



Contemporary Legacy of Colonialism in Ghana's Education

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Abstract

Ghana became politically independent from colonial rule on 6th March 1957 to signify the end of colonial rule. Meanwhile, Eurocentric schooling and its foundation still shape Ghana's education system. The paper looked at the impact of the English language hegemony as the primary medium of instruction on Indigenous Ghanaian languages and cultural expression and how Eurocentric frameworks have influenced the educational content and marginalized Ghanaian language and knowledge systems. It concluded that the cessation of colonization did not cease colonial education. This has led to Ghanaian languages and literacies still being silenced, devalued, and marginalized in the curriculum today. The paper has suggested how the English language hegemony could be neutralized to promote multilingualism in the Ghanaian school system. It has further suggested decolonizing the curriculum for more inclusive and culturally relevant education that recognizes and values Indigenous languages and knowledge systems.

Subject Areas

Education Administration

Keywords

Eurocentric Education, Colonial Legacy, Contemporary, Decolonization, Marginalization, Hegemony, Deconstruct

1. Introduction

The introduction of Western or formal education by the British in Gold Coast dates back to 1529 and took gradual turns, each with a different purpose [1]. The Europeans established schools in the Elmina, Cape Coast, and Christiansburg Castles to Christianize the local people and train them for employment as inter-

preters [2]. During this time, according to [2], traders or merchants provided education designed to produce people who would help the merchants administer foreign business or the business interests of the colonizers. Merchants sometimes worked with the missionaries to shape the curriculum to enhance their interests [3]. Nketia argues that this collaboration was to introduce the English language as the medium of communication and to ensure the mission schools produced students who met the merchant's needs, such as basic arithmetic, bargaining skills, personal hygiene, and appropriate conduct for merchandising purposes. The second half of the 19th century saw mission schools become the primary agents of spreading the gospel and Christian civilization [1]. [1] further argues that the colonizers saw education as helpful in training indigenes to help the missionaries during worship times and as catechists and messengers, which they accomplished with an acknowledgment that education was an essential means of mission evangelization. Notable missionaries such as the Wesleyan, Basel, and Bremen significantly influenced the systematic educational development in the Gold Coast using the English language as the only means of communication [3].

The term "contemporary legacy of colonialism" in education in this paper refers to the lasting effects and structures derived from colonial rule that continue to influence education today. It implies continuing educational systems, values, and practices rooted in colonial governance, such as language dominance and Eurocentric curricula. Before the advent of the Europeans in the 15th century, education was ongoing in the Gold Coast, now Ghana. Traditional or informal education existed to introduce young people into society. Grandparents, parents, and relatives were considered "educators or teachers" to teach children norms, taboos, history, music, rhetoric, trade, and survival [4]. The purpose of traditional education was to make children a part of the totality of social consciousness and to pass on knowledge from one generation to another. Those who attended "formal" schools upon the arrival of the Europeans were described as "educated." Others, including those who learned some form of trade such as hairdressing, carpentry, and auto-mechanics, were considered "informal" and "uneducated" [5], restricting the use of the concept of "formal and informal" education.

With time, colonial education dominated the country's learning system. Eurocentric schooling and its foundation shape the students' conceptions of their nation, realities, and identities [6]. These conceptions continue to be embedded in the generations of children that receive this education. Historical and contemporary textbooks began to portray White English in a heavily positive light that possesses a good sense of knowledge and attitude while constructing the Ghanaian enslaved human beings as robust, aggressive, and lacking humanity [7]. This colonial legacy in thinking needs to be deconstructed and decolonized. Considering indigenous languages beyond the cessation of colonization, [8] contests that Ghanaian languages and literacies are still silenced, devalued, and marginalized in the curriculum. The place of Ghanaian languages, for example, remains obscure and decentered in Ghanaian education today as in the colonial era [4] [7] [9] [10].

