

Abdul Karim Bangura

The African Mother Tongue and Mathematical Ideas

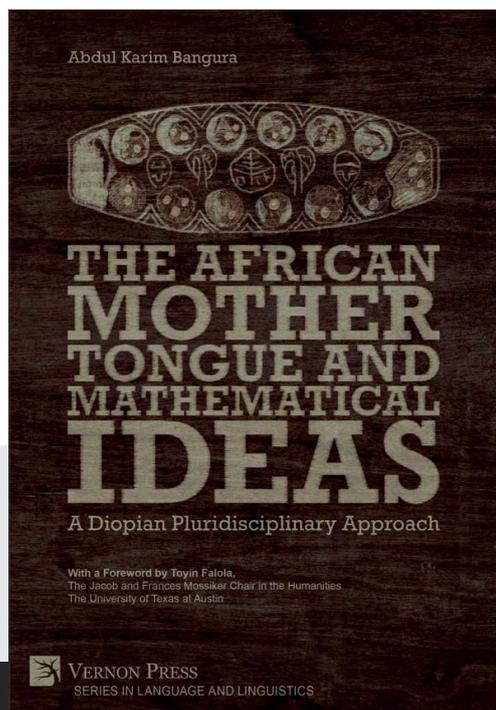
A Diopian Pluridisciplinary Approach

SERIES IN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

Summary

This book by renowned scholar Dr Abdul Karim Bangura combines linguistics and mathematics to show how and why African-centred mathematical ideas can be a driving force in Africa's development efforts. Bangura explores the concept that Africa has been the centre of the History of Mathematics for thousands of years, as the civilizations that emerged across the continent developed contributions which would enrich both ancient and modern understanding of nature through mathematics. However, scholars and other professionals working in the field of mathematics education in Africa have identified a plethora of issues in carrying out their tasks. This is highlighted by one of the most compelling arguments in the book, which is that a major reason for these problems is the fact that the African mother tongues has been greatly neglected in the teaching of mathematics in the continent. Bangura asserts that a change has to be made in order for Africa to benefit from the exceptional opportunities mathematics offer, showing that, even if there is a great body of work connecting linguistics and mathematics, few analyses have been performed on the link between African languages and mathematics—and the ones that have been made are not theoretically-grounded on linguistics. Thus, the book begins by identifying the objects of study of linguistics and mathematics, and delineates which ones they have in common.

Next, since the object of study of linguistics is language, the nine design features of language are employed to examine each of the objects as it pertains to African languages. After that, mathematical ideas of sustainability and those of tipping points are suggested as means to help Africa's development efforts.



About the author

Abdul Karim Bangura is a researcher-in-residence of Abrahamic Connections and Islamic Peace Studies at the Center for Global Peace at American University and the director of The African Institution, both in Washington DC. He is also a visiting graduate professor of Regional Integration at the University of Cabo Verde as well as director of the Institute and senior doctoral dissertations mentor of the CODESRIA College of Mentors in Dakar (Senegal). Bangura is also a member of many scholarly organizations, has served as President and then United Nations Ambassador of the Association of Third World Studies, and is a Special Envoy of the African Union Peace and Security Council. He has recently been awarded the Special United States Congressional Award for “outstanding and invaluable service to the international community.”

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