

## THE PLACE OF THE ORAL TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES OF COMMUNICATION IN A DIGITAL ERA: THE CASE OF THE KENYANG-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

By

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### **Abstract**

**K**enyang is a language spoken in the Southwest region of Cameroon precisely by people of Manyu. This paper seeks to investigate the place of oral traditional techniques of communication within the Kenyang-speaking community, in a time when large amount of information are widely available to many people, through computer technology. Data for this work is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews, discussions and observation are instruments for the primary data collection. The theoretical framework use for this work is the verbal communication theory. The findings reveal that the oral traditional communication techniques used by the Kenyang-speaking community are still useful and they still fulfil the functions of communication within the community. Also important is the fact that, the Kenyang traditional ways of communicating which include the oral and other symbolic non-verbal modes of communication, like /enok/, "drum" /gong/ / "jkaneka" /bell/ "efep" /whistle/ clapping of hands, have served the people of Manyu from time immemorial and still remain powerful and useful as far as communication among the peoples is concerned. We also discovered that, the Kenyang oral techniques of communication can work alongside modern techniques of communication. The article recommends that more attention be given to traditional techniques of communication by the Kenyang speakers to equate sensitisation, mobilisation and collective efforts to help upgrade and strengthen the use of these traditional communication techniques in this digital era.

**Keywords: Traditional tools, Kenyang language, Information technology, Communication.**

### **Introduction**

The Kenyang language as mentioned in the abstract, is spoken in the South west region of Cameroon precisely by the Manyu people. There are approximately 65000 Kenyang native speakers (Gordon 2005). It has three dialects which are, upper Kenyang, spoken by Upper Banyang people from the Eastern part of Manyu, lower Kenyang spoken by the people from the western part and middle Kenyang spoken by the Banyangs of the central region of Manyu. This accounts for 53 villages in Mamfe Central and Upper Banyang subdivisions respectively.

According to Mnuagbaw (2000), the origin of the Banyangs is not clear cut. From the information we got from the people of the area and from researchers, some of the speakers originated from Keaka, Eastern Eyumojock and settled in the Upper Banyang area. The speakers are a combination of migrants from other neighbouring tribes like Kitwii (Balong people). This therefore influences the language resulting in the existing dialects mentioned above. It is important to note here that Lower Kenyang is the standard variety used for linguistic analysis. They share boundaries with speakers of other languages such as Boki, Eshobi, Mundani, Bangwa, Basossi, Baloni and Ejagham. There are three main roads in the Banyang area, all of them leading to Mamfe. These are roads from

Ekok, Bamenda and Kumba. All the three roads are in the lower Kenyang area, a small proportion of Upper Kenyang speakers are located along the Mamfe-Kumba road. Much more travelling is done on these roads than on the Bakebe-Fontem road which passes through the Upper Banyang area.

### **Local Government Administration and the Socio-economic Situation of the Kenyang speakers**

Each Kenyang village is ruled by a chief (mfo'). These villages are equally sub divided into quarters, which are ruled by quarter-heads. These traditional administrators are supported by village notables. Hierarchy starts from the paramount chief to the quarter heads, and to the family heads. Chieftaincy is not hereditary but rotational. The Kenyang people still hold firm to their traditional modes of communication, and there are so many secret societies most of which are independent of the chief, since the chief must not be a member. These secret societies act as the police of the area, punish crimes and maintain discipline. Local administrative meetings of the chief and their quarter heads with other village notables as well as traditional rites, like the pouring of libation and cleansing is done exclusively in the mother tongue; this remains at the level of orals. Government administration is felt in the Kenyang villages through the divisional officer, to the sub divisional officer. Besides, there is a deputy manager in charge of civil status registration as well as forces of law and order. The government administers the people through the traditional rulers. Traditional authorities in the different villages usually call for meetings to tell the people in the mother tongue through the use of some of their communication techniques, what the government policy is all about, especially during clean-up campaigns and community work.

