

AFROLINGUALS

M A G A Z I N E

JANUARY - APRIL 2025 N°002



Afrolinguals
Magazine

SPOTLIGHT

Safia Shatta is the founder and CEO of Mango Gate in Sudan, a specialized language learning platform.

LEARNING CORNER

Tech-based solutions like apps, online courses, and virtual classrooms are on the rise.



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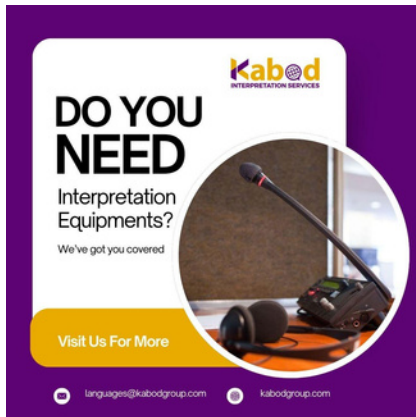
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MARKETPLACE OF ARICAN TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETORS (MATI)



Trends like gamification, blended learning, and AI are reshaping how languages are taught and learned. Keep up with industry developments to remain competitive and relevant.



THE LANGUAGE LEARNING MARKET IN AFRICA

In this first edition of the new year, we turn our focus to something close to home by delving into the thriving language learning market across Africa. This issue explores the trends, innovations, and opportunities shaping this dynamic sector. From emerging tech-driven solutions to grassroots initiatives, we spotlight the forces driving language education forward and the players transforming how Africans learn, teach, and preserve their languages.

Join us as we kick off 2025 by celebrating Africa's linguistic potential and examining the market's role in fostering economic growth, cultural exchange, and unity across the continent.



THE EDITOR'S NOTE

BY REBECCA AGGREY



Dear Language Enthusiasts,

The launch of Afrolinguals in November 2024 marked a significant milestone in our mission to increase visibility for Africa's language services industry. Your overwhelming response to our inaugural edition confirmed what we have long believed - that Africa's language services industry needs and deserves its own dedicated platform for discourse, connection, and growth. Your stories, feedback, and engagement have enriched our understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing language professionals across the continent.

This second edition delves into the thriving language-learning market across Africa. Our coverage explores how traditional teaching methods evolve alongside technological innovations, and how grassroots initiatives are working to preserve and promote indigenous languages. From the inspiring story of Kambai Akau's work with the Tyap language to the thought-provoking analysis of Nigeria's language learning landscape, this edition highlights the challenges and opportunities in our sector. The stories we share in these pages reveal a common thread: the profound connection between language learning and cultural identity.

As we witness the growth of language technology and educational initiatives across the continent, we are reminded that language is not just a tool for communication - it's a bridge to our heritage and a gateway to our future.

We are particularly encouraged by the emerging collaboration between traditional language educators and technology innovators, which is creating solutions uniquely suited to African contexts. These partnerships demonstrate how we can embrace modern approaches while honouring our linguistic traditions.

We invite you to contribute your voices to this ongoing dialogue. Your experiences, insights, and perspectives continue to shape Afrolinguals into a vibrant platform for Africa's language services community.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS & LANGUAGE TECH INNOVATIONS

Upcoming Events

The Association of Language Companies in Africa (ALCA)

Annual Conference

It is a premier event that brings together key players in the African language services industry. Held annually, this conference serves as a platform for **language service providers (LSPs)**, **industry experts**, **policymakers**, and **other stakeholders** to discuss pressing issues, explore emerging trends, and strengthen professional networks. To stay informed about upcoming editions, program details, and registration, visit the [ALCA official website](#).

ALCA
ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE COMPANIES IN AFRICA

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
28-29 AUGUST 2025

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SOUTH AFRICA

Navigating the Global Market:
Africa's Role in the Language Services Industry

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The Next Billion Conference (NBC)

Organised by Kabod Localisation Services, it is a virtual event dedicated to empowering African language professionals, including freelancers, language companies, and industry stakeholders. It will focus on essential marketing and growth strategies tailored to the African language services sector and offer a platform for networking with industry experts and peers, fostering collaboration and innovation. Registration is free but required to attend. For more details and to secure your spot, visit the official conference page.

