

(Re)generation of Speech Community: The case of G|ui and G||ana of the Central Kalahari

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Of Chebanne's many scholarly contributions, I have been inspired by his work on language use among ethnic minorities. Based on my anthropological research among the G|ui and G||ana, this paper examines the social situations in which their languages are learned. Through this analysis, I show that not only recording imitable grammar and vocabulary but also maintaining activities and places to use such linguistic resources contributes greatly to the reproduction of the speech community. Furthermore, I will argue that the key to promoting the regeneration of a speech community is to activate language practices not only through formal education but also through informal socialization and nonformal education.

Keywords: Speech Community, G|ui and G||ana, Formal Education, Informal Socialization, Nonformal Education

1. Linguistic minorities in the modern nation-state

The social and linguistic positioning of linguistic minorities has been a crucial issue in the construction of the modern nation-state. Since meeting Dr. Andy Chebanne in the late 1990s, I have gained a lot of inspiration from his work on this issue.¹ Like Andy, I have studied the people generally referred to as

¹ Andy and I first met at the Linguistic Association of SADC Universities (LASU) Conference in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 1998, although Andy may not remember. At the time, Namibia was still reeling from the excitement of gaining independence. As a graduate student just beginning my anthropological fieldwork, I was at the mercy of administrative application procedures for obtaining a research permit in Windhoek, a city that was in turmoil as it worked to establish a new political and administrative system. Simultaneously, Carrie Marias, a UNESCO staff member to whom I was indebted at the time, recommended that I attend the lively international LASU Conference. The conference was a gathering not only for linguists from SADC and other countries but also for local community members, school and church officials, and staff from international organizations including the United Nations. All participants actively and enthusiastically discussed language policies, educational practices, and language structures in broad parts of Africa. Such meetings bridging various social categories are common nowadays, but it was new to me, as I had known only academia-oriented research at the time. LASU gave me a taste of what it was like to develop a career as an African Studies researcher.

One conference participant who spoke kindly to me, despite my being a newcomer who could not yet speak English, was Andy. Back then, he was a faculty member at the University of Botswana, and at the conference, he presented the results of his sociolinguistic research in Cuaa and led a stimulating discussion on language extinction. After his session, we enjoyed a friendly conversation, and I asked many questions. He seemed to have a soft demeanour and social manner but, at the same time, was calmly analysing the situation and creating some social distance from the people around him in the heat of the moment. Having studied in various research communities in southern Africa and Europe with his naturally brilliant intellect, Andy not only shared the same high ideals and bright future prospects about the language situations in southern Africa with other attendants of LASU, but also saw that they could not be reached easily with only temporary excitement and the various scholarly, political, and economic difficulties that people would have to go through to get there. I think Andy's career, marked by outstanding

the San. They are thought to be indigenous to southern Africa and are known as (post)hunter-gatherers. Hitchcock (2012: 76) estimated the total population of the San at over 100,000, and they are distributed broadly across southern Africa, particularly in Botswana and Namibia. Although the San previously inhabited a much wider area than they do today, they have been gradually pushed into the area surrounding the Kalahari Desert by white colonization and by the southward movement of the Bantu, beginning in the last part of the 17th century. In actuality, the overarching San language group is composed of many smaller language groups that have often been called Khoisan languages.

The members of Khoisan language groups are largely characterised by socioeconomic hardships and illiteracy—in their own languages and in general (Chebanne and Dlali 2019). According to Chebanne and Dlali (2019), historically and socially, San-speaking people mainly lived a nomadic lifestyle, and they were often subdued and exploited by neighbouring agropastoralists for cheap and serf labour. Colonialism and post-colonialism left them in the same social state. As poor and marginalised subalterns, they have been largely unable to advocate for their language and culture, and some have been assimilated into other peoples' languages and cultures. Consequently, the remaining languages of these communities are largely spoken in remote areas by poor people and remain underdeveloped, under-documented, and threatened with extinction. As illiterate people, the speakers of Khoisan languages have few survival strategies for their languages in an ever-evolving, modern world. Moreover, many Khoisan languages have not received full recognition in the policies conceived and implemented within the framework of the nation-state. The situation is particularly serious in Botswana, where Setswana (Tswana language) speakers constitute the overwhelming majority.

