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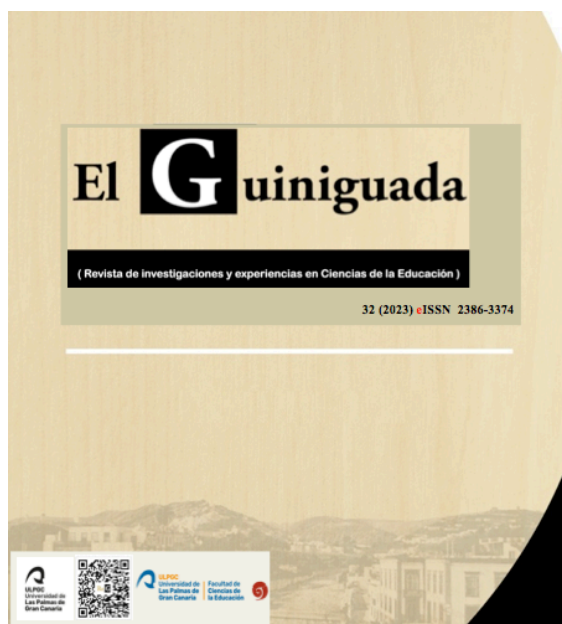
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### Spanish and Portuguese as Foreign Languages in Ivory Coast

L'espagnol et le portugais comme  
langues étrangères en Côte  
d'Ivoire

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## **Spanish and Portuguese as foreign languages in Ivory Coast<sup>1</sup>** L'espagnol et le portugais comme langues étrangères en Côte d'Ivoire

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### ABSTRACT

We analyze the implications of Portuguese integration for Spanish into secondary education in Côte d'Ivoire. Since the creation of secondary education on the model of the former colonial power in the late 1940s, English, Spanish and German have been the three foreign languages on the curriculum of Ivorian high schools and colleges. As Ivory Coast and Portugal signed a memorandum of understanding in 2015 to integrate Portuguese, it is likely that the status quo will no longer be the case in the coming years. In addition to being a member of the same neolatin family as Spanish, Portuguese has a greater presence on the African continent as the official language of five countries. Its integration will have the advantage of creating competition that will benefit the players and offer new opportunities in an increasingly globalized world.

### KEYWORDS

TEACHING, LEARNING, FOREIGN LANGUAGES, HISTOIRE, CULTURE

### RÉSUMÉ

Nous analysons les implications, pour l'espagnol en Côte d'Ivoire, de l'intégration du portugais dans l'éducation secondaire. Depuis la création de l'enseignement secondaire sur le modèle de l'ex puissance coloniale vers la fin des années 1940, l'anglais, l'espagnol et l'allemand sont les trois langues étrangères au programme des lycées et collèges ivoiriens. La Côte d'Ivoire et le Portugal ayant signé en 2015 un protocole d'accord en vue de l'intégration du portugais, il est probable que le statu quo ne soit plus de mise dans les années à venir. En plus d'être de la même famille néolatine que l'espagnol, le portugais bénéficie d'une plus grande présence sur le continent africain en tant que langue officielle de cinq pays. Son intégration aura l'avantage de créer une concurrence bénéfique aux acteurs et d'offrir de nouvelles opportunités dans un monde de plus en plus globalisé.

### MOTS-CLÉS

ENSEIGNEMENT, APPRENTISSAGE, LANGUES ÉTRANGÈRES, HISTOIRE, CULTURE

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<sup>1</sup> This article was the subject of a paper entitled "L'espagnol face à la perspective de l'instauration du portugais dans le système éducatif ivoirien" ("Spanish and the prospect of the introduction of Portuguese in the Ivorian education system"), at the *Colloque International Pluridisciplinaire* organised by the *Institut de Linguistique Appliquée d'Abidjan and the Laboratoire de Recherche en*

## INTRODUCTION

When Côte d'Ivoire inherited the French education system, as all the other French-speaking countries did in Africa, it also inherited the teaching of German and Spanish as a second modern language (LV2) from the third year onwards. English, the first modern language (LV1), is on the curriculum for all learners from the first year. Elsewhere, particularly in the former Metropolitan France, the range of foreign languages on offer has diversified over time. Since the 1970s, Portuguese had a "cursus complet, un CAPES et une Agrégation" in France (Penjon, 2019). On the continent itself, Senegalese third-year students can also choose Portuguese (Ndoye, 2007; Kem-Mekah, 2016, p. 52).

