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BILINGUALISM AND LANGUAGE SHIFT IN NAVRONGO¹

(Paper received 1979)

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to outline the nature of bilingualism and language shift found in Navrongo.

"Navrongo" has several meanings, but it should be understood here to refer to that portion of Kasena-Nankani territory under the jurisdiction of Navropio, chief of Navrongo.² Territorial units of comparable status are Paga, Chiana-Katiu, Kayoro, Kolgu, etc.

Navrongo, also known as "Navoro" and "Navoringu" by the Kasena and Nankani people respectively, is believed to have been founded by a man called Butu, who, according to legend, gave the place its name.³ Navrongo comprises the following sub-territorial units:

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| 1) Navoro | 2) Pungu |
| 3) Gean | 4) Pinda |
| 5) Manyoro. | |

Each of these sub-territorial units is a grouping of clans and maximal lineages in a continuous state of segmental opposition.⁴ Although Pinda and Manyoro now owe allegiance to the Navropio, this used not to be so before the intervention of the British. In former days when Navrongo went to war with Paga, Pinda and Manyoro stayed out of the conflict.

In almost all of these sub-territorial units two groups of people are identified: the autochthonous group and the immigrant group. The autochthonous groups have custody of the earth shrines and claim to have lived in caves before the advent of the immigrants who are believed to have taught them to live in mud huts. The immigrants brought along with them some chiefly powers believed to be capable of bringing prosperity to the locality and were therefore accepted by the autochthonous group as politico-religious leaders.

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0.1 Navoro comprises two important composite clans: Zigna and Gwala bia. There are also groups from Biu, Po and Chuchuliga in Navoro.

The Zegna come from Zekko, a place believed to be near Bongo, in Nankani country. The founder of the clan, Butu, migrated to present day Navoro in the company of his sister. He was later joined by the founder of Doba, another Zekko man. Today members of the Zegna Clan constitute a majority in a number of village-settlements in Navoro. These include Nogsania, Wurru, Nangalkinia, Doba and Gongonia.

The Gwala Clan is believed by some to be autochthonous.⁵ The following village settlements are occupied by lineages of the Gwala Clan: Korenia, Bwania, Nawognia, Bndumnia, Yighania, Vonania, Gaani and Taampala.

Bwania contains attached lineages believed to have originated from Chuchuliga, seven miles west of Navrongo. The land owning lineage in Wurru is believed to have descended from a cave-dweller. These formerly cave-dwelling lineages are believed to be of Biu origin.

Gaane, Vonania and Janania are supposed to have elements from Po or Tiebele in Southern Upper Volta. The origin of Namolo is not very clear as informants are not in agreement on it. While some consider the Namato as belonging to the same clan as Vonania and Janania, others relate them to the Wusim clan in Pungu. The Beninia lineage of Namolo is a blacksmith's lineage and is considered an off-shoot of Pnyoro in Pungu.

Nayagnia is intercalary between Pungu and Navoro. The lineages inhabiting the land there are related to the Wusim sub-clan in Pungu, but they used to consider Namolo and Nangalkinia as their landlords.

0.2 Pungu has a sub-chief who owes allegiance to Navropio. Before British intervention, the Pungu chief may have been of comparable status with Navropio. Both Pungu and Navoro plus other satellites united to fight Paga. Villages coming under the jurisdiction of Pungu Plo include Telania, Bavognia, Bawiu, Manchoro, Nembasania, Wusangu, Nyangoa, Pnyoro, Yiteria and Saboro. The chiefship of Pungu is vested in the Bavognia lineage while the Telania lineage controls the earth shrine. The arrangement is symptomatic of the diverse origins of the lineages in Pungu. Telania are believed to be autochthonous in Pungu ^{Their} / ancestors, they claim, were a cave-dwelling group.

0.3 Gean⁶ comprises three settlements, Nangwao, Batiu and Nabwio. The first owes allegiance to Navropio, but the remaining two come under the jurisdiction of Paga Pio. The whole of the territory of Gean belongs to the Adinyina lineage of Nangwao and since this lineage owes allegiance to Navropio, on that strength, the whole of Gean has been included under Navrongo in this discussion. On other grounds Gean may be considered as an intercalary unit between Paga and Navrongo.

Custody of the earthshrine in Gean vests in the Adinyina lineage. They claim to be the autochthonous group: their ancestor was a cave-dweller of Biu origin. The Kwo Songo lineage controls the office of eldership in Gean. This lineage is affiliated to the Zegna clan in Navrongo; its ancestor was a (great) grandson of Butu, the putative ancestor of the Zegna clan.

Nabwio and Batiu are considered as stranger lineages founded by immigrants from Baloo, Kajelo, Nyannia and Paga respectively. There is also an accessory lineage - sister's offspring - who migrated from Naao, now in ruins, to Gean.

