SOFT POWER AND LANGUAGE: FRENCH INTERESTS IN KENYA (1990-2018)

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my compassionate mother, Zaida Kwena Omoto, my superb dad Ibrahim Kombo, my awesome siblings, Rashid Kombo, Fauzia Ibrahim, Ali-Bashir Kombo, Shariff Kombo, my late grandfather Kombo Rachami (May Allah grant him paradise), my cousin Abdulkarim Mohamed, my friends, Halima Idhil Ahmed, Laureen Aseka, Issa Jaffar, Mustafa Chibole, Hamisi Ngema, Ramadhan Hassan, Elizabeth Wothaya Maina, Erick John and Collins Odimah Odhiambo.
Abstract

This research set out to analyse the use of language as a tool for soft power to advance the French interest in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to: analyse how the French have used language as a soft power tool in Kenya; determine the cultural and educational influence of French in Kenya and to, analyse avenues for developing French-Kenya relations. France is known as one of the few nations that have stuck with the of soft power for centuries. However, French relations with Kenya present a special case since the two did not have any colonial relations. France started strengthening its relations with Kenya after Britain granted independence to the latter. Kenya’s strategic position in the region has been a major driving factor behind efforts by the French to strengthen ties. While the French language has grown more popular in Kenya, its influence on French-Kenya relations remains unclear, especially in regard with political and economic ties between the two nations. The study used random sampling to identify respondents to the questionnaires. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyse the data. It was established that the French language has been an important tool in advancing French interests in Kenya.

*Keywords: soft power, language, linguistic soft power, Kenya-France collaboration*
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

This chapter covers an introduction to a study to establish the history and effectiveness of the use of language by France as a tool of soft power. The paper is made up of five major sections. The sections take the reader through the preparation process, the actual research and how the conclusions and references were drawn as a result of this process. This section entails an explanation of the concepts and factors that informed the research.

European occupation in Africa was characterized by a scramble that interrupted the functioning of many societies. After the partition of Africa among several European powers, the colonialists embarked on different strategies to contain their respective territories and ensure that they derive the expected returns. Most of the European powers used strategies that involved militarization. Some approached their territories with friendship but later turned physical to impose their will. France has stood out in its efforts to spread influence across the world. Colonialists drew national boundaries to ensure that they do not fall into constant conflicts. These boundaries have been maintained to date. While most European powers applied military techniques to control their territories, France stuck to the using negotiations to strengthen relations with people in its territories (Kelley, 2019a). The assimilation policy was meant to erode the perception of colonialism relations and enhance that of mutuality. Attainment of independence by African states shifted the balance of power. European nations
would establish relations with whichever country they chose to. France has extended the use of soft power to contemporary relations with most states.

The evaluation of the concept of power in International relations begins from a broad scope of the essence of power in international relations and narrows down to the concept of soft power influence. In basic definition in the field of International relations, power refers to the ability of a state to either control or influence other states or predetermine the outcome of an international event (Burley, 2017). The evaluation of the concept of power defines both an internal dimension and an external dimension. The inner aspect refers to the autonomy of a state in the creation and implementation of policies. On the other hand, the outer dimension identifies the ability to influence others to work towards your influence (Alleyne, 2016). The two aspects lead us to the two extremes of applying power to control other nations in the arena of international relations. The two extremes include Hard and soft power influence.

The hard power influence is defined by the ability to have others appeal to your desires by applying coercion. In the capacity of a state, it involves the application of military power to get things done. On the other hand, Soft power influence means getting people to your side without necessarily applying coercion. It involves seeking legitimacy in regards to ideology and having others believe in your doctrine to put it into the application. The transformations that have occurred over time create the need for the recognition of the various perspectives of power to be able to understand the current field of international relations and a state’s influence power. The end of the cold war signalled the inadequacy of applying coercive force to get things done. The situation led to the development of soft power proposed by Nye (2008) that insists on legitimacy and convincing a state to believe in your effort.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

When the French started establishing relations with non-Francophone nations, they realized that they needed a good strategy to entice governments and civilians to cooperate in different projects. Soft power influence that relied on the promotion of language was a viable option due to the sovereignty status of Kenya after independence (Pamment, 2014). The language difference was a challenge to establishing a common ground to woo Kenya. Most of the locals had little understanding of both the French language and culture. The difficulties experienced in the communication of the interest of the French created the need to promote French language education. Teaching of the French language and offering educational opportunities to Kenyans to study in France would provide the best alternative to creating a common ground that would promote understanding between Kenya and France. For one to be eligible to study in France, one needed to have B1 language proficiency in French. The use of the French language as a soft power entity would also provide a long-lasting solution to some of the challenges experienced in mobilizing a team to undertake the French government projects (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019). However, scholars are yet to reach a consensus on whether the strategy has been effective.

**Hypothesis:** The use of soft power has been effective in helping France meet its political, economic, international security and human rights agenda in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to realize the following objectives;

a. To analyse how the French have used language as a soft power tool in Kenya
b. To determine the cultural and educational influence of French in Kenya

c. To analyse avenues for developing French-Kenya relations

1.4 Research Questions

The study will seek to answer the following research questions

1. To what extent have the French used language as a soft power tool in Kenya?

2. What are the cultural and educational influences of French in Kenya?

3. How have the potential avenues for developing Kenya-France relations been exploited for mutual benefit of the two nations?

4. What Aspects of soft power have been applied by the French in their relations with Kenya?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The study seeks to assess the extent to which countries use soft power to promote their interests. The paper specifically focuses on how France has applied its concept of soft power on exerting its influence in Kenya. The literature review and data collected by the researcher will inform conclusion and inferences on how the influence of France through language has been extended to key social, cultural, political and economic sectors. The history of Kenya-France relations is relatively short compared to other European nations that were more aggressive in their approach to African relations in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. This research will involve a historical analysis of how the French have managed to strengthen relations with Kenya.
The use of soft power through language is unique and largely unprecedented. It can only work in a modern scenario where people place significant value on education. The research finding regarding the French Soft power in Kenya would be essential in highlighting the role of language in promoting the French interests in the country. The study would also highlight the essence of soft power influence as a strategy of establishing cooperation and economic ties between the countries. The study would further promote positive establishments of policy and legal infrastructures to protect the interests of both states in such situations of foreign soft power influence. Through the study, the role of French education and language in regards to the promotion of French control and culture would be evaluated and the benefits of promoting ties between Kenya and France. This study is key in drawing a line between the success of the strategy employed by France and other powerful countries from the west. France has stood out due to its efforts to employ soft power. Therefore, an examination of its strategies and success can inform decisions by other nations to change their approach to international relations. Nations such as the US and Russia have often employed military strategies to spread their global dominance. Although this study does not directly compare the two categories of strategies, it provides an opportunity for comparison with other studies. Although soft power is predominantly used by the French, the country can diversify its strategy where appropriate. There exist lots of potential for France to expand its domain in Kenya through both within its soft power strategy and other means. This study involves both the time-series and cross-sectional analysis of the soft power strategy through language. The time-series analysis entails an examination of notable quantitative changes in the number of people impacted by efforts of France to ensure that more Kenyans can communicate in French. The results will be
key in establishing how culture and education of the Kenyan people have been influenced by the strategy employed by France.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study seeks to explore the role played by the French language as a soft power tool in advancing the interests of the French in Kenya. The research focuses on the impact of the French language, culture and education as the most reliable tools that the French government has used to enhance interaction and cooperation between Kenya and France. The study is however restricted to the period between 1990 to 2018 of the aspects of French language, culture and education are therefore evaluated in regards to the transformations observed since the French set foot in Kenya. The history of professionalized France relations with Kenya is less than six decades, and this research covers a span of 3 decades, which is about one half of the relevant period. The history is relatively short because France officially began strengthening its relations with Kenya after the latter gained independence. Therefore, efforts by France to spread its culture in the country only began after French embassy was set up in Nairobi. Kenya has had longstanding relations with Francophone countries in Africa. This study does not extend to the language and cultural influence of these relations on Kenya and its partners since they are not a result of direct deliberate efforts by France to spread its dominance in the country. The data collection process is modelled to ensure that the respondents understand that the scope of the research is strictly focused on direct relations between Kenya and France, especially factors relating to the use of language as a tool of soft power by France. While France is considered the leader of soft power in the world, there are instances where the country has employed other strategies to spread its influence across the
world. In Kenya, the country does not merely use language as a tool for spreading dominion and strengthening relations. This research will only focus on language as a tool of soft power.

1.7 Definition of Terms

**Soft power:** Soft power refers to the ability of a jurisdiction to draw the attention of another and co-opt it. It is largely involved in foreign policies where coercion is considered inappropriate. It involves a persuasive approach to convincing other countries to cooperate in various activities with your government without the use of force, especially military strategies (Nye, 1990). The mechanism often relies on utilizing economic, linguistic and cultural influence to promote understanding between the two countries. According to Nye (2004), soft power may come in ways such as economic collaboration, leadership, diplomacy, institutions, culture, and donations. Under soft power strategies, the subject nation draws the attention of the government or citizens of the target authority. The subject nation portrays itself as friendly and provides the latter with an opportunity to learn and admire aspects of their culture, politics, economy and national values and interests. The rest of the interaction is diplomatic, with both nations keen to draw their interests while appeasing each other.

**Language:** A system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. Each language has unique sentence structures, noun phrases, framing, vocabulary, pronunciation and figurative language. Some aspects of human language are universal while others have to be learned over time. The period taken for a person to learn a language ranges depending on a number of factors (Hast, 2016). Key factors include the relationship between first language
and the new language, other commitments in life and the motivation for learning the new language.

**International Collaboration:** The organization of households into communities and states brought new identity to the society. Under a state, people pool their resources and abilities for mutual benefit. However, states have their limitations and shortcomings, which are mitigated by establishing relations with other countries (Sandholtz, 1992). Nations identify other states with the potential of meeting their mutual interests before approaching them. International collaboration involves the interaction of representatives from two different nations with the aim of pursuing a common goal or interest for the benefit of both the parties. This collaboration can be bilateral or multilateral. Bilateral collaboration involves relations between two nations. This form of international collaboration is simpler and can be conducted through foreign affairs departments and embassies. Multilateral international relations are more complex and involve a series of meetings and agreements before a consensus can be reached. Challenges are posed when nations split into factions. In bilateral relations, every nation picks a partner according to their coinciding needs and abilities.

**Cultural Influence:** Cultural influence refers to the use of geographical, familial and historical factors to change the perceptions and actions of other people. Culture is generally defined as a way of life of certain people. Culture is often associated with a social unit, ranging from a family to a society (Zhu et al., 2007). Cultural influence entails efforts by a social unit to make other units familiar with their culture. In some instances, cultural influence is coincidental while in others it is deliberate with some motives. Soft power cultural influence refers to the promotion of a foreign countries culture in a target country with the aim of promoting understanding between the two countries that eventually lead to cooperation.
between the two countries. Therefore, soft power cultural influence is based on meeting the interests of the nation that initiates the entire process. In order to meet these interests, the initiating nation must ensure that it draws the attention of the target. Therefore, cultural influence must be packaged in a manner that convinces the target that it will draw some benefits from the entire process.