African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) Conference

ALTA 2025: African Languages Across Disciplines, Professions, and Communities

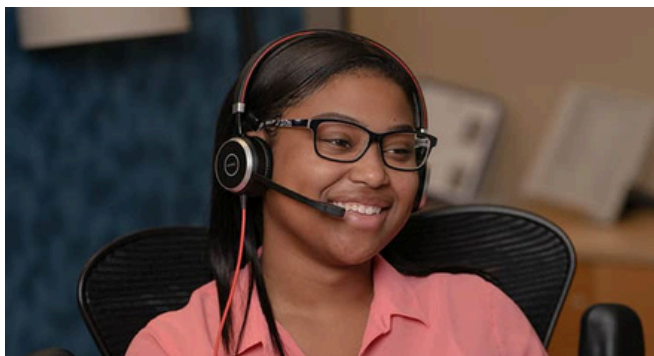
The 2025 ALTA Conference will be hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Center for African Studies and the Less-Commonly-Taught Languages Center from April 10–12, 2025. The conference will explore integrating disciplines, professions, and communities to enhance African language pedagogy and will focus on incorporating cultural, social, and professional contexts into language instruction.

DEEP LEARNING INDABA 2025 IN RWANDA

The Deep Learning Indaba will be held in Kigali, Rwanda from 17-22 August 2025

This annual gathering unites the African machine learning and AI community, fostering collaboration and innovation. Since 2017, our mission has been to empower African AI and ensure that Africans play a leading role in shaping the future of AI advancements. It will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, from August 17 to 22, 2025.

PRESS RELEASE | NEWS



BENIN LAUNCHES TRADUX FOR CERTIFIED TRANSLATIONS

Benin has introduced TRADUX, an innovative digital solution designed to facilitate certified translations of various official documents, such as certificates, transcripts, contracts etc. This initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, currently supports translations in seven major languages: German, English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French, and Russian.

2024 SLATOR LANGUAGE AI 50 UNDER 50

The 2024 Slator Language AI 50 Under 50 provides a snapshot of fifty of the newest and most notable language AI companies. The selection also spotlights new players building AI foundations, as well as companies offering innovative localisation workflow solutions. The list captures a cross-section of new entrants, founded within the last fifty months, ranging from early-stage startups to well-funded platforms. It's important to acknowledge the only African-based company is part of this top 50: Lelapa AI Africa.

The Slator 2024 Language AI 50 Under 50



SMARTLING UNVEILS AI-POWERED TOOLS TO CUT COSTS, BOOST QUALITY

Smartling has unveiled major platform upgrades, solidifying its status as a leading AI-driven solution for enterprise translation and localization. These updates introduce advanced quality assurance tools, enhanced data visualization features, and an AI Translation solution designed to replace traditional machine translation post-editing (MTPE) at half the cost. Read more here. DeepL, a global leader in Language AI, has announced the launch of its first voice translation solution, DeepL Voice, unveiling two initial products: Voice for Meetings and Voice for Conversations. This innovation enables multilingual virtual meetings and provides real-time translation for face-to-face interactions.



TRANSLATED LAUNCHES LARA: ADVANCED AI FOR GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

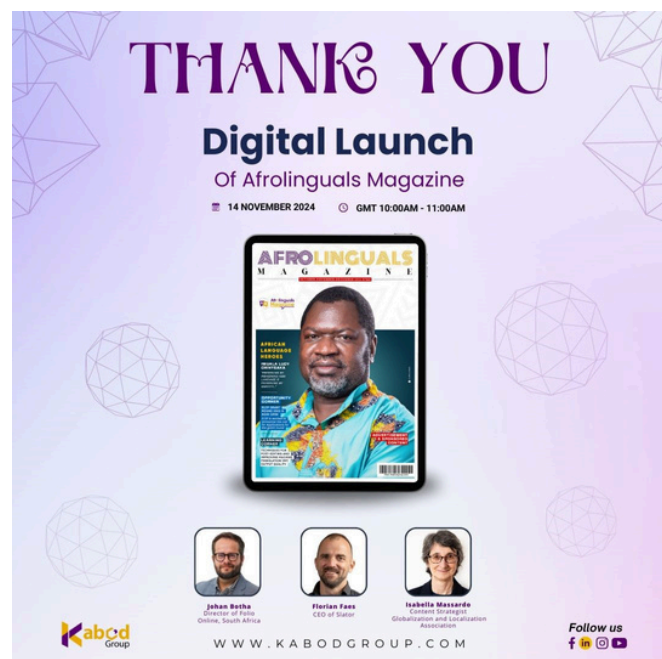
Translated, a global frontrunner in AI-driven language solutions, recently unveiled Lara, an advanced translation AI that surpasses popular machine translation systems and rivals the quality of elite professional translators.



