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Pure fiction – the interplay of indexical and essentialist language ideologies and heterogeneous practices
A view from Agnack[1]

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This paper investigates the complex interplay between different sets of language ideologies and multilingual practice in a village in Lower Casamance (Senegal). In this heterogeneous linguistic environment, which is typical of many African settings, individuals have large and adaptive linguistic repertoires. The local language ideologies focus on different aspects of identity which languages serve to index, but enable individuals to focus on different facets of identity according to context. National language ideologies are essentialist and have as their goal to put constructed homogeneous communities on the polyglossic map of Senegalese languages. In contrast to similarly essential Western ideologies, however, these national ideologies operating in Senegal are not linked to actual standard language practices. Using the example of individuals in two households and by presenting rich ethnographic information on them, the paper explores the relationship between language use and language ideologies before describing a sampling method for documenting language use in these contexts. It is argued that the documentation of these contexts cannot be achieved independently of an understanding of the language ideologies at work, as they influence what is presented as linguistic practice, and that arriving at a holistic description and documentation of the multilingual settings of Africa and beyond is central for advancing linguistic theory in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and contact linguistics.

1. SETTING THE SCENE. Senegal, a West African country with ca. 14 million inhabitants, is moderately multilingual by African standards. The number of named languages

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[1] The research reported in this paper took place as part of two externally funded projects led by me. The first was the language documentation project 'Pots, plants and people – a documentation of Baïnounk knowledge systems' funded by the DoBeS programme of the VW Foundation from 2010 to 2013. The second project is the Leverhulme Research Leadership Award Project "At the crossroads – investigating the unexplored side of multilingualism from 2014 to 2019. The generous support of both funders is gratefully acknowledged, as is the precious input from all project members and research participants. I thank in particular the Mané families in Agnack Grand – Dominic, Hortense, Jules-Bernard, Pierrot, Benjamin and René Mané and Meta Diandy, Theodoria Sagna and Jacqueline Biai. Without Alpha Naby Mané, my main consultant from Agnack Petit, it would have been impossible to make sense of most things. The DoBeS project members, Amadou Kane Beye, Alexander Cobbinah, Cheikh Daouda Diatta and Moustapha Sall have all centrally contributed not only to the research but also to developing new ways of thinking about the multilingual settings of Casamance. In addition, exchanges with Pierpaolo di Carlo, Jeff Good and Mandana Seyfeddinipur were extremely fruitful in conceptualising multilingual language documentation. Finally, I thank Anne Storch and two anonymous reviewers for their very insightful and constructive comments on the first version of this paper.

given for this country has been quantified most recently as 38 by the Ethnologue (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2014), but is of course impossible to pin down, since named languages are changeable socio-political constructs, not objective entities. Different social processes can lead to the status of a named language; in the current political climate of Senegal, more and more languages acquire this through a process of standardisation culminating in their receiving the status of 'national language', with very few actual consequences. In the shadow of these officially acknowledged languages, there is great linguistic diversity characterised by fluidity and the absence of clear boundaries for varieties spoken in continuous spaces. All Senegalese people are multilingual, with oral repertoires being much larger than written repertoires. The official language, French, the language of the former colonial power, occupies little space in spoken communication, but dominates official settings and most written contexts in the Latin script. Another language that has little or no presence as a spoken language but holds great prestige and is very present in writing is Arabic, the language of Islam, to which 95% of the Senegalese population adhere. The Arabic script is widely used to write those Senegalese languages in the sphere of influence of Islam, among them Wolof (see Mc Laughlin 2001, Lüpke & Bao-Diop 2014). Wolof, Pular and Mandinka, all of which are named languages but exhibit great variation within themselves, are at the same time languages of wider communication with important translocal speaker bases. Languages with smaller speaker bases are in use throughout the country, but one region stands out for its particularly high linguistic diversity and the number of small, multilingual communities. This region, the natural region of Lower Casamance (corresponding to the administrative region of Ziguinchor), is the focus of this paper. Casamance is host to a high number of named languages. Most of them, just like the languages of wider communication Wolof and Pular, belong to the Atlantic grouping of languages, whose status as genetic or areal, and their internal division, is currently being debated (Lüpke forthcoming a). To this grouping belong the languages of the Joola and Baïnounk clusters which will feature prominently in this paper, both of them having clear genetic relationships within the clusters, and other Casamance languages[2] and language clusters such as Balant, Manjak and Mankanya. Typologically very different and belonging to the Mande family is Mandinka, a language with a large speaker base that also has an important role as a lingua franca and language of Islam in Casamance. Finally, a Portuguese-based Creole is spoken throughout Casamance and adjoining Guinea Bissau. The scope of Creole includes both in-group and inter-group communication.

Many of the smaller languages of this region are conceptualised as languages belonging to one village. This ideology, described by Good (2012) and Good and Di Carlo (ms.) as localist and indexing (rather than as comprising a complete identity in an essentialist fashion) for another West African setting in Cameroon, is evident in the practice of naming languages as the language of X, X standing for a particular location – for instance (Joola) Banjal as the (Joola) language of Banjal, or (Baïnounk) Guñaamolo as the (Baïnounk) language of Niamone. As Cobbinah (2013) notes, the adequate interpretation of this naming strategy in terms of linguistic practice is to read the glossonyms as meaning not 'the languages of X'

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[2] All languages of Senegal have translocal speaker bases. When I offer geographical locations for languages I am referring to the place with which they are identified according to their ideological 'home base'.

but '*one* of the languages of X'. Other named languages are not linked through their names to precise locations; to these belong Balant, Mandinka, (Baïnounk) Gujaher, (Joola) Eegimaa and others. Most villages are habitually associated with one language as the language of the locality. However, it would be fallacious to conclude from these naming strategies that one language has ever dominated them or that their inhabitants or groups of them have been or are monolingual in this language. These spaces are not (and probably never were) inhabited by monolingual speech communities. Rather, they are as heterogeneous and multilingual as urban spaces. If the ideologies foreground one language of these heterogeneous spaces as being *the* local language, this appears due to longstanding 'landlord-stranger' relationships regulating settlement patterns of the typically decentralised groups in the area (Brooks 1994). According to these practices, one group, often consisting of the founding clan of a village, takes nominal ownership of the associated land and accommodates strangers by ceding them land. These 'strangers' can become very settled, but are not treated on a par in political terms, and this is reflected in the widespread strategy of naming languages.

Just as places are tied to particular languages in ideological fashion and do not reflect the real linguistically complex settings, so do individuals foreground one or two languages of their repertoires as what I call their 'identity language'. In some contexts, these languages are the identity language(s) of the father (sometimes with the mother's identity language(s) added). Although identity languages sometimes correspond to the languages spoken most, they are never the exclusive mother tongues, as there is no such thing as monolingual language acquisition in Senegal. Rather, identity languages can index affiliation with a certain group, but group membership is crucially not dependent on linguistic behaviour. In addition, there is ample evidence that 'identity' languages are changeable according to the context and the alliance desired, just like the ethnic identity they can be said to instantiate (see Foucher 2005 on ethnicity as a changeable and political concept in Casamance).

These language ideologies are of course rooted in the sociocultural context of the area. The history of Casamance and Senegambia is one of continuous contact between mobile, decentralised groups based on extended families or clans (Hawthorne 2003; Bühnen 1994; Brooks 1993; Wright 1985, 2010), and not all encounters have resulted in the peaceful hosting of strangers. Migration, conflict, raids, including slave raids, religious – and most recently independence and secessionist – wars and proselytising have left traces throughout the entire area and often caused decimation, displacement and assimilation of both smaller and larger groups. Assimilation can have a complete incorporation of another group or of individuals as its outcome, as historically through the integration of captives into a community, or it can happen partially and gradually, in actual cultural and linguistic practices or proclaimed features of identity and at the individual level. Crucially, assimilation is not always unidirectional but often can be reversed entirely or in parts at any time and depending on individual circumstances. At the same time, the vulnerability and small size of groups which are based on extended families that characterise the area has necessitated the creation of a number of strategies for exchange and alliance. These social strategies have been described in detail in chapter 2 of Lüpke and Storch (2013) and comprise exogamous marriage practices, child fostering, and particular patterns of ritually, economically and religiously motivated multilingualism. They are not typical of Casamance only, but of many multilingual places in Africa, in particular at the African frontier (Kopytoff 1987), where they constitute important survival techniques (see

Di Carlo, this volume, for a discussion of a Cameroonian setting). As a result of its social history, present-day Casamance presents a mosaic of linguistic and cultural diversity. This mosaic can be studied from the perspective of language – in terms of lexical and structural language contact – but only reveals its full dynamics, motivations and causes at the level of speakers. These speakers act as gendered members of – mostly small, family-based – groups but also as individual agents adapting to structural factors in their surroundings.

This paper, therefore, presents a snapshot of language use at the micro-level, based on ethnographic observations allowing some preliminary interpretation of language use before linking it to larger patterns. Using a case study, I[3] introduce the (present and absent) members of two households in a small village in Casamance and discuss their linguistic biographies and concomitant repertoires. I then turn to two different types of language ideologies and discuss how and why they are aligned or misaligned with the linguistic practices of different groups and individuals. I end the paper by describing the methods I used for documenting these complex settings and by outlining the challenges and opportunities they present for linguistic research, and the question they beg for a conceptualisation of language and language use in multilingual contexts.