The provisions of the Botswana administrative and official languages practice (cf. Article 60 (d) of the Constitution), constitutional articles 77 and 78, and various official pronouncements on language policy (cf. NDP 7) effectively declare Botswana indigenously and linguistically a mono-ethnic country. Consequently, only the Setswana-speaking ethnic groups have ex-officio representation in the House of Chiefs (cf. the Chieftainship Act) (Chebanne and Dlali 2019: 221). Furthermore, suppression of other languages and cultures through deliberate assimilation policies was perceived as a good strategy of nation-building because it was assumed that everyone could speak Setswana in Botswana (Batibo 2011). English, the language of the former sovereign nation and still the main medium of instruction in higher education, has a special status as an official language along with Setswana. In basic education, based on the “one nation consensus” (Werbner 2004: 38-39), Setswana has been the main medium of instruction since the founding of the country. Students are divided into two groups, Setswana-speakers and non-Setswana-speakers, and the latter have been disadvantaged compared to the former, not only in schooling but also in many other aspects of social life. Among non-Setswana speakers, socioeconomically influential groups such as the Kalanga have gained some recognition in official discourse, but this does not apply to the speakers of the Khoisan languages, who are usually impoverished.

Despite adequate coverage in the linguistic study of Khoisan languages of southern Africa, the specific ethnic composition of the Khoisan in Botswana has either not been known or has been ignored in official discourse (Chebanne and Dlali 2019: 221-222). Apart from the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and missionary activities, very little has been happening for Khoisan languages in the effort to promote literacy in mother tongue-based (MTB) education in Botswana (Batibo 2011:

achievements both academically and administratively, is proof of his enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

4-5). Consequently, Botswana's language-use policy has been critically examined and characterised as one factor in the marginalisation and disempowerment of minority groups, both of which lead to the languages' endangerment and death (Chebanne and Dlali 2019: 219).

Thus, except for a few languages, such as *Naro*, which received early missionary support (Visser 1998), researchers have claimed that most Khoisan languages are in danger of "language death" (e.g., Brenzinger 2003; Chebanne and Dlali 2019). While I share this sense of crisis, one should be wary of the phrase "language death", which evokes the end of the biological lives of the language group. The analogy between language and biology naturally has limitations. Language disappears not when the members of an individual group perish biologically but when the language spoken by them is no longer learned by the people around them. Unlike genes, which replicate through generations and rarely mutate, language is constantly changing. Even the language spoken by one individual changes according to the social situation (Goffman 1964). Based on the results of my long-term anthropological research among the *G|ui* and *G||ana*, two neighbouring groups of the San, the following section examines the social situations in which their languages (*G|ui* and *G||ana* languages) are learned within and across generations.

2. The *G|ui* and *G||ana* of the Central Kalahari

Notwithstanding the geographical remoteness of their living area, the *G|ui* and *G||ana* have become well-known worldwide through a number of interdisciplinary studies. These studies have demonstrated that the *G|ui* and *G||ana* are closely related in various aspects of their societies including kinship, language, rituals, and folk knowledge (cf. Silberbauer 1965; Tanaka 1980; Tanaka & Sugawara 2010; Takada 2016).

The *G|ui* and *G||ana* are said to have lived a nomadic lifestyle in the central Kalahari Desert for a long time. In 1961, the Bechuanaland Protectorate established a vast total area of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (hereafter CKGR), which spreads over an area of 52,000 km². The CKGR almost perfectly overlaps with the living area of the *G|ui* and *G||ana*, who call this area *Tc 'amnqoo* or *?Amn!oo* (Kiema 2010: 11,13). This overlap is reasonable because Dr. George Silberbauer, an anthropologist who was appointed as a 'Bushmen Survey Officer' by the Bechuanaland Protectorate, recommended a boundary that encompassed the living area of the *G|ui* and *G||ana* in order to enable them to maintain their traditional subsistence pattern (Silberbauer 1965: 132-138). For a time after the establishment of the CKGR, the nomadic lifestyle of these groups continued. The composition of camps, which was temporally formed as a residential unit based on parent-offspring or sibling ties, was quite open and flexible, and frequent fission and fusion of the residential groups were observed (Tanaka 1980).

Since the 1970s, however, the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) has affected most of the San living in the Republic of Botswana. Local infrastructure, including wells, schools, and clinics, has been developed at several settlement sites built within the CKGR. The settlement sites have severely impacted these peoples' cultures. The *G|ui* and *G||ana*, as well as the *Kgalagadi* (a group of Bantu agropastoral people who have been in close contact with the *G|ui* and *G||ana*), gradually started to gather at the settlements. *!Koi !kom*, which is administratively called Xade, became the largest *G|ui* and *G||ana* community in Botswana, where the *G|ui* and *G||ana* were the main residents.

