

Chapter 1

Colonization, Globalization and Language Vitality in Africa: An Introduction

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1.1 Historical Background

The word *colonization* in the title of this chapter is intended to conjure up the fact that much of the current debate on the impact of globalization on language vitality¹ does not make sense without also invoking the relocation of populations to new places and often the domination of the indigenous ones by the newcomers. We argue here that one cannot make sense of *globalization* without connecting it to *colonization* and articulating the different ways in which the latter proceeds. Languages are affected because colonization and sometimes globalization entail the following: population movements; the spread of the migrants' languages and the ensuing contacts of the latter with those of the indigenous, dominated populations; the emergence of new language repertoires and new divisions of labor among the coexistent languages, as well as new dynamics of competition and selection among them; and differential evolution regarding their vitality.

To start with a strong and provocative observation, we'd like to submit that both colonization and globalization are as old as the dispersal of *Homo sapiens* out of East Africa forty to sixty thousand years ago, although both phenomena have evolved significantly and diversified in ecology-specific ways since then. The first primitive adaptations must have taken place with the colonization of hunter-gatherers by agriculturalists and pastoralists at the dawn of modern human civilizations (Mufwene 2008). They must have complexified again with the invention of writing and the emergence of the first trade empires, such as the Babylonian and Phoenician (see Ostler 2003). Forerunners of recent and present-day styles of colonization and globalization may be identified in the Hellenic and Roman empires, though one cannot overlook the role of Chinese and Arab trade routes by sea and land during the Middle Ages as antecedents of the European expansion since the fifteenth century. Then the differential history of human migrations and the ensuing diasporas

(Cavalli-Sforza and Cavalli-Sforza 1995) and of language spread and language loss becomes altogether more intriguing and in need of more ecology-specific accounts.

As observed by Fiona Mc Laughlin in the introduction to Chapter 7, this book is an overdue complement to the ever-growing literature on the now popular subject matter of language endangerment. It provides information about Africa that reminds us that language evolution has not proceeded uniformly at all, not any more than colonization and globalization have, at least in the way we discuss them in the following paragraphs. While language dynamics in Africa undoubtedly vary as much as elsewhere in the world, overall the recent history of language vitality on this continent questions some of the claims of the rapidly vanishing linguistic diversity that are based on the experience of especially North America and Australia. It is debatable whether the colonial European languages that now function as official languages in Africa are (general) threats to the continent's indigenous vernaculars. It generally appears one must first distinguish between rural and urban Africa since they have not experienced European colonization, let alone globalization as this is commonly discussed in the current literature, in the same way. One must also articulate the particular ethnographic domains, and even the socioeconomic classes, in which competition obtains between the relevant European and indigenous languages, among the indigenous languages and now also between European languages, notably English and the traditional official language, which is in general the ex-colonial European language. Complementing the chapters in this book, we try to explain here why the story from Africa is so different from that of North America and Australia.

Although colonization and globalization² certainly account for why the linguistic landscapes of the world have changed, sometimes dramatically, over the past few centuries, it is also noteworthy that the colonial history of Africa has not been the same as that of North America and Australia. The trade colonization phase, marked especially by the establishment of (mostly coastal and riverine) trade posts and egalitarian exchange relations between the Europeans and the Natives, lasted much longer in Africa than in the Americas and Australia. Overall, they preceded any other form of the colonization of the non-European world by Europeans, although they were periods of overlap. This is more evident in the case of the Americas, where settle-colonization started early on along the Atlantic coast. Europeans secured concessions quite soon after discovering the New World, treated them as new homes, sort of Europe outside Europe (Crosby 1986), and traded with Native Americans from these strategic bases. Westward expansion would gradually replace former trade colonies with settlements, which would eventually lead to the establishment of European-style socioeconomic structures and the emergence of European demographic majorities. Even this evolution suggests a geographical complementary distribution of trade and settlement colonies, until the former was completely replaced

by the latter and the Natives were forcibly relocated in reservations by the nineteenth century.

With the exception of South Africa, occupied permanently by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century, Europeans practised only trade colonization in mainland Africa until the mid-nineteenth century, staying typically on the coast. However, as reported by Fiona Mc Laughlin in Chapter 7, they opened up some riverine trade posts in the interior, an expansion that would lead to the exploitation colonization of the continent. Only the off-shore islands would be colonized on the settlement model, but the Europeans would remain minorities there, due largely to the development of agricultural industries that thrived on huge slave labor, which, like in the Caribbean, grew much larger and faster than the European populations. Moreover, the lucrative attraction of the Brazilian colony would lead the Portuguese to abandon their plantations, creating conditions for the emergence of creoles, at the expense of the African languages the slaves had brought with them, especially on the Islands of Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe (Mufwene 2008). The French settled in the Mascarene Islands, where creoles have also developed, but would eventually colonize the larger island of Madagascar partly on the exploitation model, like continental Africa. The continent would thus serve as the source of raw materials to be exported to the European metropolises, where the colonizers (rather than colonists) would retire on the completion of their service for their countries or companies.

The trend of the exploitation colonization of Africa, in lieu of trade colonization, started in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Western European colonial powers found it profitable to take control of the whole continent and carved it geographically among them in the Berlin Treaty (1885), the outcome of a conference that had started in 1884. South Africa is doubly unique in having been colonized on the settlement model since the mid-seventeenth century, and experiencing an overlay of exploitation colonization by Britain since the late eighteenth century, an evolution that would lead the Boers (Dutch settlers) to proclaim themselves as Afrikan(d)ers and their new, colonially evolved language variety as Afrikaans (see also Mesthrie, this volume). We can claim that, unlike the settlement colonization of the Americas and Australia, the exploitation colonization of Africa has hardly contributed directly to the endangerment or extinction of indigenous African languages. That of the Khoesan languages has been caused by the settlement colonization of Southern Africa by both the Bantu population, during their geographical expansion southward, and the Afrikaners.

All these observations are relevant because different colonization styles can be associated with different socioeconomic structures, therefore different interactional and linguistic regimes, which have engendered different dynamics of language competition between the languages in contact (Mufwene 2008). During the trade colonization phase, Europeans were just happy to be able to

communicate with the indigenous populations, initially through interpreters, which facilitated trade. As this intensified, new lingua franca emerged, which have been identified as pidgins. An important difference between the Americas and Africa is that in the former these new languages (such as Delaware Pidgin, Mobilian Jargon and Lingua Geral Amazônica, now known as Nheengatu) were based on Native American languages, whereas in the latter they were based on European languages.³ It now appears that a Portuguese contact variety had served as the trade language used by all Europeans traders before pidgin English varieties emerged in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries (Huber 1999). Expanded pidgins such as Nigerian and Cameroon Pidgin Englishes owe their existence, maintenance and expansion (structural and demographic), as well as their continuing divergence from their 'lexifier', to the intensification of the trade, the growing insufficiency of interpreters, the fact that more and more Natives would interact directly with the Europeans or their auxiliaries in approximations of the new lingua franca and the subsequent emergence of large trade and/or administrative centers during the exploitation colonization period (Mufwene 2005). That the pidgins have survived in Africa, unlike in the Americas, is in itself evidence of different language policies and practices that must distinguish settlement colonies from their exploitation counterparts, a topic to which we return shortly.