0.4 Pinda is a small entity vis a vis units of comparable political status. It is also considered a very old settlement - perhaps as old as Biu. The legend about the founding of Paga states that Pinda was already in existence before Nave, the founder of Paga came into that locality from Kampala.⁷

The history of Manyoro is not known to the writer but tradition in Navrongo relates it to Punyoro in Pungu and Kayoro. All three settlements are traditionally blacksmithing settlements but a curious legend suggests that Kayoro was the cradle from which some blacksmiths migrated eastward to found Punyoro and Manyoro.

It can be seen from the brief historical sketch based on oral tradition that Navrongo was a meeting place of peoples of diverse origins and, probably, speaking a variety of languages. We now group the various villages according to dominant language in use and discuss to what extent language shift can be said to have taken place in some of the villages.

1.0. Languages in Use

Languages with significant numbers of speakers in Navrongo include the local languages - Kasem, Nankani and Buli and languages of wider communication. The latter group of languages include the official language of Ghana, English, as well as Hausa and Akan.

Kasem and Nankani are the most widely spoken languages in Navrongo but although they are spoken side by side sometimes by the same people, they are not mutually intelligible.⁸ Kasem is a Grusi language but Nankani, mutually intelligible with Frafra or Gurreni, is a Moore-Dagbani language.

Buli is the language of the Bulsas whose territory lies to the southwest of Navrongo. It is a Moore-Gurma language.⁹ It is not widely spoken in Navrongo despite the fact that there is some amount of intermarriage between the people of Navrongo and the Bulsas. It is important to note that in Biu, Buli is widely spoken - perhaps more widely spoken than Nankani which is the other first language there.¹⁰

Some Akan is understood by the people in this corner of Ghana owing to a seasonal migration to southern Ghana (popularly known as "Kumasi") in quest of jobs and the "good things of life". Until recently ability to speak Akan was the hallmark of the "been-to", in Kasena-Nankani territory.

Hausa is understood by a sizeable number of Navrongo people. Formerly many learnt Hausa outside Navrongo but there is now a new breed of Hausa users who acquired facility in this language through daily attendance in the market at Navrongo.

English is understood and used by the literate in a variety of domains. It is used even in the discussion of topics for which Kasem would be equally, if not more, suitable. For many a literate, English serves as a convenient bridge between Kasem and Nankani, being more neutral. Interlarding is a common phenomenon with the literate sector of the population but some illiterate or marginally literate people frequently affect it whenever they wish to put on airs.

1.1 Grouping of Villages

The lineages which combine to constitute the various clans in Navrongo are based in villages. These villages will now be grouped according to language use. Group "A" villages are monolingual while Group "B" villages are bilingual. Group "A" villages have been further sub-grouped into Group "A1" and Group "A2". Inhabitants of Group "A1" villages are monoglot Kasem speakers but those of Group "A2" villages speak Nankani. There are also Group "C" villages where one section speaks Nankani and the other Kasem.

1.1.1 Group A1 Villages

Membership of Group "A1" includes the following villages.

- 1) Gean (all sections)
- 2) All villages of Pungu except Punyoro
- 3) The whole of Pinda
- 4) Wuru
- 5) Nogsenia
- 6) Namolo
- 7) Nawognia
- 8) Yoglobinia.

An examination of oral traditions suggests that although Kasem is now being spoken and used in nearly all domains in these villages. There was a time when other languages were also used.

In the case of Nogsenia and Namolo it was only recently that there was a complete shift to Kasem. In the Kabagnia section of Nogsenia and in Namolo nearly everybody above the age of 30 years understands and can speak Nankani fluently. Many personal names are still in Nankani but the majority of young people below the age of 30 have Kasem rather than Nankani names.

In both villages sacrifices to important fetishes and shrines are accompanied by prayers spoken wholly or partly in Nankani. This is because the ancestors of these people once spoke Nankani rather than Kasem.

The case of Nogsenia is particularly interesting. The founder was Nogse, the son of Butu. Nogse was supposed to have had several wives and many children who in turn were the ancestors of the various lineages in Nogsenia. Members of the Jampia, Bawia and Bagwe major lineages in Nogsenia replaced Nankani with Kasem probably a very long time ago. The names of the founders Jampia, Bawia and Bagwe are Kasem and not Nankani and very few members of these lineages now speak Nankani. Yet all members of these lineages agree that they are descendants of a Nankani man, Butu. The common explanation given is that the mother or mothers of the founders of these lineages were Kasena women. The language of the mother of an ancestor is however, not enough to account for wholesale language shift unless succeeding generations exhibited a propensity to marry women who spoke the same language as the mother of the lineage ancestor.