PRESS RELEASE | EVENT RECAP

KABOD LAUNCHED AFROLINGUALS MAGAZINE

The launch of [Afrolinguals Magazine](#) on 14 November 2024 marked a transformative moment for the African language services industry. Inspired by [Multilingual](#), Afrolinguals is one of the first publications dedicated exclusively to African language services. It aims to provide a platform for knowledge-sharing, foster collaboration, and elevate the industry across the continent. This milestone aligns with the vision of Kabod Locali Services, to enhance visibility and promote collaboration among African language professionals. In case you missed the event, you can rewatch the recording [here](#) and download the magazine [here](#).



NBC 2024: THE FIRST CONFERENCE ON TECH, INVESTMENT AND LOCALIZATION IN AFRICA'S LANGUAGE SERVICE INDUSTRY

The Next Billion Conference, held from the 9th to the 12th of December 2024, offered a series of impactful sessions focused on empowering African language professionals with the marketing and sales skills necessary to thrive in a competitive marketplace.

Key discussions included strategies for business development, emphasizing the importance of ISO certifications, integrating technology, and industry-specific specialization for client retention. The event provided actionable insights, encouraging professionals to leverage leadership, branding, and innovative tools to thrive in the evolving language services sector.

The next session is already in the works. If you are interested in being a partner, contact languages@kabodgroup.com.

Join

The Next Billion

Conference 2024

Theme

Empowering African Language Professionals to Market, Sell, and Thrive

9-12 DECEMBER 2024
 GMT 10:00AM - 4:00PM

 Charles Kejo Vandeyck Resource Mobilisation Trainer (Ghana)	 Nancy Kankam Knowledge Management Officer	 Frank Gyimah Brands Marketing Consultant, Head of Marketing, Communications at WB Group	 Prince Boateng Content Strategist, Co-Founder STEMAIDE
 Fiifi Boateng (Comms. and Marketing)	 Peter Asare Nyarko Executive Director for the Center for Financial Literacy Education Africa.	 Patience Xavier Nong Founder of Speed Expertise, Translator and Coach	 Harrison Boakye Owusu Partnerships & Sustainability Manager at EPL Ghana
 Leonel Ngankou Entrepreneur & Investor (Cameroon)	 Martina Ackah PR, Show Host & Marketing Expert	 Chamrid Kapadonou Technical Project Manager, African Visionary Fund	 Nicholas Clerk Investment Ecosystem Development Manager at Renew Capital
 Kejo Eninful Investor and Managing Partner of Quantin Partners	 Christian Elongué Managing Director of Kabod Group		

PERSPECTIVES

THE MIRAGE OF NIGERIA'S LANGUAGE LEARNING FUTURE

By Abdulahi Olarewaju Aremu, Applied linguist with interests in bilingualism, language policy, and identity.

LANGUAGE MARGINALISATION

In early 2024, a class teacher was, in English, instructing her pre-nursery one pupil who came late to class. After repeating the same instruction ad nauseam and the child still did not understand, she became frustrated and yelled the instructions in the child's mother tongue. Surprised by the pupil's immediate action, she remarked, "So you don't understand English!"

Despite this realization, she did not choose to speak Yoruba to the class and only spoke it in that brief instance. Yet, all the children in the class were Yoruba and emerging bilinguals who had only just begun learning English.

The dream of a multilingual Nigeria, where indigenous languages are used alongside global ones, often appears as an alluring mirage—one that teases with promise but remains frustratingly out of reach.

This practice, especially pronounced in private schools, does not help children who do not understand the language in which they are being taught, and its culmination largely impedes language learning. Speaking to these pupils in their first language could indeed promote language development, enhancing their comprehension and academic success. Daily Trust, in 2014, reported that 69% of candidates failed the May/June WAEC exams, with only 31.28% passing with five credits, including in core subjects.

Similar issues were noted in 2010 and 2012 as well, with little improvements in recent years. 95% of students in a study attributed their failure to lack of understanding of the language in which they were being taught.

