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Language Planning and Policy in Education: the Case of Senegal

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Language planning and policy in education: the case of Senegal

by

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An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

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Language planning and policy in education: the case of Senegal

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ABSTRACT

Discourse concerning globalisation, post- or neo-colonialism, and development are central to the proposed argument. The connection between globalisation, post- or neo-colonialism, and development in relation to and language and education policy is dissected in detail (Shin & Kubota, 2008). A number of historical and present actors have contributed to the formation of current language policy and, on a broader scale, the present system of education in Senegal (Faye, 2013). The lack of national languages of instruction in Senegal's language and education policies are the result of powerful actors, of social tensions and conflicts, and of technical issues concerning codifying and standardisation of minority or mother-tongue (national) languages (Sall, 2010). A number of issues crop up as a result of these policies, specifically the inequalities that play out in every level of the educational and social systems. The current situation of language and education policy in Senegal is allowing linguistic imperialism to continue and is impeding the education and resulting development in the country. Some solutions include an increase in research and communication of information to policy makers, the coding and standardisation of native languages, the change in policy, the decentralisation of policy and implementation, and efforts to support and sustain a system of education that works to serve the population through consistent partnerships.

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Note: Through extensive research, most of which comes from European sources, my writing style reflects these sources. That is to say, I use primarily European spellings, particularly for buzz words such as globalisation and colonisation.

REFLECTION AND RELEVANCE

Understanding the history, background, and formation of Senegalese education and language policies is extremely important as the globalising world shifts and inequalities shift with it. By looking deeply into these inequalities and finding the central issues, this study contributes to current literature in connecting a number of discourses and addressing the necessary changes to aid in the development of Senegal alongside the rest of the world. Education is central to ethical, sustainable, and equality-based development. This study is meant to contribute to a deep understanding that can lead to improvement of education and as a result, positive development of Senegal. It is important to note that much literature concerning Senegal's education and language policy is somewhat dated; therefore this study will contribute a current and more wholesome understanding of Senegal and post-colonial education and language policy.

I lived in Senegal for four months through a study abroad program in Dakar. While I experienced the culture and learned in a university, I also interned at a school in downtown Dakar. At this school, I was exposed to poverty, as well as the failings of the education system and policy; the single shed held about 25 students aged 2 through 35, all working to learn and better their circumstances. I quickly learned that French was not an effective method of communicating information or ideas, and that a number of different languages were necessary

to effectively communicate with the students. The difficulties I faced in the short time I worked at the school were only a taste of the shortcomings of the education system and policy and the obstacles that both teachers and students face on a daily basis. It was clear that the system and policy was inadequate in addressing the needs of the population. For this reason, I was inspired to look into what was holding myself and other teachers back in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION/LINKS

Inequalities and Language

Languages spoken by the majority population in any country contribute to a hegemony in political and economic systems within a country. In this way, without policy to protect and develop minority languages, the majority languages and the resulting elites can wield power over these minority communities (Trudell, 2008, p.397). Additionally, in Senegal the use of French in official and administrative communication with the public has a negative effect on the participation of minority communities in the process of the country's development (Sall, 2010, pp.319-320). Furthermore, the more power and influence is attached to French as a language, "the more it is perceived as dominant and is rejected into imagination of other native languages" (Sall, 2010, p.320). As a result, inequalities take root in political, economic, and social systems in the country in question.

Not only is language an identity marker, but it is also a resource for communication of ideas, knowledge, and values. In this way, language has both a social and practical application. Of the 36 documented languages in Senegal, only half are recognised by the government as official languages, as only about half are codified and considered standardised. This practical codification comes with a strengthened identity for each minority community, though tensions and the multilingual, multiethnic setting in which these relationships are taking place are creating a sense of competition and an illogical power dynamic based on language alone (Trudell, 2008, p.405).

Language and Education

Language is equally important when considering the development of a country. As language is the primary tool for communicating social, academic, and spiritual ideas, it is important to consider the community context in which language and education function (Sall, 2010, p.316). Senegal has thirty-some distinct languages, linked to roughly 20 ethnic groups. This multilingual context is where communication takes place (Sall, 2010, p.314).

The only places where national languages are used in education are in a few rural kindergartens and the Cheikh Anta Diop University, where national languages are taught in the Center of Applied Linguistics of Dakar. Despite the work of administrations following colonialism and that of Leopold Senghor, “local languages are still overshadowed by French in most public domains” (Diallo, 2011, p.214).

Colonialism and globalisation are both connected to the discussion of language education through the Self and Other identities and “inherently privileges some while marginalising others,” strengthening the existing social hierarchies and inequalities in these post-colonial societies (Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.215).