The Kabagnia section of Nogsenia is also believed by some knowledgeable persons in Nogsenia to have descended from Nogse.¹¹ If this is true then Nankani probably survived there for a longer period because the men folk of this lineage exhibited a propensity to marry women who spoke Nankani rather than Kasem. On the other hand the Kabagnia lineage may well be a different group altogether. This perhaps explains their custody of the earth shrine. They may in fact be the indigenous Biu inhabitants found there by the Zekko immigrants. According to some versions of the Butu legend, the Zekko immigrants lived with the Biu cave-dwellers for a while before building a separate compound for themselves.¹² If the Kabagnia lineages are descendants of a Biu man then they may have spoken Nankani or Bili as first language, given that even today Nankani and Bili are the main languages spoken in Biu.¹³

The tentative account of language shift provided above for Nogsenia could be replicated in the case of many other Group 'A1' villages. This would certainly be the case if Wuru and Gean were examined from the point of view of language shift. Both places once had Biu elements before the advent of the Zegna lineages there. The name Wuru cannot be of Nankani etymology because we find places with similar names in other parts of Kasemland but none in Nankani land. The name Gean, however, is of Nankani etymology and means "ebony tree" (diospyros mespiliformis). This name was given by the founder of the Zegna lineage in Gean. Yet today Gean is

wholly Kasem speaking; all personal names are in Kasem including even the names of important earth shrines like "Chichire" and "Puwura". "Kunzongo" is probably the only shrine with a non-Kasem name.

Nawognia is Kasem-speaking. The name derives from a Buli phrase Naari wogi which is an insult meaning "long mouth" or "strong mouth", and was acquired through hostile interaction with Bulsas from Chuchuliga in the days when the ancestors of Nawognia, i.e. Nawoga, lived on the banks of Nawog Tono river.¹⁴ Like its siblings, the ancestors of Nawognia must have spoken Nankani, and Buli also, as a result of interaction with the Bulsas.

Whatever language or languages were originally spoken by the ancestors of Nawognia, these had been replaced by Kasem. This shift coincided with the migration of Nawoga and his lineage from the eastern banks of Tono, also known as Nawog - Tono, to their present territory about 1 mile south of Navrongo, onto land once belonging to Namolo.

Pinda is probably the only Group 'A1' village where Kasem has always been spoken - perhaps the cradle of Kasem in the locality of Navrongo.¹⁵

1.1.2 Group 'A2' Villages

It is hard to say whether there are villages in Navrongo where inhabitants are monoglot Nankani speakers. Possible candidates are however Gaani and Doba. Much of Doba is bilingual but people living in compounds bordering on Kadiga to the east tend to speak and understand only Nankani. Doba will be discussed more fully under Group 'B' villages.

Gaani is located about six miles south of Navrongo town, at the southern periphery of what is here known as "Navrongo". Although the majority of people in Gaani probably speak only Nankani, legend relates that their founding ancestor was an immigrant hunter from Tie bele, a Kasem-speaking territory in the Upper Volta.¹⁶ The founder of Gaani was settled near Lake Kulnaba by a friendly man from Bui, probably in the latter's capacity as earth priest.

From the onset the cradle of Gaani probably spoke Kasem but inter-marriage and general intercourse with Nankani people in the neighbourhood soon led to the replacement of Kasem with Nankani.

As in Group 'A' villages where Nankani may be retained for use in a limited number of domains Gaani people may use some Kasem in certain rituals, particularly in sacrificial prayers to the founding ancestors.

Although the shift from Kasem to Nankani may have taken place a long time ago there is now an incentive in the acquisition of Kasem as a second language for use in out-group situations. This has been caused by the elevation of Navrongo town to the status of District Headquarters, with a bigger market, job opportunities and educational facilities not provided elsewhere in the neighbourhood.

1.1.3 Group 'B' Villages

Inhabitants of Group 'B' villages are predominantly bilingual in Kasem and Nankani. Villages such as Korania, Rundunna, Gongonia, Jaanania, Vonania and Punyoro speak Nankani as first language and Kasem as second language.

In almost all the villages where Nankani is first language and Kasem second language, funeral dirges are sung in Kasem. There does not appear to be any particular reason why Gongonia people, who are descendants of a Zekko man, should sing funeral dirges in Kasem since their ancestor was a Nankani man.¹⁷ Jaanania and Vonania may also sacrifice to some of their ancestors in Kasem in view of the tradition which describes their ancestor as a Kasem man from Po.¹⁸

For most other in-group domains Nankani would be used in these villages but Kasem is generally understood and spoken in out-group situations. Punyoro people offer sacrifices to yoro, the blacksmiths' shrine, and their ancestral shrines in Nankani. Among village people Nankani is used but Kasem is preferred whenever an outsider who speaks Kasem is one of the group. Traditional singing is in Kasem rather than in Nankani and personal names are in both languages, with Nankani names outnumbering Kasem names probably by a small margin.

Nankani and Kasem have more or less comparable status in Punyoro but in Vonania and Jaanania Nankani is dominant. Distance from Kasem-speaking neighbours and nearness to Nankani-speaking neighbours appears to determine the strength of the interacting languages in Group 'B' villages. Punyoro

is more or less surrounded by Kasem-speaking villages of Pungu but Jaanania and Vonania are located between Gaani in the south and Kasem-speaking villages in the north and this would appear to explain the strength of Nankani vis a vis Kasem in these villages. Rundunniz and Gongonia use more Kasem than Jaanania and Vonania because they are nearer to Kasem villages. Inhabitants of Korania who have their compounds adjacent to those of the Yikuri lineage in Nangalkinia speak more Kasem than their village neighbours living farther south.