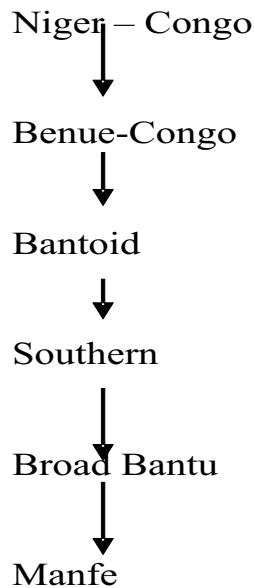
Many social and economic activities are carried out by the very resourceful and hardworking Banyang people who are geared towards the construction of their clan. In addition to agriculture which dominates their economic activities, are hunting, weaving, carving, embroidery and tapping of palm wine. Most families in the Banyang area cultivate vegetables and food crops like cassava, maize, cocoyam, yam etc. Cash crops like cocoa, coffee, kola nuts are also cultivated in a large scale. The climate of this region favours the production of these crops. More also, the cultural richness and diversity of the Kenyang people are attained through their socio-cultural and traditional consciousness. Their cultural richness is also attained through their interest to develop and sustain their tribal heritage and ancestry through time honoured festivals like the Egbe and the Obassinjum societal groups. Culturally, the Kenyang people are related, a lot of their traditional and cultural dances are borrowed from the Efiks. Economically, the Kenyang people grew up as black smiths, hunters, craftsmen and famers. The forest provides them with firewood and charcoal. The forest has a lot of game to keep men occupied in order to get meat for family meals as well as for bride prizes and death ceremonies. As craft men, the people used the wood from the forest in making masks, tools and doorposts. The great form of products of the people is the growing of cocoa and coffee.

Many buyers come from Nigeria and even around the country to buy cocoa. The women on their part, occupy themselves in the selling of cracked mangoes in the mango season, kolanut, njasanga etc. They usually move from one neighbouring market to another in specific market days to sell these things. Looking at Kenyang occupational wise, it will be of great importance to mention the traditional medical services. Most of the villagers are surrounded by a huge forest, this forest is rich in medicinal plants and the people have been very skilful in traditional healing. With the coming of modern medicine, people still travel from other regions to come for healing there. It is also important to note that there is a lot of timber that is being exported from the Kenyang area to other parts of the country, where it is being transformed into finished products. These products are being sold for money, and this helps to bring more revenue to the country. The Kenyang culture is rich in music and dances. Celebrations like marriages; births and deaths bring many people together. In such

occasions they dialogue with one another through their oral communication techniques, and that help in keeping the unity of the language. The markets also bring thousands together each week

### **Linguistic classification**

According to Greenberg's classification, Kenyang falls within the Bantu language group, while it is excluded from the narrow Bantu of Guthrie's classifications. Ethnologue (Grimes 1992:193) classifies the Kenyang languages as.



The language under study is characterised by a great number of changes that have taken place over time as far as communication is concerned. Before the advent of information and communication technology, the language used many traditional tools to communicate. For examples, Storytelling was used to tell stories, both fiction and non-fiction, before there were books. It was a way for families and communities to pass on information about their past. **Drums were one way to send signals to neighbouring tribes and groups.** Oral traditional techniques of communication thus represents **a form of communication employing vocal, verbal, musical and visual folk art forms, transmitted to a society or group of societies from one generation to another.** They are indigenous modes and have served the Manyu society as tools/medium of communication for ages. Traditional means of communication within this society exploit and develop local means, materials and methods of communication, such as **stories, songs and dances, games, and fables.** We also consider for instance **myths; story-telling; songs; proverbs; religious rituals; artistic, musical, dance and theatrical elements as depicted on pottery, textiles and wood as traditional forms of communication.**

