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## Communication & Applied Research

### Scientific language - Knowledge - Translation

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# Language practice & communication strategies in Burkina Faso

## Content

1. Reflection on language use in sciences
2. Communication strategies in rural areas
3. Knowledge and translation in development cooperation
4. Challenges for our reserach



## Scientific communication & language concepts

- language as a neutral instrument
- specialized, professional terminology: mutual understanding
- international standard: gatekeeping institutions
- developing countries: access?
- exchangeability of contexts: recontextualization process
  - ➔ environment: local concepts
- knowledge hierarchies
- colonial discourse on language: local languages (lower administration and primary schools)
  - ➔ languages: widely spoken, communication in rural areas



## Participation & Communication strategies

- **networks of communication: facilitate exchange**
- **information: considered relevant by?**
- **outsiders: external design of**
- **highly specialized experts: how do we get ideas across?**
- **official working language: French, English**
- **linguistic brokers: need for translation**
- **process of cultural adaptation**
- **negotiating knowledge: review of information**
- **process of reduction & simplification**
- **role of „local“ languages: contact with people in the village +?**



## **knowledge: transfer, transformation, interpretation**

- **effort to pass knowledge in local languages**
- **identify bottlenecks**
- **written vs. spoken language practices: radio**
- **linguistic brokers: communicative link**
- **exclusion of participants at the local level**
  - providing & discussing information**
- **environmental concepts: embedded in local languages**  
**e.g. Moore?**
- **important documents: accessible in languages of wider communication**
- **multilingual communication: 2 or more languages simultaneously**



**Mia Couto. 2009. *E se Obama fosse africano***

**„...narrowed and utilitarian perception of language, which makes language to an object of linguistics“ (S.16)**



## Challenges & Next steps

- **language skills within the project team**
- **identify communication networks**
- **information flow against bottlenecks**
- **understanding knowledge: public debates**
- **inclusion of local knowledge**
- **cooperation with regional radio stations**
- **overcome barriers of written communication**
- **participating research: hierarchical science**



Langthaler, Margarita; Nina Witjes; Gabriele Slezak. (2012) A critical reflection on knowledge hierarchies, language and development. *Multicultural Education & Technology Journal*, 6 (4), 2012, 235-247.