**Economic influence:** Each society has unique way of sustaining the production, flow and consumption of goods and services and the supply of money. Expanding the network of this flow and supply ensures sustenance, mainly as a result of diversification of the economy. When one sector of the economy fails, the others are stepped up to mitigate on the looming shortcomings on supply and consumption of goods and services. Countries spread their economic sphere by establishing links with other nations across the world (Milgrom & Roberts, 1988). The embedding of another economy into a country’s economic cycle is considered as spread of economic influence. Economic influence involves foreign countries strategies to promote economic activities in other countries either through funding or providing expertise power with the aim of creating a positive gesture to work together with the target country in carrying out numerous projects. Both nations work towards the success of the activities due to mutual benefit. However, one can easily identify the nation that has greater economic influence on the other. Some of the key factors considered during the identification process include flow of technology, funds and human resource between the two nations involved. If a country has superior technology which it lends the other and greater funding, it is considered to have economic influence over its partners.

**Linguistic soft power influence:** Language is key in defining the efficiency of interactions between individuals. In all international relations, the two states must have people who
understand each other’s language. Language is often accompanied with culture and greater understanding (Solomon, 2014). Therefore, common language between two nations strengthens relations. In this regard, some nations spread their influence by strengthening the linguistic link with its partners. This is done by increasing the number of people who speak the former’s language. The increase is achieved by tying some benefits to the target language proficiency. By doing this, the two nations involved become culturally intertwined. Spread of linguistic soft power influence involves the strategies aimed at promoting a nation’s native language and culture in other countries with the aim of creating a platform for understanding and cooperation in a number of activities.

**Assimilation:** Assimilation refers to the process of absorbing other people by making them feel as part of a society. Some of the key factors used in assimilation include language, culture, education and social status. In the political context, assimilation is a word that is widely associated with France (Betts, 2005). In the precolonial and colonial period, France chose a different approach of spreading its dominion over the world. The country could approach prospective territories and offer their people a similar status as the citizens of France. The people would be given freedom to form social, political and economic institutions that mirror those of the French in France. Therefore, the term is generally used in reference to the entity of adopting French virtues and values and consequently behaving like the French.

**National interest:** National interests refer to the joint goals and ambitions of the people of a state. Family has been considered the basic social unit for a long time. Before civilization, the capabilities of individuals would be pooled at the family level and utilized to secure the interests of all the people. As civilization advanced, people developed communities which eventually aggregated into states. The states were identified as the most convenient units of
meeting the economic, social, security and cultural interests of the people. States are run by governments given the mandate and power by the people (Nye, 1999). They have the sole responsibility of securing national interest. Government create conducive conditions for each of the people to meet their respective needs for growth. Therefore, national interest can be summarized as the conditions necessary for the survival of the nation-state and its core values.

**Civilization:** Human beings have been on a constant advancement path for the greater part of history. They have come up with strategies to improve their ability to meet all their needs. Civilization is a complex term since every human being can have their own idea on development and advancement. However, there exists a level of consensus on what is considered the ideal culture. While some scholars consider civilization as an end, others see it as the means of achieving the desired end. In this study, the researcher adopts the definition that views civilization as a process. The assumption made is that humanity will always look for ways of improving the quality of their lives. There will be no point where people will consider their life as the epitome of civilization since opportunities for improvement will always be identified. Therefore, civilization refers to the process by which a society reaches an advanced stage of social and cultural development and organization.

**1.8 Conclusion**

The first chapter of the study covers the introduction section which explores the background to the research, introduces the problem and addresses both the general and specific objectives of the study. The chapter also presents the hypothesis and the research questions to be answered during the investigation. The section further highlights the significance, the scope, and delimitation of the study. Within the same section, the key terms to be discussed in the
study are also defined. Chapter two reviews the existing literature related to the topic under study. The literature review is further divided into objective subsections that tackle the element of French education and the tools that accompany education influence; and the use of culture as a means to attain soft power.

Chapter three outlines the methodology to be used in the study. This methodology covers the research design to be used, the target population of the study, the sampling design, methods of data collection, data analysis and the ethical issues to be explored in terms of international relations between the two countries.

Chapter four presents the data collected from the field. The data is analysed both qualitatively using descriptions and quantitatively using tables, charts, graphs and percentages. The data presentation follows a thematic approach in line with the objectives of the study.

The fifth and final chapter presents the discussions of the findings of the study presented in chapter four. The chapter further gives summaries of findings, infers conclusions and makes recommendations from the findings.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In order to understand the significance of language in the advancement of the French interests in Kenya, it was necessary to review existing literature on the subject of soft power and language. This chapter therefore critically analyses available literature relevant to this study. The review starts by giving a general introduction to soft power so as to place the study into context. The discussion then progresses to the historical use of language for soft power before narrowing down to a discussion on French interest in Kenya. This chapter finally analyses the available theories on language and soft power in order to give the study a theoretical basis.

The approach of investigation involves one directed at evaluating the actual milestones achieved while applying language education influence to promote foreign policy. At this point, the study assesses the contribution of French education influence foreign policy success, especially in Kenya. The study is keen on the recognition of each effort and the previous success of each strategy in enhancing cooperation between Kenya and France. The study further assesses the efforts towards the application of the educational aspect of soft power influence and the success feedback realized by the strategy. Besides the evaluation identifies the mechanisms applied in promoting the linguistic element of soft power. The study backs the theory that emphasizes the need for nations to be informed of renewed strategies towards foreign policy (Solomon, 2014). The study also recognizes the disparity held in using educational and cultural promotion agents in strengthening the soft power influence. The contribution of the two elements to cooperation in different mechanisms but eventually achieving the same objective is addressed. The study further assesses the outcome
in economic cooperation during the influence. From the foregoing, the study seeks to contribute to the current field of knowledge while recognizing the milestones achieved through the soft power influence. The contrast is made in comparison to the two extreme ends of coercive and soft power in aiding foreign policy.

2.2 Language and Power

The historical use and spread of foreign languages and culture date back to the pre-colonial period just before European countries began colonizing different world regions. The purpose of communication within the colonial period was marked with the transmission of culture and embracing foreign lifestyles (Ansre, 2014). The same trend is repeated in modern day language dynamism and communications. The integration is marked by some element of cultural adaptation and social identity. In the comparison of the socialization landscape of the world before colonization and globalization and after colonization and globalization, a lot of changes have occurred that manifest dynamism and integration in both language use and culture. Colonialism was the first exposure that allowed European countries to recognize the sense of the existence of a common language and social culture that allows for the understanding between two strangers.

Before colonization foreigners coming to trade in Africa relied on the role of translators to allow the two parties to understand each other (Melitz & Toubal, 2014). Translators had equally learned the languages of the locals through their many trade voyages across the world. At this level language only served the purpose of communication and the local communities who interacted with the foreigners as traders rarely recognized the culture of the foreigners. Most of the colonial government relied on the spread of their native language to exercise
administrative powers in their jurisdiction. Therefore, most of the territorial governments established education systems that would facilitate the acquisition of the foreign languages and eventually facilitate understanding between the two groups (Ansre, 2017). According to Senghor (1966), African can take back their power by strengthening relations between themselves. This means that they have to resist factors that promote foreign dominance such as language and culture.

France is one of the countries that exclusively relied on the strength of language and culture through the famous policy of French assimilation in its colonies. All individuals who learned the French language and culture would be accorded all the rights of a French ruler. The strategy helped the attitude of the subjects who got the opportunity to study the concepts of French language and culture. Through the policy, many individuals who got scholarships from the French government courtesy of the French assimilation eventually developed a positive attitude about the French government. Today most of the West African leaders still have links with the French government due to the positive attitude developed. For instance, Senegal and Mali still experience much influence of the French government. It was therefore coincidental that only individuals who were privileged to acquire the foreign language had the opportunity to benefit fully from the colonial governments (Ansah, 2014).

The language was therefore beneficial for both communication and administrative purposes. At this moment language spread defined accessibility to the world since by identifying one language one could quickly learn another foreign language (Plüddemann, 2015). During the entire period of colonialism and post-colonialism, language served many functions. Language played an essential role in facilitating trade and the spread of religion. Besides, language was used as a mechanism of enabling understanding between the colonizers and the local rulers. In
case the rulers would not understand the languages, a translator would be sourced to facilitate communication and understanding. The situation explains why foreign languages would emerge as a crucial element during the independence negotiation process that marked the first approaches to soft power (Solomon, 2014). The colonizers relied on the use of foreign languages to emphasize on the target interests they would have after the countries sought independence.

It was therefore prudent to allow for the spread of foreign languages as a way of enhancing the bilateral cooperation among countries. The postcolonial era was marked by different approaches for the use of soft power to negotiate with the independent states. The formation of common bodies such as the United Nations and Commonwealth for the former British territories the colonizers still recognized the need to spread the foreign languages to enhance cooperation between countries. The path to collaboration and prosperity was admired by many. The exit of colonial masters also exposed countries to interact with different nations through trade. Countries that stood at strategic entry points to different regions would, therefore, find themselves cooperating with more than one first world country to ensure coexistence (Forsdick & Murphy, 2014). Countries such as Kenya and Egypt are beneficiaries of such situations. France continues to drum support through cooperation with countries worldwide as a mechanism of implementing its international goals.

2.2.1 Soft Power

Soft power is a proposition of American political scientist Joseph Nye in his modernized approach to foreign policy. The concept gained popularity in the post-cold war era due to the desire for peaceful approaches to foreign policy. Joseph Nye recognized soft power as an
equally unique element of control held by countries that had relatively equal strength to using military power (Illegeg, 2016). In perspective, soft power was recognized as a mechanism to getting countries to do what they would otherwise not have done in a typical engagement. The path has been followed by several world leaders such as Xin Jinping who in his ascent to office promised to make the Chinese culture into a “Socialist Cultural Superpower” (Hartig, 2015). Non-coercive power would provide the foundation to cementing foreign ties between countries. Just at the end of the cold war, various countries relied on the utility of different approaches to maintain the relations between them soft power would, therefore, remain as important. The Chinese are identified with Confucius Institute while the French created Alliance Francaise

One of the bases for studying soft power is to create a detailed review of the situations that result in exercising soft power to promote cooperation among countries. The second reason includes the extent to which the French government has capitalized on the soft power influence to improve on its foreign policy abroad (Seiichi, 2015). The perspectives include the benefits obtained while using different aspects of soft power such as linguistics, culture and economic influence.

The shift in the 21st century regarding the concept of soft power and education draws the evaluation towards recognition of various trends in the world regarding soft power and the legitimacy of soft power influence. The most relevant case study to the situation of France in Kenya today is the Chinese case of promoting soft power through education today enhanced by the establishments of its famous Confucius Institutes. Yang (2010) addresses the role of Chinese education programs as a path to the promotion of soft power. The publication recognizes the existence of specific policies that a government seeks to promote through the
strategy. The concept of education and soft power embraces collaboration and international exchange with the aim of enhancing global influence. The Chinese mechanism is comparable to the path those other countries such as France seeking to promote a global power have followed in regards to providing a formalized appeal.

The dimension provided by Hartig, (2015) is crucial to the recognition of the interplay of soft power tools. The concept recognizes the ability of soft power influence to appeal to the influence of attraction and cooperation. The case of the French promotion of soft power replicates the path followed by the French government to create a global presence and influence. As opposed to the concept of hard power that applied coercion and inducement, the soft power influence relies on setting common agendas and promoting attraction and collaboration. The leading player identified in the role includes the establishment of institutions that support values, cultures, and policies. According to Rieker (2018), the current French regime headed by President Emmanuel Macron has witnessed the intensity of application of the element of Soft power in strengthening foreign relations. The French step up in soft power strategy leads us to assess the advantages and disadvantages of applying the soft power strategy in international relations.