This work is divided into four sections. Section one is focused on the introduction, which consist of the background to the language and the speakers, statement of the problem, research question, data collection methods and the theoretical framework. Section two, presents the oral traditional techniques that the Kenyang speakers use in communicating, the next section dwells on the digital era and its characteristics. The section that follows, answers the question as to whether the Kenyang traditional techniques of communication can actually survive the digitalised era. Finally the last section presents some recommendation and the conclusion.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Traditional tools that have served the Kenyang speakers from time immemorial have for long been used as a medium of communication among them. Most of these tools are now being relegated to the background and there is need to reemphasise their important especially in a time where Information and communication technology is fast replacing traditional modes of communication in many communities. It is not everyone in the Kenyang speaking community that can boast of a phone, television set, talk less of how to use them. There is therefore an urgent need for the speakers to stay focus on the traditional methods of communication in order to maintain their cultural integrity and promote their language. There is still need to use the town crier, the /Enok/, /εfep /, drum, traditional or cultural dances, and proverbs to communicate among themselves, and promote their identity as Kenyang speakers. Of course one can only use the phones, emails, g-mails, when we have connection and the mega to do so. But what if we do not even have the phone at all, what if the network is bad. These questions can only be answered by oral traditional techniques of communication that do not needs money or mega bites to transmit information.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To find out the place of oral traditional communication techniques in the Kenyang language, in an era of digitalisation.
2. To evaluate the Kenyang oral traditional techniques of communication.
3. To determine if traditional tools can stand the challenges of the era.
4. To propose suggestion on what to do in order to boost the Kenyang traditional techniques of communication to stand the challenges of time.

### **Research Questions**

This work is guided by one general research question:

1. what is the place of the Kenyang traditional communication techniques in the era of digitalisation.

These general research questions can be broken down into the following for better understanding

1. What are the traditional tools used for communication in the Kenyang community?
2. How can these tools survive the digitalise age and maintain their originality.
3. How can traditional tools for communication be used alongside the modern techniques of communications in the Kenyang speaking community?
4. Are there any hindrances to effective utilization of traditional tools of communication?
5. What are some of the suggestions to improve on the effective use of these techniques?

### **Significance of the Study**

This work is significance in the following ways:

First, this paper will help to bring out the importance of oral traditional communication techniques as used by the Kenyang speakers to foster the growth of their language and to strengthen their cultural integrity. It will equally act as a means of passing over their culture to future generation. Second, the study will enable the rural dwellers to compare and contrast between modern and traditional communication which is better and more effective in brining development to their areas. Finally, it will serve as reference materials for further studies by the researchers and scholar. In case there are areas or issues that are perceived not to be treated in detail or comprehensively, the study will help to elicit curiosity, capable of inciting research in this domain.

### **Methodology and theoretical frame work**

The data for this research was collected from some 40 Kenyang speakers whose ages range from 35 to 60. The respondents have grown up in the village and master the communication system and techniques very well. They were randomly chosen. The instruments used for this research are: interview, discussions, and observations. This work makes use of content analysis approach. Concerning administration of instruments, it was done through the direct contact approach. This is because the researcher seeks to reduce the problem of biased responses and unwillingness on the part of the respondents.

### **Theoretical frame-work**

The theory that guided this work is the verbal communication theory: This Theory allows us to organize and understand communication experiences, select communication behaviour to study, broaden our understanding of human communication, predict and control communication situations, challenge current social and cultural relationships, and offer new ways of thinking and living. Katz and Kahn (1966) suggest that since verbal communication means using human language to represent the world and pass on information, it therefore exhibits all features of an open communication system. Verbal communication is, however characterised by some unique features which radically set it apart from other types of communication. Its principal function is to transfer information which besides being factual may also be of specific human character, and may also convey emotions, attitudes, beliefs, desires, feelings etc. Human language makes predominant use of symbolic signs, which bear relationships to their referents, although iconic and indexical signs and signals are employed as well. The model of verbal communication includes the following. Information, communication means, communication network, and communication activities.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This section, presents the results of the interview, discussions and observation using the qualitative data analysis approach. This type of data is collected through methods of observations, one-to-one interviews, conducting focus groups, and similar methods. We choose this method because it brings out the behaviour of the participants of study being observed, and the conclusion is drawn based on their answers and their behaviour. Secondly this method is naturalistic because it studies a group in its natural setting.