Education and Development

Education is extremely important when considering the development of a country. In the case of Senegal, the postcolonial status carries some weight as the country works to shift its systems and policies to reflect goals of development and growth rather than traditionally colonial goals of exploitation of natural resources and labour. Education, then, has the power to empower citizens to contribute to the development of their country through learned competences, information, and nurtured abilities. These citizens then use these tools to

contribute to social and economic development, and therefore the country's overall development. In the context of this empowering system, it is important to note the attention and preservation of autonomy, equality, and equity within this system of education to allow for a true democracy to take root in social, economic, and political development of the country as a whole (Ndiaye, 2006, p.228).

Note that local agency is at the root of language as it causes both social and political shifts (Trudell, 2008, pp.407-8). As language can serve as an identity marker or marker of community membership in this case, it therefore becomes an instrument for local identity and agency that ultimately have the potential to transform into social and political shifts. This, however, all hinges on the confirmation of this identity and the recognition of this community on a national scale in both social and political realms (Trudell, 2008, pp.403-405). Additionally, note that language of instruction has links to pedagogy as well as to policy, as each of these three function differently in the domain of education. That is to say that policy determines both teaching style and content (Diallo and Liddicoat, 2014, p.112).

Most importantly, education's place in creating and developing a democracy is a central concept of this paper. That being said, the ability to "express one's views in a language one masters" is democracy, and that democracy must be carried on in the educational practices and policies of any truly democratic country (Brock-Utne, 2012, p.781).

Post-colonialism and globalisation

In the context of an increasingly globalised world, Senegal's post-colonial status is an important factor when looking at language education. Most notably, "language education is embedded in socio political and economic relations of power and hence plays a key role in the

construction as well as transformation of inequality between the privileged and the underprivileged” (Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.206). These inequalities are linked to the

effects of neocolonial domination and subordination [that] persist in today’s world and the post-colonial celebration of local identities often works to divert attention to the hegemony of the neocolonial empire that perpetuates unequal relations of power. In many post-colonial societies, the history of development and modernisation has been intertwined with that of neocolonialism. (Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.208)

This is to say that the hegemony that began during the pre-colonial and colonial periods in Senegal continues today despite the visible actions of the former ruling powers. Globalisation allows for neo-colonial domination to continue, particularly as global links in economy, policy, and society grow and strengthen. An example of neocolonialism is the use of colonial language in education, which “is related to the business interest of large textbook producers in France and Britain”(Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.208). The broad concepts of globalisation, and post (or neo-) colonialism in mind, it is clear that the language of education is linked with the issues that result from these processes. In other words, modern and global processes today are linked and interact with the language of education, so having them in mind when looking at history, actors, issues, and solutions is essential to gain a full and realistic understanding of the past, present, and future of Senegal’s system of education.

PART 1 : HISTORY

Pre-colonial and Colonial history

Before France began to colonise Senegal, the methods of education in Senegal were specific to each ethnolinguistic group. Each of these groups would educate children in their language, creating small systems of education “linguistically and culturally responsive within each tribal or ethnic setting” (Alidou, 2003, p.197). In this way education was not a separate system, but rather intertwined with the community itself (Alidou, 2003, p.197). The colonial era changed these ethnolinguistic-based systems of education greatly, as France imposed their own groupings of children to receive the education that the colony was providing. The groups contained children that without a common language or educational background, as the ethnolinguistic groups were combined in the classroom (Alidou, 2003, p.198).

Senegal was the first French colony in what the French called “Noire Afrique”, and Saint-Louis became the central point from which the French empire spread throughout Africa. The first instances of a colonial education system came in 1817, when Jean Dard was appointed to begin western education of the masses. On this civilising mission, French was identified as the language of instruction to be used in education, and this was for a number of political, economic, and social reasons. Most importantly, African languages didn’t have the capacity to express civilised ideas in the same manner that French, a civilised language, did. French became the language of instruction starting from the first year of primary school. This began in one of the Quatres Communes, one of the four main cities where French colonisation was beginning to take hold. The citizens of these cities were considered to be French, so the assumption was that the Senegalese could attend school and begin learning in the same way that the French did.

Additionally, a number of native languages existed in each region, so French became the primary language of instruction simply to make the process of teaching easier. The economic and social factors are much more complicated and interwoven and will be discussed shortly (Alidou, 2003, p.197). It is important to note that colonial education was not for the creation and development of education to fit the needs of Senegal, but rather “to serve European economic and political interests” (Alidou, 2003, p.199).