In Côte d'Ivoire, however, the situation has changed somewhat (Koffi, 2004; Koffi et al., 2021, p. 1770). More than seven decades after the creation of secondary education, there is no international language that has joined German and Spanish in the Ivorian school curriculum, officially and on a large scale at least. All of which leads P. Désalmand (2004) to point out that:

La priorité donnée à l'anglais, du fait de l'importance de cette langue dans le domaine de la recherche scientifique et sur le continent africain, apparaît comme l'option la plus souhaitable, mais, dans une perspective africaine, il aurait peut-être été intéressant de donner une place aux enseignements du portugais, de l'arabe et des langues africaines. D'une façon plus générale, les objectifs de l'enseignement des langues secondes gagneraient à être précisés. [The priority given to English, because of the importance of this language in the field of scientific research and on the African continent, seems to be the most desirable option, but, from an African perspective, it would perhaps have been interesting to give a place to the teaching of Portuguese, Arabic and African languages. More generally, the objectives of second language teaching need to be clarified.] (Désalmand, 2004, p. 433)

From a pan-African perspective, then, the language of Camões would not be out of place in Côte d'Ivoire's secondary schools - quite the contrary, in fact. On June 18, 2015, Côte d'Ivoire signed a memorandum of understanding with Portugal to introduce Portuguese into the country's education system. Almost four years later, on 14 June 2019, the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa was welcomed at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University in Abidjan for a 72-hour State visit. During this visit, it was agreed that "En ce qui concerne l'éducation et la langue, la présence du portugais en Côte d'Ivoire doit pouvoir se développer assez rapidement" (Yao, 2019).

In an article published in 2004, Koffi Tougbo, Côte d'Ivoire's first specialist in the language of Camões, expressed the fervent wish to see Portuguese occupy its rightful place in Côte d'Ivoire, "se développer et se vulgariser en gagnant, sans attendre, les différents cycles de l'enseignement secondaire, à l'image de l'anglais, de l'espagnol et de l'allemand". He believes that the future of the Portuguese language in our country is promising, and that we need to open up the teaching of the language by taking it beyond the confines of the university, where it has been confined until now. Côte d'Ivoire has several thousand German and Spanish-speaking students in secondary education. Portuguese has none at the moment. This situation needs to be remedied (Koffi, 2004, pp. 86-87). In his opinion:

Cette langue offre une chance supplémentaire certaine à une époque où la plupart des secteurs d'emplois semblent saturés. L'interprétariat, la diplomatie, le tourisme, le secrétariat trilingue, l'enseignement et l'embauche dans des entreprises lusophones implantées dans nos pays francophones sont, entre autres, des secteurs pouvant absorber nos diplômés les plus performants, contribuant ainsi, à la recherche de solutions durables au phénomène des littéraires au chômage dans nos pays. [This language offers a definite additional opportunity at a time when most employment sectors seem saturated. Interpreting, diplomacy, tourism, trilingual secretarial work, teaching and employment in Portuguese-speaking companies based in French-speaking countries are just some of the sectors that can absorb our best graduates, thereby helping to find lasting solutions to the problem of unemployed literary professionals in our countries.] (Koffi, 2004, p. 79)

The first question that arises from this shared optimism is what the objective reasons are. Firstly, what are the linguistic, historical and cultural factors favourable to the rapid development of Portuguese in Côte d'Ivoire, and secondly, what impact could such development have on the teaching of Spanish? We are interested in this question because Spanish and Portuguese are two related languages and in the medium or long term, the fact that Ivorian pupils have to choose their second foreign language between Spanish, German and Portuguese will have consequences, particularly for the first.

In order to provide answers to these research questions, we will focus on three points, beginning with an overview of the teaching and learning of Spanish and Portuguese in Côte d'Ivoire. We will then look at the strengths and weaknesses of these languages in the Ivorian context. Before concluding the contribution, the third and final point will lift the veil on a certain historical rivalry between Spain and Portugal, which has been symbolically revived in Côte d'Ivoire's education system since the adoption of a complete syllabus for Portuguese, as has existed for Spanish for over half a century.