From the data collected, we discover a number of important things concerning the communication techniques used by the Kenyang speakers. First, at the level of identification of the tools or techniques, the respondents mentioned the following as some of tools they used in communicating among themselves. They are: the /enok/, ngkaneka/, /anoh/, traditional dances, proverbs, storytelling, /efeb/, town crying, sounds etc. According to them, each of these tools has a particular way and carries messages that are understood by the speakers of the language. We are going to discuss the function of each of these instruments as used by the Kenyang community. First we have the town crier, who is used to **make public announcements in the streets**. He is often called the newsman, a traditional emissary, mutually dependent man, news reporter and messenger. The town crier in the Kenyang community is call /ndɛp nkanɛŋka/, he performs various functions as far as communication is concerned, this is described below.

We have the Idiophone, which is an instrument whose own substance vibrate to produce sounds without the use of wires like a guitar or buttons like the piano. There are a number of them in the language under study which will be discussed below. The town crier in this community uses this instruments to communicate to the population when need be. Note should be taken that the type of message will depend on the material used in fabricating this instrument and also on the sound it

produces. They could be shaken, scratched, stroked, pulled or even pressed with the leg. In this group, we have the gong, /nkaneka/ woodblock, /enok/ wooden drum, /nkah/ and the chief's bell /nkaneka mfo/. There is a difference between nkaneka mfo/ the "chief's bell" and /nkaneka/ which is a normal "bell". nkaneka mfo/ is always at the chief's palace and it is use to call the population to order or to call attention while /nkaneka/ is use in meeting groups to either stop people from making noise or use as a musical instrument within the meeting groups.

The next instrument is called Membranophone, a musical instrument which sounds primarily by way of a vibrating stressed membrane. They include all forms of skin or leather drums, tambourines and some gongs. These drums are struck with well-carved sticks. Among the variety of dances that are from the Manyu community, drums of various sizes are used. We want to particularly lay emphasis on /mɔ nkah mɪk/, which is use to communicate with the chief or the Sessekou of the Land during some festivals. The gong on its part is use to announce the dead of someone and it also act as a reminder of time to Christians. We equally have the symbology which means the act of using symbols or representations to convey messages. The Kenyang speakers use peace front or the folding of a front of a green palm tree tried to mean different things depending on the shape in which it is tied. More also, we have signals which are the physical embodiment of a message. Signals are still used today within the Manyu community. These can be seen in the case where the main radio station like "The voice of Manyu" radio, uses a drum as its jingle before any communication activity. Some of the signals include gunshot, drums, /enok/, just to name a few.

Next in line, we have signs which are the foundation of communication. A sign designates something other than itself and the meaning is link between an object or idea and sign. (Little 2007). The meaning of a sign in the Manyu culture may depend on the form, setting, colour, or location. It is important to note that signs are different from symbols. According to Ross 1963:164-165 Symbols require an interpreter who knows something of the system by virtues of the symbol which has meaning. Generally, natural signs require an interpreter who knows a theory, or the general law in terms of which the sign is an index of the existence of something else. For example nuts, the young unopened bub of palm front, white pigeon, feather, cowries etc. Colour is another powerful communication device used by the Manyu people and can be used to signal action, influence, mood and even influence physiological reactions. Among the prominent colours used to convey different meaning among the Kenyang speakers are red, white, black and brown. Each of these colour has a particular meaning attributed to it. For example the colour black to the Manyu man means dead, problems, morning, evil, etc meanwhile, white means or symbolises sinless, purity, virginity etc. Music is another technique that the Manyu people use to communicate. It expresses the culture and history of the Manyu people. They sing satirical songs to either criticise wrong doings of individuals or to praise them for their contribution to development within the community. At times their names, where they live or their jobs are mention. At times stories concerning events that are being planned for the society may feature as a way of alerting the population about the importance of the events. Cultural groups like the Egbe, Mowa, Mpokofu still use these technique to reinforce their cultural heritage and strengthen their language tides. Again we have the extra-mundane moods of communication which Wilson 1990-282 says it is the type taking place between the living and the extra-terrestrial. This is usually done through rituals, incantation liberation and Libation.