The first advantage to the application of soft power lies on the influence achieved through enhancing a unique appeal that motivates a team to work towards the influencer’s objectives. The concept of soft power also rests on the existence of a legitimate theory or idea that drives individuals to work towards that goal. It is, therefore, more appealing to work towards a goal that you are comfortable with achieving. The ability of soft power that recognizes a beyond influence approach that leads to attraction. The ability to appeal to attraction and cooperation identifies a steadier approach towards propagating the influence. Despite the broad appeal
Nye (2010) identifies some of the shortcomings of applying soft power such as compromising a country’s sovereignty through personal appeal (Walt, 2012). The advantages point to long term collaboration.

The case of French Soft power influence on foreign policy strategy mostly relies on the promotion of language and education with an expected outcome of cultural and economic ties between Kenya and France. To understand the strength and context the French soft power through the promotion of language, it is necessary to predict the outcome. Since linguistics is regarded as one of the most powerful tools in identifying with a social group, it serves as a crucial tool for the promotion of mutual understanding between two sides. Promoting a language equally performs some uniting roles such as communication, expressing identity, creative expression and emotional tolerance. The past influence can justify the case that the United States (US) is currently enjoying.

Most of the current world leaders who schooled in the US have no challenges appealing to the economics and politics of the United States. For instance, Benjamin Netanyahu agreed with the decision to send US troops into Iraq. Besides, Chalabi who headed the Iraqi National Congress in 2009 admitted to the US invasion of Iraq. It is therefore conclusive that most of the world leaders who hold some link to American Universities often appeal to the US type of politics and economics. The concept creates attraction and appeals to the systems. The current notable case is that of the current Kenyan president who having schooled in the US often appeals much to the US government (Nye, 1990). The element of soft power would, therefore, define every nation’s role towards development and cooperation in the world (Pamment, 2014). The American case draws us to the use of language as a foreign policy instrument in a historical context.
Egypt served as a crucial entry and exit point in Africa through the Suez Canal that made different colonial powers hold various interests to the region. The interest ideology can be confirmed by the combined Israeli, British and French onslaught on Egypt during the Suez crisis. The French had enough reasons to engage in the war as a mechanism of protecting their interests. The French joined mainly in the fight due to their interests in neighbouring Algeria (Goodman, 2014). The same situation applies to the Kenyan case where some countries that had colonies in the region such as Germany and France have established better ties to enhance relationships and contacts effectively. The Kenyan association with the government of France began in the late 1990s after the establishment of the French priority Solidarity Zone.

The priority solidarity zone enlisting sought to include additional countries that did not initially fall within the Francophone countries. The listing resulted in rolling out some projects that targeted to improve the social lives of the citizens (Martin, 2018). The plans would later encourage several nations to have confidence in the French government as a development partner. At international organizations summits such as the United Nations and the G8, the French government continuously relies on cooperation with other countries to drum support for its global objectives of development. The circumstances have led to the growth of the ties between the two countries (France and Kenya). The establishment of the French embassy has played a significant role in promoting relations within the two countries. Just as during the colonial days where mastery of the language was crucial to the realization of the goals, the French government continues to emphasize on promoting the French language and culture (Mitchell, 2015). Soft power would provide a suitable substitute for the coercive power applied during the colonial days.
Globalization of companies also necessitates the understanding of diverse languages and culture. The entry of French companies into the region also provided the need for the French embassy to scale up their efforts in encouraging the development of French language in Kenya. Since expression eventually contributes to cultural cohesion the French embassy hopes to achieve integration by making the French language prominent on the Kenyan Soil. Some of the cooperation activities currently undertaken by the French embassy are as a result of teaching the French language in Kenya (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya 2019).

Each of the sections engages individuals of Kenyan origin with good mastery of both French language and culture. The individuals play a supportive role in the preparation of up to date information for the French government. Through the functions, the French embassy has been able to cooperate with Kenya on numerous fronts. The economic mission department at the French embassy relies on the collection of timely information that influences financial decisions in the region (French presence in Kenya - La France au Kenya, 2019). The embassy currently offers the French language at the armed forces school of Higher Education (AFSHE) as a mechanism of promoting peace interaction between the two countries. Since most of the French missions in Somalia are carried out from Nairobi due to the peace situation in Somalia, the French embassy relies on the Kenyan negotiation to facilitate compilation of accurate information regarding the peace situation in the region. Language has been crucial in promoting cooperation in joint military exercises between the two countries to enhance both countries influence (French presence in Kenya - La France au Kenya, 2019).

The French embassy also cooperates with Kenya on social development. The funding and provision of the terms of the project rely on the mastery of the French language. The project
managers rely on the ability of the French language to undertake the programs and projects of the organization. Through the cultural and linguistic department takes part in the distribution of French literature such as books and promoting cultural interconnectivity. The books include children literature books and books targeting adults provided in different translations. The biggest partner to French cultural support within Kenya is the Alliance Francaise with bases in various cities in Kenya. Alliance Francaise branches in both the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa undertakes cultural events aimed at ensuring connectedness between studying the language and professional aspirations ("Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya", 2019). The institution supports the foundation for further cooperation through language and cultural integration.

2.2.2 The French language

It is estimated that about 75 million people speak French as their native language. French is the official language of France as well as of its overseas territories. French is also the official language of Benin, Canada, Belgium Burkina Faso, Haiti, Luxembourg and Switzerland. In Africa, more than fifteen countries including Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Congo, Luxembourg, Gabon, Mali, Monaco, Senegal, Guinea, Niger and Togo all speak French. The French language is also one of the official languages of the United Nations. In addition, many people around the world, including Kenya, learn French. In 2009, there were 1,200 members of the French community living in. This number comprised of diplomats, doctors, researchers, economists, students, businessmen, engineers, artists

The French government under various regimes stepped up efforts of using the French language and education to foster her interests in the French Francophone and equally Anglophone countries in the case of Kenya. The most notably regime was Francois
Hollande’s (2012-2017). He strongly relied on the Francophonie strategy and education entity to push for the French interests in sub Saharan Africa. French education influence as a tool includes promotion of the French language worldwide as a strategy to promote understanding with foreign nations and equally enact foreign policies. The impact of the French has always been felt during the African Union elections. Kenya has equally had a taste of the French efforts in the use of the French language to enhance the levels of understanding between France and Kenya. There are various Kenyan educational institutions that are internationally recognized thanks to the teaching and learning of French language. Kenyatta University forms part of the amazing Universities Agency of Francophony (AUF) whereas The Kenya Association of Teachers of French is an acclaimed member of the international board of teachers of French; International Federation of Teachers of French (FIPF). The trend follows other countries that had equally relied on promoting the element of language as a mechanism of improving their soft power influence across the world such as China through the Confucius institute.

The French linguistic network is responsible for drafting various strategies that have led to the selection of countries where to implement the learning of the French language worldwide. The French have managed to emancipate the use of French literature in naming facilities around the world created through cooperation. The same is reflected in Kenya where the French government through its Alliance Francaise facility, has promoted the growth of French language. The Alliance Francaise facility holds offices both in Nairobi and Mombasa where Kenyans have continued to learn the French language while interacting with the French nationals (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019). Currently, the
Alliance Francaise de Nairobi stands as one of the biggest hosting networks in Africa that promote the prominence of the French language.

The institution offers diversified certifications in the French language that include translation certifications that promote the level of interactivity with the French Nationals. This institution offers worldwide recognized diplomas for the non-native speakers of the French language. The diplomas are referred to as DELF and DALF. The diplomas depict the French language abilities for the non-native speakers. These diplomas are issued by the French ministry of education through the Alliance Francaise. The institution is also equipped with a department that provides consultancy services to students who would like to further their professional studies in France through Campus France. The Campus France gives professional advice relating to various courses and also helps those students who seek financial assistance from the French government. This has made France to be one of the most preferred destinations for higher education learning by Kenyan students. It is estimated that around thirty-two Kenyan students benefitted from this program in the year 2012. The desire by locals to learn the French Language has seen the department operate some temporary offices upcountry such as in Eldoret, Kenya. The Alliance Francaise offices in Mombasa equally boast of one of the serene environments that provide an opportunity to study the French language (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019). The facilities include the existence of a functioning library stocked with much French literature including translated readings into other languages.

The flourishing tourism Industry at the Kenyan coast has equally promoted the learning of numerous languages including French. The libraries are fitted with both digital enhanced communication devices that allow ease of learning. Kenya also hosts one of the French
schools that offer the French curriculum. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Kenyan government rolled out the French language curriculum as part of the languages taught in Kenyan Secondary schools. Many schools have already adopted the French language that is already used to compose unique sets of presentations during drama festivals and other plays in the secondary school drama and music festival competitions (Omusonga, Kazadi & Indoshi, 2010). The language has therefore gained prominence among the French learning students in the Kenyan Secondary schools.

The presence of French Radio Stations adds an impetus to the importance of the French language in Kenya. Radio France International (RFI) is one of the radio stations that is transmitted in Kenya to develop on the strategies. The existence of the radio station and TV5 Monde (TV station) means a growing number of listeners and viewers interested in learning of the French language. The linguistic cooperation department equally enhances the promotion of the French language in Kenya. The development targets the practicing and competition in the French language as a mechanism of promoting the French language in Kenya. According to Poncins & Abdilahi (2011) the demand to understand the French language was on the rise especially in Sub-Saharan Africa due to the desire to use it on different platforms. The French government has not been left out in direct efforts to support its policies abroad.

Annually the government of France grants best actors in the French language during the National Music Festivals, a one month visit to France. The efforts encourage learners to promote their mastery of the French language. Apart from strategies made to support the French language among civilians there are also efforts targeting the security forces such as the military (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019). The role of the
Kenyan troops in peacekeeping in some of the Francophone countries necessitated the need to teach the French language to the soldiers as part of promoting the language and its use. An average number of over 50 individuals benefit from the program offered at Langata barracks. Various forums also organized by the French embassy also bring together both teachers and students to experience a unique aspect of the French linguistic elements. In addition, the linguistic and university cooperation department offers free training for the Kenyan teachers of French so as to equip them with international teaching standards of the French language under the pilot study program.

The sharing of success books by French authors abroad equally provide the ground to promote the improvement of the use of French language in both spoken and writing forms. Co-publications remain a better contribution to improve the confidence of the use of the French language by second language learners. The publications are also made available in translated forms in numerous languages most of which belong to learners. In such a situation the language prominence is felt. All the efforts aimed at promoting the use of French language align with the requirements of the intentions of the French soft power. Since soft power involves a non-coercive approach to developing a country’s agenda in foreign countries, success is achieved when the two countries create a platform for a common understanding. Language is one element that has provided a common ground for interaction between Kenya and the French government. Every effort to familiarize with the French language promotes the agreement between two nations to undertake joint projects. The mastery of the French language has played a supportive role in helping the French government implement their plans in the region. The case of Kenya adds up to the overall felt impact of the French soft power abroad. Language plays the relevant role of making each of the parties identify and understand
their interests in a cooperation activity to be undertaken. The strength of French soft power influence, therefore, lies on the ability of the parties to understand their role and undertakings to make the projects a success.

Additional efforts include the Labcitojen stay in France that calls for civil participants in open debates on international topics such as human rights. The exchange facilitates the growth and development of the French language through interaction and recognizing of the French culture. Institut Français in Paris organizes the debate as an effort to maintain the French language influence. The French government has equally facilitated scholarships for students to study in France as a mechanism to promote both language and adaptability to French culture. The scholarships support the French promotion of research in social sciences funded by IFRA.