Overall, trade colonization did not create any threat to indigenous languages, because the new communicative needs and functions it introduced were met by Native languages in the case of the Americas and by European languages elsewhere, originally through interpreters in both cases. The dynamics of language coexistence would change only after the trade colonization would be replaced by settlement colonization; that is, although trade colonization did indeed introduce some form of *globalization* from the perspective of population movements and transportation of goods over long distances, it did not need to proceed in the language of the economically more powerful, least of all to impose the language of the latter as a vernacular over the trading 'partners'. As a matter of fact, even today, globalization in the sense of worldwide network of economic interconnectedness and interdependencies is not imposing English or French as a vernacular on any non-European populations outside the European settlement colonies.

During the exploitation colonization of Africa, the European colonizers were no more interested in sharing their languages with the indigenous populations than they were in India, where the Macaulay Doctrine was passed in the early nineteenth century (see also Brutt-Griffler 2002). Unlike in the settlement colonies of the New World and Australia, the colonizers did not develop the kind of socioeconomic structure that would entice the Natives to acquire the colonial languages as their vernacular either. In fact either education was made accessible in the indigenous languages with the teaching of European languages dispensed past the third–fifth grades to the elite who passed all sorts

of difficult requirements and challenges, and/or schooling was accessible only to a small fraction of the population. The French and Portuguese assimilation system was designed less for universal education (as is obvious from Chapter 8, by Robert Chaudenson) than to create an elite class of colonial auxiliaries who became a buffer between the colonized and the colonizers and ultimately worked for the metropole.

The very artificial technique of transmitting a language through the school system rather than through daily interactions with native or fluent speakers contributed to spreading the European colonial languages as elite *lingua francas* rather than as vernaculars. The attachment of the elite class of colonial auxiliaries to their traditions and their continued interactions with their less fortunate relatives in the extended family structures hardly gave the European languages a chance to evolve ethnographically into vernaculars as they would appear to be snobbish and uprooted (Mufwene 2005, 2008).

One might expect the colonial languages now adopted as (co-)official languages of the independent African countries to have spread and vernacularized like Vulgar Latin in parts of the former Western Roman Empire in continental Europe, where the Romance languages are now spoken. This happened especially because Latin became the urban vernaculars of the towns and cities that developed during the Roman colonization and because of the spread of the Roman style economic system even after the Romans had left. However, exploitation colonization in most of Africa produced new indigenous urban vernaculars, which have remained very African despite extensive lexical borrowings from the European languages. The colonizers had set up a two-tier economic system in which the vast majority of the indigenous labor was in the blue collar sector, which has functioned in the urban vernaculars, which also function as regional *lingua francas*. Since Independence, the economies of most of the countries have at best stagnated; in most cases it has collapsed. This evolution has hardly provided any incentive for the masses of the populations, more than half of which are still rural, to learn the European languages. These remain the privilege of an elite that have perpetuated the colonial exploitation system and are distrusted, together with the political leadership. If there is any *globalization* that is supposed to make the world more and more uniform economically and culturally, it has certainly left most of the African populations on the margins, though variably.

1.2 The African Experience of Language Coexistence and Competition since the Seventeenth Century

As noted earlier, South Africa is an interesting case of two layers of European colonization. The Bantu populations were already settling the Khoesan territory when the Dutch first settled in the Cape area. Then the latter moved east and



MAP 1 Countries discussed in this book.

into the interior after the Britons colonized the land, in the exploitation style, in the late eighteenth century. This latter colonization never put an end to the Dutch settlement colonization, although it created a situation where the Afrikaners have had to learn English too as either an additional vernacular or just as a lingua franca. The various dynamics of land appropriation and distribution have created an interesting population structure in which the Khoesans have been largely absorbed by the expanding Bantu populations and the Dutch settlers. Overall, from the perspective of language coexistence and competition, very few Khoesan groups have been left alone, while important proportions of the Bantu populations in South Africa are still rural, despite recent migrations into the townships and large squatter camps surrounding these.

As Rajend Mesthrie shows in Chapter 2, the dynamics of language competition have been quite complex. Although most Khoesans have lost their languages to the Bantu and Dutch colonists, there are no reported cases of Bantu populations shifting massively from their heritage languages to either Afrikaans or English, unlike the experience of Native Americans or Australian Aborigenes. This is noteworthy, in spite of the recent emergence of an urban segment of the Bantu and Colored populations that speaks English as their vernacular, along with the South African Indians, who, as a group, had shifted earlier to English, producing their own ethnolect (Mesthrie 1992). Quite interesting in this particular polity is the extent to which the vitality of Afrikaans has been affected by the presence of English and its growing status as a global language of business and diplomacy, creating a situation where Afrikaans is being redefined as an ethnic language, being abandoned by especially the urban Colored elite (Broeder et al. 2002; Giliomee 2003). This is an interesting case of a language spoken by millions whose future may be at risk, especially if some Afrikaner children too start investing themselves more in English than in their heritage language (Mufwene 2008). Noteworthy here is also the fact that the less affluent and rural Bantu populations have remained in their respective regions, which pre-empts competition among them, as in the rest of Black Africa.

Being also the only polity in Black Africa whose economy continues to develop, South Africa has attracted migrants, earlier from neighboring countries for work in the mines and recently from almost all of Black Africa (see Chapter 11 by Cécile B. Vigouroux). It has also become an interesting contact setting that can inform us about the particular conditions under which migrants maintain or give up their heritage languages. As explained in Mufwene (2008), this is an interesting colonial history that is in some ways reminiscent of that of the United States (up to their segregation policies) and yet also quite different from the perspective of language vitality. To understand all this, one must remember that *settlement colonies* differ from *exploitation colonies* in that the colonists intended to settle new homes in the former, or, as Crosby (1986) expresses it, to develop new and better Europes than what they had left behind. Under this particular ideology, they developed in the colony a socioeconomic structure that was essentially European and different only in respects that they wanted to improve it. Generally they ignored, marginalized and/or eradicated any indigenous structures from which the Natives had to shift gradually once the colonists had reached a critical mass and were powerful enough to rule them. The shift to the European world order, including their languages, has proceeded more rapidly since the time the colonists became the majority populations and started to claim more and more of the land that the Natives had managed to keep for themselves.

South Africa is thus a case of partial settlement, or perhaps an incomplete one arrested or disturbed by the British exploitation colonization. To be sure, the Bantu populations have become the majority compared to the more indigenous Khoesans, most of whom they have assimilated. On the other hand,

they have also remained the majority compared to the Afrikaners and other (white) populations combined, although they have been marginalized from the socioeconomic system that the latter developed. It is in this disenfranchising that the explanation for the maintenance of the Bantu languages lies, an experience that they share only with those Native American languages whose speakers remain on the reservations, marginalized from the American socioeconomic structure.

The competition between Afrikaans and English is itself reminiscent of that which occurred between various European national languages and English in North America, as they 'collided' (Joseph et al. 2003) within the same socioeconomic structure and lost to English. As we are reminded by Robert Chaudenson (Chapter 8), this is a competition that French is still facing in Quebec, lost in Nova Scotia and various other places in North America and is still losing in Louisiana. It is against this general backdrop of patterns of colonization that the reader should read, especially, the chapters by Rajend Mesthrie and Herman Batibo, where settlement and exploitation colonizations of Southern Africa by various non-Khoesan populations account for the extinction of many Khoesan languages, the current endangerment of some and the division of labor between the Bantu and European languages.