The functions of the traditional techniques of communication in the Manyu community are many. First, it is the primary way of conveying their culture, feelings and attitude. It gives them a sense of belonging and help to maintain their identity and heritage. Second, it acts as a unifying force during cultural festivals, entertainments by chorale and deferent dance groups like the Egbe, Obasinjump, Mowa etc. Next it is used for inter and intra cultural communication purposes leading to the unity of

the people. More also, it educates the youths into studying and knowing their culture. It equally helps in transmitting knowledge from one generation to another there by maintaining the continuity of the culture of the Manyu people. It gives expressions to cultural and other activities of deferent parts of the community. For example, through cultural manifestations, a great number of cultural aspects are exposed to the world. By so doing, cross-cultural fertilization takes place and the society as a whole becomes better off.

### **The Digital Era and its Communication Techniques**

Digitalisation is the process of converting information into a digital format. The result is the representation of an object, image, sound, document or signal obtained by generating a series of numbers that describe discrete set points. The Digital Era is characterised by technology which increases the speed and breadth of knowledge turnover within the economy and society. The Era can be seen as the development of an evolutionary system in which knowledge turnover is not only very high, but also increasingly out of the control of humans, making it a time in which our lives become more difficult to manage. In general, communication is a way for people to connect over information, news, feelings, and so forth. But the way in which people connect has evolved; leading to new communication opportunities and challenges with and within the Internet, software agents will exchange knowledge without human intervention. Equally, our understanding of the knowledge embedded within the human genome about how we relate to the world, generated in association with technology and freely available on the internet, raises questions about our assumptions of control. Can we control such changes and their diffusion? The social and economic implications of the Digital Era are huge and will increase as technological functionality becomes more knowledge-based, our everyday lives and understanding of ourselves become more linked to it, and it takes on a 'life' of its own. Understanding the Digital Era in terms of evolution will help ensure we build sustainable socio-economic relationships both with technology and with the advanced knowledge that technology helps us create.

According to Jose Luis Orihuela on Medium.com, there have been a number of paradigm shifts in communication due to the Digital Age. First, messages for general audiences are no longer acceptable, and the shift has been made to user-centric communication. Users have control over the topics they want to hear about, the way they receive their messages, and the platforms in which they view them. And information is no longer communicated one way as people have the ability to share messages interactively without any mediation or editing. Next, text and basic images are no longer relevant as digitization, data visualization, and multimedia options are available for all forms of communication. Your communication must reflect that by incorporating dynamism to connect with your audiences. The sharing of information, news, or other reporting data is now in real time and global as opposed to periodic and regionalized. When we communicate, particularly business information, we must be able to tell the story behind the message to increase knowledge.

Jose Luis Orihuela on Medium.com also says that, the benefits of digital communication are many. First, Communication using digital techniques is instant. As soon as the sender hits the **Submit**, **Enter**, or **Send** key, the message is available to the audience in a matter of microseconds. Secondly, it is extensive. One email message or text message can be easily routed to thousands of employees at the same time. Additionally, digital communications can be extensive in their contents as well; while sending a printed forty-page report by mail has associated costs, it's virtually cost-free to send the same content digitally. Third, Digital communication is convenient, which serves to foster better communication. For example, computer programmers can relay information to their development team with a few mouse clicks, which means that they are more likely to do so. Additionally, the fact

that digital communication is instant and extensive also contributes to the convenience of using these techniques for anyone relaying information. Finally, the advent of digital communication in the business environment has contributed to positive social change and served to change the environment itself. Always being connected may not seem to be a benefit at first glance, but if that factors into more flexible work hours, employees may be happier at work. A team-oriented workforce, which tends to foster sharing and support among team members, has been shown to contribute to greater employee productivity and success. With all the advantages of the digital era discussed above, is it possible for the traditional oral communication techniques of the language under study to survive? This question will be answered in the next section.