THE ROLE OF POLICY IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

The future of language learning in Nigeria will likely be shaped by technology. However, the real potential lies in reimagining educational models that are multilingual by design, integrating indigenous to the existing global languages into the curricula.

This vision requires effective government policies and robust support systems. Nigeria's language-in-education policy, for example, advocates using children's mother tongues or the language of the immediate community as the medium of instruction in the early years of schooling. This approach fosters cognitive development, preserves culture, and allows children to learn in a language they are familiar with before transitioning to English. The functional inactivity of this policy across much of the country is evident in the shortage of trained teachers who are proficient in both local languages and pedagogical techniques. Also, the lack of resources, such as textbooks and instructional materials in various Nigerian languages, does not help its practical application. In linguistically diverse urban classrooms, teachers often default to English because students come from different ethnic backgrounds and may not share the same mother tongue.

In rural areas where mother tongue instruction would be expected to be feasible, English is viewed as being superior to any other languages; schools prioritise it over local languages, and this spiral continues to be successful given that many parents are of the false belief that what they as parents do not have is being given to their children.



Abdulahi Olarewaju Aremu

Applied linguist with interests in bilingualism, language policy, and identity.

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY FOR LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

Fortunately, AI and machine learning can revolutionise language learning in Nigeria as they have the potential to preserve and teach Nigerian languages in innovative ways. For instance, Google Translate now includes some Nigerian languages like Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo, enabling broader access to these languages in digital spaces. The Microsoft Translator platform has also integrated Hausa, allowing businesses and individuals to communicate across language barriers. Similarly, African Language AI projects, such as Masakhane, have developed machine translation models for low-resource African languages, including Nigerian ones, through collaborative efforts involving linguists and AI researchers. However, these projects require government support, as their backing would provide the necessary infrastructure for widespread implementation and sustainability. Although international organizations contribute funding to support language initiatives in the country, their impact is often limited to specific scopes and timelines.

For example, the Endangered Languages Project (ELP), a collaborative initiative aimed at supporting, documenting, and promoting endangered languages worldwide, including several languages in Nigeria, offer tools for language data collection and preservation, empowers linguists, and community members to contribute audio recordings, videos, and other language materials. Similarly, the Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages is dedicated to revitalizing endangered languages, often through on-the-ground work with native speakers. They specialize in creating digital resources—like dictionaries, language-learning apps, and video documentation—to help communities pass on their languages to future generations. Long-term preservation, however, requires ongoing efforts that only governments can fully commit to.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

The most widely learned language in the world is English, and it is evident that most learned languages are found in economically developed and technologically advanced countries. This suggests that languages are not learned without a purpose. or many, learning a language is motivated by the expectation of an economic return. In Nigeria, for instance, language-related courses are sometimes viewed as less valuable, based on a perception that those who study these courses lack clear ways to contribute to solving the country's problems. However, this narrative can change if the opportunities associated with these languages are highlighted and their value promoted. Nigerian economy can benefit from an approach to language that, in fact, moves beyond preservation and instead positions language as both a strategic global tool and a cultural necessity.

Positioning Nigerian languages as strategic global tools involves harnessing them to build regional influence and strengthen economic ties within Africa. Using these languages in education, trade, and digital spaces can enable Nigeria to lead regional collaborations, attract cultural tourism, and foster partnerships across African nations. This approach not only enhances Nigeria's economic footprint but also supports cultural continuity and pride, positioning Nigerian languages as assets for both local development and international engagement. The belief that language studies are “useless” does not take into consideration the growing demand for skills in translation, diplomacy, and cross-cultural communication, which all have global relevance. As far as the barriers to effective language learning in Nigeria are concerned, the reality is that without a stronger commitment from governments and educational institutions, language learning in the country will continue to waver between ambition and reality. While technology brings about a glimmer of hope, it alone cannot overcome the systemic issues that prevent meaningful progress.

The mirage will persist until Nigeria takes concrete steps to transform its aspirations into actions that genuinely support linguistic diversity. Only then can the dream of a functionally multilingual Nigeria solidify into something tangible and enduring.



