



Why are more African countries adopting English as an official language?

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English: a world language



[Politics]

- **85%** of international organizations use English as official language
- **official working language** of most international political gatherings

[Economy]

- The “global **language of business**”

[Academia]

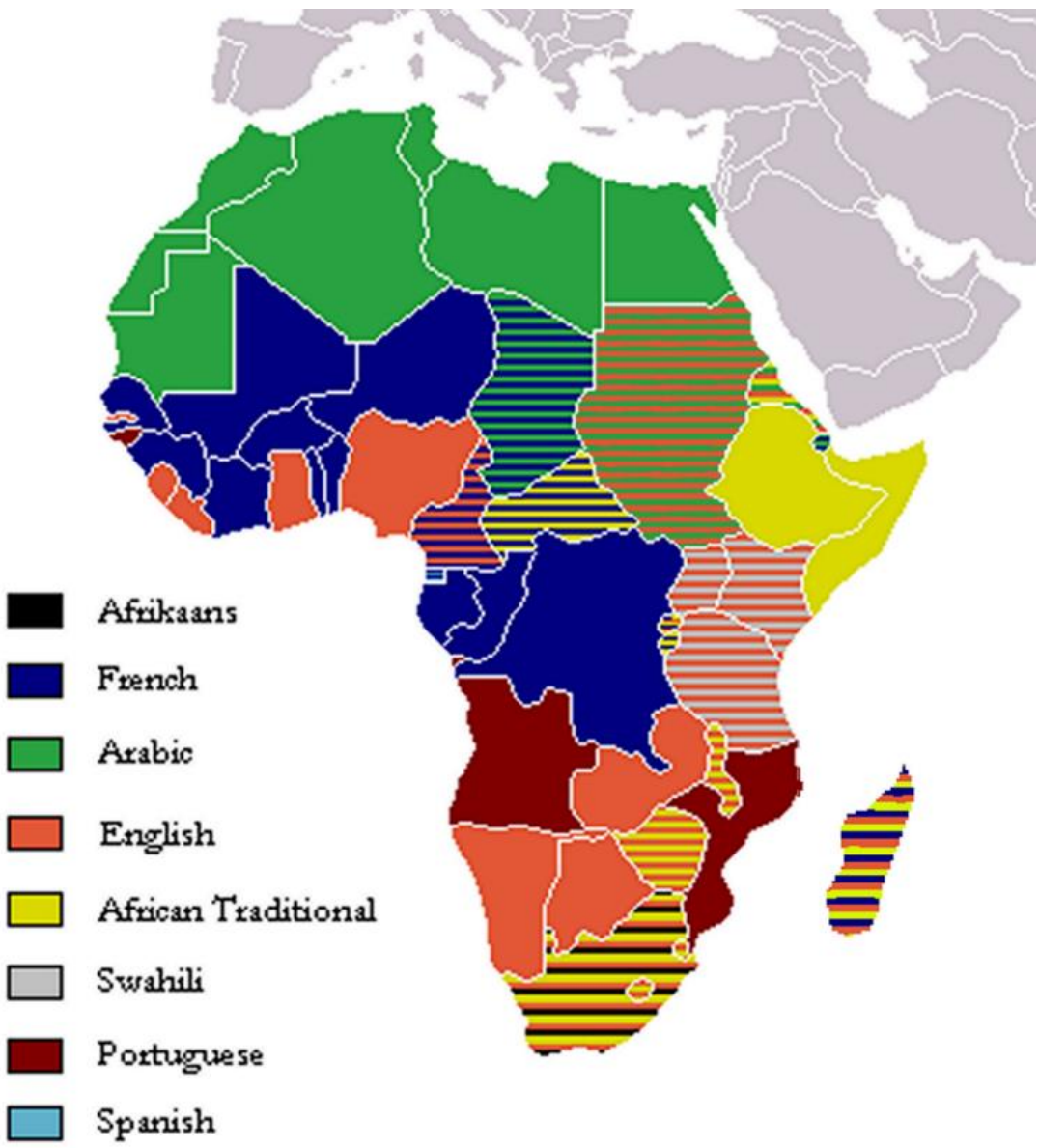
- Language of majority of academic publications—**80-90%!**

Language in Africa



- **800** languages
- About **50** African languages have more than **500,000** fluent speakers





- Botswana
- Cameroon
- Eritrea
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Swaziland
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Tanzania



Patrick in Tanzania

Ethiopia



Rwanda



Rachel in Rwanda, 2010

Why English?



- **Language of Commerce**
 - International trade
 - International tourism
 - Foreign Investment
- **Regional Trade & Relations**
 - Cuts through linguistic & cultural barriers
- **Language of Unity**
 - Rwanda post-genocide
 - South Sudan after independence

English & Education in Africa



- Most African Universities teach in English
- Secondary...or younger?
- Examples:
 - Rwanda
 - Ethiopia

SHARED UNDERSTANDING of importance of English language acquisition



English & Education in Africa



- **“Local Buy In”**
 - Somalia
 - Mother tongue instruction as “second class”
- **2005 Pan African reading conference**
- **Limited educational resources in mother tongue**
 - 800 languages!