Regarding the recent Black African migrants, while the fate of the languages they brought with them remains subject to speculations, we also know from publications such as Mesthrie's (2006) that the children of the migrants from Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and so on have been no more loyal to their heritage languages than those of the Indian contract laborers. Such shifts have been facilitated by the integration of the Bantu migrant workers within the local Bantu populations. The difference in outcomes from that of language shift among South African Indians lies in the fact that the latter were segregated from the local Bantu populations and were given more access to schooling and to the socioeconomic system run by the British colonizers (Chapter 2, by Mesthrie). After all, it was the Britons who brought them to South Africa, concurrently with those other Indian contract laborers they imported to the British Caribbean and Fiji and who have all become Anglophone (a category in which we are deliberately subsuming the varieties typically disfranchised as creole).

The socioeconomic system in South Africa is otherwise as in the rest of Black Africa, where the modern industry is to be found in cities, mines and wineries, as well as on large farms held by the Afrikaners, while the rural villages where most of the Bantu and Khoesan populations live still practice traditional hunter gathering, subsistence farming or cultivate some cash crops. Overall, the populations the most isolated from the socioeconomic structure inherited from the colonial regimes are those that have held on to their languages and other cultural practices. Social and geographical segregation is what has protected South African Bantu and Khoesan languages the most. Thus, it appears that

the answers to the question of what is the future of especially Bantu languages in South Africa depends largely on the answers to the following questions on its socioeconomic system: (i) Will the South African new socioeconomic structure expand to the rural areas? (ii) Will the economy develop to where residents of the ever-growing squatter camps will no longer be disenfranchised and benefit from the growth? and (iii) Will any of the indigenous South African languages be used in the modern, Western-style economic sector, or will English and, to some extent, Afrikaans continue to prevail in this ethnographic domain? The reader will hopefully benefit from these considerations in processing the details that Rajend Mesthrie provides in Chapter 2.

Some of these considerations will also help the reader put Chapter 3 by Herman Batibo in the right historical perspective, as he contributes yet another dimension to language competition, the fact that some Bantu languages have driven some others out to extinction. It is absolutely important to pay attention to the particular ecological factors that have permitted it, especially the relative demographic sizes and political strengths of the populations in contact. Another important dimension is the colonial history that has promoted some indigenous vernaculars to the status of regional lingua francas and 'national languages', thus associating them with modernity and making them more attractive to speakers of other ethnic vernaculars. In this chapter too it is evident that the indigenous languages all compete more among themselves than with the European colonial languages that have been adopted as official languages and are used in communicative domains introduced by the Europeans. It is interesting to know that some indigenous languages are indeed expanding demographically and in domains of usage, contrary to the standard literature, traditionally based on the Americas and Australia. That literature has given the wrong impression that major European languages have been expanding uniformly at the expense of the indigenous languages in the colonies.

The significance of the factor of *modernity* is also highlighted by Christopher Stroud in Chapter 4, where it is problematized as not being uniform and as possibly meaning different things in different socioeconomic structures and polities. The author argues that *multilingualism* is conceptualized differently in center-economy states such as the United States than in economically peripheral states (within the context of globalization) such as Mozambique. It appears that in the latter, languages are associated with different ethnographic functions or communicative domains (such as public or private life, technological or vernacular communication, national or transnational transactions, etc.), whereas in the former they compete in the same domains, which has led to the endangerment and loss of the less advantageous ones. Also noteworthy is the fact that Portuguese is spoken mostly in the city, as a mother tongue by no more than 3 per cent of the population and as an L2 by 25 per cent of the population. There is also more multilingualism in the city than in the rural areas, both in terms of number of languages one can speak and in terms of individuals who

are multilingual. African languages remain the dominant vernaculars of about 75 per cent of the population, although Portuguese is rated above them.

The Portuguese colonizers do not seem to have intended to Europeanize the indigenous Mozambicans, at least not during the first half-century of colonial period, as they barred most Natives from the city and limited their access to schools. It is only in 1930 that they thought of converting the exploitation colony into a settlement, introducing the policy of *assimilados*, which required mastery of Portuguese. However, the demographics presented earlier suggest that the segregated population structure of the colony must have not facilitated the spread of the colonial language, not at all as a vernacular. Besides, the protestant missionaries, who were in charge of education, were more invested in proselytizing in major indigenous languages than in spreading Portuguese. Thus, the requisite socioeconomic structure for its spread nationwide has never been set up. In fact, the current limited spread of Portuguese as an urban L2 is also a recent phenomenon, whose catalyst was the revolutionary war for Independence, as it functioned as the uniting language of the militants, in the absence of a common major indigenous lingua franca that could unify all. Interestingly, although, since Independence, Portuguese has been promoted as the statewide language of education – a conjunction of various factors, including the civil war and the promotion of cultural diversity. This evolution has contributed more to defining the ethnographic functions of Portuguese than in discouraging usage of the indigenous languages. The history of post-Independence Mozambique appears to be one of shifting markets driven by different ideological forces that have promoted both Portuguese and (major) indigenous languages in the interest of diversity without giving a privileged advantage to the (ex-)colonial language.

In Chapter 5, Eyamba Bokamba invites the reader to revisit *multilingualism* and *linguistic markets* again in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), as he shows that the different languages are not uniformly weighted. The ethnographic significance of ethnic vernaculars varies depending on whether one is in Kinshasa, the capital city, which is more associated with modernity and where the language varieties associated with it (Lingala and French) are highly valued, or in a provincial capital, such as Mbandaka, where the residents maintain close ties with their ancestral origins in the ethnic vernaculars. Just as there is no constant socioeconomic structure that is emerging worldwide today (as a by-product of globalization) and is uniformly endangering the vitality of ‘indigenous’ languages all over the world, there are no uniform linguistic markets in DRC that are (dis)advantaging them in the same ways from one contact setting to another. Linguistic markets depend on the local socioeconomic structures of the populations that produce them through their daily interactions. Settings such as secondary urban centers where populations maintain regular ties with their relatives in the rural areas continue to provide ecologies in which even minor ethnic languages are not endangered, whereas

major urban centers provide an ecology that is less advantageous to them. It is in the latter that the presence of the European language and the external pressures of globalization as an international phenomenon are felt.

Yet, as Bokamba's study also shows, the domains of use of the colonial, now official language only overlap with those of the indigenous urban vernacular, Lingala in this particular case; the ensuing competition is not always resolved in favor of the European language. Bokamba shows how the behavior of the ruling class can also diminish interest in the language that is emblematic of their social status. Within the low class, the association of French with socio-economic exploitation, a form of internal colonization, has often aroused attitudes of distrust and/or contempt, causing even those who learned to speak it somewhat in high school (if they did not drop out) not to want to use it. At the same time, the prestige of French has been challenged by English, a major language associated with better-paying jobs, independent of its alleged global status or of the greater economic and military might of the countries that export it.

In the final analysis, the case of language coexistence and competition in DRC is far from supporting the 'gravitational' model proposed by Swaan (2001) and Calvet (2006), which is intended to foster alliances among languages to resist the expansion of the 'supercentral' languages such as English. As explained in Mufwene (2008), decisions to use one language or another are very local, and the cumulative resolution of the competition in favor of one language or another is unconsciously influenced typically by factors that do not include dynamics of language practice outside the small socioeconomic structures in which they evolve. Locally, people learn a language because of the benefits, usually socioeconomic but often also symbolic (*à la Bourdieu* 1991), that they hope to derive from them rather than because of whether or not they feel connected to the outside world. Bokamba reminds the reader of the utilitarian dimension of languages, as assets that one accumulates only if they have local market values that are significant to them.