[11] argues that decolonization has become a catch-all idea to tackle anything with any, even minor, association with the West and is often used to perform contemporary “morality” and “authenticity.” This calls for the need to decolonize our school system. Rather than a fighting book, [11] contends that we should identify blind spots in present policies and scholarship to draw attention to addressing them and show how and why these alternative ways may yield more insights than the present dominant narrative where almost everything, especially education, is Eurocentric. [11] further argues that the U.S was also once a British colony, the same as Canada, Australia, and Japan, but why is decolonization something that the Westerners are calling Africans to do, and they are not calling other nations to do the same, which is infantilizing Africa and not taking African agency seriously? He says if Africa (Ghana in this context) chooses to use Western ways to solve its problems, that is okay. He does not need to create African solutions because their agency to do whatever they choose should be respected. I agree with [11] argument that we give decolonization too much power as it is central to discourses in African contexts. The agreement comes with the fact that the decolonization conversation will continue in Africa and, for that matter, Ghana so long as we have colonial instincts in our education, politics, etc. Even though the colonial master has left, colonial education persists [8].

2. Theoretical Framework

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its primary methodology. CDA was developed by Norman Fairclough in 1989. Fairclough’s work emphasized the connection between language, power, and ideology, focusing on how discourse contributes to constructing and maintaining social inequalities. CDA explores how language functions as a social practice and how power dynamics manifest through discourse. It examines and challenges the power dynamics and ideologies in the dominant English language discourses, as in the case of Ghana’s education system. CDA helps explore how educational policies are described in the context of colonialism by criticizing the Westernization of education, where foreign models are still dominant in the Ghanaian system. How do the policies reflect or reproduce power dynamics inherited from the colonial period? It supports discourses of subordination or dependency in portraying the educational system where specific educational models, languages, or curricula are still perceived as superior to reflect colonial aspirations.

Applying CDA to the contemporary legacy of colonialism in Ghanaian education studies can uncover how language and power continue to shape the educational experience in post-colonial Ghana. This will allow the study to critically examine how colonial structures are perpetuated or challenged within educational systems and how these systems may continue to reflect and reproduce colonial ideologies, even today. Ultimately, CDA provides a tool to understand how education, as a discourse, can both reflect and reinforce power dynamics and how it can also serve as a space for resistance and transformation in the post-colonial

context. This method aligns with this current study that calls for a transformative approach to education that respects and promotes local languages and literacies while sustaining the English language hegemony. CDA seeks to foster an inclusive and culturally relevant learning environment.

3. Eurocentric Education in Ghana

Since the emergence of European formal education in Ghana, the curriculum has been colonial and Eurocentric. Eurocentrism is a “superstructure that seeks to impose European consciousness onto other people’s consciousness” [12]. Eurocentrism is a pervasive ideology that sneaks into every aspect of life, attempting to erase the diverse histories of people to replace their outlook on life and their understanding of the world with a perspective molded and sculpted by those who sought to subdue them [6]. English’s dominant narrative has been and is still driving Ghana’s education system 68 years after independence. [13] believes that the dominance persists because educational leaders continue reinforcing the hegemony of English as the only official language in education. This is done through the policies and practices implemented in education to direct the activities of it. According to [14], even the structure of schooling in Ghana is western-typed-oriented.

[15] contends that the main reason the colonial government prioritized learning English was to uphold it as the language of civilization, modernization, and civility. Eurocentric education has, from the beginning, aimed to colonize people’s hearts and minds and to marginalize the indigenous language and knowledge. I argue that to institutionalize colonialism and suppress the colonized, the colonizers tried their best to make the colonized believe in their language and their system of education so that dominance and oppression would still be internalized and self-perpetuating even after colonization. [6] posits that this process of internalizing oppression started several centuries ago; unfortunately, it still has not ended. [16] argues that:

“The Eurocentric educational approach promotes hegemony in other areas and propagates Western civilization’s superiority, dynamism, and comprehensiveness. We think that the system is best because, in our enslaved minds, we do not know any better. We must always be European in our worldview, from fundamental framework assumptions to superficial externalities like hair and skin color (...) The tangible ways of colonization were visible, but more subtle and perfidious were the intangible ways in which our education system, the curricula, and our mindsets were shaped to represent the hegemonic European world-view and to promote Europe’s commercial and political interests and the mirage of its cultural superiority. (p. 16)”

