Mixing approaches and switching perspectives

From a typology of language contact towards a typology of multilingualism
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Structure of the talk
• Motivation: building on existing research on language contact, multilingualism and code-mixing
• Inspiration: growing body of research on “egalitarian multilingualism” (François 2012)
• New findings on:
  – Social settings in which multilingualism is practiced
  – Multilingual configurations of individuals
  – Dynamic profiles and changing patterns of societal and individual multilingualism
  – Variation of language use in interaction
  – Ideologies allowing and nurturing multilingualism
• Consequences for a holistic model of multilingualism

Case study on Senegal
Snapshots on and references to other rural, Non-Western multilingual settings

Motivations and background

Building on contact research
Trudgill (2011)
Complexification
• Happens in isolation or in situations of long-term co-territorial contact situations involving child bilingualism
• Tips when proportion of non-native speakers becomes close to 50%
• Is correlated with small community size, social stability and dense social networks

Simplification (and reduction)
• Happens in contexts involving short-term contact and/or massive language learning by adults
• Is correlated with social instability, large community size and loose social networks

“traditional dialects” Creoles and Creoloids Pidgins
Complexity linked to “societies of intimates”? 

“Linguistic complexity developed in societies of intimates – it was in such societies that the five major complexity-producing social factors were maximally operative: small size, dense social networks, large amounts of shared information, high stability, and low contact.” According to Dixon (2010a: 7) “the most complex grammatical systems… are typically found in languages spoken by small tribal groups.” It is possible, therefore, that with the gradual disappearance of societies of intimates, we will also see the disappearance of complexifying linguistic changes.” (Trudgill 2011:185)

Endangered, unresearched multilingual settings?

“A type that is rapidly vanishing from today’s world is multilingualism among neighbouring tribal communities in pre-urban, pre-industrialised societies. […] Some authors believe to have found evidence for prolonged reciprocal bilingualism among neighbouring communities. This appears to have been the case among some of the languages of Arnhem Land […] as well as among pairs or groups of languages in the Amazon basin […]. Other case studies emphasise role division between an “internal” and an “external” language, with the latter being the default language of communication among different tribal groups […].” (Matras 2009: 48)

Building on code-mixing research

Role of languages fixed

- Fishman’s diglossia model: Language choice depends on domain and setting
- Myers-Scotton’s MLF model: Different languages trigger different rights and obligations

Role of languages flexible

- Auer’s and Wei’s CA model: The meaning of code-switching is created sequentially in a conversation
- Giles CAT: Speakers choose to emphasise or minimise social differences through convergences and divergences

No psycho-linguistic considerations

No considerations for the individual

Building on psycholinguistic research

Languages are never separate systems in the mind
- Most models assume a language-neutral mental lexicon (Green 1998)
- Bilinguals’ speech converges even in the early stages of L2 acquisition (Chang 2012, 2013, Gullberg 2009, 2011)
- Multilingual speakers can be in different language modes (Grosjean 2010)
- Listeners adjust rapidly to variation, including foreign accents (Booker 2014)

Cultures differ in perspective-taking
- Audience design, importance of common ground and perspective taking differ across cultures (Keysar, Barr, Balin, & Brauner 2000, Wu, Barr, Gann & Keysar 2013)
- Universal preference for egocentric interference
- But later corrections to reduce referential ambiguity governed by specific cultural demands

Studies are limited to Western bilingual settings

No multilingual or rural settings have been studied
Building on research on language ideologies

- Language ideologies and practices often don’t match (Irvine & Gal 1995, 2000, Kroskrity 2007)
- Language ideologies in multilingual settings often erase parts of the repertoire
- Erasure and indexing of identities is governed by those beliefs and identities beneficial in a certain context
- Language ideologies in patrilineal societies often erase women’s and children’s identities and practices

Multilingual practices often remain invisible prior to research.
Surveys systematically underreport linguistic diversity and reproduce ideologies.

