural context in shaping human development and behavior. Language plays a central role in socio-cultural theory. It is seen as a key cultural tool that allows individuals to communicate, share knowledge, and construct meaning. Vygotsky argued that language development and learning are closely linked, with language use serving as a primary means of cognitive development. Socio-cultural theory highlights the importance of social and cultural context in shaping human development and behavior, emphasizing the role

of social interaction, language, and cultural tools in learning and cognitive development.

Ghanaian languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture, identity, and social cohesion. They form an integral part of the cultural heritage of Ghana, with over 80 languages spoken in the country. Ghanaian languages serve as a tool for communication, knowledge transfer, and preservation of cultural values. The literature review on the topic focuses on the role of Ghanaian languages in promoting culture and identity. Agyekum, K. (2010), explores the complex relationship between language, culture, and identity in Ghana and other African countries. He argues that language is a key regulatory instrument that helps to promote and maintain cultural traditions. Ammah, E. A. (2001), argues that Ghanaian languages are an essential component of Ghana's cultural heritage and that their preservation is crucial for maintaining a sense of national identity.

Ghana has a rich linguistic diversity, with over 80 languages spoken in the country. The country's linguistic diversity can be traced to its history of colonization and the slave trade. Ghana was colonized by the British, and English became the official language after independence. However, Ghanaian languages have remained the dominant mode of communication in many parts of the country. The promotion of Ghanaian languages has been a key objective of the government's cultural policy since independence. Aboh, E. (2010) examines the challenges and opportunities involved in promoting Ghanaian languages and argues for a more holistic approach to language policy and planning in the country.

The promotion of Ghanaian languages has been a key objective of the government's cultural policy since independence. The government has taken various measures to promote the use of Ghanaian languages in education, media, and public administration. One of the key initiatives has been the introduction of local language studies in the school curriculum. Local language studies have been mandatory in primary schools since 2002. The government has also introduced local language radio and television stations to promote the use of Ghanaian languages in the media. Akosua Adomako Ampofo (1997) emphasizes the importance of recognizing the diversity of Ghanaian cultures and the need to incorporate this diversity into the country's social science research and teaching. Ameka, K. F. (2006) argues that the promotion of multilingualism in Ghana is essential for the preservation and promotion of the country's rich linguistic and cultural heritage. Ghanaian languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture. These languages are an important component of Ghana's cultural heritage and are crucial for maintaining a sense of national identity and cultural diversity.

Ghanaian languages play a significant role in promoting culture and identity. They serve as a tool for

communication, knowledge transfer, and preservation of cultural values. Ghanaian languages are the primary means of communication in many communities, and they are used to convey cultural knowledge and values from one generation to the next. The use of Ghanaian languages in the media has also contributed to the promotion of cultural diversity and tolerance. Yankah K. (1997) argues that Ghanaian languages are crucial for the preservation and promotion of Ghanaian culture. He emphasizes the need for Ghanaians to value their own languages and use them in all aspects of life, including education, literature, and the media. Anyidoho, K (2005) advocates for the inclusion of Ghanaian languages in the country's education system, arguing that this would help to promote a sense of national identity and pride in Ghanaian culture. Ghanaian languages are also used in traditional ceremonies and rituals. Traditional ceremonies and rituals are an essential part of Ghanaian culture and are used to celebrate important events such as birth, marriage, and death. Ghanaian languages are used to recite prayers, chants, and songs during these ceremonies. The use of Ghanaian languages in traditional ceremonies helps to reinforce cultural values and traditions.

Ghanaian languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture, identity, and social cohesion. The promotion of Ghanaian languages has been a key objective of the government's cultural policy since independence. The use of Ghanaian languages in education, media, and public administration has contributed to the promotion of cultural diversity and tolerance. Ghanaian languages are also used in traditional ceremonies and rituals to reinforce cultural values and traditions. The preservation and promotion of Ghanaian languages are crucial for the preservation of Ghanaian culture and identity. Osam, E. K. (1998) examines Ghana's language policy, planning, and implementation and the challenges they face in promoting the use of Ghanaian languages. He argues that the government needs to provide more support for the development of Ghanaian languages and the training of language teachers to ensure their preservation and promotion. Dolphyne F. A. (1988) focusing on its sound systems and tonal structure. It provides a detailed analysis of the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language, making it an essential resource for anyone interested in studying the Akan language.

Ameka, F. K. (2001) focuses on the Ewe language and the role of ideophones in its grammatical structure. He argues that ideophones play a significant role in the Ewe language and should be recognized as a distinct word class, similar to adjectives. The article provides an in-depth analysis of the ideophone system in Ewe, making it a valuable resource for anyone studying the language. Akintoye, L. M. (1992). examines the relationship between language, culture, and development in Ghana. He argues that promoting the use of Ghanaian languages can help preserve the country's cultural

identity and promote development in various sectors. The article provides an overview of the challenges facing the promotion of Ghanaian languages and offers recommendations for their preservation and promotion.