#### CURRENT SITUATION OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

As it can be seen on a global scale, Spanish and Portuguese do not have the same visibility in Côte d'Ivoire. One has a long history in secondary and higher education, while the other has a discreet presence only in universities.

#### Spanish as a foreign language in Côte d'Ivoire

Spanish was introduced quiet at the same time secondary education started at the end of the 1940s, and by the early 1980s had overtaken German in terms of the number of teachers and learners, to become the second foreign language widely most studied in Côte d'Ivoire after English (Koffi, 2009; Quiñones, 1995). It is still officially taught from the fourth year of secondary school, but some private and public schools are starting to teach it from the sixth year, the most emblematic of them all being the Lycée d'Excellence Alassane Ouattara in Grand-Bassam, which opened in 2019. While there will be 795,488 learners in the 2020-2021 school year (Yao, 2021), the number of students studying Spanish in secondary education in Côte d'Ivoire now exceeds 800,000, making the country the number 1 in Africa in this field (Instituto Cervantes, 2021).

For higher education, Dago (1993), former director of the Spanish Department at the University of Abidjan, and Quiñones (1995), a Spanish lecturer in the 1990s, are reliable references. Spanish was first taught as an option in the Department of Modern

Literature, before a Department of Spanish was opened as part of the former FLASH (Faculté des Arts, Lettres, et Sciences Humaines) in 1969. Students could study Hispanic philology up to doctorate level. In 1975, there were 04 teachers in the Spanish Department, including three Ivorians and one Spaniard; in 1982, 14, including 06 foreigners. There were 1,050 students, with a further 1,000 learning the language as an option in other departments.

Since then, things have changed enormously, both qualitatively and quantitatively. On the one hand, the range of courses on offer has diversified, with two new courses (Hispano-African Studies and Linguistics-Didactics) added to 'Modern Spain' and 'Latin American Studies'. In addition, a new Spanish department was opened in 1994 at another university, Bouaké, which had been set up two years earlier. Once again, Côte d'Ivoire is the leading African country in terms of the number of students of Spanish and doctors in various specialities related to the language of Cervantes (Djandué, 2018).

Today, using the new names of these institutions, the Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies (Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny d'Abidjan), the Department of Spanish (Université Alassane Ouattara de Bouaké) and the École Normale Supérieure d'Abidjan, which houses a Spanish Section dedicated to the training of secondary school teachers, have at least 60 teacher-researchers and over 5,000 students, figures that are constantly growing. In the north of the country, the Université Péléforo Gon Coulibaly in Korhogo, where Spanish is taught as an option in several departments, may well become the third Spanish department in Côte d'Ivoire in the years to come.

All in all, Spanish has been taught as a foreign language in Côte d'Ivoire for more than seven decades, with a continuity that leads Djandué (2021) to say that learning it has become as commonplace as eating attiéké. This long presence also makes it the second international language, after English, to feed Nouchi and inspire its speakers in their various lexicalisation processes (Yao, 2015; 2017). The sociolinguistic phenomenon of the Hispanicisation of nicknames among young people, under the combined influence of music, telenovelas and football (Djandué & Yapi, 2022), also testifies to a certain level of penetration of Spanish in Ivorian popular culture in the 21st century.

#### Portuguese as a foreign language in Côte d'Ivoire

In an article entitled "L'enseignement/apprentissage du portugais en Côte d'Ivoire: actualité et perspectives" (Teaching/learning Portuguese in Côte d'Ivoire: current situation and prospects), Koffi (2004) provides an almost exhaustive overview of the situation of Portuguese as a foreign language in this African country. The first thing that emerges is that, unlike Spanish, which has entered the education system from the bottom up (from secondary to higher education), Portuguese is entering from the top down, since it is only present at university level, pending its eventual integration into secondary education.

The Portuguese language was introduced into Côte d'Ivoire's higher education system in 1979, ten years after Spanish, and later formed the Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan. It was first taught as an "optional language with around ten students on a regular basis from 1979 to 1984 [...] to over 500 learners in 1999, then to over 2,170 in 2003/2004", both at

the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan and at the Université Alassane Ouattara in Bouaké (Koffi, 2004, p. 75).