These dynamics lead us to consider the case of societal multilingualism in Morocco and the ecological pressures that govern the coexistence of Amazigh (Berber), Arabic, French and English. In Chapter 6, Ahmed Boukous reminds us that North Africa has experienced several documented layers of colonization since the Phoenician trade ventures, the current situation being the ultimate outcome of that long history of language contacts. For the Amazighs, the recent exploitation colonization of Morocco by the French is just another layer over the earlier settlement colonization by the Arabs whose language and culture have been threats to theirs and must have driven various other minor languages to extinction (Mufwene 2001). These historical layers of entrenchment also appear to correspond to the current ethnographic stratification of the coexistent, if not really competing, language varieties, namely, Amazigh, Colloquial Arabic, Standard Arabic, French and English. Thanks to global, post-colonial economic pressures, English, the latest newcomer, emerges at top of the scale,

while Amazigh, the most indigenous of the languages, lies at the bottom. The latter also happens to be predominantly rural, functioning in ethnographic domains where it faces no competition from French, least of all English, but is threatened by Colloquial Arabic, its urban counterpart.

Morocco is, according to Boukous, an interesting arena where the dynamics of language practice suggest that the foreign languages represent important social capitals, contrary to the Arabization promoted by the policy makers. Here too one must factor in the local population structure, in which native speakers of Arabic find no need to learn Amazigh and can even afford to be monolingual if they are not educated in French or English, whereas the Amazighs cannot, although their language is emerging from centuries of marginalization. Since the colonial period, French has been associated with modernity, especially in economics and technology, domains in which English is introducing competition, whereas Standard Arabic is associated with 'Arabo-Muslim tradition', especially regarding Islamic studies, and with cultural Independence. One might want to conclude that there is a neat division of labor that keeps French and English out of domains devoted to Standard and Colloquial Arabic. However, Arabization policies in education and technology are creating competition for French.

Overall, the foreign languages derive their social capital locally from the fact that Morocco has developed a Western-style economic system and they connect the national economy to the international markets. They are also favored by fear among some Moroccans that Arabization policies are nothing more than attempts to eliminate cultural diversity by assimilating ethnic minorities and to provide to working-class children second-rate education that is not competitive with that provided to children of the more affluent in French or English. This is quite consistent with Robert Chaudenson's observation (Chapter 8) that it is often the parents themselves who are opposed to their children being schooled in indigenous languages.

In the current socioeconomic structure of Morocco, French and English are greater assets on the local job market than Arabic, at least for jobs that are more highly valued. There is indeed competition taking place among the languages but in a very ecology-specific way, with English competing with French and French also being threatened by Arabization policies. Because of the division of labor between Standard Arabic and Colloquial Arabic, only the latter is a threat to Amazigh, in vernacular domains of oral communication, and more in the urban than in the rural environment. The latter is protected only to the extent that a movement is developing that promotes indigenous cultures and diversity, and Amazigh is entering political discourse. The traditional population structure has thus managed to slow down the extinction of this most indigenous language. Perhaps the current reforms will help it thrive again, but can it if the reforms are only linguistic and cultural but do not affect the socioeconomic structure that has kept it at the very bottom of the ladder of symbolic capitals?

In Chapter 7, Fiona Mc Laughlin gives us a glimpse into another facet of the varying linguistic effects of exploitation colonization in Black Africa, namely, the promotion, deliberate or accidental, of some indigenous languages to the status of major urban vernacular, regional lingua franca and national language – a phenomenon discussed only in passing by Eyamba Bokamba in Chapter 5. Focusing on Wolof, Mc Laughlin tells the story of its ascent from an ethnic language to the dominant and national language now spoken as a vernacular or as a lingua franca by at least 90 per cent of the Senegalese population, many more than the 10–15 per cent who speak French, the official language, with variable levels of competence. Like Kikongo-Kimanyanga in present-day DRC, which evolved into Kikongo-Kituba and became a regional lingua franca cum national language (Mufwene 1994, 1997), Wolof already functioned as a trade language before colonization. Its speakers controlled much of the center of Senegal by the time the first Europeans arrived and developed trade colonies. They had already traded with the Portuguese and the Dutch by the time the French arrived in 1638. They became the majority residents of the first towns to emerge (St. Louis, Dakar, Gorée and Rufisque, among others), and many of them functioned as interpreters. Their language would soon develop into an urban vernacular, by the founder principle (Mufwene 2001), and it would also spread with the Dakar–Niger railroad project in the late nineteenth century.

Mc Laughlin thus shows how urbanization and economic development can play a central role in the spread of a language. The spread of Wolof, thanks to its function as an urban vernacular, is in fact reminiscent of that of Latin in today's Romance countries, where it expanded geographically from the urban centers where it was associated with a Roman-style socioeconomic system, which would be emulated by the rural areas. It is also in the (major) urban centers that Wolof came to compete with other ethnic languages as a vernacular, with more and more children ignoring their (grand)parents' languages – in a way similar to Eyamba Bokamba's account of language shift in Kinshasa, DRC. The towns also fostered an asymmetrical multilingualism that favored Wolof among the adults who have migrated to the city, as more non-Wolof speakers learn to speak Wolof than the other way around.

In addition, urbanization has had the effect of obliterating traditional ethnic distinctions, leading the residents to identify themselves, for instance, as 'Dakar-ois' (in association with the city) rather than by any traditional ethnic name. Thus, more than French, Wolof has been a major threat to other indigenous Senegalese languages typically in the urban centers. Although there is pressure to speak it as an indigenous lingua franca even in rural areas, people stick here to their ethnic languages as their vernaculars. In a number of cases, the languages are also spoken outside Senegal in places where they are major languages, which encourages their speakers to hold on to them in Senegal.⁴ Militantism for the maintenance of languages such Pulaar has also warded off any threat

that Wolof can constitute to other (minority) languages. Overall, a clear division of labor exists among many speakers in rural areas between usage of Wolof as a lingua franca and speaking their ethnic language as a vernacular and ethnicity marker. It also appears that in an ecology with a long tradition of egalitarian societal multilingualism, acquisition of a language of wider communication just to speak with people of different ethnic groups entails no pressure to give up one's heritage language. This is a general ecological factor that has protected most African languages in especially the rural areas, where almost half the indigenous population continues to live (unlike in the West), against the spread of European languages and indigenous urban vernaculars and lingua francas (Mufwene 2008).

It is also noteworthy that despite all the prestige it has, French functions in Senegal, as in several other Francophone African countries, primarily as a lingua franca, marginally as vernacular, which is why it is not endangering the indigenous languages. Generally, vernaculars compete with other vernaculars within the socioeconomic ecologies of their speakers, and lingua francas with other lingua francas. Moreover, rising sentiments of national pride that now promote usage of national languages even in domains formerly reserved to European colonial languages, such as political speeches and radio and TV broadcasts, are slowing down the expansion of the latter if not reversing it altogether.

Studies invoking globalization as the constant cause of the endangerment of indigenous languages around the world oversimplify a situation that is heterogeneous and complex. The introduction of English to Senegal has no more endangered the indigenous languages than French has over centuries of contact, although it has relativized the importance of French as a means to connect with the outside world. On the other hand, the fact that non-local globalization has enabled many Senegalese to emigrate has also promoted Wolof to function as a unifying national language among the expatriates, without being the reason why some of these may give up their ethnic languages. When expatriate minorities give up their ethnic languages, it is usually because they hardly come across anybody who speaks them, the same kind of experience that slaves had endured in the New World and in the Indian Ocean (Mufwene 2008), aside from the pressure that the host society exerts on immigrant children to speak the local (dominant) language as a vernacular.