Notable history

While France was quite repressive in their colonial policy, particularly in terms of systems of education and language of instruction, Britain had a more inclusive approach and indirect rule over their African colonies. Britain supported the use of native or mother-tongue languages as the language of instruction in school in a number of their African colonies, including Ghana and Nigeria. Furthermore, Britain encouraged the study and development of these languages. This was comparatively more supportive of development and education than France’s colonial system of education, identical to France’s own system of education (Diallo, 2011, p.208). English language, under Britain, only became the primary language of instruction in the fourth year of primary education, and in secondary education it became the only language of education. Conversely, French immediately became the sole language of instruction beginning in the first year of primary education. Arabic and African languages were forbidden in educational contexts under French policy. It is important to note the extreme hegemony resulting from the French approach to education in comparison to the relatively equitable British approach. The result of these hegemonic systems of education led to largely limited upward mobility, only possible through fluency in French. This is a serious issue when

looking at the rates of enrollment and rates of literacy, both well below a quarter of Senegal's population (Alidou, 2003, p.211).

Jean Dard was the first French educator in Senegal, where he taught in a boys school in Saint-Louis (Alidou, 2003, p.199). He was appointed in 1816/17 by colonial administration to begin French-style education to civilise the natives and begin illustrating the positive impact of French colonisation of Africa (Diallo, 2011, p.209; Alidou, 2003, p.199). Immediately upon beginning his work, Dard noted that it was very challenging to teach Senegalese youth in a language that they hadn't spoken before. He quickly began to question the methods of the colonial model for education and decided to learn Wolof and Bambara, using these languages to teach his students. Dard believed that education is a tool for liberation of young Africans. He also believed that black Africans must be taught in their own language and without this there cannot be sustainable schools any by association, any civilisation. By including African culture and languages in his curriculum and educational model, he was effectively teaching his students. This was quickly brought to a halt by the colonial administration, as his "pedagogical stand was a threat to core foundations of the assimilation agenda" (Diallo, 2011, p.210). The administration banned Wolof in schools to combat this threat, additionally sending Dard back to France and terminating colonial public education in Senegal (Diallo, 2011, p.210).

In 1834, public schools were reinstated along with very detailed by-laws to ban local languages or mother-tongues from learning and teaching environments and force French language, culture, and beliefs fully on the students. With this new policy, colonial administration tasked Christian institutions to take the power in this new educational setting,

shifting it out of local hands. This civilising mission alienated the colonised and forced them to assimilate to French life in this way until 1854 (Diallo, 2011, p.211).

In 1854, Faidherbe was appointed the governor of Senegal. He changed education policy in a major way by shifting away from religious institutions of education, towards secular education. His primary goal was to assimilate the Senegalese and reduce tensions around the sizable differences in culture, belief, and values between the Senegalese and their colonisers. He rested firmly with the original French-only teaching policy, though he did work to provide more educational opportunities for the local populations (Diallo, 2011, pp.209-210).

Throughout colonial rule of Senegal, the French language “imposed” on education, politics, and economics worked to assimilate the Senegalese while marginalising native languages. French was framed as a civilised language, capable of expressing civilised and developed ideas that native languages were not equipped to express. In this line of thinking, then, native languages were not functional in the space of politics, education, or economics (Diallo, 2011, p.211).

After independence, the new governing powers chose not to break down and completely restructure the educational system to better benefit citizens through the reinstatement of native languages. Instead the newly hatched political elite chose to leave the French system intact, as they had been indoctrinated and privileged in the same system. While some of the following governments worked to elevate native languages, this effort has largely failed. Additionally, some powers seek to continue the system that gave them their elite status, therefore working to maintain the colonial system and the hierarchy that resulted (Diallo, 2011, p.211). As a result, French continues to be the central language in politics, economics, and

education (Diallo, 2011, pp.207-208). In this way, native languages are continually pushed to the side and replaced by French in all public systems, though most notably in media and education.

The first mention of national language in Senegal's independent constitution was that French would be the only official language in Senegal. In response, NGOs, language associations, and other political parties called for changes to the constitution to recognise the native languages of Senegal and also to reduce the extremely high rates of illiteracy with regard to the national language. This brings up the first actor in the matter of language planning and policy, Leopold Senghor (Diallo, 2011, p.211).

PART 2 : ACTORS

Leopold Senghor

Leopold Senghor, the first president of Senegal following France's colonial rule, was loyal to the French system of governance, education, and policy that he was raised in. As a result, in his drafting of the constitution, he maintained that French would be the only official language of Senegal, as previously mentioned. Following the pushback by both national and international actors regarding this legislation, Senghor responded in 1971 with a change to the constitution that added that national languages included Diola, Malinke, Pulaar, Serrere, Soninke, and Wolof. This addition did not, however, give these languages any function in the public domain, but merely recognised their existence in the country. Senghor also later created Direction Nationale de L'alphabetisation (National Directorate for Literacy), though this small office was given no purpose or function. In this way, the French language was maintained as the central language in Senegal, allowing for the accompanying hierarchy, elitism, and singularity to continue (Diallo, pp.211-212). It is important to note, however, that Senghor's actions to codify the 6 national languages resulted in the creation of a community of university linguists, who then banded together to preserve native languages (Albaugh, 2007, p.15).