In 1998, in response to high demand and very high enrolments, the Faculty Council asked the University Council to consider creating a Portuguese degree, which was done the following year. The 2000-2001 academic year saw the arrival of the first baccalaureate students studying Portuguese at the University of Abidjan. Since then, the flow has not stopped (Koffi, 2004, p. 77). In addition to its status as an optional language (LV2) taught to groups of students from other departments at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny and the Université Alassane Ouattara, therefore Portuguese has been a specialised language (LV1) for just over two decades now, with around fifty students regularly enrolled each year from the bachelor's to the master's level.<sup>2</sup>

Although the teaching of Portuguese in Côte d'Ivoire benefits from the constant support of Brazil, Portugal and the Camões Institute, it still suffers from a significant lack of teachers to respond effectively to demand. There are only 06 teachers in the Iberian and Latin American Studies Department, including 05 nationals. The lack of a relay at the École Normale Supérieure, combined with this shortage of teachers, explains the very small number of students still studying Portuguese at university. After their studies, the few who do venture into Portuguese have no other outlet than embassies or scholarships to continue their studies in Portuguese-speaking countries. In the worst cases, they drop out altogether.

The integration of Portuguese into secondary education in Côte d'Ivoire is all the more urgent now that the main aim is to remedy a paradox, an injustice that has gone on far too long. Knowing full well that the profession of secondary school teacher is the first outlet on the job market for students of all foreign languages in Côte d'Ivoire (English, Spanish, German), the École Normale Supérieure d'Abidjan should also have had a Portuguese section in its language department a long time ago. Without the creation of this complete course, continuing to send baccalaureate holders on to study Portuguese will still look like "a planned mass murder".

But there is reason to hope that the situation of Camões' language in Côte d'Ivoire will change for the better in the near future. A little political goodwill added to the memorandum of understanding signed by Côte d'Ivoire and Portugal on 18 June 2015 could be enough to make the dream a reality. In addition, there are several arguments, not least, in favour of extending the teaching of the Portuguese language in the Ivorian education system.

#### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE LANGUAGES INVOLVED

In the competition looming on the horizon in Côte d'Ivoire's education and training sector, both Spanish and Portuguese have their strengths and weaknesses. What is the weight of each language in the world in general and in Côte d'Ivoire in particular? In what follows, we compare them firstly through demolingistic data, and secondly from a sociolinguistic angle.

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<sup>2</sup> For the 2020-2021 academic year, for example, the Portuguese Section of the Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny had 35 students in Licence 1, 11 in Licence 2, 04 in Licence 3 and 07 in Master 1 and 2 (figures provided by the Department's administration).

### Demolinguistic data

Spanish is the official language of 21 countries, 19 of which are in the Americas, 01 in Europe (Spain) and one in Africa: Equatorial Guinea. According to recent figures (Instituto Cervantes, 2022, p. 5), over 496 million people speak Spanish as their mother tongue and over 24 million others study it as a foreign language. These figures make it the second most widely spoken mother tongue in the world after Mandarin, and the fourth most widely spoken when all speaker profiles are taken into account, with 595 million people, or 7.5% of the world's population. So much so that, for Fernández González, Fernández Vítóres, Gutiérrez Rivilla and Serrano Avilés, "*El español se integra en [el] grupo de lenguas grandes, con notable peso específico*" (2023, p. 7), and this is first and foremost a question of demographic weight.

Portuguese, for its part, claims to have more than 250 million native speakers; it is the third most widely spoken European language behind English and Spanish, and seventh in the world (Éditions Assimil, 2017). It is the official language of 10 countries, including 06 in Africa: Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe. Since 2014, Equatorial Guinea has been a full member of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) (Darrigol, 2016).

All in all, apart from the modest Equatorial Guinea, a small country (28,050 km<sup>2</sup>) with fewer than two million inhabitants in 2020, no nation in Africa speaks Spanish as an official language. In fact, Equatorial Guinea finds itself in a situation of linguistic isolation, which it is trying to ease by making French and Portuguese its official languages (Darrigol, 2016). This has led Koffi (2004, p. 78) to say that Portuguese "is, apart from French, the most African of the neo-Latin languages".