In Chapter 8, Robert Chaudenson puts in historical perspective a prediction made by several linguists since soon after the access of African states to Independence, namely, that the (ex-)colonial languages that now function as official languages endanger the indigenous languages and would drive them to extinction, an experience suffered more specifically by the patois in France. Focusing on former French colonies he explains why such 'futurology' has been proven wrong: the futurologists did not take into account differences in the socioeconomic structures of Europe and Black Africa. They were as naïve as the new,

indigenous rulers of the African nations, who generally thought that the ex-colonial languages, associated with better education, would spread widely within their populations through the school system, which they hoped to make accessible to all. On the other hand, they were not developing the requisite socioeconomic infrastructures that would make the ex-colonial and now official languages useful or necessary to all citizens of their nations. The economies of the new states have all collapsed, taking down with them the educational systems left by the colonizers. Even the command of the European languages themselves has statistically gone down.

Highlighting the distinction that must be made between, on the one hand, *glocalization* as locally adapted state of interdependencies between components of a complex socioeconomic structure and, on the other, *globalization* as interconnectedness between various branches of especially multinational companies, Chaudenson shows, like Blommaert (2003) and Pennycook (2007), how the latter is far from making the world more and more uniform or equal. He underscores the fact that the gap between the economic North and South is getting wider and wider, making it almost utopian to expect Black Africa to evolve in the same way as Europe or North America, although, as he shows, there have been some surprising developments on the Internet with regard to language vitality. A little over a decade ago, it was generally feared that English (above any other Western European language) would prevail as *the* language of the Internet and this situation would precipitate the extinction of minority or marginalized languages. On the contrary, this electronic medium has availed another sphere where the putatively endangered languages can be used, as long as some graphic system has been developed for them and their users can access the new technology. As Chaudenson puts it, the Internet provides a 'quasi-ideal mode(. . .) of managing linguistic diversity and language partnership'.⁵ He argues that the audiovisual media can likewise be used wisely to serve the needs of all the languages that coexist in a polity, as they bypass the problem that arises with developing a graphic system (see also Chapter 9 by Alamin Mazrui) and of printing materials for the practice of the relevant languages. They can be used to satisfy the needs of both those who want more exposure to the European languages and those who are interested in seeing the indigenous language (re)valorized. Readers will have to assess the economic feasibility of this proposal and fit it with demands for more and more democracy, especially if some languages are given more air time and receive more financial investment than others. They will have to think over whether using a language in the media really guarantees or strengthens its vitality.

Much of the discussion in this chapter makes it obvious that the vitality of languages depends largely on an adequate socioeconomic infrastructure (in the author's words, 'economic, social, political, psychological, technical, etc') that can support them. Agreeing with Mufwene (2005), Chaudenson explains, with more arguments, why efforts to revitalize Gaelic/Irish were doomed to fail

in Ireland, while the recreation of Hebrew in Israel and the revitalization of French in Quebec benefited from a number of circumstantial factors, other than the support of the economic system, which favored their success. However, he doubts whether the revitalization of French in Quebec will last. While the state has set up the right economic ecology for the maintenance of French as a useful language, one cannot overlook the fact that the bilingual policy of the federal government provides its citizens the alternative of favoring the language that is likely to offer more advantages to their children in the larger region where English is the dominant language. Moreover, citizens of non-French origin can invoke their human rights to reject the imposition of French on them. As argued in Mufwene (2008), the 'language rights' advocated by linguists often clash with the human rights of speakers, and it appears that the latter will usually prevail.

In the case of Quebec, militancy for a separate state may have worked against the efforts to revitalize the French culture and language, as it has aroused resentment among those who see the language and culture imposed on them against their human rights. It has thus created a situation comparable to that of Afrikaans in South Africa first in the 1970s, when the Bantu populations rioted to resist its imposition on them (Chapter 2 by Rajend Mesthrie), and then now when more and more non-Bantu non-Afrikaners are raising their children with English as mother tongue or placing them in English-medium schools (Mufwene 2008, citing Broeder et al. 2002; Giliomee 2003). In the case of both Quebec and South Africa, the situation is complicated by migrations of those who are ethnically associated with French and Afrikaans, respectively, to areas or spheres where another major language, English, is dominant and their children may not invest themselves in the ethnic language.

The reader can revisit the topic of the usage of less prestigious languages on the Internet in Chapter 9 by Alamin Mazrui. By his own admission, Africans represent only 2.2 per cent of the world's Internet users, and Swahili speakers constitute 6.6 per cent of that population. Yet, several Kenyans are excited by the fact that Microsoft has decided to produce some software in Swahili, arguing that Swahili can now compete more with English and can even spread. They are encouraged to think so by the fact that generally 'the forces of economic globalization are seen to have developed great interest in penetrating world markets through local languages'. The question is: Can the Internet really help a language spread any more than it can help maintain its vitality? Mazrui concludes that 'far from supporting the nationalist agenda of empowering Kiswahili in its perceived competition against English through the localization program, the Internet in Kenya has generally favored the use of "global English"'. English continues to carry a very high symbolic value in Kenya and has prevailed as the preferred lingua franca of the elite; it even functions as a vernacular for some, though it is not evident what proportion of the population the latter represents. Does this really mean that English is endangering

Kiswahili or any other indigenous languages? What should we think of the fact that most Kenyan users of the Internet prefer it to Kiswahili? Does this entail that English is being more widely used in Kenya than this major indigenous lingua, which is also associated with urbanity and modernity, at least to the masses of the population? The study also reveals that there is much more usage of Kiswahili than is generally acknowledged in the survey, albeit as a code-mixed variety. As is evident from the contributions to this volume by Eyamba Bokamba and Fiona Mc Laughlin, code-mixing between an indigenous language and the official one is widespread phenomenon in Black Africa and may perhaps be considered part of normal linguistic practice. It may be observed in urban Lingala in DRC and urban Wolof in Senegal, and the behavior is confirmed by the rich literature on code-switching. Mazrui also reveals that an important reason why Swahili is not as much used on the Internet is the discontinuity between the variety prescribed by purist Kiswahili advocates and what they normally speak. Another is that, although both Kiswahili and English are promoted in the school system, the former was taught as a medium and the latter as an instrument; their literacy has been shaped more in English than in Kiswahili. This appears to be a common experience of the African elite. However, although their language of literacy and scholarship is a European language, they have not necessarily given up usage of their ethnic languages, urban vernaculars or regional lingua francas. It is also important to know what Kenyan and other users of electronic mail use this medium for. Who do they communicate with and about what? Could these factors have contributed to privileging English without concurrently reducing the opportunity for the same Internet users to practice their indigenous languages? The subject matter of language practice and the conditions under which it can cumulatively drive indigenous languages out to extinction is made more complex by the fact that most indigenous African languages have survived the experience of European colonization and the post-Independence retention of the colonial languages as official languages, which are the most emblematic of elite status. English may very well be spreading even into the rural areas of Kenya, but it is quite a different matter whether the spread entails endangerment of the indigenous languages.

The reader will thus be quite interested in the ethnographic significance of the literary creation that Jan Blommaert discusses in Chapter 10. Arguing against the metaphor of 'killer language', he states that dominant languages are not always oppressive and exclusive; they often 'also offer new communicative possibilities and opportunities for creating new sociolinguistic identities'. He finds 'more promising' such metaphors as 'center' and 'periphery' that are found in globalization studies and applies them to a critique of the political novel *Miradi Bubu* (1992) by Tanzania's writer Gabriel Ruhumbika, who he claims both used 'a form of cultural vernacularization' that highlights the locality of its characters, situated in Tanzania, and took advantage of his life

abroad to 'globalize' Swahili, a language of the periphery in the *worldwide interconnectedness* conception of globalization.