In 1985, Quett Ketumile Joni Masire, then president of Botswana, appointed a fact-finding mission to determine whether the community remaining in CKGR was economically and ecologically viable. Based on the results of the mission, the government decided in 1986 to encourage CKGR residents to resettle outside the reserve. The official reason was that "many residents of the CKGR were becoming settled agriculturalists, raising crops, and rearing livestock" and that "these land uses, especially

livestock husbandry, are not compatible with preserving wildlife resources” (The Government of Botswana: <http://www.gov.bw/basarwa/background.html>). Eleven years later, many of the *!Koi !kom* residents who agreed to relocate began to move to *Kx'oensa kene* (administratively called New Xade), a new settlement established outside the CKGR. The migration continued to progress thereafter, and groups of people with various sociohistorical backgrounds started to live together in *Kx'oensa kene*. Depending on the developmental scheme created by the government's housing planner, each family is obliged to live on a plot of land measuring 25m×40m (hereafter, the plot). In 1999, within the surface area, which covers approximately 2 km², the government allotted more than 300 residential plots, in which more than 400 huts were built, and established a variety of public facilities such as clinics and schools. More than 1000 *G|ui* and *G||ana* people were living in crowded conditions within the residential area and surrounding agricultural fields. The population was larger if non-*G|ui* and *G||ana* were included in the figure (Takada 2002). The population increased to more than 1600 in 2022 (Noguchi and Takada, submitted). Prior to relocation, the *!Koi !kom* residents, who are the largest population in present-day *Kx'oensa kene*, comprised three major language groups, namely *G|ui* and *G||ana*, and *Kgalagadi*. As the above procedure of relocation indicates, the government initially aimed to segregate the residential area of *Kx'oensa kene* by ethnic group. However, according to Kiema (2010), the *Kgalagadi* thought that the relocation targeted only the San, and that calling themselves '*Kgalagadi*' would mean that they could not benefit from government services in the new settlement. Thus, many of them registered themselves as *G|ui* and *G||ana*, and *Kgalagadi* people were consequently scattered all over the village (ibid. 138).

Because the government initially implemented relocation for those who agreed to move, a considerable number of people chose to remain in the villages within the CKGR. However, in 2002, the government cut the water supply and other services to the remaining villages in the CKGR and sent officials and trucks to ensure that all remaining residents moved. The First People of the Kalahari, a local NGO that fought for the rights of the San, filed a case against this policy implementation, claiming that it was a forced relocation. After a long legal battle, 243 residents who had moved to *Kx'oensa kene* in 2002 were allowed to go back to the villages inside the CKGR in 2006. Despite this landmark court victory, however, it is still difficult for the *G|ui* and *G||ana* to make a sustainable living inside the CKGR. Notably, the right to freely enter the CKGR was not granted to most of the *G|ui* and *G||ana* who were relocated before 2002. Bringing domestic animals that were outside the reserve into the CKGR was also prohibited. The government has not restarted many services at the villages inside the CKGR. As a result, a majority of former CKGR community residents, including those in communities other than *!Koi !kom*, have resettled at *Kx'oensa kene*, *Kaudwane*, and *Xere*, all of which are situated outside the CKGR.

Since relocation outside the reserve began, a multidisciplinary research team, of which I am a member, has been conducting intensive field research among the *G|ui* and *G||ana* (Takada 2016). It quickly became obvious that relocation had substantially impacted the lives of the *G|ui* and *G||ana*. For instance, useful game and plants are scarce outside the CKGR. Indeed, this scarcity is the reason that the *G|ui* and *G||ana* have not lived in this area for a long time. Although the *G|ui* and *G||ana* had accumulated immense knowledge of landmarks that enabled them to move freely throughout a wide range in the Kalahari, most of their landmarks were not distributed within their new environment (Takada 2006). The government encouraged them to engage in other subsistence activities such as herding livestock, cultivating farms, and engaging in wage labour (Takada 2002).