To promote Spanish and Portuguese and the cultures they embody abroad, Spain set up the Cervantes Institute in 1991 and Portugal the Camões Institute in 1992. However, English and Spanish are the two most widely studied foreign languages in the world today (Hubert, SA). That said, in terms of their respective geographical distributions, Spanish opens Côte d'Ivoire up to part of the world, while Portuguese opens it up first and foremost to part of Africa.

### Sociolinguistic aspects

As the growth and prestige of a language can also be measured by its appeal to people (Hubert, SA), it is clear that more than half a century of uninterrupted teaching has contributed greatly to building an image of Spanish and its culture among all Ivorians (Djandué, 2012, Lalékou, 2021). In the same way as learning at school, international music, football and telenovelas (Diomandé, 2020) have contributed a great deal to the construction of this image, which has evolved positively over the course of history.

This has resulted in sociolinguistic phenomena such as the incorporation of Spanish terms into Ivorian slang known as Nouchi and the aforementioned Spanishisation of nicknames among young people (Djandué & Yapi, 2022). Here is a fairly representative sample of hispanisms in Nouchi:

Table 1. Some hispanisms in Nouchi

Lexical borrowing	Meaning	Spanish term	Example of a statement in Nouchi
<i>Adios [adiɔs]</i>	<i>Au revoir</i> [Goodbye]	<i>Adiós</i>	<i>Adios frero!</i>
<i>Amigo [amigo]</i>	<i>L'ami</i> [The friend]	<i>Amigo</i>	<i>Amigo, Késhia?</i>
<i>Como [komo]</i>	<i>Comment</i> [How]	<i>Cómo</i>	<i>C'est como?</i>
<i>Coché [kofɛ]</i>	<i>La voiture</i> [The car]	<i>Coche</i>	<i>Est-ce que t'as vu la coché ?</i>
<i>Madré [madre]</i>	<i>La mère</i> [The mother]	<i>Madre</i>	<i>La madré est calé.</i>
<i>Padré [padre]</i>	<i>Le père</i> [The father]	<i>Padre</i>	<i>Mon padré est po.</i>
<i>Vida [vida]</i>	<i>La vie</i> [The life]	<i>La vida</i>	<i>C'est la vida ; on va faire comment ?</i>

Source: Based on data from Yao Koffi (2017, p. 122)

If, as things stand at present, the average Ivorian does not systematically make the connection with the Portuguese language when he hears about King Pelé (Brazilian footballer) or Cristiano Ronaldo (Portuguese footballer), or when he watches telenovelas such as *Dona Beija* (Brazil, 1986), *Terra Nostra* (Brazil, 1999) or *Mara, une femme unique* (Portugal, 2015), which were once broadcast on national television ; It is not out of the question that, when the time comes, Portuguese will also take advantage of these elements of popular culture to promote itself in public opinion and in people's hearts in Côte d'Ivoire.

In the specific field of football, it will have escaped no-one's attention that some Ivorian players are nicknamed Gervinho (Gervais Yao Kouassi) or Kalunho (Salomon Armand Magloire Kalou). This type of construction is typical of the Portuguese language, in which the combination of the consonants N and H (NH) effectively corresponds to French GN and Spanish Ñ; hence, for example, Ronaldinho (Brazilian footballer) or Mourinho (Portuguese football coach).

Historically, the Portuguese were the first European explorers to set foot on the west coast of Africa in the 15th century and, by extension, on Ivorian soil. According to Koffi (2004, p. 78), "the hundreds of Lusitanian toponyms, hydronyms and lexical borrowings attested in our countries and in local languages [are] palpable proof of this". His doctoral thesis on the subject includes the following toponyms and hydronyms for Côte d'Ivoire:

Table 2. Toponyms and hydronyms derived from Portuguese in Côte d'Ivoire

	Portuguese derivatives	Original Portuguese Terms
Toponyms (town names)	<i>Tabou</i>	<i>Tabú</i>
	<i>San Pedro</i>	<i>São Pedro</i>
	<i>Sassandra</i>	<i>Santo André</i>
	<i>Fresco</i>	<i>Fresco</i>
	<i>Grand Lahou</i>	<i>Rio do lago</i>
	<i>Grand Bassam</i>	<i>Rio da Bassa (créole portugais)</i>
Hydronyms (river names)	<i>Cavally</i>	<i>Restinga do cavalo</i>
	<i>Sassandra</i>	<i>Rio de Santo André</i>
	<i>Bandama</i>	<i>Banda má</i>
	<i>Bia</i>	<i>Rio da bahia</i>

Source: Drawn up from the appendices of Koffi Toungo's thesis (2010, p. 299-300).