2. WELCOME TO AGNACK. Agnack is a village 18 km to the east of Ziguinchor, the capital of the region with the same name, on national road 6. It is situated in the lowlands close to the tidal Casamance River and one of its arms or *marigots*, called *cinda* in Baïnounk Gujaher. The village is surrounded by rice fields, palm groves and salt marshes, criss-crossed by creeks and swamps. Agnack is divided into two parts, Agnack Grand ('Big Agnack') and Agnack Petit ('Little Agnack') with some smaller wards, including Aringala and Asimiou. Ironically, Agnack Grand constitutes the smaller part of the village today, although it is the original point of settlement. According to oral history, it was founded by the great-grandfather of the current village chief, Jules Bernard Mané, who came with his family from nearby Sangaj to settle here. When the road from Ziguinchor to Kolda was built, inhabitants of Agnack Grand gradually started to move their houses[4] close to the *goudron* (tarmac), a movement that was exacerbated by the construction of a power line running alongside the road. Since Agnack Petit, in contrast to Agnack Grand, is connected to the electricity grid and the transport and communication network constituted by the road, it continues to be very attractive to new settlers and has increased in size over the years. Agnack Grand, in contrast, with only solar street lamps, offering the most rudimentary modern infrastructure, has many abandoned compounds to testify to its position at the margins of modern facilities. Figure 1 offers a map of the village with the households of Agnack Grand.

Life in Agnack Petit is very cosmopolitan, and all the major languages of Casamance

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[3] Whenever I use the first person singular, I report my individual research, which is the focus of this paper. The occasional use of the first person plural signalises that I refer to experiences or observations made by several team members of the two collaborative projects I am leading.

[4] As Wright (1999) reminds us, houses and entire villages (but not shrines at which ancestors are worshipped) are and have been very mobile. They are made of mud, with thatched, or more recently, tin roofs and can be built by a family during one dry season. People take down and rebuild their houses in regular intervals because they don't withstand the heavy rains for long. This temporary character of dwellings makes it easy to move compounds or entire villages in order to avoid conflicts or benefit from better agricultural conditions, defence positions, electricity, and so on.
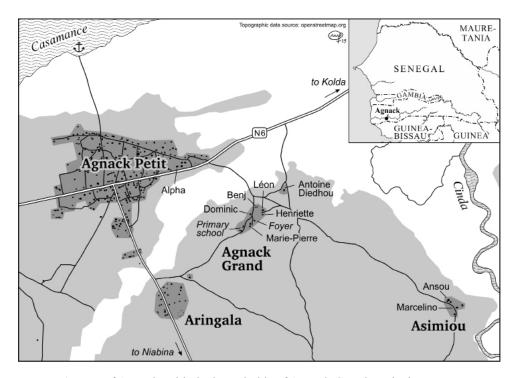
FIGURE 1. Map of Agnack, with the households of Agnack Grand marked

and Senegal (and beyond) are spoken there. This is due to the fact that alongside the already complex configuration of Casamance languages present there, civil servants, in particular teachers, from all over the country have been appointed to posts in the village. For a long time, Agnack Petit had a military post, likewise inducing linguistic diversity through the profiles of the soldiers posted there, and there is still a military post close to the Aringala ward of Agnack Petit. The most recent influx of newcomers is constituted by a large contingent of Malian fishermen and their families, attracted by the rich fishing grounds of the Casamance River, and bringing in the Mande language Bambara.

Agnack Grand presents a somewhat reduced linguistic complexity, with 'only' six to eight languages routinely offered as parts of the repertoires of its inhabitants, who live in seven households.[5] In addition to Baïnounk Gujaher, 'the' language of both parts of the village according to the localist language ideology, Joola Susaana is spoken by refugees from Guinea Bissau ('chez Antoine Diedhou'), and the descendants of Jalonke-speaking immigrants from Guinea in a household in the Asimiou of Agnack Grand ('chez Ansou'), who speak rudiments of this language. Balant, Manjak, Pepel, Joola Fogny and Joola Kasa, Wolof, Creole, Gugëcer, French and sometimes Pular are present as well, in addition to other languages not spoken by many people. Most people assume complex ethnolinguistic identities, parts of which are inherited from the father. These identities can be given with differing levels of

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[5] No attempt at counting the inhabitants of the village is made here. The number of inhabitants is in constant flux, as will become evident from the detailed discussion of two households in §3.

granularity and are not monolithic but are highly adaptive according to context. Crucially, identities are not dependent on mother tongue(s) or languages spoken, although speaking a certain language in a certain context can serve to index a particular facet of identity.

3. FOCUS ON TWO HOUSEHOLDS IN AGNACK GRAND. The – to most outsiders invisible – complex sociolinguistic setting of Agnack Grand will be discussed through a snapshot study of two of its seven households. The first systematic collection of sociolinguistic and ethnographic data was obtained through interviews there[6] in 2013. These semi-structured interviews were preceded and followed by participant observation from 2010 to 2015, lending the observations reported here a minimal time depth. The households were chosen because they are the ones that hosted other project members and myself during several field stays, a circumstance that facilitated building personal relationships and allowed for participant observation of daily interactions, so that rich information on the inhabitants, their personal histories and their networks is available.

The real names of participants are given, for the following reasons: first and foremost, the participants of my research in Agnack are unanimous in wanting their story to be told. Most of the personal information presented here has already been made public in a documentary film on multilingualism in Agnack Grand that was created as part of a research training scheme and has already been screened in Agnack Grand to great public acclaim.[7] Secondly, all names – first names and surnames, but also the multiple nicknames individuals bear – have a social significance whose extent and exact meaning is far from being fully clear to me as a linguist and outsider (see also Sagna this volume). One very visible meaning expressed through first names is the religious affiliation of their bearers. First names of French or Portuguese provenance signify Christianity; names of Arabic origin denote adherence to Islam; and in many communities, names predating these recent newcomer creeds exist that are tied to the local religions and customs (see Sagna (this volume) for examples from a Joola community and Cobbinah (2013) for examples from the Baïnounk Gubëeher community of Djibonker). First names also indicate special links to family members or friends: children are never named freely but always after a relative or important friend of the family. Sharing a name or being somebody's *homonyme* in French expresses and creates a special social relationship but also results in the recurrence of identical names. For this reason, nicknames are important in order to differentiate between holders of the same name. Less immediately decodable aspects of meaning exist as well, for instance name changes of women induced as part of the fertility ritual called *kañaleen* or *gañ(ñ)alen* in Joola languages (see also Sagna this volume) and *gubos* in Baïnounk Gujaher, where women are removed from their habitual context and receive the clan names and identities of their hosts in order to make them invisible to evil spirits

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[6] Findings for the four households not presented here have partly been discussed in chapter 2 of Lüpke & Storch (2013).

[7] This documentary, *Kanraxël – the confluence of Agnack*, was created by Remigiusz and Anna Sowa, two filmmakers who participated in the AHRC Collaborative Skills Development Scheme 'Language research and teaching in a multilingual world' organised by Mandana Seyfeddinipur and myself and shot in Agnack Grand to paint a vivid portrait of multilingual life unfolding over seven days during which the village prepares for a major ceremony. See http://www.kanraxelfilm.co.uk/ for more information.

(see Lüpke and Storch 2013: 24–28). Using code names or aliases for the purposes of this article would result in discarding the social information conveyed by the names, or creating misleading names carrying different or conflicting meanings because of factors unknown to me. Finally, I am offering the detailed information on individuals here in order to allow for follow-up studies with the potential of identifying long-term trends regarding, for instance, mobility patterns, changes in language use and ideologies throughout an individual's lifespan, marriage patterns and their influence on multilingual settings, etc. Obscuring the identity of my research participants would rule out these possibilities for future research. Research participants have provided informed consent to participate in the research on several occasions in a culturally adequate format. In addition, there is a unanimous feeling of wanting to become visible and acknowledged as multilingual speakers of Baïnounk, shared by all the individuals who took part in the documentation project of which this paper presents some results. This is due to the socio-historical context and language ideologies discussed in detail in §4.

3.1 'CHEZ DOMINIC'.[8] The first household presented here is the one labelled as 'Chez Dominic'. Until his death in January 2012, Dominic Mané, a grandson of the village founder, was the village chief and head of household. His paternal grandfather came from Sangaj, a now abandoned village about 30km from Agnack in present-day Guinea Bissau.[9] Since his death, his son Jules-Bernard Mané has taken over the role of head of family and, more recently, also that of village chief.

Dominic was married to Hortense Diandy who continues to live in the household. She comes from Agnack, from the ward of Aringala. Dominic and Hortense had nine children together, two of whom died in childhood and one as an adult. Only two of the children live in Agnack Grand in their parents' house, following the patrilineal and virilocal settlement pattern. These are two of Hortense's and Dominic's sons, Jules-Bernard Mané and Pierre Mané. All the other children of the couple live in Dakar. They are now introduced by order of birth.

Jules Mané, the oldest son, follows the firstborn, Marie, who died young. He lives in Agnack Grand in his father's house and is married to Theodoria Sagna. She comes from Etomé, a village to the west of Ziguinchor, and speaks Bayot as her identity language, but has had hardly any chance to speak it until the recent arrival of an adoptive daughter. Jules and Theodoria have one son together, Pascal (aka Neene Tuuti or Keba). Pascal speaks Gujaher, Wolof, Creole, French and Mandinka. Theodoria mostly speaks to her son and

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[8] The labels for the households in figure 1 were given by Pierre Mané, who drew a map for me, and they are kept here for easy reference. The information on members of Dominic's household was given by himself, a couple of weeks before he died, and complemented and updated through continuous participant observation.

[9] As is the case throughout Africa, where arbitrary borders were created by the colonial powers during the Africa Conference in Berlin 1884-1885, national borders cross-cut linguistic and social spaces. In the case of the south of Casamance, this has resulted in settlements of related clans and closely affiliated groups being located in two different countries with two different official language policies. Guinea Bissau, a former Portuguese colony, is lusophone, with Portuguese is its language of education, whereas Senegal, formerly part of *l'Afrique Occidentale Française*, uses French in official and educational domains.

the other women in the household in Wolof, although she also speaks Gujaher. Theodoria also has a daughter from before her marriage, who lives in Oussouye. In 2014, Jules and Theodoria adopted a little girl, Alida Bassène, who also comes from Etomé. Alida speaks Bayot and Wolof and is learning Gujaher. For the first time since the beginning of my research, Theodoria has occasion to speak Bayot and is visibly enjoying it. Officially, Alida is not speaking Bayot, at least according to Jules: as an adoptive child, her only concern is to learn Gujaher as quickly as possible.