To analyze the contemporary legacy of colonial education in Ghana, it is essential to seek answers to critical questions such as: What has been the impact of the English language hegemony as the primary medium of instruction on indigenous

languages and cultural expression? Also, how have Eurocentric frameworks influenced the educational content and marginalized Ghanaian history and knowledge systems? Much literature on colonialism's impact on education in postcolonial countries focuses on direct, overt forms of colonial control [7] [14]. This article expands the conversation by exploring the more subtle, indirect legacies of colonialism, how specific educational structures, ideologies, or cultural norms have become routine and continue to shape education today, often in ways that are not immediately visible or easily recognized. This article seeks to contribute to the growing field of decolonial scholarship by exploring how Ghana's education system marginalizes indigenous knowledge systems through the colonial inheritance approach (the system where the curriculum is structured to tailor Eurocentric courses). It provides concrete examples in literature that support the efforts to reassert indigenous educational practices, languages, and epistemologies in the context of Ghanaian schools. This will call for efforts to decolonize education, whether through curriculum reform or changes in pedagogical approaches, to advance the understanding of how educational institutions can truly become more inclusive and culturally relevant.

In Ghana, English is dominant in the educational system, both as a language of instruction and as the country's official language. Several contemporary policies in education have reinforced the dominance of English in Ghanaian schools. These policies significantly affect classroom language use, teacher training, and the general educational landscape. The National Language Policy established in 2002 by the Ministry of Education specifies English as the official language of instruction in all public schools in Ghana. The policy stipulates that English should be used as the medium of instruction from Primary four onward, despite Ghana having 81 indigenous languages [17]. Although the policy allows the use of local languages in the early years, from Kindergarten to Primary 3, the focus shifts to English in higher grades. Ironically, even these books meant to be taught at the lower primary level in local languages are written in English. This reinforces the dominance of English in Ghana's educational system, even though local languages are culturally significant for many students. This policy marginalizes Indigenous languages and potentially contributes to learning difficulties for students who may not be fully proficient in English. Although the emphasis on English is part of broader globalization efforts and the promotion of English as the gateway to global knowledge and opportunities, it limits students' ability to engage with the content thoroughly, particularly in rural or low-income areas where students may not have strong English skills. It must be emphasized that heavy reliance on English hinders students' complete comprehension, especially in rural and underserved communities where local language proficiency is higher.

Secondly, the revised Ghana National Curriculum in 2019 emphasized English as the primary language for instruction, especially at the primary and secondary school levels. English is used for teaching all subjects, including those related to the arts, social studies, and sciences. The curriculum prioritizes English for aca-

democratic performance, even as local languages are still taught as subjects in school. School curriculum focus remains heavily on English literacy, overshadowing the development of proficiency in indigenous languages. Despite the presence of local language education, the curriculum does not provide enough support or infrastructure to strengthen mother tongue-based education, which has been shown to enhance cognitive development and academic performance, especially for younger learners.

Thirdly, in Ghana, exams such as the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) are conducted in English. Students must demonstrate proficiency in English to succeed in these exams, regardless of their proficiency in local languages. English proficiency is a key factor in determining students' academic success, particularly in national exams, where failure in English can result in overall failure, regardless of performance in other subjects. This English-only policy burdens students who may not have had a strong foundation in English during their early years of schooling, particularly those in rural areas or who speak predominantly Indigenous languages at home.

Moreover, teacher training in Ghana is focused heavily on English literacy and English-medium instruction. Teachers are trained to use English as the primary medium for classroom interaction and lesson delivery, which aligns with national educational policy. This policy ensures that teachers are proficient in English, but it can lead to a disconnect between teachers and students who are not fully proficient in the language. Interestingly, teachers trained to teach the local languages have their syllabi instructions written in English. Additionally, there is a lack of emphasis on teachers being proficient in local languages, which could enhance the learning experience for students in certain regions. Teacher training that prioritizes English over local languages can contribute to a cycle where students' home languages are undervalued in the classroom, and teachers may lack the skills to support bilingual or multilingual learners effectively.

Lastly, in Ghana's tertiary education system, English is the dominant language used for instruction in all fields of study, including law, medicine, engineering, and social sciences. While students may come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, English remains the only language of instruction. This reinforces the linguistic divide between students proficient in English and those who may struggle with it. English proficiency is essential for admission, academic success, and graduation in all higher education institutions. Students from non-English-speaking backgrounds face difficulties in higher education, where academic success largely depends on English comprehension and expression. This contemporary legacy reflects Ghana's prioritization of English as the language of instruction and a means to integrate into the global economy. While these policies aim to improve access to global knowledge and international opportunities, they also reinforce the dominance of English, potentially sidelining indigenous languages and cultural identities. I argue for a more inclusive approach that integrates mother tongue-based

education, especially in the early years, to ensure that the language barrier does not hinder children's cognitive and academic development.