Doba, as was mentioned earlier, is not easily classified in terms of language use; while inhabitants living near Kandiga tend to be monoglot speakers of Nankani those of them living nearer Nayagnia speak both Nankani and Kasem.

Doba is a mixture of people with different origins. Butu was supposed to have first settled in Doba but there must have been already in existence a more indigenous group.¹⁹ Superimposed on this mosaic were immigrants from Kasem-speaking Wusungu in Pungu.²⁰ All these people now speak Nankani but Kasem is employed for various purposes. Some people from Doba bear Kasem names like Pwayijong, Awe, Agayire, Nahemiei etc. Funeral dirges are probably sung in both Kasem and Nankani and so are sacrificial prayers. Doba people would however compose folk songs in Nankani rather than in Kasem.

Bwania and Yigbania constitute a sub-group of Group "B" villages. Together with Korania and Nawognia etc. The authentic lineage groups in these villages trace descent patrilineally to Gwala. They probably spoke Nankani in the past but Kasem now predominates as first language and Nankani is a second language. Most inhabitants of Bwania and Yigbania speak both languages although knowledge of Nankani is declining fast. Some Buli is also spoken in Bwania by an accessory lineage there. Nankani personal names still exist but Kasem ones predominate.

The accessory lineage mentioned above inhabits the section of Bwania known as Agona bisi. It is attached to the Bayania lineage. This expression is a Buli one and suggests the ancillary status of the group concerned. The name Bwania, however, is a Kasem phrase. Its etymology is unknown to the writer but the belief that it is Kasem is supported by the existence of the same name in other parts of Kasemland viz. Chiana.

Folktales found in Bwania contain Buli songs and Kasem songs and both narrators and listeners have no problems singing these songs. The presence of Buli in folk tales is however the result of borrowing. Inter-marriages between Bwania and Chuchuliga, the nearest Buli-speaking territory, and the frequent visits by village farming and funeral parties to either side has made it possible to assimilate each others language. Chuchuliga like Bwania is bilingual in Buli and Kasem.²¹

Despite the multilingualism prevalent in Bwania, the people compose their folk songs in Kasem. The choice of what language to compose is may be pragmatic. The place where it pays best in terms of rewards to the musician is Navrongo market. There, Kasem is the predominant language. Chuchuliga market is comparatively small and Sandema market is too far away to attract musicians from Bwania.

Group 'C' Villages

Only two villages can be grouped in this category. They are Nangalkinia and Nayagnia.

Nangalkinia occupies a territory which borders on Nawogila and Wuru in the north, Yogbania and Korania in the west, Gongonia in the south and Nogsonia in the east. In a word, it lies south of Kasem-speaking villages but north of Nankani-speaking villages. It is not therefore surprising that one half of Nangalkinia speaks Nankani while the other speaks Kasem. Nankani is spoken as in-group language in the southern half of Nangalkinia i.e. the section occupied by the Afabia lineage but the northern half is mixed. The Nayiu and Yikuri lineages now use Kasem for most purposes but the Banga lineage has retained Nankani, which is used occasionally as an in-group language.

Nangalkinia was once wholly Nankani-speaking. The name of the village derives from the Nankani phrase - naam galisiya "chiefship abounds".²² The founder of the village was called Naamgali and was believed to have been one of the sons of Butu. The authentic lineage of Nangalkinia was a Nankani lineage by origin. Almost every compound in Nangalkinia still bears a Nankani name and most people in the village have Nankani names. Kasem names are rather few here. Nankani is still used throughout the village for sacrifices to shrines.

The present day language situation is that Kasem is understood all over the village, ^{but} although Nankani is still understood by the older people i.e. people of 40 years and above, younger people in northern Nangalkinia only understand Nankani without being fluent in it.

It is not hard to see why Kasem has replaced Nankani in northern Nangalkinia. The importance of Kasem as the language of the wider community makes it necessary for nearly everybody in Navrongo to understand it.²³ More frequent intercourse with northern neighbouring villages has resulted in language shift in northern Nangalkinia. The southern Nangalkinia people whose territory is separated from that of the northerners by a stretch of marshy land find more convenience in intercourse with neighbouring southern villages like Gongnia. This accounts for their retention of Nankani.

The Bangia lineage of Nangalkinia live in compounds located close to the Wuru - Nangalkinia border but they have retained Nankani although no Nankani is spoken in Wuru. The reason lies in the fact that the Bangia lineage is the one in which the joint office of headship and landpriestship is vested. These offices are usually held by the oldest man by both ages and generation and only male members of the Bangia lineage are qualified to hold them. However, the incumbent should be able to speak Nankani, since Naangali's shrine should be sacrificed to using Nankani. Parents have felt compelled to speak Nankani for this reason. This is particularly true for Chaporingu's compound where even today parents feel compelled to use Nankani to children.

Nayagia lies to the south-east of Navrongo town. It shares borders with Pungu villages to the north, Doba to the east and Jaanania to the south. Its western border is shared by Nogsania. Like Nangalkinia it is surrounded by both Kasem-speaking and Nankani-speaking villages.