3. Reproducing minority speech communities

Unlike Noam Chomsky, who attempted to approach the universal human capacity to produce language through deductive methods, Dell Hymes emphasized communicative competence (Hymes 1972) and sought to develop an interdisciplinary field (“Ethnography of Speaking” or “Ethnography of Communication”) to explore human nature based on empirical data on language use in diverse cultures. He believed that linguistics and social anthropology could make a particularly important contribution to such a field (Hymes 1963: 277). This approach has developed into linguistic anthropology. I have promoted linguistic anthropological studies of the Khoisan languages based on this approach (e.g., Takada 2006, 2008).

Most communities where Khoisan languages are spoken (hereafter Khoisan communities) have been not only poor but also illiterate, in their own languages and in the country’s official languages (Cassidy et al. 2001; Batibo 2011). That is, most Khoisan communities have not had the means to organise the promotion of their languages and cultures (Chebanne 2015). As a result, the children gradually stopped speaking Khoisan languages, began to have difficulty communicating with the older generation, and eventually lost respect for the elders and their way of life; in many cases, the entire community lost the Khoisan language and culture.

However, this is not the inevitable path for minority languages in all regions. In Botswana there has been a growing recent trend to rethink schooling in languages other than Setswana (Noguchi and Takada, submitted). Some minority languages, such as *Naro*—for which linguistic resources including orthography and dictionaries, and the human resources to use them, have been developed as a result of years of work by the Dutch Reformed Church and related organizations—are being considered for introduction as a medium language for primary education. If this is successful, other minority languages, including *G|ui* and *G||ana*, may have the opportunity for a similar review. In relation to this, the Dutch Reformed Church made and distributed digital voice players of Bible sermons read in *G||ana* by a *Kx'oensa kene* resident. During my stay in *Kx'oensa kene* in 2022, I met several residents who were listening to them. Such practices are important because for the reproduction of the speech community, it is necessary to not only record the grammar and vocabulary of the language so that they can be used beyond the here and now, but also to (re)vitalise activities and places for the use of these linguistic resources. The following analysis will also indicate this.

At the time of my research in *Kx'oensa kene*, the educational institutions consisted of a primary school, which provided children with formal education from preschool to standard 7, and the Out of School Education and Training (OSET), which was the promoter of non-formal education (see 4.3). The total number of pupils from preschool to standard 7 in the primary school was 555 (of which the number of day schoolers was over 400). In addition, socialization through daily activities at home and in the community was particularly important for *G|ui/G||ana*, who lived a nomadic lifestyle without a schooling system for a long time. In the following, I will analyse the characteristics of *G|ui/G||ana* speech communities’ reproduction in *Kx'oensa kene* by dividing them into formal education centring on the primary school, informal socialization in the *G|ui/G||ana* household and community, and nonformal education in the OSET.

3.1. Formal education. Since its founding, Botswana has made great efforts to establish a nation-state and modernize its education system, from basic education to higher education. These efforts have been successful to a certain extent. For instance, the government of Botswana (Republic of Botswana & United Nations 2004) has declared that they have achieved universal access to basic education. San groups, including *G|ui* and *G||ana*, have been the main targets of the RADP, and the government has

encouraged them to register for formal schools. If the government finds children who do not go to school after reaching school age, they conduct outreach activities in the framework of the RADP. According to a social worker interviewed by me in 2022, such children were sent to one of 11 settlements, including *Kx'oensa kene*, to receive education while living in a hostel, away from their parents.

The development of these settlements and the establishment of schools there have contributed to the reproduction of the speech community significantly in that they have brought together the *G|ui* and *G||ana* people, who make up a large part of RADP's target population and prepared social situations in which their children engage in educational activities. However, these educational activities were based on a de facto policy of integration into Tswana, and it is difficult to say that sufficient attention has been paid to ethnic minorities in Botswana. According to Trudell (2016), Setswana was the medium of instruction in standards 1 to 4, while English was taught as a subject in those grades. English then became the medium of instruction from standard 5 to the tertiary level, while Setswana was taught as a subject (Trudell 2016: 18). In contrast, Namibia, Botswana's neighbour, has promoted MTB education in the first three years of primary school since independence in 1990 and has explored a new rationale for education (Sguazzin and Graan 1999). According to Le Roux (1999: 34-35), the neglect of minority languages in Botswana was often aired simultaneously with complaints about the lack of land and political representation for minorities. The situation gave the issue of MTB education in Botswana a politically sensitive slant. Although the task force for the establishment of the Botswana Languages Council recommended MTB education in schools to the Ministry of Education in 1997, the recommendation was shelved by parliament until recently. While in theory the principle has been admitted, the implementation has been suspended due to lack of adequate materials in languages other than Setswana. Consequently, conflicts regarding the education and socialization of San children continue to rage. At the heart of such arguments is the medium of instruction, teaching style, and learning opportunities for minority children.