Abdou Diouf

After 21 years of Senegal under Senghor, Diouf took office and began to work to reinstate national or native languages. He began with the creation of the Direction de l'Alphabetisation (Literacy directorate) to replace the original National Directorate for Literacy created by Senghor. He moved the directorate into the Ministry for National Education, and gave it the mission of "providing free public education... create synergy with other affiliated

ministerial bodies involved in language issues, in order to facilitate the integration of the national languages into the mainstream education system” (Diallo, 2011, p.212). Diouf eventually phased out the Literacy directorate in lieu of the Junior Minister for Literacy and the Promotion of the National Languages and the Directorate for Literacy and Basic Education. He also advocated for the creation of a number of other ministries and departments to support cultural, educational, and training reformation (Diallo, 2011, p.212).

Abdoulaye Wade

Abdoulaye Wade defeated Diouf in the 2001 presidential election. Soon after, he amended the constitution, adding that the national languages include “any national languages that will be codified” (Diallo, 2011, p.213). Following this, by 2007 there were 17 recognised national languages, with authorities working to codify two languages per year (Diallo, 2011, pp.212-213).

Looking at the political figures that have headed Senegal after independence, it is clear that these leaders were faced with a huge dilemma that continues today: the recreation or structural adjustment of a colonial education system with respect to processes of globalisation and market liberalisation while working against neo-colonial forces and working to respect native languages and further and equally develop within the multi-ethnic, multilingual context. The response was that leaders relied on Article 1 of the Constitution, with French as the official language in the institutions and the media, and following this allowance, “French then filled all the space in the political and socioeconomic environment” (Sall, 2010, p.315). While elevating the status of Senegalese languages is extremely complicated and politically and socially charged, progress has been made since the end of Senghor’s presidency. The following political

leaders and their administration then worked to create and pass “laws to enhance the prestige of the national languages and created competent institutions to promote them” (Diallo, 2011, p.214). Despite this work, unfortunately, French remains the dominant language in Senegal’s political, administrative, and economic fields (Diallo, 2011, p.214).

This correlates with the fact that none of these leaders have advocated for the use of an African language as an official language of administration or education (Albaugh, 2007, p.8). It is important to note that before the government of Senegal became involved, NGOs and local language associations were the primary actors regarding minority language development and mother-tongue education. These parties continue to be involved until present day (Trudell, 2008, p.406).

The World Bank

The World Bank has been an extremely powerful actor in the systems and policies surrounding education in post-colonial Senegal. Beginning at the time of independence in 1960, the World Bank has been a source of funding and support as Senegal began to develop independently of France. It is important to note, here, that the World Bank’s funding comes with constraints, rules, regulations, and requirements that must be met for any country to receive aid. Following a brief overview of the World Bank’s projects in and with Senegal, the current project and policy, as well as power relationship will be a detailed (Brock-Utne, 2012, pp.776-779).

The World Bank has invested in 200 projects for Senegal totaling three billion dollars, 11 of which are focused on education. The roughly \$360 million dollars spent since 1960 are shown in Figure One. These projects are focused on vocational, agricultural, technical

education, as well as creating higher education and improving the quality of education. The ongoing and current projects include the Tertiary Education Governance and Financing for Results Project, the Quality Improvement and Equity of Basic Education Project, and the Learning for All Project (Brock-Utne, 2012, pp.776-779).

The Learning for All Project was put into place in 2011 through the World Bank Education Strategy 2020 program. There are no requirements or recommendations to be found concerning the education and learning prescribed by the World Bank, notably a lack of any mention of language of instruction. The report simply states that children aged 6-8 generally benefit from mother tongue language of instruction in combination with the dominant (in this case colonial) language. While this is true, on a broader scale all students benefit from learning with their mother tongue as the language of instruction. Furthermore, there is no reason to use the colonial language as a media of education at all, as this only holds the country back from independent development and growth. In this way, the World Bank's influence on the formation and implementation of language policy is neither positive nor negative, but does nothing to actually improve the literacy and comprehension rates that the project aims to do, as stated in its title: Learning for All (Brock-Utne, 2012, pp.776-779).