Blommaert assumes that globalization enables cultures not only to coexist within the same geographical and social spaces but also to spread over discontinuous geographical ones, placing 'emphasis on situatedness, (. . .) flows, trajectories, movements, and thus (. . .) *relative* spatiality'. He explains how Ruhumbika uses place indexicalities to juxtapose several intersecting centers and peripheries at the world and national levels and within the city of Dar es Salaam. Characters' geographical and social trajectories connect these indexicalities both in time and space, highlighting socioeconomic disparities even within a part of Africa considered uniformly peripheral relative to the West. This is all to indicate that things do not evolve uniformly within African nation-states or within urban centers, which sheds light on how differentially African languages must have evolved in their contact with major Western languages. It is possible for different languages to be allocated their respective geographical, social and functional spaces in which they are maintained, despite the spread of major and global languages.

Diasporas are an important dimension of worldwide globalization insofar as they are among the outcomes of population movements. Although written in Swahili, *Miradi Bubu* is a global novel because it is intended for literate Tanzanians and other literate Swahili speakers all over the world who can grasp the 'translocalizations' and make sense of the local Tanzanian experience that it presents from a world-system perspective. The novel is thus an example of how the global/world-system dimensions of modern life can be interlocked symbiotically with the local. The paper is an invitation to reflect over the idealization of culture, society and particular language practices in a world where people are constantly on the move and must reshape their identities and adapt to new communicative needs. Just as deterritorialization entails reterritorialization (Vigouroux 2005), every new situation at home or away from home may entail new communicative practices, including a reallocation of new ethnographic roles to the languages of one's repertoire. Relocation, translocation and related notions need not be interpreted only geographically; they can be interpreted even socially and also in both ways. This is indeed what Ruhumbika's novel shows successfully. These considerations must be part of our reflections on language vitality and endangerment, from which the rights of speakers as adaptive individuals tend to be subordinated to the rights of languages.

Migrations, the formation of (ethnic and linguistic) diasporas, the integration of the migrants in the host country and the role that language (practice) plays in the process is the focus of Cécile B. Vigouroux in Chapter 11. As longitudinal as her study is, the period of 10 years or so covered by her field research does not enable her to determine what particular languages other than the particular lingua francas of the migrants' countries of origin, including French, enjoy some vitality in the host country and which ones are falling into attrition.

For countries such as DRC and Cameroon, where more than one indigenous lingua francas are spoken, it would also be interesting to find out which particular languages are gaining more speakers and, conversely, which ones are losing speakers, among the migrants. Equally informative would be knowledge of the particular diasporic ecological conditions that favor these evolutions. For instance, are DRC migrants socializing among themselves in ways that reflect regional divisions in the home country and therefore competitive maintenance of the “national languages” or in novel ways that favor one over the others? Do the migrants often meet other migrants that speak the same ethnic languages with whom they continue to speak the same traditional vernaculars in private or are the occasional phone calls at home the only opportunities they have to practice these? On the other hand, does technology constrain the particular languages that one can use, such as French on the Internet, not only because this is the dominant language of literacy among Francophone Africans but also because the correspondents that can have access to it at home are more likely to be affluent and among the privileged few that have access to this technology? The language would thus be emblematic of this economically privileged position. By the same token, does the telephone as an urban phenomenon disfavor usage of ethnic languages and therefore condemn them to attrition among the migrants who do not come across speakers of the same languages? Are there any shifts of vernaculars as languages of day-to-day communication among the migrants and according to what particular interactional patterns?

These are all interesting questions about language maintenance and loss among (im)migrants that a more extensive investigation, extending over a longer period of time than Vigouroux’s ethnographic field research, could have focused on. However, the author capitalizes on dynamics of socio-economic integration within the host “social space” and the impact that they make both on language acquisition among the migrants and on language practice with and among the host population, which is multilingual. In this respect Vigouroux articulates the distinction between Pierre Bourdieu’s notions of “market value” and “symbolic value.” The distinction helps explain why the recent Francophone migrants are more interested in learning IsiZulu, spoken in the eastern part of South Africa, than IsiXhosa and Afrikaans, the local indigenous languages. To the migrants, the symbolic value that IsiZulu derives from its association with the historic leader Shaka Zulu is more significant than the important local market value of IsiXhosa, which they find less useful than English. This imbalance is largely due to the availability of business opportunities locally and to the possibility of moving outside Cape Town and South Africa to places where English is more likely to be used.

However, what kind of English do the migrants learn and how do they manage their language repertoires? Chapter 11 sheds light not only on the above dynamics but also on the way IsiXhosa’s ethnographic space has been extended because of the presence of the migrants in Cape Town’s city-center. The

migrants have made Blacks' presence more conspicuous in the city-center especially through the marketing of art crafts from all over Black Africa and the employment of local women as helpers and occasional interpreters in both English and IsiXhosa. By the same token, they have contributed to spreading IsiXhosa from the townships and squatter camps to the city-center. The latter phenomenon has hardly received much attention in linguistic studies of migrations under conditions other than those of colonization. To what extent do the migrants directly or indirectly affect language practice within the host population?

Another, more applied perspective on the complex question of the co-existence of the ex-colonial and (more) indigenous African languages is contributed by Neville Alexander in Chapter 12, where he focuses on policies for the promotion, maintenance and/or revitalization of the indigenous languages. Arguing that language planning is not a futile enterprise, he addresses the following specific question: 'under what conditions can language policy and planning influence decisively the direction and depth of social change?' He admits that scholars should avoid social engineering, arguing that language planning projects should be undertaken in consultation with their speakers. The same is certainly true of attempts to revitalize some languages, an activity that we consider different from the related scholarly interest in documenting moribund languages for the purposes of future research on language universals and typology, which need not be claimed as useful to the would-be speakers of the languages in question.

Alexander acknowledges that the ex-colonial European languages have become part of the normal linguistic landscape of Africa and 'our objective is to develop the use of [the more indigenous] African languages in high-status functions *next to*, rather than *in place of*, the current languages of European origin'. His goal is to reduce their 'hegemony'. One of the questions is whether the current ethnographic ranking of languages inherited from the colonial period, which has associated the non-European languages with less prestige, can be changed. On the other hand, one can also ask whether the (Black) African experience is unique. Continental European scholars have increasingly been holding conferences and publishing their research findings in English, a practice against which Phillipson (2003) and Hagège (2006) write.⁶ And why should anyone worry this much if, as is obvious from most of the other contributions to this volume, indigenous African languages are indeed not at all endangered by the ex-colonial languages in the first place? Why should anyone worry since the latter have actually been indigenized and are no less African than the Romance languages are non-Roman? As a matter of fact, are they not meeting communication needs that are as important as the now indigenized languages themselves? Isn't Africa actually contributing a new form of linguistic diversity with an African touch? Do the more indigenous African languages actually have less value because they are not usually used in the domains allocated to the Euro-African language varieties?