The role of local communities in Ghana is crucial in driving the decolonization of education, as they are intimately connected with the cultural, social, and historical contexts that need to be redefined in the educational system. Decolonization of education is a process that seeks to challenge and transform the legacy of colonial influences on the education system while promoting indigenous knowledge, languages, values, and practices. Community leaders can advocate for including local languages and indigenous knowledge in the curriculum to decolonize our education system, ensuring that traditional values, practices, and languages are preserved and integrated into everyday learning. This will help students reconnect with their cultural heritage, deepen their cultural identity, and ensure that education is more contextually relevant to their lives.

4. Critical Analysis of the Impact of the English Language Hegemony on Indigenous Languages and Cultural Expression

The centering of Ghanaian languages and cultures in education worked better for students' educational achievement in the colonial era and still does today [9]. [9] sees the idea of colonial leaders upholding English as the only medium of instruction as oppressive and harmful to students learning and educational achievement. [6] analysis of the effects of colonized education mentioned that the ability to speak the colonial language has become a status symbol. At the same time, the local language has become associated with inferiority. [18] opined on the hegemony of the English language:

“One's language is more than a means of communication. The loss of it means the hibernation of a culture—since language is a window to your culture, it is a window to your folklore, it is a window to your parables, to your proverbs, to all the stories that you hear at birth and what you grow up with. (p. 25)”

I agree with [18] because the ability to speak a language represents the culture of people who speak that language. Without language, culture is muted. The ability to talk about a language meant “above all, assuming a culture and bearing the weight of a civilization” ([15]: p. 2). The literature of [19] has shown how the dominant use of English in Ghanaian education harms students and hampers their educational advancement. [20] researched whether Ghanaian schools' scientific concepts taught in English to Primary five and six were well grasped and understood. It appeared that students studying English did poorly grasp and explain scientific concepts taught in English. [20] again did the same experiment with the same Primary 5 and 6 students, but this time, it was done in their Ghanaian languages. These students understood the lesson and could explain it to the researcher in their Ghanaian languages. Interestingly, they could use more complex language and illustrations to explain the scientific process learned in the class-

room compared to the English-only group. This demonstrates that intensive instruction in a Ghanaian language, even briefly, improves learning outcomes in English, Science, and Mathematics. I confirm [20] results as a geography teacher at a secondary school in Ghana for decades. I realized that teaching geography to students in the Ghanaian language was mainly helpful. Illustrating abstract features such as desert landforms, weather, climate, and oceanic and continental shelves, among others, is challenging for the student to grasp, especially its associated geographical terminologies. However, students get more understanding when I explain it in the language they understand. This resulted in high scores, mainly in the subject, when they translated their knowledge into writing in English.

Research has shown that non-English speaking students, year after year, continue to struggle [21] [22]. These authors further argue that despite this challenge, school leaders insist on students passing exams in English or speaking only English in schools because they see that as the only way students can progress in the system they oversee. I see this as the contemporary legacy of colonialism in Ghana's education system. Even when policies have recommended that Ghanaian languages be used where possible to support teaching and learning in schools, especially at the lower levels, school leaders mostly ignore the idea due to colonial instincts. I argue to support the assertion of [8] that even after the cessation of colonization, Ghanaian languages and literacies are still silenced, devalued, and marginalized in the curriculum. This is in line with [7] [9] [10] that the place of Ghanaian languages, for example, remains obscure and decentered in Ghanaian education today as it was in the colonial era. It is deceptive for a community to claim to be independent while its education that leads to enlightenment continues to be colonized.