### **Can the Kenyang Oral Traditional Techniques of Communication Survive in an Era of Digitalisation?**

**To answer this question, we will first begin by looking at some of the functions of communication, next, we evaluate if the Kenyang traditional techniques of communication still fulfil this functions in this present era, and finally some possible recommendations to upgrade these techniques.** According to Thayer (1968), the primary function of communication is about communicating your ideas, thoughts, information, opinions and views, and sharing messages with others in the most effective manner. It is used as a powerful tool in both personal and professional spaces to communicate your vital needs, goals, desires and boost interpersonal relationships. For him, excellent communication skills have become a desired quality in the current scenario because it is believed that employees with this soft skill will have a good edge above others. He enumerated eight functions of communication, which we will discussed some of them below. First, communication, plays an informative function, that is, it is used as a medium of expression in social organizations. Human activities are dependent on being communicative and using proper language and speech to communicate feelings and ideas with other people. Informative communication also helps to promote the products of an organization in the consumer market, inform the public about new products and act as an official statement from the company. The Kenyang community of course uses this type of communication during meetings and community labour to inform others about the current happenings through the town crier. Secondly communication also plays an instructive function that is; human activities are dependent to a great extent on interactions and communication.

Instructive communication is about providing essential instructions so that people can make informed choices. This type of communication is mostly practice where there is respect of hierarchy. Here again, the Kenyang speakers respects hierarchy as the /mfo'/, or the/ Sessekou/ gives instructions to his subordinates on what to do during festivals or other gatherings. Another function of communication is persuasive communication. In normal life, people take the help of persuasive communication to change the attitude of others and sway them towards their way of thinking. A mother can persuade her children with a toy and sweet messages whereas children can sway their parents and group of friends to their way of thinking with their sweet talk, attitude, communication and good behaviour. They share vital information, views, new ideas and techniques that persuade other people in proving a point, accepting their claim and work accordingly.

The communicative goal of any community is to bring its people together and build interpersonal relationships so that everyone can work harmoniously in and within the community. This is done by the Kenyang speakers during festivals, village meetings, and come together where the people interact with one another. There is also the Motivation communication system which uses a person's desire to communicate, to motivate them in coming out of their shell. A motivated person plays an



active role in a company or within the society and this is why organizations or councils hold meetings. Village-group meetings within the Kenyang-speaking community organised meetings to tell the people what is required from them, how well they are performing their duties and instruct them in the ways to improve their performance. Again, we have the aesthetic communication, which helps in fulfilling social needs as it becomes easy to display emotional expression, frustration and satisfaction. The Aesthetic function of communication takes the help of language and art form to give a realistic presentation of the subject matter and explain the conceptual meaning. Verbal expressions and art forms are used to explore innovation, development and creativity. This function of communication is used to boost social routines and cultural development. In daily life, it helps an individual to interpret and understand the information that is conveyed between people, in the media and cultural life. Finally one of the functions of communication is to help in social interactions. Starting a conversation with other people, greeting them cordially, establishing warm relationships and even ending a relationship with grace is part of social interaction in daily life

Looking at the functions of communication discussed above, our next task is to evaluate if the Kenyang techniques of communication still fulfil these functions. The main aim of communication is to share ideas; feelings; messages, emotions; etc; and the Kenyang communication techniques play this function. The reason why during meetings or festivals, communication is still done through the various techniques discussed above. We have for example the /nkaneka/, /enok/, /mō nka mik/, /efeb/, which still have their place in the communication system of the Manyu people. According to Onigu and Ogionwo (1981), culture is defined as a complex whole of man's acquisition of knowledge, morals, beliefs, and arts, customs which are shared and transmitted, from one generation to another. In this definition, culture includes those things which man has invented and produced and which we can see, feel, hear as well as those aspects of man's behaviour which we cannot see: namely: knowledge, beliefs, or moral, language, philosophy, attitudes, etc. Communication which is an act, a process of interaction, is carried out primarily through the use of signs or symbols and such symbols must arouse the same meaning in the other person as it does in oneself.