Nevertheless, there has been renewed discussion in Botswana's government about introducing MTB education, which would contribute greatly to the political recognition and socio-cultural reproduction of the speech community. According to the principal of K'joe Primary School (see below), whom I spoke to in 2022 during my research period, the proposed MTB education project includes *Naro* but not *G|ui* or *G||ana* yet. Also, several project sites have already been selected, but *Kx'oensa kene* is not one of them. The utterance indicates that the introduction of local languages in the school curriculum is divided into two phases: *Naro* is targeted in the first phase, while *G|ui* and *G||ana* in the second phase.²

K'joe Primary School in *Kx'oensa kene* was named after the word *K'joe (c'úĩ)*, which means "good" or "beautiful" in the *G|ui* and *G||ana* languages. The mother tongues of most students there were *G|ui*, *G||ana*, *Kgalagadi*, or *Naro*. Under the current situation, however, school authorities encouraged or forced use of Setswana after entering preschool or standard 1. The mother tongue of almost all teachers (20 out of 21) was Setswana, except for one teacher of San origin. All of them graduated at the diploma level to be qualified as a teacher. One assistant teacher per class was allocated in standards 1 and 2, and they supported the language use for children as needed. Like formal schools in other San communities (Wagner 2006; Hays 2016), corporal punishments, such as lower arm or hand caning, were reported as

² I thank the anonymous reviewer for bringing this point to my attention.

happening at K'joe Primary School. This might have been relevant to the Setswana teaching style, which has often been characterized as emphasizing adherence to discipline (Akiyama 2013; Noguchi and Takada, submitted).

Students originating from several different villages and camps were enrolled at K'joe Primary School. They came to school from their parents' plots in *Kx'oensa kene*, or from friends' or relatives' houses in *Kx'oensa kene* if their parents did not have plots in *Kx'oensa kene*. Some stayed in the school hostel if they were from a remote area, such as the villages remaining in the CKGR. Over 150 children stayed in the school hostel, and almost all went back to their home villages during the long vacation. In this regard, the school hostel has changed the membership composition of people in the settlements inside and outside the CKGR, contributing to the division between generations and affecting the reproduction of the speech community, including the socialization process to traditional and modern knowledge. At school, Setswana was adopted as the medium of instruction in standard 1. Over standard 2, all subjects were taught in English except the *Setswana* class as a subject. Teachers helped the students understand Setswana, and this seemed to be burdensome and stressful for many students. Thirty-four (6.1%) out of 555 children dropped out of formal school in 2022 (Noguchi & Takada, submitted). Although preschool was provided in *Kx'oensa kene* in order to promote the smooth transition to standard 1, the drop-out ratio was still high, as in the *!Koi !kom (Xade)* period in 1997 (Akiyama 2013). 'Tswanization' through education was also observed in extracurricular activities. When I visited *Kx'oensa kene* in 2022, a beauty contest was held at the primary school. Such competitive events are popular in *Tswana* society but were rarely seen in *G|ui* and *G||ana* traditional culture and society. At this beauty contest, a prince and princess were chosen from the nominees in the lower grades, and a portion of the donations collected from the audience was used to pay for the secondary school fees of standard 7 students.

3.2. Informal socialization. When the *G|ui/G||ana* lived a nomadic lifestyle based on subsistence hunting and gathering activities play, and socialization was inextricably linked, and the play-to-work transition was smooth. Children learned to work through playful joint activities with family or peers. That is to say, after a long nursing period lasting several years, children shifted the locus of their attachment to multi-aged child groups, and socialization was achieved through the activities of these child groups. For example, singing and dancing enabled children with diverse physical and cognitive abilities to cooperatively perform their parts accordingly (Takada 2020). Social division of labour was not common in this society except by gender. According to Tanaka (1980: 100-101), as *G|ui/G||ana* children grew up, both boys and girls extended their range of play. Boys were given toy bows and arrows by their fathers or elder brothers and began to hunt small animals, such as rats and birds, imitating adults' behaviour. Girls began helping their mothers on gathering trips when they reached five or six years old. At camp, children absorbed knowledge regarding wild animals and plants while elders sat nearby telling stories of times gone by. Consequently, apart from their physical immaturity and lack of manual dexterity, children of 12 years could behave like adults. In particular, girls contributed greatly to plant gathering, which does not require a high level of skill. On the other hand, boys became full-fledged hunters much later in life because hunting requires both exceptional skill and physical strength. This is one of the reasons why young men could not marry until they reached the age of about 25 years, while girls married as early as their late teenage years.