Between Jules and the fourth-born child Pascal, Hortense and Dominic had Mathieu, who died at the age of seven. Pascal Mané lives in Dakar, where he was raised as a foster child. He is married to Irène Byasi, a speaker of Mankanya. He does not speak much Gujaher, and his wife does not speak it at all. They have two young children, Dominic and Salvador, who do not speak Gujaher but are learning Mankanya, Wolof and French. They come to Agnack Grand occasionally for holidays, important ceremonies or business. It is impressive to observe these visits, as they totally change the language dynamics of the household for their duration. When Irène came to stay for a couple of weeks with one of her sons, everybody moved completely to speaking Wolof in order to accommodate these visitors who did not speak Gujaher.

The next child in line is Yvonne Mané, who also lives in Dakar, where she grew up. She is married to Clément Basse, a speaker of Manjak. Their two children, Mamisou and Dominic, speak French and Wolof but neither Gujaher nor Manjak.

Rose Mané lives in Dakar but grew up with her parents in Agnack Grand. She speaks Baïnounk Gujaher. She is not married and has one daughter, Yvonne Mané, who is growing up with her, speaking Gujaher, Wolof, Creole and French.

Pierre (aka Pierrot) Mané is married to Jacqueline Biai and lives in his father's household in Agnack Grand. Jacqueline comes from neighbouring Guinea Bissau, from a village not far from Sao Domingos, called Sonk, which is associated with Gujaher and Gugëcer. Jacqueline presents both these languages as her identity languages, and also speaks them. Together, they have three young children, Prospère, Marianne and Justine (aka Mamaatina). The oldest child was born in 2005, the middle one in 2007 and the youngest in 2010. Pierre and Jacqueline have a foster child, Emily Sadio (aka Yombe), who is the daughter of Jacqueline's older sister. She was fostered with Jacqueline to help her with her younger children and came to the village at the age of five. Yombe's identity is given as Pepel, but she has hardly had the occasion to use this language since her arrival in Agnack, and it is fading away and making place for Gujaher and the other languages of her new environment. In 2014, her father came to check on her. Since she is fostered and not permanently adopted, it is possible that she will return to her agnatic family in the future, and then she would undoubtedly grow back into Pepel.

Until October 2013, Prospère lived in Agnack Grand with his parents. In October that year, at the age of seven, he moved to Dakar where he now lives with a member of his mother's family. He has an eye problem and her relative knows an ophthalmologist who they hope will be able to look after him. Between October 2013 and April 2014, his parents saw him once. When I enquired about his language repertoire during my latest stay in Agnack in 2015, I was told that he has forgotten all his Gujaher and that his parents now speak Wolof with him when they talk to him on the phone.

Pierre is followed by Marianne Mané who lives in Dakar and is married to Jacques

[family name unknown], a speaker of Sereer. They have three children, Hilaire, Charles and Jean-Clément, who do not speak Gujaher but speak Sereer, French and Wolof.

Leontina Mané died after having had a daughter, Rose Mbinky, who lives in Dakar. She speaks Gujaher, Joola Fogny, Wolof, Mandinka, Creole and French.

Hortense Diandy, the widow of the late Dominic Mané, has a foster son, Jean-François Biai (aka Fanfo), who sometimes lives in Agnack Grand, where he has a room in the household. He is married to Odette Diandy, a sister of Meta Diandy at 'Chez Benj' (see 3.2 below). Like her sister, she comes from Kanjandy in Guinea Bissau and is a speaker of Gugëcer and Gujaher. Odette used to live in Dominic's household but moved back to Kanjandy with her baby in 2012. Fanfo speaks Gujaher, French, Wolof, Mandinka, Creole and Joola Fogny. He spent most of 2013 commuting between Ziguinchor and Agnack Grand but recently moved to Kanjandy to re-join his wife. They have two children, Domingo and a new baby born in 2012, and now only come to Agnack for big ceremonies.

All adult members of the household who were living in Agnack during the period covered by the research are fluent in Baïnounk Gujaher, Mandinka, Wolof, Creole and Joola Fogny, and many have knowledge of additional Joola varieties and of Manjak, Mankanya, Balant and Pepel. For the men, Gujaher was given as their identity language in the local context. I have refrained from listing all languages in all cases, because the self-reported repertoires offer little basis for comparison, as they can mean different things according to the contexts in which these languages have been used throughout their speaker's life. The men additionally speak (and write) French. Dominic belongs to the generations who grew up before schools were built in the village, but as the son of the village chief he was made to attend school by the French colonial administrators.[10] Hortense, like all women of her generation, did not go to school and hence learnt neither French nor to read and write this or any other language. The younger women all attended school for at least three to four years and have mastered the respective official languages of their countries: oral and written French in Theodoria's case, oral and written Portuguese in Jacqueline's case. Jacqueline has informally learnt to speak French since her arrival in Agnack, although she does not include it in her self-reported repertoire.

Theodoria speaks Bayot, a language related to Joola but not belonging to this cluster, because she grew up in an area where it is spoken. Jacqueline also speaks Gugëcer (Kassanga), a language closely related to Gujaher and often seen as part of 'Baïnounk' by members of both groups. Regarding the women's declared identity languages, Hortense univocally gives Gujaher as hers. Jacqueline variously gives Gugëcer or Gujaher as her identity languages. Although she speaks Gujaher and is married to an Ujaher, Theodoria never gives her identity language as Gujaher and is not seen as an Ujaher by others, but remains Bayot.[11]

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[10] Rather than as an educational opportunity, this must be understood as the traumatic and forced removal of the sons of dignitaries from their parents in order to turn them into compliant colonial subjects in French boarding schools.

[11] It constitutes an interesting question for future research why Theodoria is the only woman in Agnack Grand who remains so unabsorbed by her husband's Gujaher identity. One factor may be that Gujaher and Bayot are only very remotely related; another, that Bayot does not feature in the linguistic ecology of Agnack in a productive way. No other Bayot-speaking women have been married into the village.

3.2 'CHEZ BENJ'.[12] Benjamin Mané's household is next door to 'chez Dominic'. Dominic Mané and Antoine Mané, Benjamin's deceased father, were brothers. After his father's death, Benjamin, as the eldest son, became the head of the family. His mother, Martine Coly, passed away, but his step-mother, Tida Sadio, (his father's second wife) lives with them. Antoine was born in Agnack; Tida comes from Bijingen, a village in Guinea Bissau where Gujaher/Gugëcer speakers cohabit with Manjak. Martine Coly and Antoine Mané had six children together: Benjamin, Cécile, René, Jean, Sougounda and Berthe. Of these, only Benjamin and René live in Agnack Grand.

Benjamin is married to Nafissatou Meta Diandy, known as Meta, who comes from Kanjandy, a village in Guinea Bissau that regroups speakers of Gujaher and Gugëcer (Meta and Odette Biai, who used to live in Dominic's household, are sisters). Meta is one of the very few Muslims in Agnack Grand. As head of the household, Benjamin lives in his late father's house. He used to be a taxi driver in Dakar, where he met Meta and where their first children were born, and then in Ziguinchor. Later he ran out of luck and had to retire to the village.

Benjamin and Meta have the following children: Martine, Marie (aka Sansi or Ndeie Tuuti), Lucie (aka Mame Boi), Madeleine and Jean. As visible from their Christian first names, the children have at least officially taken their father's religion, as is customary.

All the children, with the exception of Martine Mané, the oldest, live with their parents. Benjamin had to give Martine to his sister Cécile who lives in Boufan Badiane, because she did not have children until late in her marriage and claimed her. Martine Mané is growing up in a household where Gujaher is not spoken. Therefore, she speaks better Creole than Gujaher, but she speaks Gujaher as well. One house of the compound is inhabited by a number of foster children. They are: Louis Coly, Landing Biai, Moussa Biai, Bakary Biai and Chérif Diandy. Louis Coly is the son of Albert Coly (the younger brother of Martine Coly, Benjamin's mother) and of Yassinen Sangnan. Landing, Moussa and Bakary Biai are the sons of Oumar Biai, who now lives in Samik and is the oldest son of Tida Sadio (Antoine Mané's second wife) and Gomis Biai. Gomis Biai is a Gujaher from Sonk, in Guinea Bissau. The second son of Tida and Gomis is Ansou Biai. Both Oumar and Ansou grew up in Sonk and later joined their mother for a while in Agnack Grand. The children of Oumar Biai and Awa Sadio live in Agnack with their grandmother Tida because of the *collège* – there is no secondary school in Samik, where their parents live. Soon, at least those of them who want to do their A levels will have to move to nearby Niaguiss, where the *lycée* is located, and where they will board with a local family during the week. Chérif Diandy's mother is Cécile Mané, Benjamin's younger sister, and his father is Salif Diandy, presented to me as having Gujaher as his identity language. Chérif was born in Dakar and his mother was not married to his father. He now lives with his uncle Benjamin because his mother has married another man and lives with him in Boufan Badiane.

Antoine Mané's and Martine Coly's second-born, Cécile Mané, is now married and lives in Boufan Badiane with Benjamin's firstborn daughter Martine.

René Mané, the third-born son of Martine Coly and Antoine Mané, lives with his older

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[12] The information on this household was given by Benjamin Mané and complemented by participant observation and interviews with other household members.

brother Benjamin in his father's compound. He is married to Madeleine Coly, an Ujaher from Niaguiss who also lives there. They have one son, Antoine Adansi Mané, who lives with his mother in Niaguiss.

The fourth in line is Jean Mané (son of Martine Coly and Antoine Mané and *homonyme* of Benjamin's youngest son), who lives in Dakar. He has a child with Fatoumata Gomis, a son called Antoine Mané, to whom he speaks Gujaher.

Sougounda Mané, the fifth child of Martine Coly and Antoine Mané, is in Dakar. He is not married and has no children. He speaks only a little Gujaher, because he was fostered at the age of 5 by Marie-Louise Coly, a sister of Antoine Mané senior's mother.