Communication, being an aspect of non-material culture, the Kenyang language and its traditional communication modes have therefore a sort of cultural relativity. Communication is initiated when the sender utters symbolic sounds which refer to his experiences, rooted environments. If the receiver or audience has had a similar experience and has been conditioned to associate the given sounds with those experiences and attach a common meaning, we then say communication has taken place. Some of these modes include message relay-running, festivals, drama, music/songs, dance styles and steps, fire wood, smoke ashes colour of clothing, tales and proverbs, gun shorts, animals birds and insects hair looks tribal marks, talking drum, just to name a few. All the above techniques are the creation of human interactions and are valued by the Kenyang language community group communication, mostly based on age, kinship, inheritance, marital status. These

Communication techniques do not need sophisticated structures, and technology which the people do not have access to. It does not discriminate between the rich and the poor. This is to say you don't need any mega bites to have access to information. You don't need an iPhone, computer or internet connection to get access to information. It does not underestimate or disrespect rural values, that is, they make use of technology as a means to foster the use of their traditional techniques or tools of communication. More over talking to people through face-to-face, either through the town crier or other oral traditional means of communication mentioned above, has proven to be very effective not only to the Kenyang community but to the entire Africa. Nwabueze, 2007, Chude 2007, believes that a communicator, who speaks to people in a town hall, market square, meeting group, age group, has the ability to convince, sensitise, or even mobilise the population more than one who uses a video conference or the phone. Obiora (2011) says the use of songs, dances, drama, local

language to teach, people new farming techniques, encourage them to be self-reliant, acquire good education and health habits, stop harmful traditional practices and participate in community work, also constitute effective traditional communication strategies among the manyu people. For him, the audience sees the communicator and asked questions where necessary. Feedback and necessary clarifications are made for effective communication.

### **What attention and focus should be given to the Kenyang traditional techniques of communication to prepare them for the digital Era?**

Such attention would require the Kenyang community as a whole to embark on language engineering processes in order to render valuable their oral traditional means of communication. The fact that the present Constitution of the Cameroon government underscores the promotion of indigenous languages is already an added advantage to the speakers of the language to promote theirs. Also important is the fact that they should ensure the standardization of their language, by so doing the communication system will stand the challenge of the time. Of course in a country like Cameroon with over 247 national languages with the support of the government to encourage such language engineering process is not without difficulties. The fact is that their very existence is threatened today especially in towns and cities where more and more young people tend to use the official languages from childhood. According to Bitja'a (2001), findings from an earlier study carried out on language use in the city of Yaoundé reveal that 32% of young people between 10 and 17 years old in Yaoundé do not speak any Cameroonian indigenous language. French is their only language of communication. The author affirms that this population is bound to increase in an exponential manner by the next generation, given that such Cameroonians will not be in a position to transmit the indigenous languages to their children. The Kenyang language is not left out of this drama. But if the language committee takes it as a duty to re-enforce their communication tools for example by bringing up educational movies, cartoons, games and other entertainment programs for the children and youths in the language, we think this language will stand the challenges of the era.

### **Conclusion**

We have focused our discussion on the place of traditional techniques of communication within the Kenyang language community. We started by presenting the language and the speakers. Next, we discussed the traditional techniques of communication that are being used within the community in question. After that, we presented the digital era and its characteristic, and answered the question as to whether the communication techniques used by the Kenyang speakers are able to survive the digital era. We finally presented some suggestions to the Kenyang community. It was revealed that the Kenyang communicative techniques are still effective because they are still being used by the speakers of the language and they still respect and fulfil the function of communication within that community, which is interacting, exchanging ideas, feelings, emotions, through the various techniques describe in section two of this work. Also important is the fact that the work demonstrates that communication is culture and nothing can replace the Kenyang traditional ways, because it does not need money, it is at the disposal of everybody be it young, old, rich or poor. It is the best method to educate sensitise, mobilise, teach, encourage, interact and safe guard the identity of the Manyu people. In effect, the Manyu people will always use their oral traditional ways to maintain effective communication among themselves no matter the Era. We finally gave some suggestions on how to upgrade the communication system of the Kenyang language to incorporate the children and the youths that may be carried away with the new communication technology.

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