Whereas Nangalkinia is usually considered by its people and by outsiders as a simple unit, Nayagia is a complex unit. Its name, which is in Kasem, implies the diverse origins of its inhabitants.²⁴ Consequently exogamy does not bind its component lineages:- Yibanabia, Karania, Badania and Kungwania.

Everybody in Nayagnia can speak and understand Kasem and nearly everybody can understand Nankani. Perhaps not all Nayagnia inhabitants can speak Nankani tolerably well but the majority have that facility.

Kungwania and Badania members speak Kasem in nearly all domains but some of them understand and speak Nankani which they would use to a non-Kasem-speaking person. They would not normally use Nankani.

The people of Karania are believed to have had their origin in Saboro. A lineage from Kasem-speaking Saboro had migrated to Nayagnia to found the Karania lineage. As evidence, the exogamy rule still binds this lineage to Saboro.

The present day language situation in Karania does not in the least suggest that its people had originated from Saboro. Nankani is the language used for communication among the majority of lineage mates but very little Nankani is now understood in Saboro. Kasem is however understood and spoken fluently. Personal names are in both Kasem and Nankani but the latter predominate. Folksongs are composed in Kasem but this is probably the result of the higher premium the wider community places on Kasem songs. Funeral dirges are entirely in Kasem and probably sacrificial prayers would be in Kasem too.

The shift from Kasem to Nankani as first language can perhaps be attributed to the mothers of most lineage members. We shall discuss this point further in a subsequent section.

Yibanabia is perhaps a migrant lineage from Punyoro and may sacrifice to yoro, the blacksmith's fetish. Members of the lineage speak both Kasem and Nankani in the home. For esoteric rituals Nankani is likely to be used, being the language of their paternal ancestors. As in Punyoro funeral dirges are sung in Kasem. Personal names are in both Nankani and Kasem.

Although it is true to say that in Navrongo almost everybody understands some amount of Kasem, the kind of Kasem spoken varies from place to place. Broadly two geographical varieties may be distinguished; N-K₁ and N-K₂²⁵. N-K₁ is the dialect first developed by the Catholic Missionaries and later given a boost by the Kasem branch of the Bureau of Ghana languages.

Most literates educated in the mission schools tend to speak a variety of this dialect. As a geographical dialect, N-K₁ is spoken in Group B and C villages. It has been more heavily influenced by Nankani which is the other language spoken in the villages in question. A phonological marker of N-K₁ is the absence of lip-rounding or labialisation from certain syllables. The only consonants that may be labialised in N-K₁ are the velars; k, g, ŋ. All other consonants may only be labialised in syllables where the vowel is low i.e. /a/or/3/. In N-K₂ all consonants may be labialised.

	N-K ₂	N-K ₁	
	kwi	kwi	'bones'
	pwa	pwa	'chiefs'
but	bwe	be	'to ask'

It is obvious that the restricted occurrence of labialisation in N-K₁ is a result of phonological interference from Nankani speech habits. Nankani has velars as well as labial velars and the latter are the only instances of double articulations. The labialised consonants of Kasem are comparable to double articulations; ŋw, kw, and gw in Kasem are comparable to Nankani nm, kp and gb respectively but pw, bw, nw etc. have no homophones in Nankani hence the dropping of the second consonant from these clusters in N-K₁.

N-K₂ is the dialect found in most Group A₁ villages. Though different from the Paga variety of Kasem, N-K₂ is less divergent. It has a full vowel Harmony which N-K₂ does not have in its full form.

While Kasem can be said to have been influenced by Nankani the reverse is also true. The variety of Nankani is so different from other varieties that its speakers frequently prefer to use a neutral language like English when speaking to speakers of other varieties like Frafra in Bolgatanga etc. On the other hand speakers of other varieties do not hide their scorn for Navrongo Nankani.

2.0 Domains of Language Use

The outline sketched above was aimed at indicating the extent of language shift. The observable trend is towards replacing Nankani with Kasem in many settlements. The etymology of place names, lineage names as well as personal names now and in the past taken together with language use in selected domains suggest that Nankani was once more widely spoken than today. Below, language use in selected domains will be examined with a view to ascertaining the extent to which these have contributed to language maintenance or shift. Domains to be selected include the following:

- 1) Entertainment
- 2) Ritual
- 3) Market
- 4) Education and Church
- 5) Kinship and Marriage.

2.1 Entertainment

Entertainment may take various forms with various aims. It may or may not involve verbalisation. Here, attention is focused on entertainment involving Verbal Art.

Folktales are still told and enjoyed by both adults and children particularly in rural settings. The language of narration is Kasem in Group A1 and some Group B villages but Nankani in Group A2 and in some Group B villages. Borrowing from speakers of neighbouring languages, many folktales which are usually told in the first language of the lineage from which the audience is drawn may be accompanied with folktale songs in another language - usually Nankani, Kasem or Buli as the case may be. Where the folktale and its song are given in different languages it is certain that the folktale has been borrowed. Where the borrowing is first hand, the narrator is bilingual but repeaters of the folktale need not be highly bilingual to be able to reproduce the borrowed folktale together with its song. The audience learn folktales together with accompanying songs easily.