Studies mentioned in the talk

- Vaupe basin (Epps & Stenzel 2013, Stenzel 2005, Chernela 2013, Hosemann 2013)
- Upper Xingu (Franchetto 2011, Ball 2011)
- Northern Vanuatu (François 2012)
- Grassfields (Di Carlo 2012, Good & Di Carlo 2014, forthcoming)
- Northwestern Arnhem land (Storge forthcoming)

A glimpse at the multilingual setting of Casamance
Spoken multilingualism in Senegal

Official contexts, including schools; Some urban settings; Contexts where formally educated speakers don’t share another lingua franca

French

Wolof

Pulaar

Creole

Mandinka

Joola Fogny

Contexts where formally educated speakers don’t share another lingua franca

Homes; Schools; Translocal contexts

Lëbou

Bassari

Pepel

Guaher

Soninkë

Soninkë

Joola Fogny

Mancagne

Maninka

Gubëeher

Niominka

Contexts where formally educated speakers don’t share another lingua franca

Homes; Local contexts

Seereer

Mënik

Bayot

Manjak

Creole

Joola Fogny

Wolof

Nominal languages of particular locations

Regional linguae francae

National linguae francae

No polyglossia at the local level

Both symmetrical and asymmetrical multilingualism occurs and serves important social purposes.

Mof Avvi: Joola Eegimaa

Djibonker: Bainounk Gubëeher

Brin: Joola Kujireray

Agnack: Bainounk Guaher

Control languages

Joola Fogny

Crossroads languages

Multilingual and mobile individuals

- Between 3 and 10 named languages spoken
- Repertoires are dynamic because of:
  - Fostering
  - Marrying in/out
  - Economic, religious and ritual mobility
- Old and new mobility patterns co-exist

The Christian « Bainounk » Hélène Caly turned into the Muslim « Mandinka » Teye Sukko as part of the gubos ritual.
**Zoom in on repertoires**

**Nominal languages of particular locations**

- Bainounk Gujaher
  - Joola Susaana
- Joola Fogny
- Mandinka
- Joola Kasa
- Creole
- Wolof
- French

**Regional linguae francae**

- Baïnounk
- Gujaher
- Joola
- Susaana
- Fogny
- Kasa
- Mandinka

**National linguae francae**

- Wolof
- French

**Zoom in on repertoires**

**Nominal languages of particular locations**

- Bainounk Gujaher
  - Joola (?): Gugëcer
- Pepel
- Creole
- Mandinka
- Wolof

**Regional linguae francae**

- Meta Diandy

**Only some settings with fixed linguistic choices**

- Contexts/communities of practice translocally associated with particular languages:
  - Mosque: Mandinka
  - Church: Joola languages, French
  - School: Wolof, Mandinka, French

- An asïin in Diibonker addressed in Joola Eegimaa because subordinate to the rain king of Mof Avvi.

**Shared cultural practices**

- Initiation rites
- Masked dances
- Fertility rituals (kanyalen/gubos)
- Exogyny
- Wet rice cultivation
- Religion (« path of the forebears », Christianity and Islam)
- Many rituals are timed across the area and involve all groups, although they have ethnic labels
Localist and indexing language ideologies contrast with practices

- **Ideologies:**
  - Pick out one language as the nominal language of a location — often the language of the founding family
  - Present one language as the "identity" language of an individual
  - In this patrilineal and virilocal society, this is the identity language of the father
  - Other identities can be indexed to outsiders
  - An intermediate level identity corresponding to the language cluster exists as well.

Why do people remain so multilingual (in so many small languages!) when their practices converge?

Why don’t they adopt simpler patterns of multilingualism?

Masks and dancers with ethnic labels performing at a cultural festival in Ziguinchor, 2013

Why is the contrast between language ideologies and linguistic practices upheld in specific situations?

Why don’t identities align with practice or vice versa?

A linguistic and cultural ecology

Djibonker: a linguistic and cultural ecology (Haugen 1972, Mühlhäusler 1996, 2000, Mufwene 2001)

Mof Avvi: a linguistic and cultural ecology

Brin: Crossroads research area and beyond in Casamance (but not everywhere!)
The importance of small differences for the ecology

- “African Frontier” situation (Kopytoff 1987) where only small groups can (could?) thrive
- Survival requires multiple & flexible alliances
- Speaking several languages serves to index different affinities as required by context
- Co-ordinated cultural activities strengthen the unity in difference
- Persistence of all linguistic and cultural practices is strengthened by their role(s) in the ecology

Linguistic consequences of the restructuring

- Speakers from Agnack Grand and Agnack Petit have two different agreement patterns for animate nouns (Lüpke ms.).
- A new agreement pattern based on animacy is emerging in languages spoken to the East of Ziguinchor, where Mandinka has entered the ecology (Cobbinah in prep.).
- Other Joola and Bainounk varieties have no or very little animate agreement.