2.2.3 Language and Culture

Language is key in daily human activities because of the dependency that people have on each other. Chomsky (1959) reviewed verbal behaviour as written by BF Skinner and applied it to contemporary trends in language learning and use. He found out that there exists a faculty in the brain that enables people to learn any language that they wish to. Learning of a language is easier for a child, mainly because their brain is relatively blank and can be easily modelled to conform to the demands and standards of any language. However, some scholars have opposed this view, stating that language is based on the general functioning of the brain and not a specific section. The latter argument is stronger, and can be proven by the fact that the ability of an individual to learn and master a language diminishes with age. If there was a specific section of the brain that deals exclusively with language, individuals would learn second and third languages with the same ease despite differences in age.
Language is used by a society to understand mutual needs and interests and create unity of purpose in the development process. According to Amartya Sen (1988), culture is a key aspect in development. Culture emanates from the shared perspective of a certain society. Development is directed change. The sense of direction is drawn from the common interests and values of the people of a certain society. In Amartya Sen’s perspective, common understanding between the members of a society strengthen the intellectual rationale for development practice. Therefore, language strengthens culture, and is later translated into development for the society involved. Common aspects of language develop when societies remain in contact for some time. In Africa, one of the biggest issues facing national development is the existence of many languages.

Despite the strength in the relationship between language and culture, there exists a time gap between spread of language and the subsequent familiarization with culture. In the pre-colonial era, African societies remained highly fragmented, resulting in development of different languages and cultures (Atkinson, 2011). The situation was worsened by colonizers who set up communities against each other to ensure that they remained divided and weak to mount any reasonable resistance against the foreigners. National boundaries came with establishment of national languages in order to unify the people under the identity of the state. Despite these efforts, many countries across the continent are yet to be culturally integrated. A large number of people still pursue their own ways of life and values. These differences have resulted in civil wars and many scuffles over leadership. Issues such as nepotism and tribalism are still rife because people do not have a common national identity as is the case with nations in Asia and Europe where language and culture have developed jointly for thousands of years.
Amartya Sen notes that many jurisdictions chose to interact on aspects that reflect their common interests. The most basic non-competing common interests are economic. In many parts of the world, the people have resources that they are willing to export in exchange for others. For instance, developing countries have unemployed human resource while developed countries have capital. Human resource require capital to spark productivity. In many instances, developed and developing nations create economic interactions with such mutual benefits. Traditionally, these nations would interact with little attention to aspects of their culture.

Culture has become instrumental in international relations as a tool of sustaining links between nations. Each nation in the world has another with competing interests. If there exists no strong bond between a nation and its partners, they are likely to cut relations when another country with a better offer shows up. Language is a key tool towards intertwining relations between two nations. Once the people of the two nations can interact freely, it becomes easier for their governments to interact and establish long-term relations that are supported by the rest of the people (Barbier, 2011). There are significantly lower chances that a change in regime will affect the relationship between the nations that share language and cultural values.

Unification of culture and language between countries is a gradual process that must be guided by deliberate policies and plans.

Language is used to encode norms and values of a society. In societies that differ in values and norms, it becomes hard to translate what is said or written in one into the language of another. Some words have become obsolete due to erosion of specific aspects of culture. In Kenya, Christianity drove an end to certain aspects of culture. Female circumcision, for instance, has been condemned and banished in many communities in Kenya. Words that were
used to refer to practices associated with the rite of passage have remained unused, meaning that new generations are not familiar with them. Mutation in people’s thinking can be influenced by a variety of factors, key being discarding of certain aspects of culture in pursuit for modernization. A language also adopts new terms with civilization. With civilization, new practices, artifacts and relations are created among members of the society. Therefore, words are created to help the people communicate on the new ways of life.

In the contemporary world, many people are adapting their languages to include newer aspects associated with civilization. With spread of globalization, the world has a near-similar set of rules and values that govern decisions of the people. However, there are instances when people have completely abandoned their language for others. Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) conducted a study to establish the relationship between knowledge of native languages and the time spent away from ancestral land among urban-dwelling populations in Kenya. The results showed that a large percentage of children who are born and brought up in urban areas are completely delinked with their ancestral culture and language compared to those in rural areas. In another research conducted by Rottland and Okombo (1992) on language shift among the Suba of Kenya, the results showed that interaction between the Luo and the Suba was eroding Suba language and culture. Since Suba are a minority, a large percentage of the Suba know both Luo and Suba languages. There were some people of Suba ancestry who only spoke Luo and had very little or no knowledge of the Suba people and culture. Therefore, both language and culture are adversely affected in scenarios where the owners turn out to be minorities against another group of people.

Amartya Sen sees culture as a means to achieving development. Therefore, nations will invest in the change of culture as a way of fostering their social, economic and political
development. Tourism, for instance, is an economic sector that largely relies on culture and language. For a country to promote tourism, there must be specific aspects of culture that both its inhabitants and outsiders consider as desirable. In this scenario, people are willing to visit and admire aspects of culture in exchange for gains made by local people and businesses. Tourism is also successful when the language barrier between the hosts and the visitors can be mitigated upon to facilitate smooth communication between the parties involved. However, cultural factors must be interconnected to promote the ability of two jurisdictions and societies to interact.

Cultural connections are complex. They often offer temptations towards certain generalization. Amartya Sen dismisses culture as an instrument for prediction in relations between nations. There are instances where societies that share language and culture have differed sharply. In the middle east, tribal wars have been rife, including between individuals who share culture, religion and language. Such scenarios make scholars more inquisitive on the level of influence that language and culture exert on streamlining relations between two societies or nations. The intricacy presented in this situation means that converting language, as a tool of soft power, into mutual development for the nations involved is a complex process whose success is determined by a variety of factors.

In the recent years, the World Bank has been demonstrating growing interest on cultural factors that influence development. The organization has appreciated the role that information plays in promoting a common sense of purpose among key development partners. Amartya Sen believes that there are some aspects of culture that must be linked to promote development of the world as a unit. This unification can only be achieved if the world shares and applies the same data and its information in its decision-making process (Sen, 2004).
Therefore, stakeholders view the world as a common development region which can face its issues through unification of purpose and efficient sharing of information. This introduces the aspect of language. Communication is considered to have happened if both the sender and the recipient of the message can disseminate, receive and decode the information being passed. Nations involved in establishing international relations should be able to create a common sense of purpose through the communication process. There exists a reciprocating relationship between language and culture. Individuals who share language and interact more often are likely to develop similar values systems and world view. Common culture develops between these people over time. Unification of culture results in more interactions between the societies involved. For instance, societies that share a common resource such as a lake or a river will interact more, either on good terms or after disagreements on the resource. As they interact, they establish the need for a common language for efficiency in communication. This results in the adoption of one of the languages used or development of a new language to bridge the communication gap between the two groups involved.

Nations have adopted different strategies in regard to overcoming the cultural barriers in international relations. While some nations prefer spreading their ancestral language to the rest of the world, others have adopted linguistic diversity. Diversity is seen as a better tool for domination because it gives a nation strength against both foes and allies. Languages are considered knowledge banks. Societies see them as tools to spread their culture and become part of the greater global society. Loss of a language is seen as impoverishment on the knowledge resource possessed by the relevant society. Language is part of culture. As stated above, discarding many aspects of culture in African societies has rendered some aspects of language obsolete. The vice versa is also true in the sense that when aspects of language are
lost, the society loses its richness. While some norms are dropped because they are considered obsolete by the people, some are lost gradually without the intention of the society, especially when aspects of vocabulary and language structure grow obsolete or remain unused for a long time.

2.2.4 Language and Civilization

2.2.4.1 Samuel Huntington: The Clash of Civilization

Huntington (1996) developed a hypothesis that religious and cultural identities are the main source of conflicts after the end of the cold war. He felt that war between countries came to an end with the fall of USSR. Therefore, future wars will be fought between cultures and religions. Considering the perspective adopted by Huntington, one would infer that unification of language, culture and religion would be a definite answer and solution to the issue of social and political tensions between societies. The debate emanated from a book by Francis Fukuyama on the implications of future civilization on coexistence between human beings. Fukuyama (1992) fronts an argument that humanity was reaching the end of their ideological evolution. There was no further ground for people to improve their economic, social and political practices and institutions. Western liberal democracy was seen as the epitome of human ideological evolution over the years. Fukuyama felt that the rest of humanity will adopt the western system and bring the entire process of political ideology evolution to an absolute end. He expected that people will get comfortable and pass down the same system of government to the rest of times. However, other scholars started looking at the entire argument to identify any possibilities that Fukuyama’s argument had weaknesses.
In the first chapter of this paper, the researcher noted that there exist two different perspectives from which the term civilization is defined. One perspective considers civilization as an end while the other sees it as means. In Fukuyama’s (1992) perspective, civilization is viewed as an end or a result of efforts by human beings over the years. In a 1992 lecture at the American Enterprise Institute, Huntington dismisses the perspective adopted by Fukuyama and instead looks at the most probable cause of divisions in the foreseeable future. Huntington feels that global politics have shifted from issues of human rights, capitalism and liberal democracy. Global politics are now founded on culture and religion. Therefore, people who share these two aspects are very unlikely to resort into war. They will adopt a soft approach when handling disagreements between each other.

Differences in civilization are far too clear compared to politics. Civilizations are clearly cut by language, history, culture, religion and tradition. Language becomes a key defining factor since it can be used to define how long people have been separated from each other. People can easily be differentiated by the accent with which they speak a common language. In order to foster future cooperation, many nations are keen to unify their cultures with prospective partners. Language is considered as a key factor influencing acceptability of culture. Therefore, people who share a language can be considered as being at par in regards to civilization. Nations have been popularizing their culture as a strategy to create commonalities and limit chances of future war and conflict. Huntington (1996) notes that although differences in civilization will persist even between neighbouring communities, unifying aspects such as culture play a key role in reducing the possibility of conflict and fostering social, political and economic ties.
2.2.4.2 Francis Fukuyama: Culture and Ideological Evolution of Man

According to Fukuyama (1992), history consists of a linear progression from one epoch to the next one. This idea was first proposed by Marxists, led by Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who felt that there was discontinuity in civilization, where subsequent generations were keen to completely do away with some aspects of culture considered important by their forefathers. In the perspective of Fukuyama, the current epoch of civilization is the epitome and that future generations will live within the current epoch because he perceives it as being supported by the most perfect ideologies. Humanity has taken over the ability to control the entire universe, mainly through technology. Therefore, nations are keen to maintain relations with each other through mutual understanding. Violence is no longer a viable means of achieving control of newer territories. Rulers such as Alexander and Napoleon would organize armies and annex territories to secure their interests. In the contemporary political environment, countries have adopted a friendlier way of approaching territories that they consider having the potential of meeting their own needs and interest. In fulfilling this approach, nations that reach out for international relations must prove that the future interactions will be based on the mutual interests of all the involved states.

2.2.4.3 The Problem of Language and Religion

Most of the languages across the world are related with a certain religion; the Hindi, Gujarati, Sindhi and other Indian languages are associated with Hindi; English is associated with Protestantism; Spanish and Italian with Catholic; while Arab is affiliated with Islam. The relationship between these languages with religion is due to similar historical development. However, their contemporary use is not tied as many people may assume. In many regions in
the world, learning of a foreign language can easily be associated with giving up of a person’s religion and adopting that which people associate the new language with (Keane (2013)). Therefore, people may become repulsive to learning a new language due to these perceptions. Some foreign languages are seen by religious leaders as a threat to the spread of their religion. This situation does not occur where a language is already associated with a multicultural society.