Riddles and singing games have not been observed in Group A2

villages but in the other groups they tend to be performed in Kasem although it is also likely that in some Group 'B' villages they would be enjoyed in Nankani too.

Folktales, riddles and singing games are more or less an in-group affair except when performed in educational institutions. Folk-singing is performed for both personal and group entertainment. Within the village the first language would be the normal language to use except for the educated who sing English songs for personal entertainment. For out-group situations e.g. at the durbar grounds or on festive days when villages meet in Navrongo market, the language of folk songs would be Kasem.

2.2 Ritual Domain

Rituals of various kinds can be distinguished and they vary in the size of the congregation they draw. Personal shrines, donga, may be sacrificed to by the individual personally or by his or her son. The shrine of a dead parent is usually sacrificed to using the first language. In sacrifices to lineage founders a larger congregation is expected but the language used is usually the one the lineage founder spoke during his life time. For very remote ancestors it may be necessary to use the language those ancestors were supposed to have spoken at their time. This often means using a language different from the one now being used by living descendants. For most of Navrongo, Nankani would be used although in many villages Nankani is no longer spoken. Where the person pouring the libation cannot speak Nankani it is enough to murmur the initial words of the prayer in Nankani, a thing which everybody can do, before switching code to the more familiar language.

Foreign shrines and fetishes or magical objects must be addressed in the language understood by the shrine in question. A Mossi shrine will be addressed in Moore. The Kwara, the chiefly fetish, must be sacrificed to in Nankani because it came from Zekko in Nankani country. The yoro, blacksmith's fetish, must be addressed in Nankani.

Because of the linguistic demands imposed on office holders, who are in control of important lineage shrines, lineages in which is vested certain important traditional offices sometimes try to prevent the complete replace-

ment of the ritual language with another, such as Kasem.

Curiously most of Navrongo sing funeral dirges in Kasem. The explanation for this is not obvious however most of such funeral dirges are recent. They make references to recent events like slave raids, visits to Gambaga, one time headquarters of the Northern Territories, and wars with Paga. These songs are stereotyped for almost all villages and are not therefore indices of language shift.

2.3 Market Domains

The market is an instance of wider-setting, since different groups meet there now. It serves economic, social and political ends. In the past the market congregation was smaller and more localised and the event used to be held in the late afternoon.

The most important market in Navrongo is the central market found in Navrongo town. It was probably a small market in pre-colonial days. Now it attracts people from Navrongo and beyond.

Situated in the hub of Group A1³ villages, it has boosted Kasem at the expense of Nankani since Kasem is the language most commonly used in Navrongo market. Although Nankani, Buli, Hausa and even Akan, not to mention English, are spoken in the market, affective marketing demands knowledge of Kasem - preferably a local dialect of Kasem.

Other markets in the neighbourhood are Manyoro market where the most important languages are Nankani and Kasem, Paga and Kejelo markets where Kasem is spoken, Chuchuliga where Buli and Kasem are used and Biu market where Nankani, Buli and Kasem are used. These markets have only local importance and their influence on language shift or maintenance is less important.

2.4 Education and Church

Apart from a minority of local people and some outsiders, most people in Navrongo are either members of the Catholic Church or followers of the traditional religion.

The Catholic fathers arrived in Navrongo around 1906 and set up their mission there almost immediately. Soon afterwards they established a school.

Today Navrongo is the seat of Bolgatanga-Navrongo Diocese.

Kasem was, and still is, the language of evangelisation in many places in the Navrongo parish.²⁶ Catechism is conducted in Kasem and the liturgy, parts of the Bible, hymns etc. have been translated into Kasem. The Sunday sermons are made in Kasem and English.

In the early mission schools Kasem was the medium of instruction at the early stages but it was also taught as a subject and literacy material was prepared in it. The Kasem wing of the Bureau of Ghana Languages and the School of Ghana Languages have since continued with the work initiated by the Catholic missionaries. The Institute of Linguistics in Tamale is also doing a lot in this direction.

Because most of the schools in Navrongo are located in the Kasem-speaking areas and as the language of instruction was, and still is, Kasem, children from Group B villages and elsewhere who went to school in Navrongo were compelled to learn Kasem. The initial emphasis put on Kasem may have also created a more favourable disposition towards Kasem at the expense of Nankani thereby hastening further the spread of Kasem and the decline of Nankani in Navrongo.

2.5 Kinship and Marriage

The rule of exogamy binds lineages believed to be related or believed to have other kinship ties not easily demonstrated. For example, Nawognia is bound by exogamy to its sibling lineages - Korania, Bwania and Yigwania. They cannot marry from Namolo however, because they have been settled on Namolo lands. For most villages like Nawognia, there are several neighbouring villages with which marriage is impossible. On the other hand the Kasena scorn marriages with nearby villages with which no exogamy actually forbids marriage. Because of exogamy and other attitudes, marriage is often desired with far off villages and in many cases this means marriage between Kasena and Nankanis or Bulsas.²⁷

Once such a marriage bond has been established other marriages are set in motion. The desire of every woman is to bring in as many of her "sisters" into her husband's clan as possible. She may start by fostering "junior sisters". Her husband may decide or be invited to render services

(agricultural in nature) to his in-law. This however is usually done at village level; young men from the husband's clan or village visit his wife's village and stay there for a couple of days working on the in-laws' farms. Usually they return home with more daughters taken from the host village. Before long, the husband's village abounds in women drawn from the wife's village.