Berthe Mané is the last-born. She now lives in Dakar and speaks Gujaher fluently. She has one son with Paul Mané, Jean Mané. Father and son live in France and have lost their Gujaher, according to Benjamin.

Mariama Diandy also lives in the household. She is a niece of Meta Diandy and was fostered into the village[13] from Kanjandy to look after the children at the age of five. Mariama had a baby in 2013, a girl called Monique Diassi. Mariama is a Muslim, but her daughter is at least nominally a Christian.

Hortense Diedhou is another fostered child in the household. She was brought in from Sindone, where her parents, Jean Diedhiou (a Joola Fogny) and Cécile Bajinka (a speaker of Gujaher) live, in order to look after René Mané's son Antoine. Although Antoine now lives with his mother in Niaguiss, Hortense remains in Agnack Grand. Nominally a Joola Fogny, she speaks fluent Gujaher.

From 2009 to 2013, there was a teenager with a Pular background visiting, Babacar Baldé, from Dakar. He is the son of a friend of Benjamin, and he spoke Gujaher and Wolof, but not his declared identity language, Pular. He had left by 2014, but another young boy was there as a long-term visitor from Sindone, and had just started to pick up a little Gujaher.

All the men in the household presented Gujaher to me as their identity language, and they also speak this language. In addition, they speak Mandinka, Wolof, Creole and Joola Fogny, to various levels of proficiency, often complemented with other important Casamance languages like Balant, Manjak, Mankanya, etc. The men additionally speak (and write a little) French. For the women, the main variation lies, as for those 'chez Dominic', in their native country and consequent language of education, if they had any. All the women, with the exception of Tida Sadio and Meta Diandy, had access to formal education in Senegal. Therefore, they also have varying competences in French (depending on the length and quality of schooling). Meta and Tida have no formal education and hence neither literacy skills nor knowledge of a colonial language. They are also the only ones to speak Gugëcer (Kassanga), because they grew up in Kanjandy where both languages are spoken. In contrast, Mariama, who also comes from Kanjandy, has no knowledge of Gugëcer since she did not grow up there and was not exposed to it in Agnack. All children and teenagers in the household speak Gujaher, apart from the most recent incoming foster child, although it is not the declared identity language of all of them. Women exhibit greater variation in declaring their identity languages than men, giving either the identity languages of their fathers or of their husbands.

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[13] See chapter 2 of Lüpke & Storch (2013) for a summary of research on and an overview of the manifold motivations for the widespread practice of child fostering in African societies.

4. THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN MULTILINGUAL CASAMANCE

4.1 LEVELS OF GRANULARITY. Despite the multilingual context of Casamance, every individual is able to give one or several ethnic identities and name one or several identity languages upon request. Which aspect of identity is expressed in the usually selective answers depends on the context – the location, the interlocutor, and whether one wishes to signal distance or proximity to a particular identity. The extent to which these proclaimed identities are matched by parts of the linguistic repertoire is a matter of life experience, which is highly gendered, as well as childhood environment and mobility. There are also different levels of detail available for ethnolinguistic identities, and I will start by looking at those and the ideologies they convey before offering a more detailed look at men, women and children in turn.

When I was interviewing research participants about their identity in French, one of the most frequent statements I heard uttered was "*Je suis Baïnounk*", often completed by "*Je parle le baïnounk*".[14] Strikingly, it is impossible to translate these statements into individual Baïnounk languages, because there is no equivalent of the hyperonym Baïnounk (see Lüpke 2010; Lüpke and Storch 2013; Cobbinah 2010, 2013 for detailed treatments of this issue). While ethno- and glossonyms like (Ba)nyun and Baïnounk in various spelling variants can be found in Portuguese sources from the early 16th century onwards, the different Baïnounk languages do not have a superordinate term for all the varieties of this cluster. Only the individual languages are named. The label Baïnounk is most likely of Mande origin. It has in the past been used by outsiders to regroup communities that have been separate, without direct contact, for at least the past four to five hundred years. Baïnounk in all likelihood constituted loosely connected groups with very different patterns of settlement and social organisation before (Bühnen 1994).[15] The exact extension is as unclear as the etymology of the term.[16] So, what does it mean when a speaker of

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[14] French convention distinguishes between ethnonyms and glossonyms by setting the former with an initial capital letter.

[15] The label Joola, for another group with considerable diversity at its interior, is much younger than the label Baïnounk and most likely owes its existence to French colonial administrators (Thomas 1959).

[16] The label (Gu-)Nyun or Guñun is most often used to refer to the Baïnounk languages, whereas the term Banyun generally designates the speakers. This invites us to read *gu-ñun* as a glossonym that can be derived to designate the people by prefixing *ba-*, by analogy to, e.g. *a-lant* 'a (Balant person)' *ba-lant* '(Balant) persons', which is very reminiscent of the *ba-* prefix in Bantu. However, this apparent couplet is a red herring, at least synchronically: none of the Baïnounk languages has a prefix *ba-* that forms a human plural. The prefix *ba-* is attested, but as a collective for non-animate entities. In Baïnounk languages, *gu-/ha-* is the noun class paradigm used for languages; whereas *u-/ñan-*, one of the human paradigms, is used to derive their speakers, e.g. *gu-jaher* 'Jaher language', *gu-lëb* language', *ha-lëb* 'languages' and *u-jaher* 'Jaher person', *ñan-jaher* 'Jaher persons'. Joola languages also have a collective prefix *ba-*, which is likewise unattested with human plurals. Lespinay (1987: 24) asserts that the communities speaking '*Guñun de l'ouest*', comprising the communities of Niamone and Djibonker, are the ones that use the label Ñun, but we have not been able to confirm this with any of the speakers we have encountered. The root *ñu(u)n* means 'west' in a number of Baïnounk languages. Cobbinah (2013: 33, footnote) reports that in Djibonker, *gu-ñuun*, literally 'the language of the west', denotes the language spoken to the west of Djibonker – Bayot. To add yet more confusion, Guñun is also the glossonym used by the Baïnounk community of Djifanghor to

Gujaher, Gubëeher or Guñaamolo calls him- or herself a Baïnounk? There are two options available, and both are variably used by the same individuals. The minimal claim entailed is that one belongs to a group speaking a Baïnounk language or that one uses it as an identity language, i.e. that one is an Ujaher, Ubëeher, etc. The maximal claim is that one belongs to the overarching group uniting all the different Baïnounk languages. This claim is very vague and elastic, as most research participants are not aware of all the Baïnounk languages – the moribund Gambian varieties (Lespinay 1987, 1996) and the Baïnounk language of Djifanghor, to the east of Ziguinchor, are never mentioned as part of this construct by people in Agnack at least, but can be added when attention is drawn to them. In addition, for some people, the related language Gugëcer (Kassanga)[17] can be part of the grouping, whereas for others, the Ñangëcer are cousins or allies, not direct members. For many people, their awareness of other Baïnounk languages and their location (notwithstanding the question as to whether or not they classify as part of Baïnounk) depends on the existence of kinship ties with people from the places concerned, or on their exposure to documentation of the influential Baïnounk lobby organisation BOREPAB (*Bureau de Recherches et d'Études sur le Patrimoine Baïnounk* (described in depth in Lüpke 2010 and Lüpke & Storch 2013: 196–202). None of the Baïnounk varieties mentioned in this paper are spoken in areas that overlap or are contiguous to each other; and speakers of one Baïnounk language only very rarely speak another Baïnounk language. Bilingualism in two Baïnounk languages has so far only been attested for women marrying into another Baïnounk-speaking village. There is no mutual intelligibility between the languages; in fact, for a speaker of Gubëeher, for instance, the Gujaher of Jegui in Guinea Bissau is not even recognised as a related or Baïnounk language (Alexander Cobbinah, p.c. 2014).

For Western and Western-inspired language ideologies, concerned with boundaries (for critiques see Blommaert 2008; Irvine 2008; Irvine and Gal 1995, 2000; Bonfiglio 2010; Horst 2008), this fluidity and ambiguity of what it means to be Baïnounk may be seen as a problem; but for Casamançais, it creates many advantages by offering different possibilities for creating and negating belonging (see also Jong 1995, 1999, 2002, 2005; Smith 2006). These possibilities are not static but are constantly being adjusted to changing circumstances. In the past, the term Baïnounk most likely was only used as an exonym, and it is unclear whether it was ever linked to a linguistic group (as opposed to a social group). Baïnounk later came to have primarily negative connotations that are still alive in the collective imagination, where the Baïnounk are seen as a doomed people. They are described as having been cursed by their last king, Sira Bana Biai, whom they killed when he demanded a human sacrifice,[18] and they still suffer from the outcomes of this curse today. One outcome is that members of other groups do not like to marry Baïnounk or give one of their women to a Baïnounk person in marriage. In the second part of the 20th century, until very recently, a Baïnounk identity, regardless of the question of whether

designate its variety (Quint, p.c.).

[17] The relationship between Ñanjaher and Ñangëcer, though not necessarily holding between Ñangëcer and other Baïnounk groups, appears to go back a long time, as it has been mentioned by Portuguese sources already (Bühnen 1994), despite occasional hostilities and warfare between the two (Hair 1967).

[18] Bühnen (1994: 149–151) describes in detail this myth and its distribution and variation among Baïnounk, Balant and Kassanga, as well as its likely historical context.

it existed, was not something that one publicly asserted, but was an identity confined to insiders. The tide started to turn and the label started to take on a definitely linguistic flavour when new essentialist language ideologies became *en vogue* at the national level from the 1980s onwards, in the wake of a growing political instrumentalisation of ethnic identities (Smith 2006) that was flanked by the emergence of discourses of language endangerment. As part of this movement, the BOREPAB was created and remains active till today. It is important to stress in this context that BOREPAB was created as a diaspora organisation of an urban elite and remains active mainly at this level. Therefore, BOREPAB can be understood as a response to essentialist language ideologies operating at the national level. BOREPAB was instrumental in achieving the recent codification of 'Baïnounk' as a national language (see also Lüpke 2011). This means that this language is now one of the officially recognised languages of Senegal. In practice, this status has hardly any consequences on the use of the language in the education system (one of the rhetorical rights conveyed through the status of national language). This is not just due to the inactivity of the Senegalese state to implement these language rights, but also to the incontestable fact that there is no such thing as a 'Baïnounk language', since the term refers to an ideological construct not reflected by a unified standard language instantiating it.