2.2.5 The French Interests in Kenya

As argued by Sagala (2016) the term ‘national interests’ remains fluid in terms of definition. National interest however can generally be used to refer to the conditions necessary for the survival of the nation-state and its core values. As further argued by Sagala, (2016) in his paper titled ‘In Defence of the National Interest: Theory and Analyses of Kenya’s National Interests’, politics is essentially and unchangeably a struggle among self-interested states for power and position under anarchy, with each competing state pursuing its own national interests.

National interests are categorized as Survival (very important) Important, and periphery (Sagala 2016). The French Embassy asserts that “Kenya has a strategic position within East Africa; it hosts the headquarters of two United Nations programs and it has traditionally been a mediator in peace talks concerning its neighbours. The French Embassy therefore lists a number of areas of cooperation between Kenya and France. Top on the list is bilateral and multilateral dialogues. Other interests include education, peace promotion, development and education. (La France au Kenya, 2019).
Most foreign nations have demonstrated greater interest in Kenya in relation to other countries in the region. Kenya is considered one of the strategically paced countries for penetration of the African continent. In the horn of Africa and the eastern region, Kenya is considered as a centrally-placed country that allows foreigners to penetrate the rest of the region. In addition to the strategic location, Kenya has remained a politically stable nation for a long time. All the countries in the region, except Tanzania, have experienced some form of political and social instability in recent history. Therefore, the stability associated with Kenya has been an attracting factor for many foreign nations with interests in the country and its immediate neighbours. France’s economic interests in Kenya are coordinated by Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The bank secures the financial interest of both the French government and its citizens living abroad. The rest of the functions are controlled directly by the French embassy.

2.2.5.1 The French Business Interests

The French economic influence is part of the soft power that drives cooperation between Kenya and France. The French economic influence has seen Kenya cooperate with the French government on a number of issues. Kenya has continued to hold a series of meetings with the French government in a bid to create economic cooperation. The French government has never hesitated to use its economic soft power influence to enhance the relationship between the countries. For instance, up to 20 Kenyan Ministers were hosted in France between the years 2003 to 2016 encouraging discussions on a number of areas to invest in. The economic influence has seen France enjoy better trade ties with Kenya (Kiamba & Bachmann, 2015). The impacts of the relationship include influx of French companies and investments into
Kenya. Kenya stood as the biggest French trade partner within the East African community courtesy of the efforts between the two countries.

As a strategy to encourage growth the French exports to Kenya have equally increased over the years. French companies have also established branches within the country due to the economic confidence resulting from the soft power influence. The French research projects such as the French institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) have acted as pacesetters for economic cooperation. Equally cooperation between the French government and Kenyan Universities has opened the opportunities for economic cooperation between the two governments (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019).

2.2.5.1.1 Goods Production Sector

A number of French brands have set up production and distribution entities in the country. Total is one of oldest petroleum distribution companies in Kenya, having entered the Kenyan market in the 1950s. The company has over 170 service stations across the country that employ thousands of Kenyans. Its franchised outlets provide an opportunity for Kenyan investors to work under an established brand (Total Kenya, 2019). The company Société BIC, a French pen manufacturer, has maintained its presence in the Kenyan market through HACO, a local producer. BIC brand has dominated the Kenyan pen market as a result of this sponsorship. Afribon Is a French entity that specialized in manufacture of food fragrances, flavours, ingredients, cosmetics and beverage on the Kenya. The company has spread through the entire East African region with its base in Nairobi. Bayer East Africa is headquartered in Mathare, Nairobi (French Chamber of Commerce Kenya, 2019). The company specializes in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals. Decathlon is a French brand that specialized in the manufacture and retailing of sports apparel. These entities have thrived in the Kenyan market.
due to the bilateral agreements between the governments of Kenya and France. During President Emmanuel Macron’s visit to Kenya in January 2019, he opened new assembling plants for two key French car manufacturers; Renault and Peugeot. Kenya has benefitted from employment of its citizens, payment of taxes and creation of utility for households through the goods produced. Innovation is a key industry driver in both the goods and service sectors. France has superior technology to that used by Kenyan manufacturers. The transfer of technology by French firms, which is later adapted by Kenyan entities, has a major impact in enhancing local productivity and competitiveness of locally produced goods in the Kenyan market.

2.2.5.1.2 Service sector

The Kenyan service sector has become increasingly competitive as a result of innovation by stakeholders. French firms have a long history of operation in the Kenyan service sector. Allianz is a French finance, insurance and risk management firm that has been in the Kenyan market for several decades. Bolloré is a transport and logistics service that specializes in transport, logistics, port services, construction and maintenance of railway lines and port terminals. KLM- Air France, Air France and their subsidiaries offer services to their clients in Kenya. The Air France-KLM group is a founder member SkyTeam Global Alliance, the alliance to which Kenya’s national carrier, Kenya Airways, also belongs (French Chamber of Commerce Kenya, 2019). A TOTAL is also another entity. This demonstrates a high level of collaboration between the two governments and business entities. Since France is a world leader in technology and innovation, Kenyan companies have benefitted from the ties in the service sectors of the two nations.
2.2.5.2 Educational and Other Interests

Education is key in the development of human resource for any country. France is using education to enhance familiarity and acceptance of its culture among Kenyans. The French embassy and other French organizations have been conducting coordinated activities to ensure that a section of Kenyans have a first-hand experience with the French language and cultures (Poncins and Abdilahi, 2011). These entities have their own programs, while others are conducted in collaboration with government agencies and individual institutions. In Kenya, French language is taught in a variety of institutions. At the secondary school level, the Ministry of Education has approved a curriculum for teaching and learning French language. Through the curriculum, students are helped to master the basics of speaking and writing the French language. The curriculum also integrates some aspects of the French culture. The secondary school French curriculum is a prequalifying factor in government sponsorships to France. According to information provided by the Kenya Ministry of Foreign Affairs, three students are given government sponsorships through the France embassy to study subjects of interest in France. Other students are given opportunities to study in French universities through self-sponsored programs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs recorded that a total of 20 Kenyan students joined French universities on self-sponsored programs in 2018.

Both the direct and indirect educational interests by the French government have largely been implemented through teaching of language. In the maiden visit of a French president to Kenya in January 2019, President Emmanuel Macron visited Alliance Française de Nairobi, a building that has been widely utilized to promote the education agenda of France in Kenya (Macharia, 2019). The building is used to support French programs in the mainstream Kenyan education sector. It also hosts key meetings, conferences and aspects of French language and
culture such as performance art and interactions between Kenyans with interest in learning key issues related to France.

2.3 Kenya-France Relations

2.3.1 Kenya’s Interests

There has been a growing interest of the government to secure the interests of its citizens abroad. Kenya is a developing country that suffers from unemployment. Therefore, human resource accounts for the largest percentage of income inflows into the country. Kenya has a large population living in the diaspora. In 2018, Kenyans in diaspora remitted Ksh. 200 billion back home (Kelley, 2019b). Kariuki (2019) notes that Kenyans have preferred Anglophone countries to Francophone ones. However, the Embassy of France in Kenya is keen to reverse this trend by attracting more competent Kenyans to the French job market. The number of Kenyans abroad has been on a constant increase, with a majority going to the UK and the US. Kenya is also keen to attract more tourists from Europe. Learning of French Language by Kenyans is key in boosting this sector. Workers in the tourist sector should be able to communicate with visitors in their language. The Kenyan tourism sector is a beneficiary of the French language strategy. Hotel owners, tourist guide company and travel agencies have a large number of French-speaking prospective employees to choose from.

Kenya is located in the Sub-Saharan region. Scientists believe that nations between the tropics will bear the biggest burden in regard to the effects of global warming. Countries in this region are facing floods and long drought periods due to the shifting temperature, pressure and rainfall patterns. The country has therefore focused on lobbying the international community to consider the effect of their activities on climate. The energy sector has created the greatest
concerns, being the largest contributor of Ozone gases and particulate matter. France has been using its influence to get members of the international community to ratify key agreements on actions to reverse the negative effects of climate change. France is also a key ally in peace initiatives in Kenya and across the region. Jelley (2019) notes that collaboration between Kenyan and French forces has benefitted the former through equipment and training.

France is a major power in the European region. Being a founder member of the European Union, the country has immense influence on the decisions made by the European Commission. Kenya depends on France and other European nations to prevail against the others in order to help her secure her economic interests in the region. A significant percentage of Kenya’s agricultural produce finds its market in the European Union. Therefore, strong relations with France is key in maintaining and expanding these markets.

2.3.2 Bilateral Interests between Nairobi and Paris

France-Kenya relations are strengthened by the high strategic power that Kenya bears in regard to French prospects on the African continent. French Embassy in Nairobi (2019) admits that the increased focus of the French government on its relations with Kenya is based on the wider interests of France in the region. Therefore, France hopes that it will continue using Nairobi as a launching pad for strengthening relations with the rest of the East African Region. The French government has its internal criteria for determining its model with relations with countries around the world. In 1999, the French government put Kenya within the Priority Solidarity Zone. According to the French Embassy in Nairobi (2019), the decision was informed by the increasing significance of Kenta in regional stability. From this moment onwards, Kenya has been used as a key contact point between the French government and the rest of the African continent. Somalia has experienced instability for over two decades now.
However, the nation has many French nationals serving various interests. France’s interests in Somalia are being handled through the French embassy in Nairobi. Collaboration between the Kenyan government and the embassy has enabled the French government to circumvent the challenges and secure the interests of the French government and its people in the volatile Somali region.

A number of agreements have been signed between the Kenyan government and its French counterpart to strengthen relations between the two nations. In 2011, Kenya’s Prime Minister, Raila Odinga, signed a bilateral Agreement on the Declaration of a Strengthened Partnership with François Fillon, his French counterpart. According to an annual bulletin released by the Kenya Embassy in France (2011), the agreement covered areas of climate change, international security, education, scientific collaboration, economic aid, cultural exchange and economic partnerships. It created a foundation of further deliberations on how other stakeholders can be actively involved in strengthening and sustaining relations between the two nations.

Both Kenya and France are key powers in their respective. The two nations are founder members of the respective regional unions; East African Community (EAC) for Kenya and European Union (EU) for France. Therefore, their agreements include lobbying to the rest of the powers in the regional unions to secure the interest of the partners. France is one of the leading global champions for clean energy. France has been championing for adoption of clean energy in Africa through Kenya. The Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed in April 2016. Before this agreement, France had entered the Nairobi-Paris Initiative on Clean Energy (United Nations, 2016). The ministerial-level agreement would foster mobilization of resources for production and
distribution of clean energy source. In the agreement, France recognizes that nations in the sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya included, are the most predisposed to the effects of climate change.

French investors and businesses have benefitted massively from ministerial agreements between the two nations. Most of these investments entail transfer of technology by French firms into the Kenyan market. The clean energy agreement paved way for French clean energy production firms to enter the African market through Kenya. In 2019, Alten Africa started building a solar energy plant in Kenya (Ngugi, 2019). Other French firms are involved in distribution and installation of smaller units of other forms of clean energy across the country. Other forms of technology are applied in telecommunications, manufacturing and the services sectors whose growth is highly dependent on innovation.