Appiah Amfo, N. A. (2017) explores the ways in which language is used to construct and express identity in Ghanaian society. She argues that Ghanaian languages are an important resource for promoting cultural diversity and should be celebrated and preserved. Obeng E. A. (2000), argues that Ghanaian languages are a valuable resource for preserving and promoting cultural traditions and should be supported and celebrated.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research design adapted for the study was descriptive. It was a type of investigation which specifies the nature of a given phenomenon. It determines and reports how things look like. Besides, it recognizes the natural setting as the direct source of data. A descriptive research design was used to describe the characteristics of Ghanaian languages and their role in promoting culture. The participants were the purposively sampling. The approach of the study was qualitative in nature. Primary source was used to collect data. The instrument for data collection were interview and focus group discussions with experts in Ghanaian languages and culture. In all fifty (50) respondents were interviewed; in Ashanti region twenty – five (25) and Bono East region twenty – five (25). Interview was conducted and the significant information was used to analysis the data.

#### 3.1. Research site

The data was collected in the Ashanti Region (Amakom) Majority of the population in these Metropolitan were trades, other sectors for instance politicians' health and education and their cultural activities takes the centre stage in their activities. The sites were suitable for the investigation based on the cultural values that can be drawn from there. The studies were carried out at significant places like palace, youth gatherings and at rallies. Close attention was paid to all respondents during the interview and the observation to monitor the effect Ghanaian Language: A essential regulatory instrument that promote culture.

**Table 1: Sample Size**

Gender	Number
Male	25
Female	25
Total	50

**Table 2: Distribution of sample by schools and age bracket**

Region	Number of respondents	Age bracket
Ashanti Region	25	25- 73yrs

Bono East Region	25	30- 69yrs
Total	50	-

**IV. DISCUSSION**

**Table 3: Awareness of Ghanaian Language as regulatory instrument that promote culture**

Region	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Ashanti Region	25 (23)	51%
Bono East Region	25 (22)	49%
Total	50 (45)	100%

The table above showed that, out of fifty (50) respondents representing 90% were aware of Ghanaian Language as regulatory instrument that promote culture. The research design for this study could be a descriptive or exploratory research design. The purpose of this study is to explore the essential regulatory role of Ghanaian languages in promoting culture. Ghana is a country with over 100 ethnic groups, each with its unique language and cultural heritage. The Ghanaian constitution recognizes English as the official language, but it also acknowledges the importance of the country's indigenous languages in promoting cultural diversity and national identity. The investigation explores how Ghanaian languages serve as an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture.

**Table 4: Ghanaian Languages preserve cultural values and traditions**

Can Ghanaian Languages preserve cultural values and traditions	No of respondents	Percentage
Yes	17	38%
No	28	62%
Total	45	100%

From the above table, it was explicitly cleared that out of forty - five (45) respondents only seventeen (17) affirmed the assertion that Ghanaian Languages preserve cultural values and traditions and these respondents were aged with age bracket of (55 -73) whereas twenty – eight (28) who were youths responded (No) to the assertion. Ghanaian languages help to preserve cultural values and traditions. Language is a vital tool for passing on cultural practices and beliefs from one generation to another. When people speak their native language, they are more likely to retain cultural practices, customs, and beliefs. The Akan language is used to convey proverbs, folktales, and other cultural beliefs, ensuring that traditional values are passed down from one generation to the next.

**Table 5: Ghanaian Language foster communication and social cohesion**

Can Ghanaian Language foster communication and social cohesion?	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	41	91%
No	04	9%
Total	45	100%

From the table 5, the respondents who answered (Yes) to whether Ghanaian Languages foster communication and social cohesion, were forty - one (41) representing 91% out of forty – five (45), whereas four (04) representing 09% answered No. Here most of the youth appreciated the Ghanaian Language as communication and social cohesion tool of model. Ghanaian languages foster communication and social cohesion within communities. Language is the primary means of communication within a society. When people speak the same language, they are better able to communicate with one another, understand each other's needs, and form social bonds. By speaking their native language, Ghanaians can connect with their communities, build relationships, and promote a sense of belonging.