Are you a language service provider, freelancer, linguist, or language professional with an article or opinion piece on the language industry in Africa? We want to feature your work in our magazine! Contact us now at **languages@kabodgroup.com**



KAMBAI AKAU

TYAP TRANSLATOR

PRESERVING THE TYAP LANGUAGE IN A MODERN WORLD

AFROLINGUALS

Tell us a bit about your background and what inspired your work with the Tyap1 language?

Kambai:

I am from a town called Fantswam (Kafanchan) in Southern Kaduna, Middle Belt, Nigeria. I am a graduate of Mechanical Engineering. However, my work on language preservation ran concurrently with my studies. I have visited various libraries in different cities to deepen my understanding of linguistics since 2010, and currently work as a volunteer translator of the Tyap language on various projects, especially Wikimedia sister projects. I speak Tyap, English, and Nigerian Pidgin.

My work with the Tyap language stems from a personal realization. Growing up, I avoided speaking Tyap and noticed many others were abandoning it for Hausa. As a teenager, I struggled to understand conversations in Tyap. That struggle sparked my determination to learn and preserve the language.

I started small, using a notebook to write down translations with my mother's help as a translator.

We used an English dictionary for reference, filling in Tyap translations and leaving blanks where we couldn't. This process showed me just how much of the language was already lost. In 2007, inspired by my learnings of Hebrew, Greek, Cyrillic, Arabic, and Sinitic writing systems, I developed a writing system called the Akai script and a corresponding numerical system known as the Fafang, which I hoped to use for the writing of Tyap, and other Nigerian languages. Determined to deepen my understanding, I travelled from Benin City at one time and from Nasarawa-Toto at another time to Kaduna to seek guidance from older speakers. Even then, many words had no known translations, which was a wake-up call. Around this time, I connected with the chairman of the Tyap Literacy Committee and Bible Translation Trust (TLCBTT),

Major-General Zamani Lekwot (retd), through the Atyap Community Development Association (ACDA)'s President, Wg. Cdr. Danjuma Karau.

He introduced me to a linguist, Dr. Carl Follingstad, whose feedback was instrumental. That meeting in 2011 marked the beginning of my language preservation journey.

Afrolinguals: How did your work evolve from collecting translations into broader initiatives?

Kambai: My first major step was publishing a Tyap dictionary in 2014, despite limited support from the language board. I also created a Facebook page called the Tyap Language Institute of Nigeria to share translations and engage others interested in Tyap documentation. By 2018, I expanded to WhatsApp and other platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Quora, and YouTube, connecting with more people and raising awareness. In 2020, I attended Wikimedia Foundation meetings and learned about creating language-specific Wikipedia. Realizing Tyap lacked representation, I applied to translate Wikipedia into Tyap that December. A small team and I worked on translating 500 essential terms. This wasn't easy—modern terms like "email" and "interface" required creating new words or adapting older Tyap terms. By May 2022, Tyap became the fifth Nigerian language on Wikipedia. The Tyap Wikipedians User Group was approved as a recognised affiliate of Wikimedia

The Tyap Wikimedians User Group was approved as a recognised affiliate of Wikimedia Foundation in mid-2022, making it the fifth in Nigeria; and the Tyap Wikimedians Organisation which I co-founded was registered as an NGO with the Nigerian government in January 2023 and began work on a Wikipedia for Jju², a related language in September 2024.

AFROLINGUALS

That's incredible progress.
What challenges have you
faced along the way?

Kambai: Financial constraints were a constant struggle, limiting my ability to travel or print materials. I often relied on my father's support or took on labor jobs to fund my work. We also faced skepticism, especially from elders who doubted young people could handle such a task. Some accused us of distorting the language for personal gain. Finally, retaining volunteers was tough—many lost interests or weren't fully committed, slowing our progress.

AFROLINGUALS

How did you overcome
these challenges?

Kambai: Persistence and collaboration were key. Over time, elders saw the value of our work, especially when we involved them in translations during events. Engaging them showed the complexity and importance of preserving Tyap.

We also focused on reaching young people through social media and grassroots efforts. Retention is still a challenge, but we're making steady progress by building a network of committed individuals.

AFROLINGUALS

You've developed several resources
for the Tyap language. Are there
any initiatives to make these
materials accessible to the younger
generation?