France intends to use Kenya to help the region familiarize with its culture. The international Francophone day is celebrated on the 20th March Every year. Nations and institutions that are interested in the French language commemorate the day through a variety of events (French Embassy in Nairobi, 2019). In 2010, data by the International Francophony Organization (OIF) showed that between 2007 and the time of release of the report, the number of Francophone people had increased by 20 million to 220 million. By 1963, Kenya had about 45 recognized languages, including native languages, English and Kiswahili. Kenya’s interest in French started increasing when France opened up opportunities for Francophone Kenyans. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has played a key role in linking Kenya and France through culture and education. UNESCO representatives of the two nations have been interacting through the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO to ensure that French cultural events bring out the ideals of the
French culture (Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, 2018). Exchange programs are also organized where artists travel between the two nations to showcase talent and other key aspects of culture. The French hope that they will get Kenyans to understand and appreciate French culture while still maintaining their own cultural values, beliefs and practices. This explains why cultural exchange programs are organized between the two nations. They are used as proof that France respects the local culture and would want to see it preserved.

2.4 What the Data is Saying

The French Embassy has a responsibility to put in place training programs to support Kenyans interested in learning French Language. Through its Linguistics Department, the embassy has been equipping Network of Resource Centers for French. Some of these centers are part of mainstream institutions such as Kenyan Secondary and tertiary institutions, while others are open to the general public. The number of centers increased from 15 in 2011 to more than 20 by the end of 2018 (France Diplomatie, 2018). French has grown to become the most taught foreign language in Kenyan schools. In 2018, the French Government, through its embassy in Nairobi, sponsored 10 Kenyan students to study in France. In 2018, French was being offered in over 400 schools around the country to over 30,000 learners. The curriculum is developed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in collaboration with the Linguistics Department of the French Embassy. The Commission of University Education (CUE) also plays the role of streamlining university education with requirements and standards set by the linguistics department. The embassy sponsors events in secondary schools and tertiary institutions to promote French culture (De Poncins and Abdilahi, 2011). Once the interest of the students is drawn to the culture, they start making efforts to learn the language. The Alliance Française has created a network of French learners across the country. Since
being set up in 1949, the institution has been facilitating the teaching of the French language to an average of 4000 students annually. The Alliance Française network is made up of centers in Nairobi, Eldoret, Mombasa and Kisumu. There are prospects to expand to other major towns.

Bilateral Kenyan-French economic relations are dynamic. Kenya is the largest consumer of French goods in East Africa. Between 2013 and 2015, Kenya’s trade volume with France grew by 14% to an annual average of €163 million. Peugeot returned to the Kenyan market in 2015 after a long absence. Other French companies that have joined the Kenyan market include Schneider Electric, Danone, L’Oréal, Essilor, Vinci, Bonduelle, OCEA, Sodexho Egis and Accor (French Chamber of Commerce in Kenya, 2019). According to the France Embassy in Nairobi, Michelin, Dassault Systèmes and Société Générale are at advanced plans of entering the market. France’s FDI accounts for over 10% of total capital inflows into Kenya, making the country the fourth biggest investor in the country.

A large percentage of France’s financial assistance to Kenya comes in as loans. Between 1997 and 2018, France’s commitments to Kenya’s development totaled €1.5 billion. Most of these loans and investments went into energy, transport, urban development, water and sanitation. A significant part of France’s bilateral relations has been based on education. The French government signed a scientific cooperation agreement in May 2015. French top graduate schools have been touring Kenya under the Kenya Day program. Between 2014 and 2915, the Kenya Day program facilitated interaction between the institutions and over 3000 students spread in over 40 schools. University meetings were also initiated in October 2016. In Kenya, there are over 400 teachers of the French language. Over 31,000 secondary school students attended French lessons in 2018. In higher education institutions, over 7,000 students are
actively taking a French language program. There are 650 students from 53 nationalities under the Kenyan Lycée Français (French Embassy in Nairobi, 2019). By the end of 2018, Kenya had 22 French resource centers and two Alliances Françaises in Nairobi. In June 2018, these resource centers were handling 3000 French language students.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the related literature in the context of existing theoretical framework. The following chapter presents the research methodology used for the study. According to the Kenyan Embassy in France (2011), France has been hosting key events to showcase Kenyan culture, including beauty pageants, fashion and design, food, music and other forms of art. Such events are conducted in Europe as a way of enhancing cohesion among Kenyans and drawing tourists to the country. However, there still gaps on information and data on the influence of the use of language on strengthening relations between the two nations. While the individual citizens increasingly embrace French culture, there are no clear results on how this familiarization has influenced high level engagement between the French and Kenyan governments. The number of Kenyans travelling to France have increased over the years, especially on issues related to education. However, the economic impact of these links is not very clear since nations such as China have stronger economic ties with Kenya than France. The struggling French firms also seem not to have benefitted much from the cultural and language exchange programs. The knowledge gap can be filled by looking at the progress of relations between the two nations over the years.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter highlights the procedures used to undertake the research. The methodology outlines the criteria of conducting the study regarding the impact of French language; education and culture in Kenya. The section further highlights the mechanisms of collecting data, the tools to be applied in the analysis and the justifications for the arrangements of the study. The ethical bit of the survey is also addressed in the section.

3.2 Research Design

The study sought to utilize mixed methods that combine both the qualitative and quantitative techniques for research. The researcher combined both primary and secondary data. The qualitative aspect addressed the changing terrain of foreign policy between Kenya and France. The quantitative aspect was used to evaluate the input and output in terms of investment in French language and education and the outcome in terms of collaboration and economic ties between Kenya and France. The study relied on secondary publications provided by the French and Kenyan embassies regarding the milestones in foreign policy. The primary research technique applied in the study was the qualitative approach describing the positive contribution of French education to cooperation. The study sought to roll out surveys seeking to obtain the opinions and perceptions of the beneficiaries of the projects.

The trends evaluated from the survey were generalized for similar foreign policy efforts. The methodology sought to provide a better mechanism of giving cohesion to the use of mixed methods as proposed by Brannen, (2017).
3.3 Target Population and Sampling plan

According to the French embassy up to 1000 students benefit from the French government soft power efforts. In addition, the French embassy in Nairobi holds a consistent team (Cultural and Linguistic network - La France au Kenya, 2019). The sampling design for the study was random sampling that sought to interview both the student beneficiaries and the officials working at the French embassy on the changing cooperation due to the application of soft power.

3.4 Data Collection

The study sought to analyze the extent to which the French language education influence has contributed to the cooperation and partnership between the two countries. To achieve that the survey reviewed the secondary data provided by the French Embassy regarding the improvement in cooperation since the French language influence developed within the country. The study further relied on the primary data that included face to face interviews conducted among the French educational community and the interviews carried out with the French government diplomats working at the embassy. The quantitative aspect was applied in comparison to the trends witnessed before stepping up the French language influence.

The study also relied on primary data collections to create valid and justifiable data. The students’ interview was unstructured while the representatives’ interview questions took a structured format.

The interview sought to gain information on the change in attitude towards the French by the Kenyans who have benefitted from the French good gesture and the French government cooperation efforts with the Kenyan government as a result. Information regarding the
improvement in both linguistic and cultural ties was also obtained through the interviews. The collection was preceded by creating a relationship between the data collected regarding positivity and perception. The relationship between improvement in Kenyan’s attitude and improved levels of cooperation with the French government was tabulated. The interviews were recorded and decoded for the record.

3.5 Data analysis

The study included an analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data involved evaluating the statistical trend in benefits of soft power measured in cooperation benefits. Quantitative data was presented in trends format tabulated either in graphs or tables.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The study was carried out within the principles of social research. The study applied the concept of informed consent where participants were allowed to enroll voluntarily. Besides, all the recorded interviews were marked with confidentiality to avoid victimization of the participants. Before the study a legality letter was obtained from United States International University- Africa (USIU-A). Consent was also sought from the National Commission for Science and Technology to conduct the research.

3.7 Chapter summary

The methodology section is crucial in elaborating the main steps to realization of the goals of the study. The study design necessitates the application of a mixed methods approach to answer the target questions from the study. It is essential to identify that the research held a fact-finding approach and had the aim of getting the solutions to the questions. The target
population is equally identified and an analysis would precede the study to determine the relationships.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the findings on the study on the use of French language as soft power in Kenya. The chapter begins with a general introduction to the study, followed by an analysis of the data compiled from the questionnaires administered to respondents. The findings begin with general demographic information of the respondents, followed by information on French interaction in Kenya and then present findings on any economic strides made through the French connections. The chapter then provides an analysis of data from the key informant interviews to compliment and clarify information collected through the questionnaires. This chapter further interrogates the findings in chapter four above with the intention of discussing them and forming a basis on which conclusions and recommendations can be drawn. The study set out to investigate the ways in which France uses soft power in Kenya and to find out the extent to which the French language has promoted the interests of France in Kenya. Data was collected through two main ways; the questionnaires administered to a randomly selected number of teachers and current students of the French language; and a guided semi-structured interview administered to purposively selected members of the French community in Kenya. The key informant interviews were done in order to substantiate and clarify findings from the primary data collection tool.

4.2 How French Have Used Language as a Tool for Soft Power in Kenya

This study set out to investigate the extent to which the French language is used as a form of soft power to propagate the French interests in Kenya. The study sampled 60 people among
them, students at the Alliance Francaise and teachers of French working in Kenya. The key informant interviews were done in order to corroborate findings from the questionnaires and clarify the findings. The key informants were purposively selected from individuals working with the French communities in Kenya and whose work relations avail them substantial access to information of the use of the French language as a form of soft power.

The French government has equally embraced the element of language education and culture promotion as a strategy to strengthen its soft power influence abroad. Just as the predecessor countries with a considerable influence that held numerous cultural interactions with other nations such as the United States and Britain, the French culture is equally gaining prominence and would similarly help the French government in actualizing their interest objectives (Zamorano, 2016). The extent of French cultural penetration can be identified as a similar strategy for creating a common ground that provides understanding between the French government and Kenya as an ally. Similarly, the extent of French soft power influence has equally been promoted by the intercultural exchange. The growing French language influence cannot adequately be recognized without recognizing the role played by culture in promoting soft power.

Culture is defined by specific elements such as food, dressing style, language use, music, and even beliefs. Culture, therefore, establishes the identity of a social group. Culture is crucial for creating a common understanding of a given social group. The element of soft power comes along with the creation of a common ground for interaction. The comparison of the French soft power in Kenya is similar to other experiences shared elsewhere such as in Abu Dhabi and China where significant infrastructure has been given both local and French names. In Abu Dhabi there exists the Louvre Abu Dhabi a symbol of shared cooperation that reflects a
rich cultural heritage from French museums (Foradori, Giusti & Lamonica, 2018). In Kenya, the cultural ties between the two countries are just beginning to pick up. The current trend of cultural influence suggests more interactions to come and this has been witnessed during the annual Francophone celebrations in the country.

Most of the aspects of cultural ties are reflected in the promotion of the French languages. The permanent committee for Francophony has played a crucial role in promoting the cultural link between French-speaking nationalities. Kenya has greatly been involved in this despite the fact that it is an Anglophone country. The open exhibitions showcase food, fashion, artefacts and games drawn from other French-speaking nations. The efforts create a common culture shared by the francophone speakers. The interaction provides a ground for frequent communication and cooperation between the French government and the francophone communities because of the existence of a shared cultural understanding (Demmelhuber & Kaunert, 2014).