**Table 6: Role of Ghanaian Language in Education and literacy**

Do you agree or disagree on assertion that Ghanaian Language play a crucial role in education?	Number of respondents	Percentage
Agree	23	51%
Disagree	22	49%
Total	45	100%

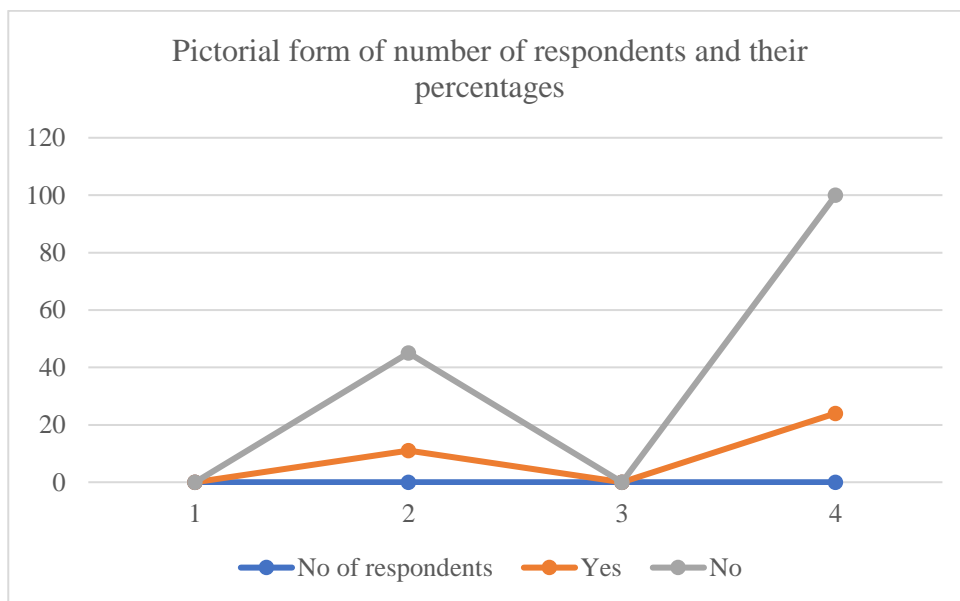
From the above table, the number of respondents who agreed that Ghanaian Languages play a crucial role in education and literacy, were twenty – three (23) representing 51% while 49% disagree with the statement. Ghanaian languages play a crucial role in education and literacy. Language is essential for education, as it is the medium through which knowledge is transmitted. In Ghana, teaching in local languages has been shown to improve student performance and retention rates. When children learn in their native language, they are more likely to understand and retain the material, leading to higher academic achievement.

**Table 7: Ghanaian Languages promote economic development**

Can Ghanaian Language help to promote economic development?	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	24%
No	34	76%
Total	45	100%

From the above table, the number of respondents who thought Ghanaian Language can promote economic development, were eleven (11) representing 24% while 76% thought economic development and Ghanaian Language are two different entities. Ghanaian languages help to promote economic development. Ghanaian languages are crucial for conducting business in local communities, as they enable communication with local customers and suppliers.

Using Ghanaian Languages language, businesses can establish trust with their customers, gain access to local resources, and better understand local needs and preferences. When government information and services are provided in Ghanaian languages, it makes them more accessible and understandable to the majority of the population. This approach can also foster a sense of trust and cooperation between citizens and their government.



The use of Ghanaian languages is critical to promoting culture, preserving linguistic diversity, and achieving sustainable development. Recognizing the importance of local languages and promoting their use, we can create a more inclusive, transparent, and united Ghana. Ghanaian languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture. They help to preserve cultural values and traditions, foster communication and social cohesion within communities, promote education and literacy, and support economic development. Therefore, the preservation and promotion of Ghanaian languages are crucial for maintaining cultural diversity and national identity.

### V. FINDINGS

One finding that has been identified by this investigation is; Preservation of Cultural identity. Promoting of Ghanaian languages can help to preserve cultural identity and promote a sense of belonging among Ghanaians. When people are able to communicate in their native language, it can foster a deeper connection to their roots and strengthen their cultural heritage. Economic benefits were one of the findings revealed by the study; promoting the use of Ghanaian languages could have economic benefits, particularly in the tourism industry. Tourists are often interested in experiencing local culture, and being able to

communicate in Ghanaian languages could enhance their experience and encourage them to spend more time and money in the country. The investigation identified education and literacy as one of the findings; promoting Ghanaian languages could have positive effects on education and literacy rates. When children are taught in their native language, they may be more likely to engage with the material and perform better in school. This increase access to literacy materials in Ghanaian languages could help improve literacy rates among adults who may not have had the opportunity to learn to read and write in their native language. Political representation was one of the findings, promoting the use of Ghanaian languages could help increase political representation and participation among marginalized groups. If people are able to communicate with their elected officials in their native language, they may feel more empowered to engage in the political process and advocate for their needs. Based on my understanding, Ghanaian languages are an essential regulatory instrument that promotes culture in several ways. Firstly, these languages serve as a medium through which people can express and pass down cultural values, beliefs, and traditions from one generation to another. They also help to foster social cohesion and a sense of identity among community members, which is crucial for the preservation and continuity of Ghanaian culture.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Ghanaian language is an essential regulatory instrument that promotes the culture of the Ghanaian people. The government and other stakeholders must continue to support policies and programs aimed at promoting the use of local languages to ensure that Ghanaian culture is preserved for future generations.

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