Alexander's chapter is not as much about language endangerment as it is about the current marginalization of large segments of the indigenous populations from modern knowledge, just like during the colonial days. His argument is for a wider diffusion of knowledge in languages that should empower more citizens and to have their governments function in languages that should make their transactions more transparent. As a matter of fact, provided the economies of African nations stop stagnating or degrading, citizens better educated in their own languages could, like their Western counterparts, participate more in the global qua worldwide networks of economic interdependencies instead of being marginalized from them or just being exploited to the benefit of the West. Note that the Japanese and Taiwanese, for instance, participate in the worldwide global economy not because every Japanese or Taiwanese can speak English – as a matter of fact, most of them do not – but because they are empowered to function in successful economies that operate in the indigenous languages. Only a small elite in the white collar sector interface and communicate with the foreign nodes of the worldwide networks of the global economic system in the dominant lingua franca, English. Alexander's essay can thus be interpreted as a plea for decreasing, if the current political systems are incapable of stopping it, the marginalization of the vast majority of African populations from the education systems and the politics of their respective nations, thus for a 'radical democratization of African societies'. The reader is invited to think over this alternative approach to the coexistence of ex-colonial and more indigenous languages in Africa.

1.3 Some Relevant Interpretations of *Globalization*

In this introduction, we have so far not anchored our discussions in globalization and have referred to it without really discussing what it is. There are two important reasons for this. First, there is an obvious correlation between the variable speeds at which language endangerment and loss have proceeded over the past half-millennium and the particular style in which European nations have colonized particular parts of the world. Indigenous languages have vanished the most in settlement colonies than elsewhere. Trade colonies and exploitation colonies have actually introduced new language varieties (Mufwene 2001ff), although the latter have concurrently created new ecologies of language coexistence (especially through urbanization) that have triggered new dynamics of competition among the indigenous languages themselves. This particular correlation between style of colonization and the fate of the indigenous languages has in fact prompted Mufwene (2001ff) to take a retroactive perspective on human history of population movements and contacts, hoping to better understand whether the consequences of recent history of language contacts is that different from the linguistic consequences of, for instance, the colonization of England by the Germanics, of especially continental

southwestern Europe by the Romans, and of Europe and South Asia by the Indo-Europeans. From this perspective, we can also determine whether worldwide globalization, rather than local globalization dynamics, is the main reason why indigenous languages have been vanishing so fast in some parts of the world. Can worldwide globalization be dissociated from colonization, be it political or economic, in modern terms?

The second reason for our approach in this introduction is that language practice in Africa today is largely a legacy of colonial traditions, one of which is the imposition of the European colonial languages as emblems of socioeconomic status and political power (Mazrui and Mazrui 1998). It is a tradition that has also perpetuated them as tools of socioeconomic exclusion, of oppression and exploitation. We think that understanding these 'local' ecologies of language coexistence and competition, without dwelling too much and precociously on worldwide globalization, can shed interesting light on why the current experience of language endangerment and loss does not sound as grim in Africa as in the rest of world. We do not of course ignore the heavy toll that the Bantu expansion over the past five thousand years or so has inflicted on the Pygmy and Khoesan languages, nor that suffered by the Khoesan languages from the settlement of South Africa by the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries especially. On the contrary, we think that there is something to learn from all this differential evolution of languages in assuming that the Indo-European dispersal continues to date, although its linguistic consequences are not uniform around the world (Mufwene 2008). We may even want to consider the alternative that what has been acknowledged recently as worldwide economic globalization is yet another facet and consequence of a new form of colonization in which trade and exploitation have become difficult to extricate from each other and Western metropolitan states have disengaged from political accountability to the exploited populations, although they can intervene militarily to protect the interests of multinational companies in which their citizens are heavily invested.

It is thus deliberately that we have left globalization on the back burner in this introduction, although much of the current literature on language endangerment and loss has just done the opposite, often invoking colonization only implicitly. Unfortunately, the same literature has not bothered much to explain *globalization* itself nor question whether worldwide rather than local globalization was really responsible for the current experience of language endangerment and loss. We would be remiss not to invite the reader to put its different interpretations, or perhaps just facets of the same phenomenon, in perspective, so that they can appreciate the contributions to this volume against the prevailing literature in a more informed way. We focus on the relevant meanings of the term, on which of them bear(s) on language vitality, and on whether it is accurate to consider it a recent phenomenon.

We start with two interpretations of *globalization* that stand out. The first is what Francophone linguists have typically identified as *mondialisation*, in

reference to the interconnectedness of different parts of the world thanks to better networks of communication and transportation, which have facilitated both world exchanges of goods manufactured in different parts of the world and more movements of people who now can remain connected to their places of origins while residing (permanently) in the host country. Thanks to improved communication and transportation technologies, we can now also witness almost instantaneously what is going on in distant parts of the world, consume fresh produce originating in distant climates, communicate almost in the same limited number of European languages, chiefly English, with colleagues and business partners at various points of the planet, and, among other things, sustain the emergent ethnic diasporas as if we all lived in adjacent neighborhoods. These developments have led some optimists to claim that geographical distances and time zone differences have been reduced if not eliminated, that the world has become smaller and more uniform and that cultural and linguistic diversities are vanishing. Little attention has been given to observations that globalization has either widened inequities between the economically more and less developed parts of the world (Stiglitz 2002) or introduced new forms of diversity (Tomlinson 1999). As many contributions to this book show, Africa is still far from experiencing either linguistic Westernization or any kind of cultural and linguistic homogenization. The linguistic Westernization of Africa has remained very much contained by its current socioeconomic structure, limited to a small elite socioeconomic class. If we can speak of some parallel evolutions that set most of Africa in a separate category of its own from the perspective of language vitality, the European languages are not the ones prevailing at the expense of the indigenous ones, and language endangerment is being experienced more in the city than in rural areas, subject to various other ecological factors.

This variable evolution is driven primarily by the second interpretation of globalization as interdependencies that obtain locally among various components of a complex socioeconomic system. Although local economic systems are very much influenced by worldwide global economic trends, populations of different localities adapt primarily, though not exclusively, to local socioeconomic ecological pressures, which affect them directly. Although multinational companies have been at the center of the literature on globalization, especially in linguistics, global economic systems need not cross national or regional boundaries. They are fundamentally local, based on some sort of complementary distribution among the different components, such as (i) dependable transportation and communication infrastructures (for the traffic of ideas, manufactured goods, farming produce and people) and (ii) reliable utility services (in water, electricity and healthcare, which support the industry and labor) within the same town or cluster thereof, as well as (iii) interdependencies between different domains of expertise (such as between masons, carpenters, electricians and other utility service men in the housing industry). Even the plantation slave system operated on this local globalization model,

which led everybody operating within the same system to shift quickly to the dominant language of the system, while independent farms evolved at their own separate pace towards the emergence of a common national vernacular in the statewide colony.⁷ Communication between the different sectors of such complex systems requires a common language, a phenomenon that becomes evident in urban centers, which have tended to evolve toward monolingualism, unless different parts of the city are highly ethnicized or racialized and each one is almost autonomous, while they are united by a central administration that is bi- or multilingual, as in Brussels.