The Alliance Francaise network also provides a common ground for honing the French cultural experience that is useful to the French government while undertaking common projects targeting social development such as education funding. The French diplomats equally engage in training the teachers through a pilot program that aims at promoting effective teaching through the Alliance Francaise network.

From the demographic details, it can be said that the French language appeals to both genders (male and female) it can also be said that the teaching of the French language seems to target individuals with a basic education since majority of the learners had secondary education and above.
Most of the French speaking community in Kenya said they had first learned French through the formal school curriculum (Primary school, secondary school and college). A few however learned French through informal sources such as friends and audio recordings. It is therefore true to say that the language is being taught both through formal and informal sources. This finding was corroborated by the key informants who reported that La France au Kenya had partnered with various institutions to teach French. It was further confirmed that Alliance Francaise had different programmes for learning French, some of the programmes were on audio and video decoders. The institution also presents films in French and has dialogue classes for its students.

Majority of the respondents said they had interacted with the French community for less than four years. Although the teaching of French in Kenya has been taking place for a long time, it is understandable that most of the respondents had not interacted with the French community for long. This can be explained by the target population; considering that 50% of sample population was made up of current students of French thus the teachers who were sampled made up the population that had interacted with the community for longer. This was also corroborated by the key informant interviewees who said that institution, teachers and materials for learning French are now more accessible thus attracting more learners. Further, this study can report that the learning of French opens opportunities and linkages to the French community including travel and business in France. Six of the respondents had travelled to France for different reasons. Indeed, it was confirmed by the key informants that the learning of French opens different opportunities to interact with French communities both within the country and outside the country. These opportunities include study opportunities, work opportunities, opportunities to showcase and use talent among others. The fact that some
of the respondents had gotten an opportunity to work on French projects means that respondents, as Nye would argue are likely to be attracted to the work of the French community and thus further the interest of France in Kenya.

This is further affirmed by the question on whether the respondents are motivated to work on French projects or not. The fact that the majority of the respondents were motivated to work on French projects agrees with the hypothesis of this study that the propagation of the French language by the French community is a strategic move by the community to spread both culture and language and use them as political tools through which soft power can be acquired.

4.3 The Cultural and Educational Influence of French in Kenya

Language points to a specific culture of a social group. France is keen to help Kenyans embrace both its language and culture due to their reciprocating relationships. When people admire or embrace a culture, the develop interest to learn its language; either as a way of becoming part of the social group or out of sheer exploration interests. France has formed a cultural and linguistic network through education programs and cultural events coordinated in collaboration with key stakeholders such as education institutions. The Alliance Francaise in Kenya has been working on strengthening both language and cultural relations in the country. Initially, the focus of France was entirely on helping Kenyans understand the French language. French Embassy in Nairobi discovered that there existed many other educational opportunities that can be exploited to optimize on links between Kenyan people and the French culture.
In 2015, France moved to strengthen bilateral cooperation with the Kenyan government. The agreement between the two nations focused solely on education after the Kenyan government formulated many policies that prioritized the sector. The ministry of Education has been emphasizing on the need to shift the attention of learners and institutions from humanities, and balance with science-related faculties in Kenyan institutions. The decision was based on the fact that Kenya is a developing nation, with a lot of potential in the industrial sector. At the time of these deliberations, most of Kenyan students were taking humanities in tertiary institutions, especially in diploma and degree programs. The agreement sought to exploit sciences as an avenue of expanding French influence in the country. Through the scientific cooperation agreement, the Ministry of Education opened avenues for the French embassy to coordinate activities to mentor young learners in science related fields.

In 2016, the French Embassy launched Kenya Day, a day in which both French and Kenyan scholars in various scientific fields from France visit education institutions in Kenya to mentor students into taking up science-related careers. According to data by the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ten students are sponsored by the French government to take up courses in universities in France. In addition, tens of Kenyan students also join French tertiary institutions under self-sponsored programs. Although this may be seen as a way of promoting education in Kenya, one can see that it is an advancement from mere learning of French language. The students who benefit from these programs have to be familiar with both the French language and culture. This is an improvement from the past where the French language programs and cultural events were conducted with no guaranteed prospects for the participants. By attaching French culture and language to gains the education and professions, France has enticed a large number of Kenyans students into developing interests in its affairs.
4.4 Avenues for Developing French-Kenya Relations

Most of the initiatives for developing French Kenya relations have been initiated by France, especially due to its relative political and economic superiority. Capital, aid and loans have flown in one direction, from France to Kenya. Therefore, the French government has had greater control of the relations between the two nations. The growing significance position of Kenya in the region has increased its discretion in its relations with France. Since 2010, Kenya has been visited by high profile leaders from key world powers, creating a perception of a scramble towards the country in an effort to strengthen ties with Kenya. The frequency of visits is unprecedented, sparking various discourses, especially in local and international media, on the changing worldview of the country. Key high-profile visits since 2014 include US President Barrack Obama, Italy’s Prime Minister Reo Mattenzi, UK’S Prime Minister Theresa May, Japan’s Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, Switzerland’s President Alain Berset, India Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Pope Francis, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, UN Secretary General António Guterres, South Korean President Park Geun-hye and executives of global brands such as Facebook and Microsoft. The unprecedented rate of these high-profile visits might have prompted France President Emmanuel Macron, who visited the country in January 2019. According to Mutambo (2019), Macron’s visit was aimed to promote bilateral and multilateral links between the two nations, while countering the effect of visits that may negatively impact France-Kenya ties.

France has taken a different approach to developing its relations with Kenya, especially as a result of the growing influence of China in the region. Contrary to the traditional strategies adopted by France and other nations, China has been approaching nations directly on economic issues. Culture and language have been considered secondary aspects of China’s
approach. To counter the Chinese influence, western nations have reverted their strategy to approaching state operatives at the top. During his visit to Kenya, Emmanuel Macron was accompanied by a delegation comprising of ministerial representatives and investors. The agreements signed were a result of the top-most negotiations. Monteine (2019) notes that while nations like France strive to spread their culture before creating other opportunities for interaction, China’s entry into African nations is preceded by economic agreements and engagement before the country can spread to spreading its culture and language among the civilians.

French-Kenya relations are characterized by mixed fortunes. Ministerial and presidential engagements have been largely successful, creating a picture of two nations that enjoy strong bilateral and multilateral links. Despite the cordial relations established between France and the Kenyan public through spread of language and culture, many French entities have struggled to make inroads into the country. The French culture and language have worked in helping France win the attention of the Kenyan population. France needs to back this acceptability with governmental engagement. Most of the needs created under France’s foreign policy can be effectively met through more governmental engagement. This means that France has to go beyond its language and culture strategy. According to Irish (2019), France feels threatened by the inroads that the Chinese are making on the continent, with Kenya being one of the biggest points of worry.

France should consider taking greater interest in the activities of French firms and other operatives working in Kenya. China’s strategy involves ministerial engagements and agreements. Once the government delegations agree, the private entities come in to sign agreements and fulfil the contracts signed. Irish (2019) quotes a French diplomat in the
region, who notes that France prefers diplomacy to China’s contract-oriented, low-cost, low-interest model of doing business. However, the model employed by China seems to be giving it advantage compared to the diplomatic approach. Irish notes that France has lost its portion of French exports, including in the West African French-speaking nations. Active involvement of high-level French government officials, including President Macron, is a demonstration that the country has realized that there exists massive potential in contract-oriented dealings with its bilateral and multilateral partners, especially in economic-related issues.

4.5 Analysis of Findings

4.5.1 Demographic information

The study randomly selected sixty individuals from the study population as respondents to the questionnaires. From the findings of the study, thirty-five respondents were male while 25 were female. This data can be summarized in a pie chart as follows:
Since the target population was made up of students and teachers of French, the majority of the respondents (90%) had tertiary education. Only six people (10%) out of the sixty respondents said their highest education level was secondary school education. The information is represented in the pie chart below:
4.5.2 Interaction with the French community

Respondents were asked to state where they first learned French. Out of the 60 respondents, majority (37) were first taught French in secondary school, 12 respondents first learned French in primary school, 6 first learned French in college, two were taught by friends, one learned at home and one learned through an audio recording. Two respondents did not answer this question. The information can be summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where French was first learned</th>
<th>Total number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio recording</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to state what motivated them to learn French, 17 said they heard an advertisement in media, 15 said it was family, 11 said they were motivated by their school
teacher, 8 said that they were encouraged by peers, 2 said from a video and one said job requirements. The rest did not respond to this question.

On the number of years in which the respondents had interacted with the French community, thirty-seven said that they had interacted with the French community for between 1-2 years, twelve said that they had interacted with the French community in Kenya for a period of between 2-4 years and the rest (11 respondents) said they had interacted with the French community for more than four years.

Out of all the sixty respondents, six had travelled to France while the rest (54) had not travelled to France. Out of the six who said they had travelled to France, two said they had travelled for education purposes, one said s/he had travelled to France for trade and three said they had travelled for other reasons. The reasons stated were, work related cultural exchange, tourism and to visit family.
Regarding the question regarding the use of French language outside school/college, respondents had varied answers to where they use the language. About 45% (27 respondents) use it at the work place, 31.7% (19) said that they use French on social media, 16.7 % of the respondents (10) use if with friends, 6.7 % (4) use it at home and 5% (3) selected the option others indicating that they use French in other places not provided in the choices. The total percentage is above 100% as respondents were asked to select all that applies. All respondents (100%) said that they would love to embrace the French culture in their day to day activities.

This information was summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where they use French</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.3. Work involvement

The respondents were asked to state whether they had worked on any French project in Kenya or not. The findings revealed that only about 20% of the respondents (twelve people) had previously worked on a French Project in Kenya. Eighty percent of the respondents had not worked on any French project in Kenya. This information can be represented graphically in the chart below:
Regarding the nature of projects that the respondents had worked on, out of the twelve that had been involved in different French projects, seven said they had worked on education related projects four said they had been involved in community empowerment projects and two said they had been engaged in agricultural research while two said that they had been engaged in other projects (music and art). The total number of responses is more than the 12 since respondents were asked to tick all that apply. This information is summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Project</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial focused</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community empowerment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the twelve respondents who said they had been engaged in the French projects, five said that the projects had lasted for more than two years, while the rest (7) said that the projects had lasted for less than two years. This information can be presented using the chart below:

![French projects chart]

Finally, most of the respondents said that they were very motivated to work on French projects for a longer period. Respondents were asked to rate their motivation to work on the French projects on a scale of 1-4 with 4 representing very motivated, 3 representing moderately motivated, 2 representing somewhat motivated, and 1 representing not motivated. Out of the sixty respondents, 45 which is 75% said that they were very motivated. 12 respondents (20% said they were moderately motivated while the rest (5%) of the respondents did not fill in this question. This information can be represented as follows:
4.5.4 Findings from the key informant interviews

This study selected four individuals within the French community in Kenya through snowballing in order to gather an informed opinion of the subject under study. The sample for the interview was purposively selected from individuals with a general understanding of international relations for the purpose of understanding the strategic direction of the teaching of the French language in Kenya. A semi structured interview guide was used to collect the data during the interviews. The interviewees were two male and two female and were each interviewed through a face to face meeting that allowed for discussion, clarification and follow-up questions. The discussions were cantered on the study objectives and were open ended in nature. The interviewees were therefore allowed to give details, support arguments and even challenge the researcher’s hypotheses on the topic of study.
All the four interviewees worked with the French community in Kenya and had close ties with the French Embassy in Kenya—La France au Kenya. From the guided interview, it emerged that indeed, the teaching and learning of the French language had more than doubled in the last twenty years. Several reasons were given for this interest in the teaching and learning of the French language; first, the teaching of French in Kenya became a strategic move by La France au Kenya since Kenya is a host of many international bodies such as the UN whose official languages include French. Another reason proposed by the interviewees for the increase in the teaching/learning of the French language was the formation of the East Africa Community and the inclusion of various French speaking countries. By learning French, the interviewees suggested, Kenyans have greater opportunities to associate, work with, and do business in the French speaking countries. It also emerged from the interviewees that access to institutions, teachers of French and reading materials had generally made it easier for learners to study the language. The French community has availed the infrastructure necessary to reach out to the masses interested in learning French. Finally, the interviewees confirmed that as a medium of communication, language naturally helps form relationships. The French community in Kenya was therefore strategically cementing relationships with Kenya, as well as with other countries through the exchange of their different cultures.