The English language hegemony does not only sideline the Indigenous Ghanaian language but also reduces students' comprehension. The extent to which a student can apply what is taught meaningfully primarily depends on their understanding of the content. It should be mentioned that when students cannot comprehend what they are taught, they have no option but to memorize the content. This legacy of English only has led to rote learning or "chew and pour," popularly known as *babadie* in Ghanaian parlance, which often results in students' immediate good grades. However, they tend to forget memorized facts or contents over time. [23] have argued that how students assimilate learning information greatly influences their retention or forgetfulness. [13] contends that using English as the primary medium of instruction can hinder comprehension and academic performance for students whose first language is not English, contributing to inequities in educational achievement. The dominant narrative that the national examinations are assessed primarily in English and that literacy and content in Ghanaian languages in the educational system are not considered a priority in national assessment is a fallacy. The national evaluation could also assess the Ghanaian language if it is prioritized. This paper submits that English's process of becoming

the dominant language is the same way the local language could or should be today. Educational leaders, therefore, need to nurture the dominant local languages in schools alongside the English language to help students grasp the content and concepts of what they learn well. This will practicalize [20] experiment, which concluded that students tend to understand the lesson and can explain the content better when taught in their local languages. [2] argument that the government and local communities should support linguistic diversity in education is in the right direction. [2] believes that community involvement in language policy formulation and implementation will go a long way to create a more inclusive education system we all expect in Ghana. [7] contends that language constructs national identity and cultural heritage as language policies foster a sense of belonging and cultural pride among Ghanaian citizens.

A clear depiction of the contemporary legacy of colonialism in Ghana's education was in the government policy in 2001. Before 2001, Ghanaian languages were used as a medium of instruction for the first three years of a child's education [7]. The government administration, including the Ministry of Education, in 2001 decided to implement an "English-Only Language Policy" throughout all levels of education without considering the difficulties Primary one to three pupils will face when they change their mother tongue to English as a foreign language. It is clear from here that the principle of "learning from known to unknown" was defeated because the education system has been dancing to the tune of colonizers. I contend that it will be challenging for a "my first day at school" child whose life has been communicating in the mother tongue to suddenly start to learn a different and unknown language-English. This may initially discourage some of these kids from liking schooling. Implementing an English-only language policy in the contemporary education system in non-English society is more than colonialism itself. What makes this more colonial nature and oppressive is the fact that the local educational leaders and teachers enforce the intense use of English on students and are mostly punished for speaking their mother tongue languages in the classroom. This calls for the decolonization of Ghana's education. [24] article "Decolonial Education at Its Intersections" emphasizes the need to understand and apply a decolonial framework in education, critically examining colonial legacies and power dynamics in educational practices. [24] focus on advocating for challenging dominant narratives and knowledge systems that marginalize Indigenous and other historically oppressed voices is not adhered to in the Ghanaian context. Instead, it is the legacy of colonialism in education that is in full force and perpetual sustenance.

I agree with [13] "Language, Education, and Linguistic Human Rights" assertion, which mentions that every individual can access education in their native language and that promoting Ghanaian languages in schools is essential for protecting these rights. [13] underscores the effects of the dominance of English in Ghanaian education on the indigenous languages and students' cultural identities. He says prioritizing the English language as the only medium of instruction at the

expense of Ghanaian languages will undervalue and marginalize the indigenous language in formal education. I support [13] argument that teaching in students' native languages, particularly in the early years of schooling, can improve literacy, cognitive development, and engagement and foster a positive cultural identity. [13] assertion on the need for a bilingual or multilingual education model that integrates local languages as a medium of instruction, especially in early childhood education, is something contemporary education should pursue.

5. The Influence of Eurocentric Frameworks on Contemporary Educational Content in Ghana

Eurocentric education framework refers to an approach to education that centers around European values, histories, philosophies, and cultural norms, often at the expense of indigenous perspectives, particularly non-European societies. These frameworks present European traditions as best, universal, superior, or more advanced while marginalizing or erasing other indigenous societies' knowledge systems and cultural contributions. Ghana's curriculum predominantly focuses on European history, methods, literature, and scientific achievements that sideline Indigenous knowledge, contributions, and cultures. The contemporary educational frameworks could be termed a colonial legacy because such frameworks were implemented during colonial times and persist in postcolonial educational systems. Even though colonial educational practices were resisted, as local communities sought to adapt and incorporate their language, cultural values, and knowledge into the education system, it still became the dominant means of instruction for education in the Gold Coast [1], mainly because the colonizer will always control the colonized based of structured frameworks.