It is noted that this project began after the 2010 meeting between Ministers of Education in a number of African countries where the commitment to adopt national languages and integrate them into educational systems was made. Despite the fact that the World Bank likely had this information before the project content and policy was complete, the project document has no mention of this goal. This is extremely telling of the lack of consideration of

what the African country, in this case Senegal, is working to accomplish or thinks is relevant and important in the development of education on a national level (Brock-Utne, 2012 pp.776-779).

The issue of accessibility of knowledge and education comes into question, not only in relation to location of schools, funding and materials, but also of the language used to communicate that knowledge and education. Unfortunately, without significant funding and policy behind the Minister of Education's commitment equivalent to that of the World Bank's, French is allowed to continue as the dominant language of instruction in postcolonial Senegal. Clearly linked, the "use of foreign languages as media of instruction disadvantages learners and erects barriers between school and community" (Brock-Utne, 2012, pp.776-779). That is to say the lack of intervention by the World Bank is simply continuing to feed colonial roots as they wrap tightly around Senegal's education system.

The government of Senegal

The government of Senegal has recently become a major actor in language planning and policy vis-a-vis minority and mother tongue languages (Trudell, 2008, p.403). In terms of the government's role in language policy, state recognition of minority languages is extremely important to language communities, as this is a marker of importance and a resource for each language community to take advantage of in relation to language development. The most notable legislation regarding national languages is Article 22 of the constitution stating "all national institutions, public or private, have the duty to alphabetise their members and participate in the national literacy effort in one of the national languages" (Sall, 2009, p.316). Unfortunately, these national languages are limited to less than 10 of the thirty-some languages that exist in the country. This means that more than 20 mother-tongue minority languages are

being neglected in the effort to increase literacy in the nation. Senegal's government additionally chose to use French as the official language of communication, notably between public figures and local communities, therefore decreasing the agency in development for locals that are not fluent in French. This effectively excludes the majority of rural populations that are coincidentally the most in need of development efforts (Trudell, 2008, p.399).

Other actors

In addition to the previously mentioned university linguists, there are a number of other actors that have some part or some power in the construction and implementation of language planning and policy in education: civil servants, the teachers' union, parents, educated linguistic elites, and grassroots movements.

The average civil servant seems to prefer French as the language of administration as it puts them at an elite status; those in the Ministry of Education are those that have an impact on language planning and policy. The civil servants in the Ministry of Education generally have a more positive attitude towards mother-tongue language of instruction, though this is not unanimous (Albaugh, 2007, p.8). Since the early 1980s, Senegal's teachers' union has been pushing for mother-tongue education systems to be put into education policy, as the union continues to make recommendations and suggestions about the workings of this education system (Albaugh, 2007, p.10). The parents have a minor, if not insignificant, role in the government's decisions regarding systems of education. This is apparent as past resistance to the system was responded to with a campaign to reinforce the system's approach and assure parents that their children are being educated in the best way possible (Albaugh, 2007, p.13).

While the power does not necessarily sit with these actors, the educated linguistic elites do have important insights and recommendations in terms of effective and equal education. These linguistic elites (and similarly, linguists in general) do not compete with each other like political elites, who do not demand the government's support of language rights for their communities. The linguists are instead "working to persuade parents and politicians that local language education has practical benefits" (Albaugh, 2007, p.16). Missionaries similarly have some knowledge and pull regarding these matters (Albaugh, 2007, p.15). Additionally, grassroots support mother-tongue education, though the government has not and does not respond to these demands. (Diallo, 2011, p.216)

Note that there is a lack of regional language elites, whom are prescribed to be the "strong advocates for local languages in education" (Albaugh, 2007, p.16). With all of the actors in mind, the "education outcome is deemed as multilingual" (Albaugh, 2007, p.16) since national leaders support French while the other actors either do not have a say or are mixed or ignored in their demands (Albaugh, 2007, p.16) . The major actors, in this case, are the external actors - the ex-colonial powers, the NGOs, and the indigenous linguists (and their organisations) - as they work with or against the government for their respective policies (Albaugh, 2007, p.17): "The main actors include trade unions, the press, school parents, teachers, local authorities, grassroots community organisations, technical and financial partners, and NGOs (Ndiaye, 2006, p. 227).

PART 3 : ISSUES

Until now, national languages have not been present in Senegal's official language systems. French is the language of instruction for all levels of education, and a required subject in all levels of schooling as well. No existing private or public schools teach in any national language other than in French, as the language remains the most effective tool for social and economic mobility and global communication. Additionally, there are no teacher trainings available in national languages other than French, and no developed curriculum in any language other than French. The result is that

current national languages practices are not embedded in any clear and sustainable local or national framework. As a result, activities which are undertaken are inconsequential, and their design and implementation appear amateurish because they rely heavily on volunteers and well-wishers. (Diallo, 2011, p.213)

In other words, French as an official language remains a legacy of colonialism, in a country housing more than 30 native languages (Sall, 2010, p. 314). A number of issues crop up in a detailed look at the system of education in Senegal, each of them contributing to and resulting from the continued colonial history.