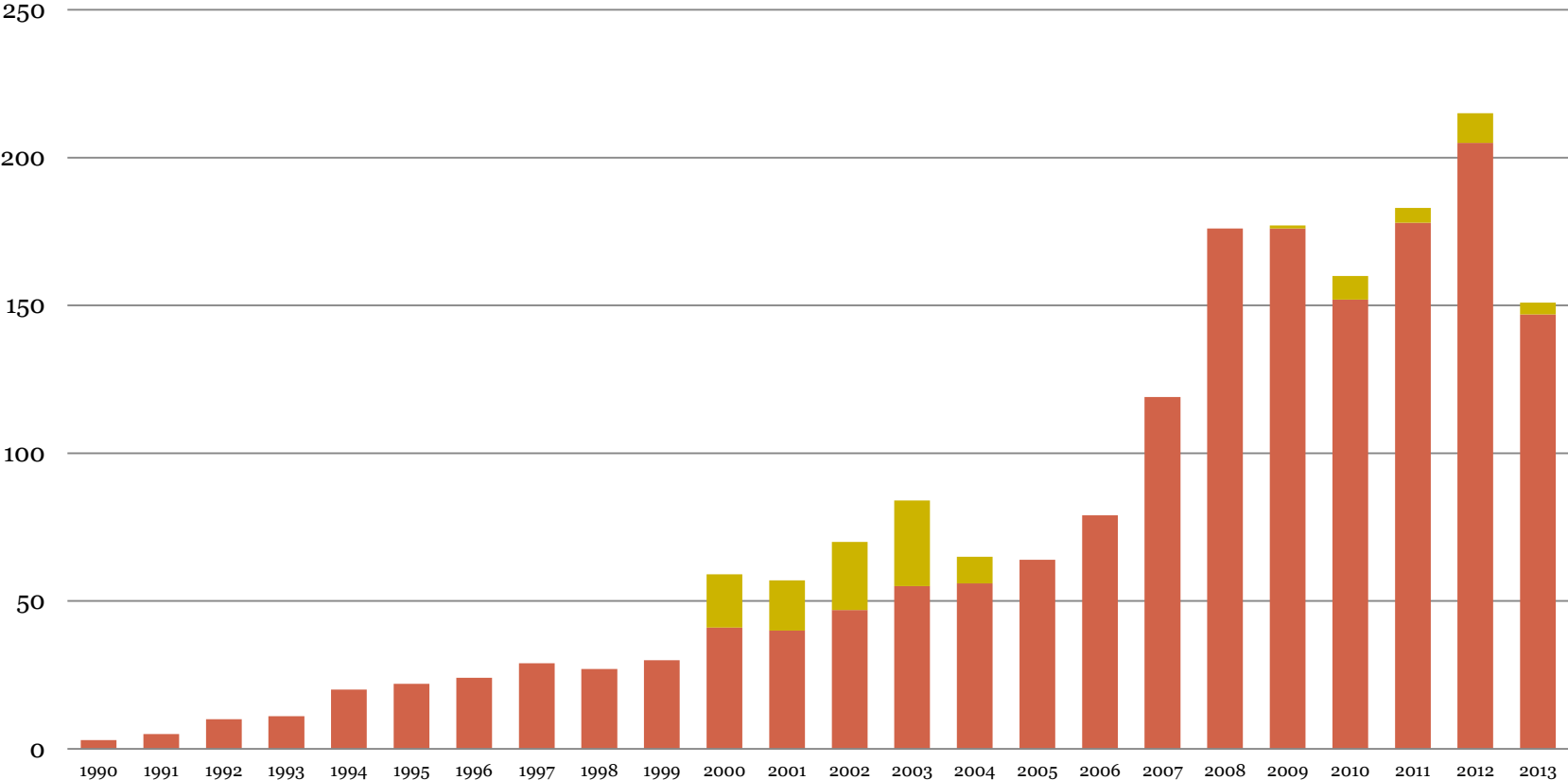
Books For Africa Case Study



Photo: Betty Press

Books For Africa Container Shipments and Shipping Grants (1990-2013)

Containers Shipped (BFA Warehouse) Shipping Grants



Books For Africa Case Study



- **BFA is demand driven and the demand is increasing**
- **Increased shipments to Rwanda since 2008**
- **21% of countries served by BFA do NOT use English as an official language**
- **Demand in traditionally French speaking nations**
 - **Burundi**
 - **Cameroon**

Negative Implications



- Language of Imperialism?
- Loss of cultural identity
- Loss of local & tribal languages
- Imperfect education



Conclusions



- 1. There is a growing demand for English language usage across Africa**
- 2. This demand is going to stick around**
- 3. There are some negative consequences**