According to [25], educational reform in a former colonized country like Ghana has failed to overhaul the educational system, particularly regarding the curriculum. Even though Ghana gained political independence from the British administration 68 years ago, that was not reflected in Ghana's education system. This is because educational leaders did not focus on decolonizing the education system inherited from the colonial past. Decolonizing education never occurred after Ghana's independence because the country focused on expanding the educational system inherited from the colonizers rather than disrupting it [4]. [8] contends that since the education system was not decolonized, each reform or revision merely tweaks and builds on cemented colonial foundations of education (p. 3). I agree with [8] that Ghana's independence from the colonizers did not remove colonialism from her educational system. [26] and [27] postulate that it is a fallacy to assume that Ghana's educational system is devoid of colonization, especially since leaders have not consciously tried to decolonize the education system.

The Western curricula and frameworks render more oppression, and one can never see clearly through the goggles of oppression [12]. The decades of imperialism and colonialism have had such lasting effects that the presence of European nationals is not even required to ensure the colonized character of the schools

after the event of political independence. However, a dependent relationship between the two countries (the colonizer Britain and the colonized Ghana) is essential. [6] argues that if dependency is established in the domains of economy, politics, or culture, the colonial character of schools is secure. To [6], whenever changes occur in these domains in the metropole, they will be passed on through schools and other institutions to the dependencies. The stronger the dependency relationship, the stronger the transmission of the changes will occur [28]. I argue that colonized education tries to fit people into what will benefit the colonizer regardless of the effects on the colonized culture.

[22] have documented that instead of reimagining and disrupting the education system in a way that better serves its students who might need more support with Ghanaian languages to do well, school leaders are rather busy surviving in the system and are focused on managing the school institutions rather than students. [29] pushes for the need to rethink and transform education through decolonial frameworks and perspectives that recognize and address colonialism's historical and ongoing impacts on education. [29] further emphasizes the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy, which values students' cultural backgrounds and incorporates their experiences into the learning process, promoting engagement and success. Like [29], I also criticize the conventional education systems for perpetuating colonial narratives and power structures, which mostly marginalize the voices and experiences of Indigenous students. [29] further argues for the active involvement of local communities in shaping educational practices and policies, the same way I push for the inclusion of indigenous Ghanaian languages as a medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. This indigenous Ghanaian language approach will empower students and create more relevant and meaningful educational experiences. Again, [29] highlights the need to challenge existing power dynamics within academic institutions, advocating for equitable representation and participation of marginalized groups (indigenous Ghanaian languages) in educational setup. This way, we can reimagine the curriculum to include diverse perspectives, histories, and epistemologies, creating a more holistic and representative educational experience.

6. Significant Barriers to Implementing a Multilingual Curriculum in Ghanaian Schools

The study admits that implementing multilingual education in Ghanaian schools is a crucial yet challenging task due to several barriers that educators face. Ghana has linguistic diversity. There are 81 Indigenous languages spoken in Ghana. Only nine are government-sponsored languages written and spoken in schools [17]. These are Akan, Dagbani, Dangme, Dagaare, Ewe, Ga, Kasem, Nzema, and Gonja. The minimal presence of Indigenous languages is due to the educational system primarily operating in English, making it challenging to implement a multilingual curriculum that effectively serves the diverse student population. Below are the most significant barriers and challenges stakeholders of education in Ghana face

when implementing multilingual education. First, there is limited teacher proficiency in multiple languages [30]. Many teachers in Ghana are not fluent in the local languages spoken in their communities. Most teachers are trained to use English as the primary language of instruction, and they mostly do not have the linguistic skills necessary to teach in local languages or use a multilingual approach in the classroom. The lack of proficiency in local languages makes it difficult for teachers to switch between languages in the classroom, engage students in their native languages, or provide effective multilingual instruction. To overcome this challenge, teacher training programs must be tailored towards equipping teachers with the language skills needed to teach in a multilingual context and use local languages to teach various subjects, particularly in the early years of schooling.

Secondly, the Ghanaian curriculum heavily prioritizes English as the language of instruction across all educational levels. There is a lack of sufficient multilingual resources, such as textbooks, teaching materials, and assessments in local languages [27]. This makes it difficult to provide comprehensive multilingual education even if teachers are willing to teach the local languages. It is important to note that, without adequate teaching and learning materials in local languages, it is almost impossible to integrate these languages into the curriculum meaningfully. Also, school assessments are primarily designed in English, which disadvantages students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. This study pushes for a major national curriculum reform to include local language materials and adapt assessments for multilingual responses. To achieve this, educators, traditional leaders, and the proponents of Indigenous language inclusion should provide textbooks and teaching aids in their local languages to support the use of local languages in instruction as they push for their language inclusion in the national curriculum.