A look at 'Baïnounk' television and radio broadcasts illustrates how unsuitable language is to symbolise this unified identity in the face of very different varieties. Yet, laying claims to this symbolic identity makes sense in the wider ideological environment of Senegalese languages, and therefore, these efforts continue to expand (see 4.6 for a detailed discussion). Until 2014, there were only radio broadcasts in Baïnounk languages, each having the label '*émission baïnounk*' in French. In reality, the broadcast at the state radio station RTS is presented in Baïnounk Guñaamolo, the variety of its host, Moussa Bala Coly, as was the one at the private station Kassoumaye FM, also with a Guñaamolo moderator. The 'Baïnounk' broadcast at the private station Zig FM is in the hands of Ansou Diendiame, a speaker of Gujaher. In 2014, a new regional TV channel, RTS 4, opened, and the 'Baïnounk' broadcast there is also presented by Ansou Diendiame in Gujaher. The broadcasts are only accessible to speakers of the respective Baïnounk varieties and are listened to only by them, although they propagate a feeling of pan-Baïnounkism and contribute to the strengthening of a shared Baïnounk identity – note that both Moussa Bala Coly and Ansou Diendiame are BOREPAB activists. In particular in the TV broadcast, as in public events, a pan-Baïnounk identity is often projected, never through language, but through visual elements of culture, often produced in folkloric settings. The claiming of masked dances and elements of material culture by particular ethnolinguistic groups is a growing tendency in the area (Jong 1999; Mark, Jong and Chupin 1998); however, in reality, the practices are shared to a large extent with all other groups of Casamance.

Just as for the linguistic aspects of identity, the cultural aspects used to create a distinct Baïnounk identity do not tally with lived practices on the ground but nevertheless serve important symbolic purposes. The following sections will investigate why this is so. Sections 4.1 to 4.3 explore language ideologies in the male-centred and gerontocratic context of Casamance and describe how they are related (or not, and why) to the language practices of different social groups and individuals. §4.4 describes what social gains are connected with rendering aspects of complex identities visible or invisible through projecting different facets according to the requirements of the context. §4.5 describes

how the local indexical (i.e. context-sensitive) identities can be misunderstood by Western observers with national essentialist language ideologies, and how Casamançais navigate the field of tension between these seemingly incompatible types of ideologies.

4.2 POTENTIAL MATCHES BETWEEN LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND MALE LINGUISTIC PRACTICES. The micro-study of the two households presented in §3 above is illustrative of a general pattern of social organisation throughout Casamance (see Linares 1992 for Joola groups and Hawthorne 2003 for Balant) that results in crucial differences in the potential for identity languages to be matched by parts of the linguistic repertoires. Societies in this region are largely patrilineal and virilocal. This means that *both* women and men inherit their father's ethnic identity and identity language but that only a subset of *men* actually remains immersed in it. These are the sons that remain in their fathers' villages (often in their fathers' compounds). Clearly, then, language ideologies are male-centred and based on the idealised scenario that sedentary men pass on a language to their sons, who do the same *ad infinitum*.

It is impossible for most men to live this language ideology, from which women are categorically excluded, in practice (see 4.2 for discussion). First of all, we have seen that children are very mobile and easily fostered for a variety of reasons. Since fostering is not limited to male children, this will be discussed in detail in §4.3 for children of both sexes. Secondly, even as adults, not all men remain in, or return to, their villages of origin. Seasonal and (semi-)permanent labour migration are very common and are by no means a recent phenomenon but a longstanding practice of young men throughout the region, and although elders have and are still attempting to counteract it (Hawthorne 2003; Jong 2007; Mark 1978, 1997), it is very widespread. Men exhibit patterns of multilingualism depending on individual trajectories and life stories just as women do, but according to gendered social practices there are often systematic differences between the two genders. So, for instance, men are far more likely to migrate to Europe than women (Heil 2013), whereas women migrate in greater numbers to urban centres like Dakar to work there as nannies and household helps (Foucher 2005). When men migrate to cities, it is mainly to find salaried work, often in the French-dominated formal sector, which exposes them much more to French than the women, in whose repertoire Wolof, the language of Dakar and *lingua franca* in many urban contexts, is more prominent. Even when they have migrated more or less permanently, men (and to a lesser extent women) will be expected to return to their agnatic villages for important ceremonies such as funerals or the initiation ceremonies that are of paramount significance. Many village- or language-based and regional associations strengthen affinities with the rural home bases, but also differ in the language ideologies they embody (see the example of the BOREPAB). But even though men in the diaspora can tap into an environment more aligned with their language ideologies from time to time, this does not necessarily mean that their linguistic repertoires will follow suit. Finally, all children, male and female, grow up in heterogeneous settings in which their language socialisation takes place, which will be briefly treated in §4.3.

4.3 MISMATCHES BETWEEN LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND FEMALE LINGUISTIC PRACTICES. The micro-study has also revealed that in the two households, the majority of women living there did not grow up in Agnack (in fact, only one of the

adult women, Hortense Diandy, was born in a ward of this village). In addition, all of the now grown-up women born into the two families left their paternal household at the latest when they got married, and now live elsewhere. This is not an arbitrary fact of these two families but reflects exogamous marriage practices attested in the entire Casamance. While men may spend their entire lives in their fathers' villages, this is hardly ever the case for women, who are married out of their agnatic families and communities into new communities, often with different identities and linguistic repertoires. Apart from Hortense Diandy, all wives in the two households grew up elsewhere, as is typical in many parts of Casamance. Throughout their lives women bridge their communities of origin and the ones they marry into through visits, (temporary) retirement from the marital household – as in the case of Madeleine Coly – and temporary migration. The male-centred language ideology does not account for their existence at all. This becomes strikingly obvious when both male and female interviewees state that Baïnounk should speak the language of their ancestors, which they mean to be Baïnounk. But of course, Baïnounk was never the (only) language of by far the majority of their female ancestors.

It makes sense, then, to look at women as being erased from the language ideologies at work in the area and also partly from another ideological construct, that of ethnicity, which is likewise based on male ancestry only. That women have no ethnicity and that ethnic concepts are mainly invoked for them in order to control their mobility or to form marriage exchange circles has been said before (for instance by Vail 1989 for Southern Africa and by Foucher 2005 for Joola society); and it definitely holds for women in Casamance that ethnicity for them is more important *before* marriage than afterwards. For women of marriageable age, it is important that their patrilineally acquired identities have the required properties to turn them into eligible partners for men – either that they come from a particular clan, ward, village, area or, in cases of strict linguistic exogamy, that they have certain identity languages. Once married, these identity aspects cease to be salient identity concepts. When wives have moved into their husband's compounds, at least according to the ideologies, their identities are often subsumed under those of their husbands. In actual language practice, women are of course often systematically different from men. This mismatch between ideological ascriptions and actual language use of women is often described with a critical undertone of describing a lack of allegiance of women to 'their' languages. For instance, in the context of Senegal, it has been reported that women shift to Wolof more often than men and that they are really the propagators of Wolofisation in villages and cities where Wolof has not been spoken so much in the past (Dreyfus & Juillard 2004, Juillard 1995).[19] One of the explanations given for this behaviour is that women are less versed in or discouraged from speaking French; another that they are upwardly mobile and prefer Wolof as a code associated with modernity and urban life style over their identity languages. It is often claimed by young Senegalese people that Wolof has become the language of romance because it is the language that young men need to use in order to flirt with girls. I would like to challenge the assump-

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[19] Juillard (1995) notes that in Ziguinchor, 'Joola' girls consistently prefer speaking Wolof to 'Joola' young men. However, the identity label 'Joola' hides as much diversity as the label 'Baïnounk', so it is by no means clear if two people speaking 'Joola' actually share a language, as there are closely but also very distantly related languages subsumed in the label.

tion that women are less loyal to their identity languages for those contexts where it is an *a priori* assumption not backed up by detailed sociolinguistic research, and call for more empirical investigation of this subject in many situations. From the observations in Agnack Grand, it appears that the only woman who uses Wolof routinely to communicate in the family (not with outsiders where it is not a matter of choice but a communicative necessity) is Theodoria Sagna. She is unable to speak Bayot, her identity language, with anybody but an adopted child in the village; the fact that she chooses Wolof over Gujaher in most communicative contexts does not express a lack of loyalty to her patrilineal identity or a shift away from an identity language. While in Agnack, most women are fluent in and use Gujaher often, this is due to the linguistic environment in which they grew up – nominally Gujaher and Gugëcer communities in Guinea Bissau for the mostpart. Had they come from locations with different linguistic configurations, their linguistic behaviour would reflect this background. Alexander Cobbinah (p.c. 2014) confirms that women do not systematically speak more Wolof than men in Djibonker, his research area.

4.4 NO LINKS BETWEEN LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND THE LANGUAGE SOCIALISATION OF CHILDREN. While women's life experiences and pre-marriage identities are not reflected in the language ideologies, children's are only when they are male and grow up in their paternal community. This is not the case for a very high percentage of children, as becomes obvious when one looks at where children from the two households in Agnack Grand grow up. If one starts with the generation before the current heads of household, out of fifteen children living till adulthood, five were fostered out as children and one was fostered in. In the following generation, three children have been fostered out, and fifteen have been fostered in at the time of writing. One child lives with his mother in a nearby village. In all cases of fostering, the movement went hand in hand with a change in the linguistic environment. For the children with Gujaher given as their identity language but who grow up elsewhere, this always means that Gujaher is not, or is only marginally present in their new surroundings, and that the link between constructed identity and actual linguistic practice becomes weakened or broken, depending on the particular circumstances of their upbringing and the length of time they spend away from a Gujaher environment. For outsiders, this broken link can look as if the Ñanjaher in question have given up their language. This is a comment I often heard, for instance, when most of Dominic Mané's children came back to the village to attend his funeral, including those who had grown up in Dakar and spoke very little or no Gujaher at all. In fact, Pascal and Yvonne have not forgotten or given up Gujaher; they never acquired it in the first place. In contrast, those of Dominic's and Hortense's children who spent at least parts of their childhood in Agnack Grand, Rose and Marianne, speak Gujaher and use it with ease, although they now live in Dakar.