The name "Côte d'Ivoire" is even said to be the French translation of the Portuguese name "Costa do Marfim" given by merchant sailors on their way to India, and which appears in Portuguese portulans at the end of the 17th century. In addition to these place names, there are numerous lexical borrowings from Portuguese in local Ivorian languages such as Dida and Agni:

Table 3. Lexical borrowings (Lusitanisms) from Portuguese in local Ivorian languages

		Meaning in English	Portuguese term	Meaning in English
Dida	<i>àlákà</i>	the crate	<i>arca</i>	arch, box
	<i>kānja</i>	lantern	<i>candéia</i>	candlestick
	<i>àziglì</i>	the sugar	<i>açúcar</i>	sugar
	<i>fwflw</i>	the leaf	<i>folha</i>	leaf
	<i>kpāw</i>	the bread	<i>pão</i>	bread
Agni	<i>àlákà</i>	the box	<i>arca</i>	arch, box
	<i>bàlikó</i>	barrel	<i>barriga</i>	belly
	<i>kāvja</i>	storm lamp	<i>candéia</i>	candlestick
	<i>kpāw</i>	the bread	<i>pão</i>	bread
	<i>platja</i>	the money	<i>prata</i>	money

Source: Drawn up from the appendices of Koffi Tougbo's thesis (2010, p. 291, 293, 295).

Thus, Hispanicisms penetrate the Ivorian linguistic fabric from above by lending terms to a slang that emerged in the 1980s (Koffi, 2013), particularly from school and university circles (Djandué & Toa, 2019); Lusitanisms, on the other hand, penetrate this linguistic fabric rather from below by directly influencing the lexical structure of local languages. This has the potential to bring Portuguese into the hearts of Ivorians, to the point where, when the time comes, it will be chosen by many secondary school pupils.

#### THE SPAIN-PORTUGAL RIVALRY BACK IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Once all these elements of analysis have been taken into account, it is hard not to see the historical rivalry between Spain and Portugal being transposed, if only symbolically, into the Ivorian education system. The Treaty of Tordesillas is the best political symbol of this rivalry. But what is it really?

#### The treaty of Tordesillas

Although the Portuguese were the first to set foot on the shores of West Africa in the 15th century, the discovery of America was Spain's doing, since the King of Portugal refused to help Christopher Columbus and it was the Spanish monarchs, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, who financed the expedition that led to the discovery of a "New World" towards the end of the same century in 1492 (Thomas, 2016, p. 2). Portugal was no less interested in the un hoped-for fruits of this expedition.

In order to prevent conflicts over the conquest and exploitation of the riches of the new El Dorado, the kingdoms of Portugal and Spain, the two European powers of the time due to their technological superiority in naval matters, agreed a territorial arrangement recorded in the Treaty of Tordesillas ratified in 1494 under the aegis of

Pope Alexander VI, and later confirmed by Pope Julius II in 1506 (Bouopda, 2010, p. 18; Dago, 2014, p. 13).

A demarcation line was thus drawn, dividing the world into two zones: one Spanish, located on the meridian plane of west longitude  $46^{\circ} 37'$ , i.e. around 1,770 km west of the Cape Verde Islands; the other Portuguese, located to the east of this vertical line (Bouopda, 2010, p. 18). This is how 'España volvió definitivamente la espalda a África' (Dago, 2014, p. 13; 2015, p. 7). By definitively turning its back on Africa, Spain left the field open to Portugal.

But as the treaty was only binding on its signatories, despite the pontifical anointing (Bouopda, 2010, p. 18), the other European powers soon entered the fray. They bitterly disputed America with Spain and Africa with Portugal. In the end, Spain was left with only 19 countries in America and Portugal with five in Africa. Côte d'Ivoire is therefore inevitably one of the territories lost or ceded by Portugal to its competitors. As a result, the prospect of integrating Portuguese into its education system has a Tordesillas air about it.