Kambai: Absolutely. I work closely with the Tyap Language Development Board (TLDB) and its Literature Development Subcommittee. I submit all the resources I develop to the subcommittee to ensure they're accessible. These include a Tyap-English dictionary, teaching materials, and online platforms of Wikimedia, like the Tyap Book on Wikibooks, Tyap phrasebook on Wikivoyage, and an obsolete Facebook profile named Chong Āniet Ātyap Chomyaa for grassroots mobilisation) to engage young learners and those of other ages

Kambai: I have also developed a learning material in Fantswam, a variety of Tyap, “Fantswam Language Learning Simplified”, together with a teacher, Obadiah Audu-Abui Obed. All these works are either in hard or soft copy formats. My team and I are currently working on sourcing donor funds to publish the Tyap Dictionary and grammar books being developed by the TLDB in hard and soft copy formats for easy accessibility to aid translators and language researchers.

AFROLINGUALS

Why do you think preserving and promoting the Tyap language is so important?

Kambai: Language is identity. Losing our language means losing our cultural and historical roots. For instance, adopting languages like Hausa or English often leads to assimilation, erasing the Tyap identity over time.

By preserving Tyap, we're safeguarding our heritage, traditions, and unique worldview. It's not just about preserving words; it's about protecting who we are as a people.

AFROLINGUALS

Thank you, Kambai, for sharing your inspiring journey and insights. Any final thoughts?

Kambai: Just a reminder that preserving languages is everyone's responsibility. It's more than documentation—it's about inspiring pride and daily use in our communities.

INSIGHTS & OPINIONS

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN AFRICA'S TRANSLATION INDUSTRY: A CALL FOR A STANDARD PROFESSIONAL BODY

A black and white portrait of a smiling man with a beard, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and a lanyard with a badge. The background is a solid orange color.

By Ridwan Oyekulehin

Freelance translator (English, Arabic, and Yoruba)

Translation plays an indispensable role in today's interconnected world, enabling communication across cultural and linguistic divides. With over 2,000 languages spoken across the continent, Africa holds immense potential for a robust translation industry. Yet, despite its promise, the translation industry in Africa struggles with numerous challenges. These challenges include but are not limited to: low pay, misconceptions about translation profession, unrealistic deadlines and non-payment or delayed payment.

The absence of a standard professional body to regulate practices and protect the interests of translators exacerbates in Africa these issues, leaving translators vulnerable to exploitation and undervaluation. Without such an institution, the profession risks stagnation, losing credibility, and failing to attract talent capable of addressing the growing demand for high-quality translation services.

One of the most pressing challenges African translators faces is low pay. In an unregulated market, translators are often subjected to exploitative rates that undervalue their expertise and efforts. Clients frequently offer payments that do not correspond to the time, effort, and expertise invested in producing quality translations. Many translators, particularly those new to the profession or operating in financially constrained environments, find themselves with little choice but to accept these offers. Abdul Omoyele, the founder of Akomolede Tutors and a seasoned Yoruba translator, remarked: "A publishing company once asked me to translate a children's book into Yoruba. When I told them my rates, they acted shocked and said they could get someone cheaper. They didn't value the effort and skill it takes to deliver accurate translations for children."

This acceptance perpetuates a cycle where translators are undervalued, and the profession as a whole is perceived as a low-skill endeavor. For professionals dedicated to high standards, these low rates are not only disrespectful but demoralising. The constant pressure to compromise on fees to remain competitive undermines the potential for professional growth and innovation within the industry.

Moreover, the general lack of understanding about the complexity of translation work exacerbates the issue. Clients often view translation as a straightforward task of converting words from one language to another. This misconception trivialises the intellectual and cultural depth required for effective translation. Chioma Obiezu, an Igbo translator, shared her frustration: "A client rejected my work, saying it didn't sound professional enough. They didn't understand that Igbo has idiomatic expressions that convey meaning in culturally appropriate ways. I had to spend hours explaining this—unpaid, of course."