Turning to the children who grow up in Agnack Grand, the numbers given above illustrate an important point: only a fraction of the children growing up together share the same identities, and their repertoires are subject to constant adaptation and negotiation. This situation often leads to cases where the constructed identity and the associated linguistic repertoires do not match. Babacar Baldé is a Pular speaker who does not speak Pular but Gujaher; Hortense Diedhou is a Joola who speaks Gujaher, and so on. Since children grow up with great independence from the age of three, when they are released into the company

of their age grades, the mixed and constantly shifting constituency of these groupings of children also entails that they are necessarily a space of multilingual language acquisition. Language socialisation takes place in peer groups, and children develop their repertoires in these groups. By the age of five, most children minimally use the languages spoken in the household plus Wolof. It is often invoked as a threat to Casamance languages that children speak Wolof among themselves, as this is interpreted as a case of language shift. I would like to argue that these interpretations are premature unless they are based on detailed sociolinguistic studies and aim at disentangling ideologies (of researchers and research participants alike) from practices. These assessments do not pay enough attention to the constituency of children's peer groups. Already the snapshot of two households has shown how diverse children's linguistic profiles are. Of course, their interactional space does not end at the level of the household; they regularly play and interact with children from the other households and wards of Agnack Grand, where children do not count Gujaher as a code in their repertoires, so there is a communicative necessity to learn and use other languages. Children are regularly sent on errands to Agnack Petit and even further to transmit messages, buy groceries from the local *boutique*, etc., activities that entail mastering a complex and adaptive repertoire from a young age.

If children's repertoires are already impressive before they start primary school, they are further augmented and altered in school. As mentioned before, the official language of Senegal, and the language of formal education, is French. When children start school at the age of five or six, they only speak isolated words and formulaic sentences in French. The teachers, in turn, already charged with the daunting task of teaching literacy and numeracy through the medium of French (which is not a subject in the curriculum), are generally not from the geographical area and do not speak the smaller, more locally confined languages. In Agnack Grand, they resort to the national *linguae francae* and use Wolof and, to a lesser extent Mandinka, as a metalanguage in the classroom. Children's knowledge of Wolof explodes from when they start school, and children of Agnack Grand, who in contrast to their peers from Agnack Petit are not much exposed to Mandinka in their daily lives, add it to their repertoires when it is used by Mandinka-speaking teachers and fellow students from Agnack Petit.

4.5 INVISIBILITY AND VISIBILITY AS CONTEXTUAL TOOLS. It appears that language ideologies are not only centred on patrilineality, but that they also focalise particular aspects of identity. How do people in Agnack and other Baïnounk-speaking areas reconcile ideologies foregrounding one part of their repertoire and identity with the manifold and changing practices they live? So far, I have not become aware of research participants perceiving the difference as a clash, and I argue in §4.5 below that the seeming misalignment between focalised language ideologies and multilingual practices is the result of a misunderstanding regarding the character of languages ideologies as essentialist vs. indexical and regarding their scope as including practices or remaining symbolic. Research participants are generally pleased to be multilingual; in fact, it is also seen as an essential part of being Baïnounk that one takes great pride in speaking everybody's languages (see also Lüpke 2010). That only parts of this identity and repertoire are activated in the male-centred language ideology does not negate the other parts; it just gives them a different status. At the same time, those parts of linguistic practice that are not profiled in the patrilineally

motivated facet of language ideology can under most circumstances – of communication with outsiders of various allegiances – be the only visible portions of a complex repertoire and be construed as an alternative identity by and for outsiders. This dynamic interplay will be described in the following section.

Many Casamançais – let alone Senegalese that do not know the area, or foreigners – have no knowledge of the continuing existence and location of Baïnounk groups. They know nothing of Baïnounk subdivisions and are only aware of the mythical claims surrounding them – that they are the autochthones of Casamance, that they are cursed, etc. Two tangible examples may serve to illustrate this invisibility. During a field trip in April 2014, I witnessed the visit of a Joola-led NGO, Usoforal, in Agnack Grand. This NGO, which aims to contribute towards ending the dormant civil war in Casamance, has been visiting Agnack Grand for the past decade or so, and its staff members know many of the inhabitants of the village well.[20] Yet they had no idea that this was a 'Baïnounk' village, and that many of its inhabitants speak the language Gujaher. (Ironically, they also assumed that Agnack as a whole was organised along ethnic divisions between Joola and Mandinka and attempted to overcome this division through their work). Given the multiple language skills of Agnackais in combination with their clan and first names, they assumed them to be either Mandinka (if they have Muslim first names, rather than particularly 'Joola' family names) and addressed them in Mandinka, or Joola (if they have Christian or Muslim first names, family names also attested among Joola, such as Sagna), and addressed them in a Joola language. This emerged when I chatted with NGO members after their action day in the village. It was not yet possible for me to interview research participants in Agnack on their motivations to tacitly – perhaps even explicitly – express these identities or eliminate the Gujaher aspect from them in interacting with this particular group of outsiders. It would definitely require an active effort to convey Baïnounkhood to outsiders, since for obvious reasons, it is not possible to do so linguistically through speaking a Baïnounk language with them, and there are no cultural traits that immediately signal it. The behaviour of the NGO members is not an isolated case; the school teachers in the village also had no idea of the Gujaher facet of the linguistic landscape of Agnack until this was revealed to them during an exhibition on Gujaher plant and environment knowledge organised as part of the DoBeS project in 2013 in the Agnack Grand primary school. (School teachers in Senegal almost never come from the localities where they are posted to teach.) When the continuing existence of Baïnounk-speaking communities is pointed out to these outsiders, the most common reaction is "Oui, mais ils sont en voie de disparition, n'est-ce pas?" [Yes, but they are vanishing, aren't they?]. This rhetorical question serves more to explain why the person asking it is not aware of these communities than to raise the real issue of language endangerment. Language endangerment is treated in detail in §4.5 below.

A concrete example of (in)visibility of parts of identities and repertoires can be given through the example of Jules Mané. An Ujaher village chief who has the authority to settle strangers, he can turn into Joola Fogny in the space of five minutes by picking up his mobile phone and making an intervention in a Joola Fogny radio broadcast.

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[20] To give an example, the director, who took part in the visit, had been a teacher of Alpha Naby Mané, an Ujaher from Agnack Petit at high school, yet she had no knowledge of his Baïnounk identity and language skills.

When speaking to a Mandinka or a French person, he may become a Joola, whereas speaking to a researcher interested in Baïnounk languages such as me makes him present himself as such. Many Manés in Agnack Petit, such as Alpha Naby Mané, could be taken for Mandinka, since their first names reveal them to be Muslims. For Jules, this identity is excluded because of his Christian first name: he cannot pass as a Mandinka in any context involving more than a fleeting encounter. He cannot credibly turn into a Wolof either, because the region-specific Wolof he speaks reveals him as a Casamançais. When in Dakar, he is likely to identify himself as a Joola-Baïnounk, unless he becomes involved in BOREPAB activism, which would turn him into a Baïnounk for that purpose.

To summarise, contexts in which Ñanjaher do not remain invisible are those where this identity aspect has social and political relevance. In regional contexts, being a Baïnounk (of whichever denomination) entails being autochthonous and thus at least symbolically having control over the land and landlord authority over strangers. In other cases, being an Ujaher signifies that one taps into a longstanding alliance with the Ñangëcer, which goes hand in hand with the possibility of exchanging daughters in marriage. At a national scale, signalling Baïnounkhood (without any nuances at this level) means that one lays claims to the symbolic rights conveyed through being a recognised community with a codified language, with the main consequence being that one becomes a minor player on the postcolonial, polyglossic playing field of Senegalese named languages.

Thus, the motivation for upholding all these different contextualised identities is social. Indexical identities single out parts of a complex identity with partly aligned repertoires by focalising the one that yields particular benefits in a specific setting. Each aspect can come across as total, which is the root of a widespread ideological misunderstanding suffered by proponents of essential language ideologies when they encounter these focalised identities. Languages – as part of ethnolinguistic ideologies and as part of actual repertoires – are only some of the tools in a larger semiotic toolbox in which religion and cultural practices have their place alongside dress codes and literacy practices, to name but a few. But crucially, they have to be read as practices that serve a cultural goal not of being all things to all people but of being the right thing to the right person in the right context. In all likelihood, the motivation for this strategy is rooted in the topography of the area together with the sociohistorical context holding until recently: only small groups were able to inhabit the marsh land where they formed small autonomous communities. Due to their small size and vulnerability to the slave trade, in which they were both victims and agents, these groups engaged in intensive exchange and created multiple alliances as needed. Difference was necessary in order to construct similarity and proximity, but also distance in dialectic fashion, so that one could sell members of other groups into slavery (constructing them as different in one identity aspect) but also form flexible alliances with these same groups (by drawing on another identity aspect) when needed. One single totalising identity was undesirable in this context: only multiple but contextualised identities allowed for survival. It is an empirical question how the repertoires and ideologies will adapt to the new context of postcolonial Senegal, and preliminary answers to this question will be presented in Lüpke (forthcoming c) and Cobbinah (in prep.).