Frequently speaking a language without noun classes and agreement (Mandinka) and speaking fewer languages with noun class systems speeds up restructuring.

Sociolinguistic consequences of the restructuring

- Most Mandinka speakers are bi- or maximally trilingual (generally in Wolof and French).
- Speakers issued from the Casamance language ecologies grow up much more multilingual.
- Casamance speakers also have a more accommodating habitus, which is often reciprocal within the ecologies.
- When they accommodate Mandinka speakers, these don’t (and can’t) reciprocate, and Casamance speakers often shift to Mandinka.

A different language habitus and lack of reciprocity is a better predictor of language shift and reduction of diversity than dominance patterns or prestige.
A snapshot on the Vaupès basin

Invisible but necessary multilingualism

Linguistic exogyny

- “If we were all Tukano speakers, where would we get our women?” (Chernela 2013: 34)
- The preferential crossed cousin marriage results in women marrying into villages where their matrilect is spoken

Monolingual ideologies of multilingualism

**Practices**
- Adults are expected to speak their patrilect
- Children initially grow up speaking their matrilect but are discouraged from speaking it as they grow older
- Strong constraints on code-mixing and little lexical borrowing
- However, code-mixing and speaking of the matrilect (for women) or of the wife’s patrilect (for men) does occur in practice

**Ideologies**
- Distinguish between patrilect, matrilect and alterlect
- The patrilect is the identity language and the only one counted as one’s language
- Keeping languages distinct is paramount for maintaining marriability

Tariana speakers have a more accommodating habitus, which ultimately resulted in language shift
A snapshot of the Upper Xingu area

A multilingual society with monolingual groups

Three levels of societal organization

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language family</th>
<th>Upper Xingu society</th>
<th>Level of individual language</th>
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Level of individual language

Shared pragmatic principles among different monolingual groups

Practices
- Endogamous groups are endogamous without widespread multilingualism
- No lingua franca before the spread of Portuguese
- Three levels of ethnolinguistic organization
- A common calendar of cultural events and exchange
- Communication based on shared principles of complaint and respect

Ideologies
- Languages emblematizes identity
- Language ideology emphasises monolingualism
- A dualism between witchcraft and shamanism is integral to the functioning of the system
A snapshot of the Lower Fungom area

Multiple languages, multiple identities

- Villages nominally associated with one language
- Individuals speak 5-6 languages and 8 to 10 lects
- Exogamy is common, and children receive dual identity based father’s and mother’s father’s identity
- Identity is reflected in names and linguistic competence
- Affinities to the village are also expressed through indexical language choice
- Multiple alliances are seen as necessary to gain protection against invisible threats, notably witchcraft

Egalitarian and reciprocal multilingualism

- Languages nominally associated with villages, but many individuals speak four or more languages
- Widespread exogamy widespread for both sexes (30% of unions)
- Reciprocal multilingualism, mainly depending on the location of the household
- In about 60% of unions, women relocate to their husbands’ villages, in about 40% it’s the reverse
- Children of bilingual unions raised bilingually
- Practices rapidly changing, as Bislama gains more ground

A snapshot of northern Vanuatu
A snapshot of Northwestern Arnhem Land

Owning vs. speaking languages

Warruwi community is a multilingual community on South Goulburn Island

Pre-contact language-land association

Languages spoken at Warruwi community are underlined

Multilingual individuals with less multilingual ideologies

Practices
- Widespread multilingualism in 4+ Indigenous languages, very little use of English
- Great individual variation
- Widespread receptive multilingualism pre-empts massive code-mixing and results in low levels of lexical borrowing

Ideologies
- Ideologies based on language ownership
- Each language is associated with land
- This association gives indirectly rise to language ownership
- Three languages commonly cited as languages of Warruwi; Yolŋu-matha languages are erased for older speakers
- This reflects older settlement patterns, but also the influence of the one tribe-one nation ideology of outsiders
Most patterns of multilingualism and language contact worldwide remain unstudied. Research focusses on polyglossia in settings involving at least one Western language. Small-scale multilingualism – “the primal human condition” (Evans 2012) – remains dramatically underresearched. Small-scale multilingualism is predominantly characterised as language contact between neighbouring groups, although these groups are heterogeneous. Multilingualism is often seen as endangering (Blommaert 2007), also small-scale multilingualism is globally endangered.

A universal (1) backdrop of processing demands resulting in convergence