In reality, translation involves a technical process of cultural interpretation, tone preservation, and contextual alignment to ensure that messages resonate with the intended audience. This level of expertise requires years of study, practice, and cultural immersion. Without a regulatory body to educate clients and advocate for fair compensation, many translators are left negotiating in an environment that undervalues their skills. This undervaluation not only affects individual livelihoods but also deters talented individuals from pursuing careers in the field, ultimately stunting the industry's growth. Beyond issues of pay, African translators often face the challenge of unrealistic deadlines. Many clients demand high-quality translations within impossibly short timeframes, leaving little room for the thorough research, cultural adaptation, and meticulous proofreading that quality translation requires. This pressure compromises not only the translator's well-being but also the quality of their work. Meeting such demands often means sacrificing depth and accuracy, which can harm the translator's reputation and diminish client satisfaction. Abdul Omoyele noted: *"I had a tech company approach me to translate their app's interface into Yoruba, but they gave me just two days to complete the work! They didn't care that cultural adaptation and proper proofreading need time. I had no choice but to rush the job."* The lack of standardized project timelines or regulatory oversight means that translators are often forced to either accept these terms or risk losing clients.

This dynamic creates a stressful work environment, discouraging many skilled practitioners from remaining in the profession. Equally disheartening is the pervasive issue of non-payment or delayed payment for completed work. Many translators invest significant time and effort into projects only to face difficulties in receiving their agreed-upon compensation. In the absence of a structured regulatory framework, translators often have no legal or professional recourse when clients fail to honor their commitments. Some translators resort to naming defaulters publicly in an attempt to recover payments, but this approach is fraught with risks. It can damage professional relationships and reputations, further isolating the translator in an already challenging industry. Shafiu Ahmed, a Hausa translator specializing in technical documents, added: *"I translated a 50-page document for an international firm, but when it was time for payment, they claimed dissatisfaction and refused to pay. With no regulatory body to help, I felt helpless. Publicly calling them out seemed like my only option, but it hurt my reputation."*

Without a professional body to enforce contracts and resolve disputes, translators are left vulnerable to financial insecurity and exploitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The establishment of a standard professional body for Africa's translation industry could address these challenges comprehensively. Such a body would play a pivotal role in regulating the industry, setting benchmarks for fair pricing, realistic project timelines, and ethical practices. By providing a unified voice for translators, this institution could advocate for their rights, raise awareness about the value of their work, and protect them from exploitation. Translators would have an entity to turn to for support and guidance, ensuring their contributions are recognized and fairly compensated.

Standardised rates introduced by a professional body would help protect translators from exploitative offers while ensuring that clients receive value for their investment. By considering factors such as language pair, subject complexity, and project urgency, these rates would reflect the true cost of quality translation. Enforcing these standards would not only foster mutual respect between translators and clients but also elevate the profession's status within the broader economy. Translators would no longer need to compromise their worth to compete in the market, creating a more sustainable and equitable industry.

Additionally, the professional body could establish guidelines for project timelines, aligning client expectations with the realities of quality translation work. This would empower translators to focus on delivering accurate, culturally sensitive translations without the strain of impossible deadlines. Clients would benefit from receiving work that meets their needs without compromising quality, while translators would enjoy a more balanced and rewarding professional experience. Such measures would promote a culture of professionalism and accountability, enhancing the industry's reputation both locally and internationally. To address issues of non-payment and other contractual violations, the professional body could require the use of standardized contracts outlining payment terms, deadlines, and dispute resolution processes. Acting as an arbitrator in cases of non-payment, the body would provide translators with a safety net currently absent in the industry. This structure would create a sense of security and trust, encouraging more individuals to pursue careers in translation and contribute to the industry's growth.

Beyond regulation, the professional body could advocate for the translation industry's contributions to society. Public awareness campaigns, collaborations with governments, and partnerships with private organizations could highlight the profession's value and importance.

This advocacy would not only elevate translators' status but also foster greater appreciation for their role in facilitating communication, education, and commerce across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Investing in professional development would be another crucial function of the body. By offering certifications, training programs, and networking opportunities, the institution could help translators enhance their skills and stay competitive in a global market. Access to these resources would enable translators to specialize in niche areas, expand their expertise, and command higher rates for their services. Emphasizing continuous learning would keep the industry dynamic and responsive to evolving client demands.

Furthermore, the professional body could facilitate international collaboration, connecting African translators with global networks and opportunities. Showcasing African talent on an international stage would not only boost the industry's reputation but also ensure that African translators are recognized as key contributors to the global linguistic community. This visibility would open doors for African practitioners to participate in large-scale projects, contribute to cross-border initiatives, and gain valuable exposure to diverse translation practices. The translation industry in Africa stands at a crossroads. While the challenges are significant, they are not insurmountable. Establishing a standard professional body could transform the industry, providing the structure, accountability, and support necessary for sustained growth and respect. For translators, this would mean fair compensation, professional recognition, and a supportive community. For clients, it would ensure access to high-quality translations produced by skilled professionals. For Africa as a whole, it would mean a thriving translation industry capable of meeting the demands of an increasingly interconnected world.