Although the *G|ui/G||ana* shifted to a sedentary lifestyle in the 1970s, the features of the play-to-work transition persisted. According to Imamura (2015), who commenced fieldwork among the *G|ui/G||ana* in the 1980s, children were not expected to contribute to subsistence activities or to babysit, so they spent most of the daytime in a relaxed manner. They sometimes helped adults work (e.g., seven-

or eight-year-old girls followed adult women gathering food or fetching water), but most of the time they played by themselves. Children often went to the bush and imitated what adults were doing in everyday life, such as singing and dancing, cooking, building huts, hunting and gathering, getting married, and even having sex (Imamura 2015: 192-193).

While girls spent considerable time with adult women, including their mothers, engaged in caring for younger children and gathering wild plants, boys often formed their own groups and played without adult supervision. Although these groups usually consisted of boys aged between five and 12, only boys aged eight or older went deep into the bush. These boys sometimes set traps for birds and small mammals as part of their play activities. When they were successful in this play-hunting, they cooked and ate the game. Boys hunted with toy bows and arrows and slingshots until they reached the age of 12 or 13 years. Older children helped younger children make toys. Around 12 or 13 years of age, boys also started participating in horseback hunting with other young men and adults. Those who had learned how to handle a donkey might go along as porters and observe the experienced hunters. After accompanying other young men a few times, boys learned how to hunt springhare using a pike pole, as well as how to hunt with dogs. Boys learned “how to read nature” through these experiences (Imamura 2016; Imamura and Akiyama 2016: 69-72).

The above types of play-hunting continued to take place long after most *G|ui/G||ana* people were relocated outside of their traditional living area in the late 1990s. Imamura and Akiyama’s (2016) survey conducted in 2005 indicated that all boys aged around ten years already knew the names of most of the major animals, even though they had only seen about half the number of animals as young men aged around 20 years. Imamura and Akiyama (2016) argued that such knowledge of animals became useful only when connected with direct observation of those animals (Imamura and Akiyama 2016: 70-71). Takada (2008) also discussed the rich ecological knowledge and practices among the *G|ui/G||ana*: By examining animal spoor and casts, hunters could determine an incredible amount of information, including the species, sex, number, and size of the animals in question. They were not only able to accurately establish the animals’ movements and direction by observing spoor and other signs but could also estimate the approximate length of time that had elapsed since the animals left these traces, aiding greatly in their pursuit and eventual capture.

Through living such a lifestyle, the *G|ui* and the *G||ana* have had deep, intriguing interpersonal relationships, including inter-marriages, staying in the same camp, and engaging in hunting and gathering activities together. Even so, these two groups have established ‘dual-lingualism’, in which conversation between *G|ui* and *G||ana* speakers is usually done by speaking to each other in their own language (Nakagawa 2004: 198). Children often seemed to acquire their mother’s language, probably through greater exposure and attachment to conversations in her language. Few mixed both languages, and they usually chose which language to use on a daily basis once they reached a certain age. As a result, both languages have survived autonomously.

After resettlement in *Kx'oensa kene*, contact with the *Naro* people increased. The *Naro* have traditionally been found in many villages and towns in the Ghanzi district and engaged in various subsistence activities including hunting and gathering, animal husbandry, agriculture, and piece work for town people. Hearing about the large-scale development projects in *Kx'oensa kene*, *Naro* people increasingly migrated to and visited *Kx'oensa kene*. Some *G|ui/G||ana* people regard the *Naro* language as a superior San (*Kua*) language because it has achieved sociocultural development and has an orthography through missionary activities. The government is also trying to make *Naro* the subject

of MTB education, ahead of other Khoisan languages, as shown above. The *G|ui/G||ana* people have also been increasingly exposed to Setswana in various aspects of their lives, and this accelerated after the resettlement to *Kx'oensa kene*. In addition to the context of schooling, the use of Setswana to describe modern concepts is frequently found in “modern” social situations such as public meetings or village councils (*kgotla*), church meetings, and funerals (Sugiyama 2023).