This pattern of marriage and kinship which allows the accumulation of girls from a village speaking one language in another village whose language is different is one source of language shift. Mothers invariably teach their children their own languages and parents may even contribute to the shift by showing tolerance to the wife's language. One instance of this is the practice of child naming in the language of the wife.

Inter-tribal marriages like those outlined above abound in Navrongo. Their main contribution to language shift and bilingualism lies in the fact that they break language prejudices. This is true for Navrongo on the whole, where Nankani speakers and Kasem speakers have no bones to pick. What matters is not what local language one speaks but where one comes from. Common language is not a centripetal force in Navrongo.

Throughout the discussion no attempt was made at assigning Manyoro to a group. This is because of the writer's ignorance of the language situation prevailing there. According to Cardinall, both Kasem and Nankani are spoken in Manyoro.²⁸ This assertion is true basically but further details are required to enable Manyoro to be classified in one of the groups set up here.

On the whole the trend towards replacing Nankani with Kasem is likely to continue into the future, unless the prestige accorded Kasem is minimised through change in Government policy.

FOOT NOTES

- 1) No systematic field research was conducted for this paper and the material presented here is based on first hand observations and impressions as well as bits and pieces of information gathered over time.
- 2) Refer to the map attached, which was culled from the 1960 Census map of Northern Ghana. The map is inaccurate in some respects: some of the villages mentioned in this paper are either omitted altogether or wrongly located. Another limitation of the map is that its Enumeration Areas (E.A.) do not always tally with village settlements: large villages have been divided up so that certain sections can be classified with neighbouring villages to constitute E.A. while other villages discussed here are not mentioned at all, having been included in some other villages to constitute an E.A.
- 3) A version of the legend in question is also found in St. John Parsons (1958: 1-10). The version contained in St. John-Parsons is more elaborate than many others found in the field but it also appears to imply that the Nogsenia lineages are the only descendants of Butu, also known as Gebutu. In fact Gebutu is usually not mentioned by informants unless specifically questioned about him. When asked about Butu, Achulba, elder of Gongonia, asserted that he was their ancestor but that he never set foot in Navrongo. According to Achulba it was Butu's grandson Asoo who migrated to Navrongo because he had been denied the chiefship.
- 4) The method employed in this description involves utilising clan histories to account for language shift. The terms "domain", "out-group", "in-group", "wider communication" etc., employed in the paper were taken from Socio-linguistics and where their meanings have been modified this has been indicated. On the other hand some terms found in Social Anthropology such as "clan", "maximal", "major", "accessory", "attached" and "authentic lineage" have been used too. The meanings of these forms are more or less the same as in Fortes (1945).
- 5) The proxy headman of Nangalkinia described Gwala as a cavedweller, but Ateyiri of Nawonia, whose village is a Gwala lineage, asserted that the father of Gwala descended from the sky and that Gwala himself was neither a cave-dweller nor an immigrant. On the other hand Zegola, the man next in succession to the custodianship of Gwala's Kwara claims that Gwala was also an immigrant from Zekko.
- 6) The village of the writer's mother.
- 7) Several versions of the legend which describes the founding of Paga exist. One of these is found in St. John Parsons op.cit. p. 53 - 56, and another in Callow and Tevnu.

- 8) There is the story that a Nankaninan and a Kasenaman were once given a fowl for joint services they had rendered somewhere. At the place of parting, on their way home, the Nankaninan suggested in Nankani, ti se (well, shall we roast it) to which the Kasenaman who did not understand Nankani replied, aawo, di wu wo mo (I am afraid we must roast it). Both had misunderstood each other and only the timely intervention of a bilingual prevented an ugly scene.