Like an air of Tordesillas

At a time when we are perhaps preparing to give the Portuguese language a more prominent place in Côte d'Ivoire by teaching it in secondary education as well, anyone with a little knowledge of the country's history cannot help but see it as the reparation of an "injustice" or, at the very least, a way of "rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's". Thus, for Koffi (2004, p. 78), "the development of Portuguese language teaching in our region is synonymous with a rehabilitation of historical truth and a reoccupation of the ground it occupied between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries".

In saying this, Koffi is thinking not only of Côte d'Ivoire, but also of other countries such as Ghana, Benin and Togo, where traces of Portuguese can be found even in family names (Dalmeda, Vieira, Da Silva, De Campos, etc.) (Koffi, 2010, p. 300). The idea of "a reoccupation [by Portuguese] of the terrain that was its own between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries" is reminiscent of the historical rivalry between Portugal and Spain, especially as this pedagogical terrain is already largely occupied by the Spanish language.

It is true that English and German have also been part of the Côte d'Ivoire curriculum since before the country gained independence in 1960. But when Portuguese is integrated, these languages will have virtually no impact, at least in numerical terms. English is already the first compulsory modern language for all learners. As for German, which has been supplanted by Spanish for decades, it now seems to be out of the running.

For Spanish, on the other hand, Portuguese will appear to be a competitor of the same 'calibre', not least because it is also a neolatin language. Indeed, while learners in Côte d'Ivoire have often preferred Spanish to German because of its similarities with French, Portuguese, a language from the same Neolatin family, will in turn benefit from this status, in addition to the advantage of a greater presence on the African continent as the official language of five countries, not to mention its historical assets noted a few paragraphs earlier.

In so doing, the terms of the Treaty of Tordesillas are symbolically transposed to the field of education: Africa to Portuguese and America to Spanish. According to the Cervantes Institute (2022, p.5), by 2060 the United States will be the second largest

Spanish-speaking country in the world after Mexico, with 27.5% of its population of Hispanic origin. While the growing influence of the language of Cervantes in the United States is in line with the Tordesillas clauses, this does not quite seem to be the case for its spectacular breakthrough in Costa do Marfim, and in Africa in general. However, this sort of modern violation of the historic treaty is not the fault of the successors to Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon; it was instigated by France. As we know, the former colonial power introduced Spanish as a foreign language in Côte d'Ivoire at the expense of Spain, which had turned its back on Africa to devote itself body and soul to the conquest and exploitation of the New World. In this respect, it is difficult not to think of a certain 'philosophy of the back' developed by Professor Boa-Thiémélé (2021). In the 1940s and 1950s, when Spanish was introduced into Ivorian secondary schools, Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) kept Spain sufficiently busy at home for it to think about promoting its language and culture abroad.

#### CONCLUSION

When all is said and done, it is clear that, with the integration of Portuguese, three modern languages 2 will in future have to be shared by all pupils in Côte d'Ivoire's secondary schools, which will inevitably lead to a gradual slowdown in the increase in the number of Spanish learners in Côte d'Ivoire. This will be felt as the number of Portuguese teachers increases. What is less certain, on the other hand, is that this could really call into question Côte d'Ivoire's leadership in Africa when it comes to teaching and learning Spanish, especially if the other countries that have not yet done so also switch to Portuguese. This will also be a source of healthy competition that will benefit learners and teachers of both languages in many ways.

Thus, despite Spanish's considerable leadership in terms of the number of speakers, international prestige and presence in Côte d'Ivoire to the point of lending words to Nouchi, Portuguese will be welcome, for reasons that have been amply explained throughout this work. Stepping up the teaching of Portuguese will also have the double benefit of taking us a step closer to globalisation, by helping to break down the language barrier between us and several African countries at a time when African integration is tending to strengthen. The learning and knowledge of foreign languages is in fact the driving force behind the globalisation phenomenon; "whether geographical borders disappear, globalisation will only fulfil all its promises if linguistic borders also disappear" (Djandué, 2013, p. 5).

At the same time, if we are to avoid coming empty-handed to this great planetary rendezvous of giving and receiving, we will also have to make room for our own languages and for African languages in our education system. This is the price we will have to pay if Africa is not to be a victim of globalisation, as it was of colonisation, but a player among many others.

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