3.3. Non-formal education. The OSET was established in *Kx'oensa kene* in 2007 by the Department of Non-Formal Education, Ministry of Education. The OSET site, tucked away on the outskirts of *Kx'oensa kene*, has prefabricated classrooms and offices and a small open space used as a workshop. The OSET's main objective is to reach out to children who dropped out of primary or junior secondary schools as well as help adults who want skills training. Setswana, English, mathematics, and general studies are taught in OSET classes. Local people in the community call the OSET *jia gui si* (*G|ui*) or *!tabo gui si* (*G||ana*), both of which mean “help to climb up”. The OSET has been viewed more as an educational facility for older people than for those enrolled in primary school. Children of various ages and different learning levels study in the same class of the OSET. The number of pupils in the OSET was 19 in 2022, and all were from *Kx'oensa kene*. So, the learning environment of the OSET is somewhat similar to that of informal socialization in multi-aged child groups.

The staff of the OSET consisted of three teachers, one assistant teacher, two secretaries, and one janitor. One Setswana speaker, who graduated at a diploma level, acted as both the administrator of the OSET and a teacher. There was also a teacher from *Kgalagadi*, and she could understand *G|ui* and *G||ana* languages and engaged in the adults' department. The third teacher was a *G||ana* speaker. Both the second and third teachers mentioned had been approved for Botswana General Certificate Secondary Education. The assistant teacher was a *G||ana* speaker. All of the teachers and the assistant teachers, except for the teacher with a diploma level, were hired by the National Service Programme (*Tirelo Sechaba*), which is responsible for the creation of opportunities for unemployed young people to gain skills and experience across various industries and business sectors. It should be noted that in Botswana today, there are many people in rural areas who have acquired levels of education that are considered ‘high’ (such as form 5), but they are unable to find jobs. For them, the OSET offers job training and career development. Therefore, this non-formal education setting provides opportunities for self-reliance and development not only for children who dropped out of formal education but also for youth who achieved higher education but are still unemployed (Noguchi and Takada, submitted).

At the OSET, *Setswana* and English were officially adopted as the medium of instruction. However, teachers and an assistant teacher often wrote in *G|ui* and *G||ana* languages. This meant that the teachers and children shared common everyday languages, thus children were able to explain their personal struggles using their own language. Officially, the OSET was expected to provide a pathway for children to re-enter the formal education system. To date, however, no OSET students have returned to finish their formal education. The circulation of human, curricular, and financial resources between formal and non-formal education should be further encouraged (Noguchi and Takada, submitted).

4. Conclusion

The Botswana government's policy of assimilation and integration into Tswana was intended to resolve issues related to “indigenous” and “ethnic” peoples and to foster a sense of national identity. However, many studies, including this study, have shown that the broad classification of people into Tswana and non-*Tswana* only makes people more conscious of the latter's ethnic identity (e.g., Takada 2002; Werbner 2004; Batibo 2011; Chebanne 2015; Sugiyama 2023; Noguchi and Takada, submitted). Rather,

for Botswana, which has already achieved considerable economic development, aiming for a multicultural society while encouraging the reproduction of minority speech communities, such as *G|ui* and *G||ana*, would contribute greatly to making the country a more prosperous, healthy nation in the future. The key to promoting the reproduction of minority speech communities is to activate language practices not only through formal education but also through informal socialisation and nonformal education. In order to incorporate minority languages such as *G|ui* and *G||ana* into formal education, decision-makers in Botswana need to make use of the existing wealth of linguistic research to create teaching materials that motivate learners, train and encourage teachers to use such materials, and promote the use of minority languages in schools. It is also essential to explore ways of involving learners and teachers that are not bound by the conventional framework of formal education. The distinctiveness of caregiver-child interactions in San groups, where socialisation had been achieved without the institutional framework of schooling or classroom activities (Takada 2020), could be a powerful and important model for this kind of endeavour. Nonformal education settings are small enough and flexible enough to accommodate experimentation with such resources and teaching methods. By deepening the exchange of activities and human resources in formal education, informal socialisation, and nonformal education, *Tswana*, *G|ui*, *G||ana*, and other groups will be able to achieve mutual understanding, not by assimilation of non-Tswana into Tswana but by mutual proactive engagement of each with their autonomous collective identity. By strengthening our alliance and solidarity with the future, the next generation of *G|ui* and *G||ana* individuals, minority speech communities such as *G|ui* and *G||ana*, and the whole Botswana society can be transformed into a more flexible, inclusive, and multicultural society.

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