When asked to talk about the different ways in which the French community in Kenya had partnered with institutions in Kenya, the interviewees mainly mentioned the Ministry of Education, public and private universities, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, Private schools and colleges and government ministries as the key partners in teaching French.
When asked about the ways in which the community collaborates with the intention of attracting learners to the French language, the interviewees mentioned the learning institutions especially the Alliance Francaise, radio France and the media in Kenya, cultural festivals, science cafe’s and art exhibitions, scholarships, Campus France, the French library services and association with the French language teachers.

4.6 Conclusion

From the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be deduced; First, that over the past two decades, *La France au Kenya* has doubled its efforts in the teaching of the French language in Kenya. There has therefore been an increase in the number of students learning French both at the Alliance Francaise and through other institutions such as secondary schools, primary schools, colleges and universities. This insinuates that the language has been packaged to ‘attract’ Kenyans. The packaging of the French language to make it attractive has been done through many initiatives. These initiatives include job opportunities through French projects, scholarship opportunities to study in France through campus France, media marketing and cultural events. *La France au Kenya* does not just sell the language. The French culture is also subliminally packaged and sold. Through the hosting of cultural activities at the Alliance Francaise in Nairobi and Mombasa, the exchange programs to Campus France, the translation services and Radio France broadcast in Kenya, *La France au Kenya* is able to magnetize the French culture to French speakers and learners of French. Finally, this study concurs with Nye (2008) that the use of the French language in Kenya is indeed a soft power tool to advance the interests of France in Kenya. The alliance Francaise is strategically positioned as a language and cultural relations organization to teach language as means to influence and advance French interests in Kenya.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study covers how France has used soft power and language to advance its interests in Kenya. The researcher uses data and information on the period ranging from 1990 to 2018. This chapter analysed the issues that have emerged from this study. The chapter also includes the researcher’s conclusion based on the research process and findings. The experience in the course of study made the researcher identify some areas for further study. Recommendations in this chapter are based on primary and secondary findings, discussions and some of the identified gaps on the topic covered.

5.2 The Issues that Have Emerged

France’s language and soft power strategy has largely worked to achieve the country’s short-term goals in Kenya. More Kenyans have become familiar with the French language and culture. Although France is the leader in use of soft power, the strategy is not a preserve of the country. Military approaches are slowly becoming obsolete, as more nations have been embracing negotiations as a way of earning the interest and trust of their bilateral and multilateral partners. France stands out in Kenya as a result of its unique soft power strategy. The country has widely focused on language and culture as a way of drawing the attention of civilians.

Thousands of Kenyans learn the French language yearly. However, very few of these people end up using their knowledge to the advantage of both nations, in regard to strengthening relations. There is no clear path of transition between learning of the French language by
civilians and strengthening of relations between France and Kenya. A small percentage end up working in France, in the tourism sector and other places that involve links between the two nations. France lacks a clear plan on how to translate civilian knowledge of the French language into stronger ties between the two nations. Although the number of Kenyans embracing French language and culture has been growing over the years, French entities have struggled in the Kenyan market.

5.3 Conclusions

France’s soft power policy in Kenya has been making gradual gains towards having Kenyans embrace the French culture. The soft strategy has largely worked with the government. The Kenyan government and its French counterpart have strengthened their bilateral and multilateral relations. However, the language strategy does not seem to have given France any significant competitive edge against powers that are keen to strengthen economic relations with Kenya. Both soft power and language strategies by France have not worked in securing their economic interests in Kenya. Many French firms have been struggling to survive in the Kenyan Economy. French officials in foreign relations department have indicated that they are not keen in adopting the contract-oriented economic relations being championed for by nations such as China. This means that France will remain at a disadvantage in the economic scramble for Africa. Political and social relations between the two nations have been largely successful due to the diplomacy policy adopted by France. However, there are speculations that France is reconsidering its approach to foreign relations with Kenya, especially in view of the January 2019 visit by the French President. During the visit, the two governments negotiated and brokered deals that were later signed between the governments and private
business entities. France is keen to foster its relations with Kenya on all fronts, especially in the economic sphere.

5.4 Suggested Areas for Further Research

There is need for more studies that compare France’s strategy with the more contemporary ones, especially that applied by China. China has similarly been employing soft power. However, China merely uses language and culture to support its activities in the country. This study was largely time-series, where the researcher looked at some of the key developments related to France’s use of soft power between 1990 and 2018. There is need for more cross-sectional studies that examine the various forms of soft power across the world.

Researchers should come up with means of quantifying aspects of France’s soft power approach and comparing them with key targets of France’s foreign policy. France seems to be rethinking its soft power approach to Kenya. The 2018 visit to Kenya by Presidential Emmanuel Macron indicated a prospective change in strategy by France. The president’s visit came at a time of heightened concerns about the ability of French firms to survive in the Kenyan market. Therefore, there is need for a study that quantifies the number of people reached by the French through language and a quantifiable aspect such as total returns by French firms in the country. The research should cover factors such as the number of French-speaking Kenyans absorbed in these firms over the years.

5.5 Recommendations

France needs to re-examine how the use of language and soft power impacts its major international agenda. The results showed that over 5000 Kenyans learn the French language
annually. However, most of these people do not play any significant role in helping France meet its agenda in Kenya. France has maintained close ties with Kenya using its soft power and language approaches. The level of ministerial engagement has grown over the years. The approach has largely worked in scenarios where the government is the sole actor. For instance, both nations have been supporting key international conventions on climate change. Kenya was one of the first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2016. However, the soft power approach has not effectively translated into strong ties in the economic sector. France has been vocal on opposing the contract-oriented, low-cost, low-interest model of doing business adopted by the Chinese in the region. Instead, it fully relies on negotiations and full diplomacy even in key economic sectors.

France seems to be reconsidering its soft power approach. There is need to ensure that the country’s soft power approach amounts to significant outcomes in regard to promoting its interests in Kenya. France is the most spoken foreign language in the country, but this status has not translated into quantitative indicators such as trade and capital flows between the two countries. Chinese culture is not as popular as French, but China has increased its trade with Kenya significantly over the years. The cultural and education influence should work towards helping France expand its economic inroads in the country. The students in contact with France should be utilized by French firms as go-betweens with the Kenyan market. They should be integrated in the top management of firms such as Total and Bollore, and consequently utilized as intermediaries to transfer the organizational culture of these firms in France into operations in the Kenyan market.

The Kenyan government has supported the French’s initiatives to spread their language and culture. Mainstream academic institutions have adopted curricula that help learners familiarize
with French language and culture. The government mainly sees this as a way of maintaining relations with the French government. However, there have been relatively less efforts by the Kenyan government to replicate by helping the French understand Kenyan culture and languages. This scenario may be a result of the fact that it is only France that is interested in spreading its influence power. Kenya seems to be content with its position as a beneficiary rather than controller of relations between its government and the French. Kenya needs to make efforts towards establishing exchange programs where French citizens get to understand Kenyan culture and language better.

5.6 Conclusions

French-Kenya relations have largely worked to the advantage of both nations. However, the data analysed in this research show that soft power has not been effective in securing France’s interests in Kenya. French companies have struggled in the market, prompting the French government to open direct negotiations on how they can secure the wellbeing of their firms in the Kenyan market. There is need for further studies that compare France’s form of soft power to other contemporary strategies by major powers across the world. Although France may not completely abandon its soft power strategy, it has to reconsider the role of contracts in economic bilateral relations. Language continues to be an effective strategy in having Kenyans embrace the French culture and familiarize with France’s political and social values.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

PART A: Demographic details

Male  

Female  

Level of education

Primary  

Secondary  

Tertiary  

The French interaction growth in Kenya.

Where did you first study the French language? Tick one

Primary school  

Secondary school  

College  
Other (Please specify) ☐

What motivated you to enroll and study French?

For how long have you worked with the French community in Kenya?

1-2 years ☐

2-4 years ☐

Above 4 years ☐

Have you travelled to France for any exchange? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what was the nature of the activity?

Education ☐

Trade ☐

Other activities ☐

Other than in college, where else do you use the French language? Please tick all that apply

Work ☐

Home ☐

Social media ☐

With friends ☐
Others (please specify)____________________

Do you plan to embrace the French culture in your daily life?

Yes  ☐

No  ☐

**Part C: Economic strides made**

Have you worked in any French project within Kenya?

Yes  ☐

No  ☐

If yes, what is the nature of projects often invited to work for? Tick all that apply

Agricultural research ☐

Education based  ☐

Industrial focused  ☐

Community empowerment  ☐

Other (please specify)_______________

How long are the projects set?

Below 2 years  ☐

Above 2 years  ☐
Part C: Personal take

On a scale of 1-4, please rate how motivated you are to work with the French community?

4-very motivated ☐ 3-moderately motivated ☐ 2 somehow motivated ☐ 1-not ☐ motivated

What are some of the opportunities you hope to achieve when you finally complete this course?

Overall what is the mood of fellow students studying French at the institution? Are they excited, are they willing to take part in the activities?

____________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 2: Key informant interview guide

I Rajab Kombo intends to carry out a review of the overall progress and contribution of the French soft power and language influence in Kenya. The research seeks to collect data that would facilitate the completion of the study. I would be grateful if you satisfactorily assist with the needed information.

Instructions

Kindly provide the information on these areas as much as you are aware.

SECTION A: RELATIONS DATA

1. Gender of the respondent?
   Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Age of the respondent ( )

SECTION B:

Part A: The extent to which the French association has developed.

1. When did you start working with this French community in Kenya?

2. What is the nature of activities organized by this French community in Kenya?

3. Does the association give you the corporation to embrace the French culture and way of life?

4. What are some of the gains you have witnessed since the French Kenya relations started intensifying?

5. How many direct contacts have you made with French envoys?
6. What is your view regarding the future of the relations and activities between France and Kenya?

7. Do you love being a central player in these relations?

8. Why do you think efforts to teach French in Kenya have increased?

9. Which institutions does the French community in Kenya often partner with to teach French?

10. What kind of collaborations exist in the teaching of the French language?

Part B: Economic comparisons courtesy of the relations

11. What is the general landscape of trade activities between France and Kenya?

12. How many French development projects have you been called upon to work for? Specify whether community based or economic long term project?

13. What is the influx rate of French envoys coming to give talks and participate in French projects in Kenya?

14. Do you feel these relations have improved the economic activities up to this level?

15. Based on the response above what are some of the areas currently targeted by the French government to improve economic activities?
Section C: Personal Recommendation

16. Do you agree the French Soft power is impacting on all aspects of economic development beyond education? Kindly highlight some of the areas apart from education?