Another significant challenge is the lack of government and institutional support. While multilingual education is important, the government and education authorities have not systematically implemented policies promoting multilingual instruction [13]. Resources, policies, and strategies explicitly supporting integrating local languages in education are limited or inconsistent in Ghana. Without clear, firm policies, funding, and institutional support, multilingual education efforts at the school level may lack survival and fail to gain traction. Schools and educators lack the motivation or guidance to implement multilingual practices effectively because of the English language engrained in the system. It is therefore important to develop and enforce a national policy on multilingual education, with clear strategies for integrating local languages into the formal curriculum. Government support in funding, teacher training, and resource allocation is essential for successfully implementing multilingual education programs. Undeniably, the continuous dominance of English in our education system may cause weaker Indigenous languages to become extinct, and future generations of such languages may be unable to trace their identity lineage.

Furthermore, attitudes toward local languages constitute a significant barrier to

implementing a multilingual curriculum in Ghanaian schools. In most urban and academic circles in Ghana, there is a prevailing ideology that English is the language of prestige, economic success driver, and globalization steering wheel. This essentially is true, but its universality should not undermine the Indigenous languages that serve as the heartbeat of Indigenous cultural identity. English can co-exist with the local language in our educational system. As a result of English hegemony, there is often a tendency to marginalize local languages, particularly in formal education settings. Many parents, students, and educators consider local languages inferior or useless for academic or professional success. [31] contends that language standardization makes students or their families eager to abandon their language features to cope with what the educational system has adopted. This attitude has led to a reluctance to adopt multilingual teaching practices, and students face stigmas or feel that their native languages are not valued in the educational system. These language preferences will eventually result in a language shift away from Indigenous languages, thereby weakening cultural heritage and identity. There should, therefore, be conscious efforts to raise awareness about the importance of local languages in the educational process, both for cognitive development and cultural preservation. Again, public campaigns and educational initiatives should aim to change the narrative and promote the benefits of multilingual education at all levels.

Finally, there are multiple local languages in Ghana, but many do not have standardized orthographies or written forms that can be easily used for educational purposes. The lack of standardized spelling, grammar, and vocabulary across the different indigenous languages complicates the development of teaching materials and curriculum. The absence of standardized written forms for many local languages creates inconsistent teaching and learning, making it harder for teachers to teach those languages effectively. To overcome this challenge, related languages such as Akan, which comprises Asante, Bono, Fante, and Akwapim, could emerge in the curriculum to produce standard and standardized spelling, grammar, and vocabulary for the speakers of these languages. Other related local dialects in Ghana could be re-classified to form a language that can be understood and written by many tribes. This will ensure educators, communities, and policy-makers widely accept comprehensive language resources.

This study argues that Indigenous knowledge systems can be integrated into the existing curriculum without dramatically disrupting the structure vis-à-vis the entrenched Eurocentric frameworks. Local communities of traditional leaders, opinion leaders, and Indigenous knowledge advocates can collaborate with education authorities, teachers, and curriculum developers to create community-driven curricula that reflect their unique histories, traditions, and socio-cultural contexts. By involving local stakeholders in curriculum development, communities can ensure that education goes beyond Western-centric narratives and emphasizes local perspectives, histories, and languages. Participatory teaching methods that empower students to actively engage with their environment and community resources will

be a step in the right direction. This community-driven approach will ensure the curriculum is more culturally relevant, inclusive, and representative of students' experiences in Ghana, leading to better engagement and learning outcomes.

This paper contributes significantly to the advancement of knowledge in several ways. By examining how colonial-era policies and educational structures still influence modern Ghanaian education—such as curriculum content and language of instruction—this paper fills a gap in understanding colonialism's continuing institutional and cultural legacies and impacts. This challenges the assumptions that post-colonial societies have fully broken free from colonial influence. By identifying the gaps between contemporary educational policy and the realities of decolonization, this article makes an important contribution to policy discussions on how Ghana can reshape its education system to align with the needs of Indigenous Ghanaians and the realities of its post-colonial context. The paper offers practical recommendations for how educational policy can address this enduring educational system in a way that empowers local communities and reduces reliance on Western-centric models.