The time for action is now. By uniting translators, clients, and other stakeholders in the pursuit of a unified professional body, the immense potential of Africa's linguistic diversity can be unlocked.

Such an initiative would not only strengthen the translation industry but also position it as a vital contributor to Africa's cultural, economic, and social development.

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Call for Abstracts: French Phonology Network's 2025 Annual Conference

The French Phonology Network (Réseau Français de Phonologie) invites abstract submissions for its 22nd annual conference, which will take place from July 1-3, 2025, in Agadir, Morocco. SFL, LPP, and LILDAS research laboratories support the event. Contributions from all theoretical frameworks of phonology are welcome, addressing topics like signal processing, articulation, acquisition, dialectology, and Amazigh phonology. Abstracts (max 2 pages) must be anonymous and submitted via rfp2025.sciencesconf.org by February 15, 2025. Accepted presentations may be oral or poster-based.

24 Scholarships for Language Learners in Ghana

These scholarships are designed to support students and professionals who are dedicated to mastering new languages and exploring the rich world of linguistic diversity. They provide financial assistance, access to learning resources, and the chance to connect with a broader network of language enthusiasts. To learn more about the eligibility criteria, application process, and deadlines, click [here](#).



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LEARNING CORNER

A Practical Guide for Stepping into the Language Learning Industry

The language learning industry in Africa is booming, creating exciting opportunities for language professionals to make an impact while expanding their careers. If you're thinking about diving into this dynamic sector, here are some key tips to get started:

Understand Your Niche: Africa's diverse linguistic landscape means there's room for everything, from teaching widely spoken languages like Swahili or French to preserving indigenous ones. Identify what aligns with your expertise and passion.

Leverage Technology: Tech-based solutions like apps, online courses, and virtual classrooms are on the rise. Consider how digital tools can amplify your teaching methods and reach.

Develop a Unique Offering: Whether you're creating content or designing programs, stand out by tailoring your approach to cultural and regional needs. Adding value with cultural insights or practical applications can make your offerings irresistible.

Network and Collaborate: Partner with schools, organizations, or tech startups looking to innovate in language education. Collaboration can expand your reach and diversify your skillset.

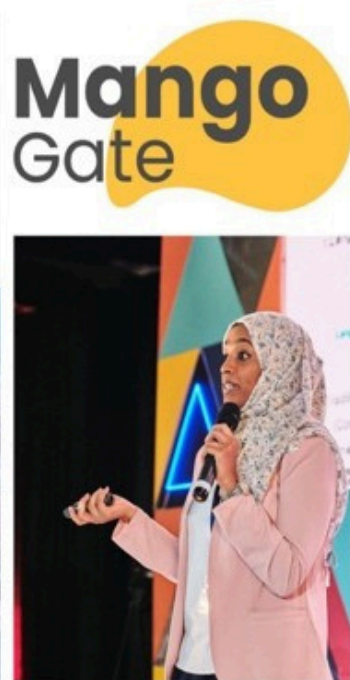
Stay Informed: Trends like gamification, blended learning, and AI are reshaping how languages are taught and learned. Keep up with industry developments to remain competitive and relevant.



SPOTLIGHT

In every industry, there are trailblazers whose work not only advances their field but also paves the way for future generations. In this section, we shine a light on a remarkable woman who is redefining the language services industry. Through innovation, dedication, and a commitment to excellence, she is breaking barriers and shaping the future.

Join us as we celebrate her achievements and recognize the invaluable contributions she makes every day. Her journey inspires us all to push boundaries and elevate the industry to new heights.



Safia Shatta is the founder and CEO of Mango Gate in Sudan, a specialized language learning platform. As an urban planner, education advocate, and passionate polyglot, she takes pride in being an alumna of Orange Corners Sudan, a member of Women in Africa (WIA), and eTrade for Women. She has also been recognized as a UNDP-4YFN women innovator and was awarded North Africa's Most Promising Entrepreneur at the AfricArena Summit in 2022. Through Mango Gate, Safia is committed to empowering individuals through language learning and fostering cross-cultural communication.



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