4.6 IDEOLOGICAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS. I have argued throughout this paper that although the indexical language ideologies, which are widespread in Casamance, fore-

ground one language of mostly complex settings in an essentialist fashion, they do not necessarily entail that a village or location can be interpreted as the seat of a homogeneous and monolingual 'speech community'. Yet it is a widespread expectation among outsiders to find such a community, and a common interpretation to analyse any instance of bi- or multilingualism as a threat to the 'speech community' one is interested in because it will induce shift to other languages. In our own research practice we experienced how difficult it is for us as researchers to free ourselves from the assumptions stemming from our own Western language ideologies. This is made even more difficult by encountering language ideologies that superficially match them. When representatives from the area present themselves as Baïnounk or Ñanjaher, this is a contextual and changeable identity that in addition is mainly based on the identity concepts of one gender. The image of a homogeneous community is also painted by lobby organisations like the BOREPAB. For proponents of essentialist language ideologies that are matched by standard language policies and practices, like most Westerners, the misunderstanding begins here. The local indexical ideologies are taken to be essentialist and applicable to all. The national essentialist language ideologies are not taken as symbolic expressions of political goals but as ideologies that should be translated into language practice. Consequently any practice that deviates from the ideologies is taken as an indicator of language shift. This means that speaking languages other than the identity language proclaimed by individuals in a particular context is taken to entail the endangerment of the language in question; and that women's language behaviour is interpreted as contributing to it. This misunderstanding has resulted in a systematic misinterpretation of multilingual language use in areas like Casamance. It has also led to many of the languages in the area being classified as endangered although they appear quite vital once the ideological misunderstanding is cleared up. (Note that many of the languages actually *are* endangered; but crucially they are not those listed in common catalogues like the Ethnologue and not because of the criteria commonly assessed on vitality scales.)

Let us consider the often-heard claim that Baïnounk languages are endangered and what narrative it follows. The historical accounts cite Portuguese sources portraying the Banyun as powerful traders and state their decline from the 17th century onwards, often interpreting the present-day pockets of Baïnounk settlements as the few remaining traces of a once powerful group that is often assumed to constitute the autochthonous population of Casamance. However, as the historians stress and has been laid out in §1, we actually do not know to what the label Banyun referred, whether it comprises or comprised any of the groups who are starting to see themselves as Baïnounk today, and whether it was related to linguistic affiliation at all. In addition, the Casamance and Senegambia were only sparsely settled in precolonial times (Hawthorne 2003, Wright 1999), so imagining large contiguously inhabited areas giving rise to homogeneous groups does not correspond to the historical reality of local clan-based settlements. The pessimistic outlook on the Baïnounk as a group in decline has certainly framed the perspective of later researchers more closely in contact with the groups they described: Cobbinah (2013) reports predictions on the impending disappearance of Gubëeher that have been made from the early 20th century onwards by French linguists and colonial administrators. That they have not been corroborated so far does not keep modern stakeholders from making similar claims. The French jurist de Lespinay (1987, 1996), whose research motivated our DoBeS project, paints a grim picture regarding the future of Baïnounk languages, claiming that they are largely giving

up their languages due to extensive exploitation and their collective '*structure mentale*' or negative attitude to the languages, which he links back to Sira Bana's curse. His assessment is shared by the Ethnologue, which only lists Baïnounk Gunyaamolo and Baïnounk Samik, Samik being a village in which Baïnounk Gujaher is spoken, and locates them at level 6b of the EGIDS (Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale) used by the Ethnologue (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2014), indicating threatened status. Other Baïnounk varieties are not listed. Since the existing pilot sociolinguistic research on Gunyaamolo (Lüpke 2010) and other varieties (Cobbinah 2013, Lüpke & Storch 2013) has not been picked up and there is no research on the Gujaher variety of Samik available, these assessments clearly pertain to the level of language ideology. The Ethnologue also lists Kassanga, called Gugëcer in this paper, as a language at level 8b of the scale, corresponding to nearly extinct, although it is spoken by a number of vibrant village communities in Guinea Bissau and by a high number of married-out women in the area. The Ethnologue criteria, which give much weight to the existence of literacy in a standardised language, intergenerational language transmission and use of the language in all domains of life, are not really applicable to the many multilingual configurations of Africa, as argued in more detail in Lüpke & Storch (2013: 267–339) and Lüpke (forthcoming b). The BOREPAB paints a similarly pessimistic picture by describing the Baïnounk language as on the way to becoming extinct, whilst simultaneously expressing, in the statutes of 1982, an optimism that declares that the effect of Sira Bana's curse is waning. This newly won confidence, in line with the growing symbolic status of small languages in the wake of Senegal's recognition of national languages, has put 'Baïnounk' back on the map, but crucially, as an endangered language.

After working for more than seven years with a team of Senegalese and European researchers in three Baïnounk communities, our impressions – and crucially, the opinions and practices of speakers in the rural communities where we work – do not match the pessimistic forecasts and assessments. This mismatch is important and warrants closer investigation, because it is not the case that all Baïnounk languages are spoken in vibrant language ecologies. Yet the endangered or moribund varieties that one might want to include here are not even addressed by most of these sources, nor even viewed as part of Baïnounk by the BOREPAB and any Baïnounk we encountered (the endangered northern varieties listed in Lespinay (1987) notwithstanding). When comparing the impressions gained through the two projects I have led in the area with a map drawn by Sauvageot based on research conducted in 1973 (Sauvageot 1973), not much has changed, with one crucial exception: the village of Djibelor, home of the Baïnounk variety Gubelor is not included in the Baïnounk universe of the BOREPAB and is not listed in the Ethnologue. This village is being swallowed up by the expanding regional capital of Ziguinchor, and in the wake of urbanisation, the linguistic ecology is just as disturbed as the natural one, resulting in the former inhabitants of the village losing their livelihoods and therefore moving on, with more and more city dwellers transforming this location from a rice-farming village into a suburb with a new set of inhabitants. Drastic changes in the natural and linguistic ecology threatening linguistic ecologies, as also stressed by Carlo & Good (2014), Lüpke & Storch (2013), and Vigouroux & Mufwene (2008), are much more likely to have a negative impact on language vitality than multilingual settings *per se*, which are actually the only settings in which languages spoken by numerically small populations can thrive, given that they have to interact with wider society.

In the other Baïnounk language areas where we have conducted research, the languages are as alive as the proverbial condemned (although crucially this does not mean that they fulfil the EGIDS or other common criteria for 'safe' languages). One factor that prevents the public from taking note of their existence is their insider status, which is linked to multilingualism and fluid indexical identities that run counter to the idea of a homogeneous speech community. This status ironically means that as soon as lobby organisations attempt to cater for more essentialist language ideologies as instantiated by the codification movement in Senegal, they need to evoke the existence of such a homogeneous community. Since such a community in reality does not exist, it can only ever be presented as the endangered and compromised remains of a pristine and pure community of the past that needs to be restored and saved. At the same time, there are no real attempts at altering the present situation, apart from rhetorical ones. This seeming contradiction makes perfect sense, though: in the light of the different scopes of the language ideologies operating on the ground and at the national level, the adherence to an essentialist language ideology and all it entails – standardisation, codification, use of one language in as many domains as possible – must remain symbolic, as argued in more detail in Lüpke (forthcoming d). Rather than being a problem, this dialectic behaviour instantiates a two-pronged strategy to maintain small-scale multilingualism while at the same time catering to monolingually biased models of multilingualism operating at the national level to a minimal extent. Once one recognises that these ideologies are not incompatible but are directed at different stakeholders for different purposes, seeming contradictions can be understood as instances of this two-sided process. That the BOREPAB declares in its statutes that the Baïnounk were a homogeneous group while on the same page celebrating multilingualism (BOREPAB 1982) is one example of this process. That the BOREPAB and other members of Baïnounk communities (such as the dictionary committees for the languages of the Crossroads project) engage in hot debates over orthography issues and standardisations although none of their members actually writes these languages, and not for lack of literacy skills, is another example.

5. DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED MODEL FOR LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION OF MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS

5.1 MOVING AWAY FROM THE IDEA OF PARADISE LOST. For us as researchers working in the multilingual ecologies of Lower Casamance, a complex process of revealing language ideologies and adjusting our research practice was required in order to lay bare patterns of language use. A first important step was to recognise the symbolic nature of essentialist language ideologies and to look beyond them. A second important step consisted in recognising the indexical local language ideologies and their mismatch with language practices. A final step, that took us a number of years of immersion into the complex social life of languages and their speakers in this area, and only happened in 2014, was to put these three puzzle pieces together and understand their dialectic nature. This step importantly comprised understanding the differences between the nature and scope of the essentialist language ideologies at work both in Senegal and in the Western world. Local ideologies are designed to create manifold social and political alliances by creating contextual similarity and closeness through language. National ideologies serve to assert the symbolic existence of imaginary communities in a national 'linguistic market place'

(Bourdieu 1991), but are not flanked by actual standard language policies or practices. This is very different from Western contexts, where ideologies are enforced by a number of language institutions and prescriptive language practices. An understanding of this crucial difference to Western language ideologies made it possible to see the coexistence of indexical and essentialist ideologies as a dialectic strategy rather than as a contradiction.

In the initial phases of language documentation, we took the essentialist ideologies operating at the national level at face value – they were visible to us and seemingly resembled our own language ideologies. As a consequence, what speakers of Baïnounk languages initially emulated for us as speech events to be documented in the DoBeS project were instances of what Woodbury (2003, 2011) terms the 'ancestral code mode' of language documentation: a pristine language, not manifesting traces of past multilingualism through language contact phenomena and not contaminated by multilingual language use that is only ever conceived as harmful. This language mode is highly controlled and somewhat artificial, but can be seen as an instance of the extreme end of a scale from monolingual to multilingual language modes (see Grosjean 2008, Green 2011 and Green & Abutalebi 2013 for different language modes in speakers and communities).