Policy gap

While multilingualism is publicly promoted and supported in Senegal, this is not apparent in the actions and policy of the country (Sall, 2010, p.318). This is to say, "policy makers are reluctant to implement a new medium of instruction policy" (Alidou, 2003, p.202). While the importance of mother-tongue education is widely acknowledged and accepted, policy continues to reflect this sentiment in Senegal. This is apparent in the World Bank's actions, as the organisation has called for "the promotion of quality education in Africa" and

“recognises the value of children’s mother tongue for attaining this goal” though the funding does not include any budget for multilingual education (Alidou, 2003, p.204). The country continues to lack policy placing native languages into the education systems and shifting the importance of French language literacy to a secondary position. Literacy, comprehension, and school enrollment all suffer from this choice (Diallo, 2011, p.216).

Failing and underfunded education and communication

Since Senegal’s independence, the economic situation in the country has become progressively worse. This financial deficit manifests in overcrowded schools, substandard facilities, inferior materials, inadequate classroom settings, low staff numbers, incomplete educator training, and concentrations of schools dependent on the financial situation of each region (Ndiaye, 2006, pp.436-7). These financial issues result in problems with access to education, as well as decline in the quality of education students receive. This is apparent in the high dropout and repetition rates in primary education (Ndiaye, 2006, p.436).

The French language continues on as the language of instruction and of administration despite the fact that the French language is not widely spoken or understood in Senegal. This directly affects children’s success in schools as they struggle to understand and reproduce knowledge in a language that is not only foreign but also one that they haven’t fully grasped:

In francophone countries, French is spoken by less than 20 percent of the urban population and less than 10 percent of the rural population, yet French remains the exclusive language of instruction in mainstream classrooms. The mismatch between school language learning and children’s home language poses serious language learning and literacy development problems for most students. (Alidou, 2003, p.202)

It is important to note that literacy rates are extremely low and that the World Bank has several ongoing projects to improve literacy rates, though literacy in French is the goal (Brock-Utne, 2012, pp.785-6). In this way, “political independence does not necessarily lead to educational or economic independence”(Alidou, 2003, p.195), as the perceived “limitation of linguistic capacity”(Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.213) of native languages continues. Because colonial language policy remains in place, particularly in education, the colonial goal of schooling is preserved, rather than replaced by Senegal’s sovereign goal. Students’ expression, comprehension, and participation are limited in the context of a foreign language. The resulting failure of comprehension, lack of literacy, and low enrollment are then logical outcomes of ongoing colonial educational systems (Alidou, 2003, p.195).

Ethnolinguistic tensions

The multiplicity of native languages, throughout and following colonial rule, has been seen as a source of competition and division rather than one of national pride and native culture (Diallo, 2011, p.208). Wolof is a necessary tool for communication between language communities and ethnic groups, but it is simply used as a tool rather than a carrier of social or cultural significance. While Wolof is the most widely spoken language in Senegal, the roughly 30 other language communities are quick to resist the “wolofisation” of Senegal. That is to say, the increased use of Wolof language in communication is seen as a threat to ethnic identity, as mentioned earlier (language use is highly interconnected with identity). French is viewed in a similar manner as Wolof, a tool. French as a tool allows speakers to gain traction and success in professional and economic contexts. Note that the use of French has not met an equivalent resistance to that in response to Wolof (Trudell, 2008, p.400). The resistance by non

wolofophones carries into efforts to increase literacy, as this would privilege Wolof over other native languages (Sall, 2010, p.320). In building the nation after independence, then, leaders chose to “detrribalise” Senegal by using the colonial language to avoid any tribal or ethnic inequalities of power. In this way the French was viewed as neutral, which was useful in political and administrative systems in this multi-ethnic context (Alidou, 2003, p.201-202) However, French was and is not neutral by any means.

Inequalities

The one way flow of information, financial domination, linguistic imperialism, and hierarchy of languages are the most apparent and most problematic of the issues concerning language planning and policy in education. Textbooks are the most concrete case in which all of these issues are presented: both colonial and postcolonial textbooks are produced in France and Britain (Alidou, 2003, p.200). The result is that European countries “continue to hold a monopoly on the textbook market in Africa” most notably “due to restrictive regulations imposed by the World Bank and international development agencies that finance African education” (Alidou, 2003, pp.200-201). Upon deeper inspection, the knowledge in these textbooks is produced in the West, then sold for consumption in Senegal, a less developed country. This means the European countries “benefited financially and culturally from the imposition of their languages as media of instruction and administration” (Alidou, 2003, p.201). The classrooms then take in the embedded ideologies, perspectives, and hierarchies as education takes place. The “universal” versus the local, culturally responsive education that existed before colonialism in Senegal is clear (Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.214). The flow of information comes from the colonial powers, the former colonies continue financially benefit

the colonial powers, the colonial language continues to take precedence over native tongues, and the languages continue to educate and privilege few rather than educate the majority. In this way, “little has changed since the end of colonisation” (Alidou, 2003, p.201).