This story may not have happened as reported but it emphasises the lack of mutual intelligibility between Kasem and Nankani.
- 9) Bader-Samuel (1971) notes that lexically Buli is a little closer to Dagbani-Mampruli than to Naudm but that it retains a noun class system typical of Pilapila and Naudm.
- 10) The writer has never studied the language situation in Biu at first hand but the majority of people who have been to Biu usually assert that although some Kasem and Nankani are spoken there, Buli is the commonest first language. Biu is however under the jurisdiction of the chief of Kolgu in Nankani country. It should also be noted that Cardinall 1921 identifies Biu with Biuk in Taleland.
- 11) Akuna of Bagwe lineage in Nogsenia described the Kabagnia group as an authentic lineage descended from Nogse but other informants from other lineages in Navrongo have refuted Akuna's claim. These informants asserted that Kabagnia is an attached lineage and they explained that custody of the earthshrine was vested in the lineage by one of the Navropios as a sign of favour.
- 12) Akuna, see fn. 11, mentioned that a cave-dwelling lineage was present in Nogsenia before the advent of the Zegna group and according to other informants Butu first lived with cave-dwellers at Waala, which is not far from Kabagnia. If there were cave-dwellers at all it is hard to find out who these people were and whether their descendants have survived. Curiously enough Cardinall op.cit., p. 21 affirms the existence of cave-dwellers at Nogsenia.
- 13) Refer also to fn. 11 above.
- 14) Zegola of Bwania considers the name to be of Nankani etymology.
- 15) My attention has just been drawn to the relationship between the chiefly lineage in Pinda and its counterpart in Pungu viz. Bavognia. If these two lineages are truly related as has been said, then most probably there are Zekko elements in Pinda too. The presence of the chiefly shrine, "Kwara", the exclusive preserve of the Zegna Clan further supports this suggested relationship. Furthermore only the presence of a Zegna ruling lineage in Pinda can explain the political relationship between Pinda and Navrongo despite the fact that the former is nearer to Paga.

- 16) According to Zegola, Gaani is a Gwala lineage, but Cardinall op. cit. p. 13 mentions a legend which claims that the founder of the settlement was a hunter from Po, a Kasem-speaking locality in Upper Volta, who was married to the daughter of a friendly Biu man and settled there by him at Biu. On the surface these two accounts conflict but it is possible that Gaani like most village settlements contains at least two different groups (if not more): the Po group which would sacrifice to its ancestor using Kasem but initially speaking probably Buli, and the Gwala group which was preceded by the Po group.

The widespread use of Nankani can be explained by the presence of the Nankani-speaking Gwala lineage and the proximity to other Nankani-speaking villages in the neighbourhood.

The place name "Gaani" or "Gania" of Cardinall's "Gania", op. cit. p. 13 suggests that the name has a Kasem etymology viz. gaa (bush), nia (people) i.e. "people living in the wilderness".

- 17) Congonia sing their praise dirges - luse - in Buli but the nagoro, dirges recounting tribal bravery, are sung in Kasem. It is interesting to observe that the former are sung in praise of deceased female members i.e. wives and mothers. It appears that in tygone days when the rule of exogamy was extensive Congonia had recourse to Buli-speaking Chuchuliga for wives, hence the use of Buli.

Other Group 'B' lineages may also sing Buli luse but it was not possible to make an exhaustive enquiry. Certain sections of Bwania sing Buli luse and the reason given by Zegola of Bwania is that Buli luse are more melodious hence the temptation to use these dirges.

- 18) Zegola mentioned Vonania as one of the Gwala lineages and yet most people assert that the original home of Vonania was at Vona, a sacred spot on the western border of Namolo. Kalu Kambonseyia whose patrilineage is at Vonania agrees that Vonania came from Vona but she also mentioned that Vonania and Korania are very closely related villages. Other sources also related Vonania to Telania the group who, even today, still sacrifice at their ancestral caves, Telania are supposed to consider Vona as one of their former homesteads. The traditions vary from village to village and seem to confuse the picture. It can however be deduced that Vonania has more than one maximal lineage - which probably spoke Kasem, Buli and Nankani in the remote past. However as of present Nankani is the dominant language followed by Kasem. Buli may however be retained for certain esoteric rituals but this is left to be found out.

- 19) The ruins of Nogsenia are at Kaasi near Doba and Nogsenia and Doba still observe a joking relationship described in a patrilineal idiom. Other sources assert that some of the lineages

- in Doba were descended from exiled Nogsania people yet others namely Akuna explained that the founder of Doba was also an immigrant from Zekko, possibly related to Butu.
- 20) The authentic lineages in Wusungu trace descent to Wusim, also of the Zekko stock; however, today the first language of Wusungu is Kasem and for practical purposes Nankani is non-existent.
 - 21) The legendary founder of Chuchuliga in Bulsaland was a hunter from Kasem-speaking Tiebele in Upper Volta called Achulca.
 - 22) naam galisiya was also translated by other informants as "the Chiefship has passed out of my hands".
 - 23) The term "wider community" should be understood here to mean "Navrongo" as defined above.
 - 24) Recent investigations suggest that the name Nayagnia derives from the personal name, Yagn, and has nothing to do with the mixed composition of the settlement complex. Yagn was one of the grandsons of Wusim and had migrated to present day Nayagnia from Wusim's compound in Pungu.
 - 25) N-K is the shortened form for the term "Navrongo Kasem", i.e. the dialect of Kasem spoken in Navrongo. This variety is a sub-variety of Southern Kasem, one of the three principal dialects distinguished by Zwernemann (1962).
 - 26) Navrongo Parish extends beyond Navoro as defined here.
 - 27) Before the time of Navropio, Kwara, the exogamy rule was binding on many more lineages in Navrongo and Pungu but Kwara proclaimed that the rule should be restricted to very closely related lineages. It is likely this proclamation was made about half a century ago.
 - 28) Cardinall op. cit.

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