By examining how the English language as the primary medium of instruction in Ghana still serves as a barrier for students, particularly in rural areas, this study advances knowledge by emphasizing the role of the English language in education and how the continued use of colonial English languages affects the accessibility and inclusivity of the educational system, and how this practice reinforces colonial-era power dynamics. The article, therefore, advocates linguistic decolonization by integrating indigenous languages into the educational curriculum. This will help bridge the gap between colonial language structures and local educational needs, advancing decolonization efforts.

The paper adds to knowledge by recognizing that the practical challenges to implementing multilingual education in Ghanaian schools are multifaceted and complex. These challenges include the limited proficiency of teachers in local languages, curricular limitations, insufficient government support, and negative attitudes toward local languages, among others. To overcome these barriers, the paper has suggested the need for policy reforms, teacher training, and resource allocation that support the development of a multilingual education system. Such reforms would help create an environment where local languages are integrated meaningfully into the educational process, enhancing learning outcomes and preserving cultural identity.

7. Conclusions

The Western-style education by British colonial authorities aimed to promote colonial interests, thereby disrupting the local language, knowledge, and cultural values. In line with CDA, the prioritization of the teaching of English and Western curricula suggests the marginalization of Indigenous languages and subjects. The traditional forms of education in pre-colonial Ghana highlighted how knowledge was transmitted orally through storytelling, rituals, and community practices.

This pre-colonial education was very effective because it was closely tied to the Indigenous language, cultural values, social roles, and practical skills essential for the survival of the Indigenous people. The paper posits that Ghana is an independent sovereign state, so her education should be noncolonial conforming. Ghanaian languages, cultures, and histories will remain on the margins unless there is a conscious and intentional effort from educational leaders willing to disrupt colonial practices. There is, therefore, the need to deconstruct the dominance of the language ideologies inherited from Ghana's colonial past.

Although transformation occurred through colonized education, it was done at the expense of the indigenous culture of expression and identity. The discussions so far emphasize that the manifold effects of colonialism on the colonized people, language, and cultures are deeply damaging. Even though the formal colonial rule has ended, colonialism is still rooted in the educational practices and ideologies in the contemporary educational space in Ghana. Till today, Eurocentric education still manifests itself in curricula, teaching methods, and assessment practices. The lasting impacts of colonial education policies on post-independence Ghana suggest that many challenges in the contemporary education system in Ghana can be traced back to these colonial historical foundations. We need to understand that past influences shape current policies in education.

To neutralize the English language hegemony and promote multilingualism in the Ghanaian school system, educational leaders need to emphasize decolonizing the curriculum by advocating for a shift towards more inclusive and culturally relevant education that recognizes and values Indigenous languages and knowledge systems. To achieve this, policymakers should be conscious of discouraging policies and practices perpetuating colonial legacies and Western-style education in Ghana's education system. This calls for the need for pragmatic reform within the educational system to dismantle the structural system of inequalities perpetuated by colonial educational practices that marginalize indigenous languages. This will promote equity, inclusivity, and relevance in education in Ghana. Also, to decolonize Ghana's education system, a comprehensive overview of the colonial education system in the Gold Coast is needed to examine its policies, curriculum, and impacts while highlighting the importance of understanding this historical context for contemporary educational challenges.

It should be emphasized that the English language is indispensable in Anglophone countries such as Ghana. Notwithstanding, credence should be given to the local languages to give meaning to children's education, especially those in the early school age groups, and to preserve their communication culture. As [7] argued, language choices can either facilitate or hinder access to quality education for different communities, especially marginalized groups. European history, literature, and values limit students' understanding of their language, culture, and identity, potentially contributing to less self-identity development and nation-building. It is, therefore, critical to take a careful look at language policies in Ghana to ensure they reflect the country's linguistic diversity and support equita-

ble access to education for all students. In the same way, as we criticize the dominance of colonial education, we should also have a holistic and inclusive educational system and reform that will align and reflect local cultures and identities. Contemporary education should promote indigenization, which focuses on decolonizing education.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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