PART 4 : SOLUTIONS

The most clear solutions are those that require shifts in long-standing political and social systems in Senegal, and therefore are most difficult. Language policies must “integrate both the national languages and French within a comprehensive national framework” (Diallo, 2011, p.226).

Information

“An adequate assessment of the medium of instruction problem in Africa necessitates a critical review of colonisation ”(Alidou, 2003, p.196). There is a need for a deeper understanding of both the global and local role of languages, as well as the way in which language can continue colonial systems and the related social inequalities (Shin and Kubota, 2008, p.216). Additionally, all of the knowledge surrounding language use and learning should be used to create language policy that best addresses existing problems and fits the needs of the population. Using both the ethno-linguistic context as well as the post-colonial context would be essential to forming a policy for Senegal’s own education systems (Sall, 2010, p.314).

Coding and standardisation

As previously stated, coding is a crucial step in recognition and status for ethnic communities as they work to develop their native languages, though it is also a crucial step in beginning to integrate this language into an educational context:

Communities of speakers, who are at the basis of the codification process, believe that official recognition of their languages in the national heritage will promote endogenous development that cannot be done without taking into account their culture in order to articulate the knowledge acquired to ebb operating mechanism of their genius. (Sall, 2010, p.320)

After a language is properly codified, “the language is recognised at the institutional level as the national language and it can be taught in schools,” (Sall, 2010, p.316) giving this language an entry point into educational settings. However, unfortunately the act of codification does not automatically create educational materials using this language, though this is the first step in the process. It is important to note that more often than not, codification is the first and last step taken, as the government does not provide more resources to continue the development of a language, but rather does the legislative action without a local implementation and follow-up (Sall, 2010, pp.318-19). In simpler terms, “the recognition of minority languages as national languages has no significant impact on their promotion” (Sall, 2010, p.320).

Policy change

As the government’s purpose is to protect the rights of its citizens, it must also uphold policy that protects the basic and universal right to education (Ndiaye, 2006, p.225). With this in mind, the state’s policy should create “equality, equity, efficiency, partnership, pluralism, transparency, and responsibility”(Ndiaye, 2006, p.232) regarding education. Notably, the policy must define clearly the limits and responsibilities in partnerships, as each actor has a role in the modification and development of education in Senegal (Ndiaye, 2006, p.232). This mainly concerns the government’s role in creating “a favourable environment” (Ndiaye, 2006, p.232) so that each actor’s resources can be applied towards the development of education (Ndiaye, 2006, p.232).

There is currently a strong demand for national languages to be developed and the use of these languages to be expanded. To meet this demand, the language decision makers must commence a “genuine language policy shift by integrating mother tongue education within a

well-articulated and coherent national language policy framework, instead of random and piecemeal language policy practices” (Diallo, 2011, p.208). In a 2011 study, the majority of respondents (87%) were in favor of the idea of introducing national languages into Senegal’s education system. This shows both the identity linked to mother tongue languages, and also the recognition that language communities are pushing for their respective languages (Diallo, 2011, p.219). The reasons behind the support for this idea are the increased access to knowledge and learning, more effective communication, as well as for cultural and linguistic identity. The respondents opposed (11%) to the introduction of national languages in education reasoned that the national languages are not useful in international communication, and that national languages cause divisions. The surveyed population believed that a balanced approach to language should be taken in the education system, with the use of both mother-tongue languages and international language learning. In this way, the study shows an overwhelming need for change in Senegal’s education system, while “maintaining cultural identities, sustaining effective communication, and the pedagogical benefits of learning in one’s own language” (Diallo, 2011, p.225).

Decentralisation (also referred to as deconcentration) is an effective strategy for transitioning from an all-encompassing policy that fails to serve the population as individuals or as a whole to community-based policy and implementation that sits on a national policy foundation (Ndiaye, 2006, p.226). In this way, local authorities can regain control and influence over education in their communities (Ndiaye, 2006, p.230). This effort to decentralise is important as the government makes partnerships and increasingly collaborates and shares

education-related duties to gain a more wholesome and rich education policy and implementation.