Maintaining monolingual speech of this kind for the duration of a recording required massive interventions before, during and after it: before a recording started, the participants of the speech event had to be carefully selected and many villagers kept at bay to enable a monolingual focus. One of my consultants took on the self-created role of gatekeeper, despite my insistence on wanting to film natural speech. Of course, I was at the origin of this misunderstanding, since my interest in documenting and recording 'Baïnounk' was incompatible with the multilingual reality. During a recording, this careful management of speech event participants had to continue: virtually all communication takes place outdoors, and people walk in and out of each other's conversations, constantly peppering them with greetings and phatic communication, in whichever language is appropriate. These undesired multilingual speech acts – from the essentialist perspective that we had unwittingly conveyed – had to be prevented by the gatekeeper constantly shushing people away and keeping them at bay. The necessary clean-up did not stop there: when it came to transcribing and explaining words, the gatekeeper insisted on replacing all words of recognisable foreign origin. These recordings constitute records of a possible, even if sometimes a little forced, snapshot of linguistic practices at the extreme monolingual end of the spectrum, and offer insights into the interplay of language ideologies at work. They are valuable for insight into language as an abstract system, both for linguistic description and understanding reifications of language made by speakers themselves. However, the snapshot of linguistic behaviour we were obtaining through this procedure represented only a skewed sample of the full range of communicative acts in Agnack. Given that I was staying with a family and able to observe many less controlled speech events, I became interested in uncovering and documenting these other facets of language use as well, and therefore needed to develop different methods for data collection resulting in less censored data. I found other consultants less inclined to edit speech in this way, and my participation in the daily life of the villagers combined with the perspectives offered by them resulted in me starting to experiment with forms of data collection that would minimise the influence of my presence and of their second-guessing my intentions about language use.

5.1 AVOIDING 'GROUPISM': GEOGRAPHIC SAMPLING AND RECORDING TECH-NIQUES. The first step towards this goal was to let go of the idea of working with 'Baïnounk'. The discussion in sections 3 and 4 has illustrated that this identity is not co-extensive with speaking a Baïnounk language, as the label regroups many Baïnounk who do not or only minimally speak one variety and excludes many people who do speak Baïnounk but are not seen as Baïnounk. Therefore, I decided to define the population from which I would sample language use in geographic terms (see Seifart 2008 for a discussion of sampling techniques in language documentation), in order to avoid the effects of groupism on my selection of research participants and their self-selection on ideological grounds. Since I wanted to record daily interaction and rich ethnographic information on the participants of the recordings, I chose a small geographical area – that of Agnack Grand. I visited each of the seven households in the village at least twice (and have visited most of them many more times for socialising). During the first visit, I explained that I was interested in recording daily life in the household (not mentioning at all that I was interested in recording language use) and would seek the oral consent of the family members to come back and record at a mutually agreed time. With the help of an intermediary who would conduct the interview in the appropriate language(s) I then collected information on the members of the household, including family members not living in Agnack Grand. On the arranged day, I returned, chatted a little while with members of the family and then set up my camcorder, usually in the courtyard where most of the activities in the household take place during the dry season. I fixed the camcorder on one scene (for instance women preparing food, braiding children's hair or pounding rice, men chatting while drinking Ataya, mending a bicycle, weaving baskets or fabricating wooden stools, or the entire family sharing a meal and gathering around a fire in the evening) and I did not move it during the entire recording. I recorded as long as possible, not stopping the recording when nobody was speaking or everybody had left the scene for a little while. I often went away from the camcorder to write down observations so as to minimise the impact of my presence.

The results of this procedure are recordings where stretches of linguistic interaction are interspersed with silent activities, and where minimally two, but much more frequently three or four languages are present. It is time-consuming to transcribe and annotate these recordings, but they have a great potential to complement the recordings that feature 'monolingual language mode' (Grosjean 2008) to offer a fuller picture of varied and heterogeneous multilingual practice.

5.2 INTERPRETING LANGUAGE USE: USING RICH ETHNOGRAPHIC INFORMA-TION. As I hope to have shown through the detailed presentation of two households of Agnack, it is impossible to interpret linguistic behaviour and language choices and constraints in multilingual settings without taking individual trajectories and life stories into account, as they result in complex and changeable repertoires very different from the essentialist language ideologies. My interpretation of self-proclaimed Baïnounk who do not speak this language, for instance, would have been very different had I not known where they had grown up. Likewise, my assessment of children's language use would have been one of Wolofisation in many instances had I not known all the children participating in a speech event and their repertoires and the history behind them personally. Women's repertoires would not have been part of the picture at all, because the dominant ideologies erase them,

resulting in misrepresentations of communities as much more homogeneous than they ever were and can be. Crucially, it was not sufficient to document language use – what was offered as speech depended on ideologies working at different levels and drawing in research participants and researchers alike.

It would have been impossible to collect all this information and link it to language use in a common three-year long individual research project; clearly, such an endeavour entails longer research periods and much more team work than generally possible in basic descriptive and documentary research. However, an understanding of the nature and impact of multilingualism is only possible by investigating the scale and intensity of multilingual activity in the daily and hourly practice of individuals, which requires a study at the micro-level, before generalisations can be drawn, situations compared and a preliminary assessment of directionality of larger trends in changing and adapting repertoires can be undertaken.

Ideologies serve to express those aspects of identity that are perceived to be most relevant for positioning oneself as an individual or as a member of a group in different socio-political contexts, and are therefore as changeable as these contexts. Therefore, I would like to argue that descriptive and documentary efforts that link language ideologies to these multilingual situations and their sociolinguistic settings have great potential for an understanding of the dynamics at work in many African situations, as argued below.

6. CONCLUSION: PUTTING AFRICAN MULTILINGUALISM ON THE AGENDA. Multilingualism of the kind described for Agnack Grand is not just an idiosyncratic trait particular to this village, nor is it a case of 'superdiversity' (Blommaert & Rampton 2011) induced by massive migration and the resulting complexity. The coexistence of several languages in daily interaction characterises many African societies, both rural and urban, whether in the context of massive migration or not. Typical African societal multilingual patterns may involve official languages (mostly of colonial provenance), national languages serving as languages of wider communication or as official languages, and languages of essentially local distribution. Especially the latter configurations involving small scale multilingualism are much more representative of linguistic diversity on the continent than scenarios involving an official and a national language.

African multilinguals do not stack several fully-fledged monolingual repertoires onto each other. Typically, they acquire one or several languages at the same time – local and regional languages, national and international *linguae francae* in the West African context. Later, they add the official language (exclusively through schooling) and a number of African languages, depending on their individual trajectories and networks, and on the communication and exchange networks of their society in communities of practice.

Although multilingual situations, such as those evoked above, are globally more widespread and rather the norm in Africa than the official linguistic constellations found in 'so-called' monolingual nation states, they are not well studied at all. This is particularly true for contexts involving not only an ex-colonial/official (Indo-European) language and a national language in contact (moreover very often studied in contexts of migration), but a number of non-Western indigenous languages. There are good reasons for this lack of coverage: in many areas of the world, only major languages featuring in these contexts have received any linguistic attention; most languages are not sufficiently described or documented to allow the study of the linguistic practices of multilingual speech communities.

This skewed research situation means that the scientific understanding of the cognitive, linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of the most widespread forms of multilingualism remain dramatically under-researched (including the question of under which conditions minority languages in these complex environments are maintained or abandoned; see Romaine 2002). Another negative consequence is that language vitality assessment and language management and pedagogical efforts either have only recourse to methods developed for (imaginary) monolingual communities, where one language serves in all communicative-contexts, or that they are based on assumptions about the role of colonial languages and of hierarchical relations between the multiple languages of an idealised 'speech community' that may not be appropriate for specific sociolinguistic settings. In many cases, multilingualism is only ever perceived as a problem, not as a resource (see Pagel 2012 for a recent example). This negative attitude is extremely widespread where African multilingualism is concerned, as also criticised by Fardon & Furniss (1994), Djité (2008, 2009), and Mazrui & Mazrui (1998), among others. It hinders fundamental research on multilingual practices just as much as the development and implementation of language management models that adequately reflect them. Therefore, central and radically new insights on an unexplored but widespread type of multilingualism are expected to emerge from research on these settings.

We know from language acquisition research that speaking different languages and varieties has an impact on *all* of the languages, varieties or registers spoken (Chang 2012; Gullberg 2013). It is necessary to let go of the illusion of being able to distil the pure speaker unaffected by multilingualism, out of 'incoherent' societies. Studies of language contact reveal the fossilised traces of multilingual speech and there is a growing awareness of their importance for language structure and language change (Heine & Nurse 2008). At the same time, knowledge of the sociolinguistic profiles of the multilingual settings that produce particular convergence patterns remains very limited (Trudgill 2011). There is evidence that different types of multilingual societies and contexts result in radically different cognitive demands on producing and processing multilingual speech (Green 2011, Green & Abutalebi 2013).

Research on multilingualism therefore has the potential to be of significant impact not only for research in the areas of contact linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, but also for language management and pedagogy both in West Africa and in the West. Language management efforts in the formal sector in West Africa are not very successful (Brock-Utne & Skattum 2009; Skattum 2010), because they select languages that are not taken up in education due to conflicting language ideologies, attitudes and practices and because they use teaching models that are not appropriate in the contexts in question. A better understanding of the ecology of languages (Mufwene 2001) in a West African multilingual space creates the prerequisites for language management better adapted to actual practice. The successful management of linguistic diversity entirely outside the formal sector in a region of the world almost exclusively known for its deficiencies has the potential to inform language management and pedagogy elsewhere by providing inspiring models, thus reversing global tendencies in knowledge transfer. This, in turn, is of relevance for a wide range of global stakeholders ranging from minority community members, language endangerment researchers, policy makers and the general public.

Current (socio)linguistic research on Western settings (e.g. Blackledge & Creese 2010) and worldwide (e.g. Migge & Léglise 2013) is moving away from seeing multilingualism

as a deviation from the fictional monolingual norm. This research is recognising multilingualism as a great social and cognitive resource, rather than as a problem. It is time for descriptive and documentary research in one of the most multilingual settings worldwide, in Africa and beyond, to follow suit and see multilingual language use not as a distracting interference with a pure language ideal but as the reality of speakers as social actors that we should aim to describe.

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