Local agency

It is clear that “local agency is key to minority languages’ development” though “thriving local language development requires a certain degree of state enablement” (Trudell, 2008, p.406). The main issue here is that financial stability is a requirement for both state policy and local action to succeed in minority language situations, and the current economy as well as financial partners present in these contexts are not stable or long-term factors. Therefore, the challenge becomes finding a long-term investment in these efforts by both the state and local actors to develop minority languages in each ethnic community. While local stakeholders would be ideal in this context, it is difficult to lock down this type of commitment to funding and supporting these language development causes (Trudell, 2008, pp.406-7).

Support and sustainability

Given that local action is a primary factor in any changes made in this multilingual and multi ethnic context, it is increasingly important to pair national policy with local action to ground and standardise these changes and shifts so that they occur in an even and equal manner (Trudell, 2008, p.407).

While Senegal continues to struggle to find the appropriate balance in language planning and policy in education, other African countries that have similarly experienced colonialism have found ways to implement mother-tongue education policy and systems (Diallo, 2011, p.226). The knowledge that “despite a complex linguistic environment, compounded by an unfavourable colonial heritage, some African countries have launched well-

planned language education policies by encouraging and supporting bilingual education” (Diallo, 2011, p.216) is extremely important in moving forward as a post-colonial, independent nation looking to develop its own systems of administration and education.

Communication

Continuing with the idea of new and advanced understandings, communication regarding development and multilingualism as they function in Senegal is crucial, as this opens up the conversation and allows for a more democratic process of solving and creating within each community. This democratic process is “possible only if there is a compromise between the benefits of local language and the objective of integration of ethnic or regional groups in the daily political and economic national life what couldn’t be done without national languages” (Sall, 2010, p.319). That is to say, a middle ground must be found where each community acknowledges the utility (both cultural and functional) of both local and national languages. Moving forward, materials for education in local languages should be created and teachers should be trained to teach in these languages, in this way also addressing the issue of literacy in Senegal (Sall, 2010, p.326). The creation of materials, of course, requires standardisation/codification of local languages. This is an important step in creating “the language infrastructure”(Albaugh, 2007, p.17), though agency (and partnership) is required for Senegal’s education system to continue to develop.

Partnerships

While Senegal’s government is responsible for the development of accessible education, there is a need for partnerships to complete this task. This can occur both in technical or financial partnerships, that is to say that partners may offer money or skills to address the

issues currently existing in Senegal's systems of education (Ndiaye, 2006, p.225). Each partner, then must be equally committed and involved in the process, specifically in terms of implementation and decision-making. In this way, the government can continue to "protect the moral and rational autonomy of citizens and to guarantee equality, justice, and liberty in a system of governance, which is devoted to furthering democracy" (Ndiaye, 2006, p.225) through the proper education of Senegal's citizens. The primary benefit of these partnerships are the support and resources that have the ability to greatly improve education in both legislative and physical aspects. This has the potential to open the country to new methods of education and different manifestations of education that may diversify the system so that it may serve a larger population (Ndiaye, 2006, p.235).

Opening the country up to external partners is a risk as the government "must share responsibility, cost, decision making and authority with all its partners," (Ndiaye, 2006, p.226) though the potential for growth is exponential as a result of these partnerships. These dynamic partnerships will involve teachers and staff participation, as well as community participation so that education may be developed and implemented (as well as reassessed) to create a well-rounded framework of responsive and accessible education in the country (Ndiaye, 2006, p.226).

CONCLUSION

It is clear that Senegal faces serious issues stemming from colonial systems that remain in place today. Following colonial times, administrations and external actors have worked to undo and rebuild economic, social, political, and most importantly educational systems. This has largely failed as inequalities continue to exist and grow. It is increasingly “urgent to change the language policy in Senegal, in its objectives and on the way of proceeding to revitalise and enhance our languages, especially minority ones and ensure sustainable economic, social and cultural development” (Sall, 2010, p.326). That is to say, this hegemonic system of education cannot continue. Education is the engine for growth and development of a country, and therefore it must be Senegal’s (and the world’s) priority to take steps to improve education (Ndiaye, 2006, p.227). It is clear that a step to be taken is to introduce mother-tongue language as the medium of instruction in Senegal’s schools, as this will immediately improve literacy and comprehension rates, as well as overall enrollment in the country (Alidou, 2003, p.203). In this way, Senegal can begin to promote “general development of individuals and their economic and social well-being by enabling them to acquire and refresh the skills, aptitudes, and knowledge they need for the development of society and its economy” (Ndiaye, 2006, p.225). Only when citizens are empowered to learn and express ideas and knowledge in their mother-tongue language can the country begin to independently and equitably develop (Sall, 2010, p.319).

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