It is not surprising that language endangerment and loss are the most advanced in polities where urbanization, industrialization and local globalization are the most advanced. These are also territories where a dominant majority of the population is urban and the economic gap in industrial development and buying power per capita between the rural and urban environments is less and less significant, as in North America and Western Europe. Language shift has been driven more by ecological pressures from the socioeconomic system than by any national language policy, which makes the case of Israel quite exceptional, with the peculiar history of its foundation and its relations with its neighbors, as explained in Chapter 8 by Robert Chaudenson. The experience of language endangerment and loss in Africa is so different because its local globalization is nowhere close to what can be observed in the West. The continent is little industrialized and the few industries to be found there are typically urban phenomena and more than half of its indigenous people are still rural (averaging recently to 57 per cent, according to a United Nations 2004 report.), experiencing little pressure for shifting from their traditional languages or cultures. Note also that even the massive migrations of the latter to the city have proceeded in quite peculiar ways. Cities have become bigger faster than anywhere else in the world over the past few decades, often due to economic desperation in the countryside; and they have grown not by some design but rather by the mushrooming of shanty towns around the pre-Independence urban centers, with populations that are only partly urbanized and straddle between the urban and rural ways. The less integrated populations continue to function in their ethnic vernaculars at home and/or neighborhoods. Although their children typically acquire the urban vernacular as their mother tongue, continued migrations from the rural areas has continued to supply speakers of the ethnic vernaculars and other regional lingua francas. This is more remarkable in second-order cities and smaller towns, as explained by Eyamba Bokamba in Chapter 5.⁸

The notion of *glocalization*, more commonly invoked in multicultural studies and invoked in this volume by Robert Chaudenson (see also Mufwene 2008), is ultimately relative to the degree of advancement of local globalization and the integration of the latter in the *mondialisation* phenomenon. The connection between *glocalization* and *mondialisation* articulates the gap between the haves

and have-nots, making some parts of the world more alike than others, despite the undeniable local cachets that can be observed across, for instance, MacDonald eateries and Hilton hotels around the world (Marling 2006). A factor bearing on it is also socioeconomic class, which creates the kinds of local, intranational divides well illustrated by the novel that Jan Blommaert discusses in Chapter 11, with some segments of the national population, especially in the urban centers, being more connected to the world outside their polities than others. As Blommaert articulates this, it depends largely on whether one lives in the town center and thus has access to some socioeconomic privileges or in its periphery and is excluded from the privileges. It also depends on whether one evolves in a geographical area that has benefited the most from industrialization and some Westernization or has been excluded from such evolution. Thus globalization qua *mondialisation* does not bear uniformly on the interactions of citizens of the same country, as Eyamba Bokamba and Fiona Mc Laughlin show so well in relation to the coexistence of French and the indigenous languages in DRC and Senegal, respectively. Almost the same experience is true of Morocco, as is explained by Ahmed Boukous in Chapter 6, which portrays Amazigh as primarily rural and represents lack of both Arabization and Gallicization. It is all so reminiscent of the fact that in North America, the indigenous languages and cultures have survived the most in places least exposed to European influence, typically on the reservations, as long as the Native Americans themselves were not mixed among themselves and/or European Americans did not move in to claim some of their lands too (Banner 2005). As explained in Mufwene (2008), the ensuing hardship and the concurrent lure of the world outside the reservation exerted pressure to shift to the language and culture of the new population majority, predominantly of European descent and speaking English. The Brazilian Amazon is another interesting example of how marginalization from the ongoing economic changes can protect indigenous languages. Until its deforestation started, the Native Americans who inhabit(ed) this rain forest hardly came in contact with the Western-style culture and language(s) that had spread in the rest of Brazil. These contacts have exerted new ecological pressures on the populations to either shift from their traditions and/or relocate to join the dominant population and its more globalized socioeconomic system. They have thus endangered the Natives' ancestral languages and cultures.

It is myopic to assume that either fundamental interpretation of *globalization* is a recent development or to assume that globalization qua *mondialisation* is disconnected from colonization. As is obvious from Smith (2005), the colonization of Africa by Europe was in itself already an instance of Africa's connection to the world economy, albeit as a source of raw materials, with the modes of exploitation and the rate of production determined by institutions outside the continent. As is evident from Ostler (2003) and well explained by economic historians such as Cowen (2001), globalization is an old phenomenon in human

history, though it has become more and more complex in modern times. It has always been characterized by convergence in the modes of production and consumption styles facilitated by wider diffusion of goods through long-distance trade routes.

Long before the European 'Great Explorations' of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Phoenicians had established trade colonies around the Mediterranean, the Greeks and Macedonians had built a Hellenic Empire that consisted primarily of trade colonies and the Romans had already set up a vast empire straddling in style between the exploitation and settlement models all in the interest of Rome, bequeathing us, among other things, the saying 'all roads lead to Rome'. The forerunners of all such ventures appear to lie in the colonization of hunter-gatherers everywhere, at the dawn of civilization, by farmers and pastoralists. As pointed out by Cowen (2001), they have repeatedly been enhanced by the invention of better and faster means of transportation, with inequities in the control of wealth following from unequal inventions of technology and developments of armies, as well as from advantages that writing and literacy provided to those who controlled technology and power. Colonization of any style and some form of globalization and its inequities in how the benefits are shared have thus proceeded hand in hand. In Africa, the geographical expansion of the Bantu population, which has resulted in the domination and assimilation, sometimes in further marginalization, of the Pygmy and Khoesan populations is reminiscent of the Indo-European expansion, which continues to date in the world. As explained by Herman Batibo in Chapter 3 (see also Mufwene 2001) it caused the gradual loss of the Khoesan languages and cultures (not without their partial impacts on those of their colonizers) in basically the same way that Indo-European languages expanded geographically and speciated in Europe, while the pre-Indo-European languages were vanishing. This was of course the effect of settlement colonization, which has triggered similar effects recently in the Americas and Australia.

Just like the Hellenic Empire was replaced by the Roman Empire, the colonization of the Pygmies and Khoesans by the Bantu has been replaced by that of Africa by the Europeans. On the other hand, just like the Hellenic Empire, the European colonization of Africa has little affected the linguistic landscape of Africa, except in introducing the European languages as *lingua francas* for communicative functions considered ethnographically high, occasioning the emergence of indigenous urban vernaculars such as urban Wolof and urban Lingala, concurrent with the wider spread of some indigenous languages (e.g., Swahili, Hausa), and the emergence of Afrikaans. Thus, European languages have generally been associated with functions in which they hardly compete with the indigenous languages, in more or less the same ways that Aramaic and Ancient Greek once did. The position of European languages in Africa is even more similar to that of Latin in today's Romance countries of Europe after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, as an emblem of the socioeconomic

elite and largely an urban phenomenon. Their future appear likewise to be tied to how African economies have been evolving, though, as in the case of the Romance countries, one must also factor in the role that nationalisms play in the vitality and restructuring of languages. This is one of the ramifications of Neville Alexander's contribution to this volume.

As noted earlier, from the point of view of the spread of European languages and their impact on indigenous languages, language evolution has proceeded differently in Africa than in the Americas (especially North America) and Australia. This differential evolution appears to be strongly correlated with differences in colonization styles and in the nature of the ensuing glocalization. A dimension of this has involved human traffic and, more recently, migrants perceived as a problem. As a matter of fact, migrations caused either by economic hardship in the country of origin or by armed political conflicts, which have forced many people to seek refuge in other countries, have become part of the demographic dynamics in Africa today. They raise a host of questions regarding language vitality that have seldom been investigated.

In the case of massive refugee exoduses, one of the questions regards the extent to which the vacuum left in the home country affects the vitality of languages. Will the few members of the same ethnolinguistic group left behind shift to another language in order to protect their identity and get their children to speak nothing else but the other language? Will those who left ever return to rebuild the critical mass that their language needs in order to thrive? What happens in the host countries? Are the refugees kept together and in isolation from the host populations, in places where they can continue to evolve in their own cultures and languages? Or are they given refuge in places where they can interact regularly with the host populations and their children acquire the latter's languages as their vernaculars? Is there any hope for them to return home or are they settled almost for good? For instance, during the Angolan struggle for Independence, many Angolans lived in the DRC, integrated within the host population. By the time of Independence, many were connected to Angola more by ideology and nationality than by any knowledge of its languages and other cultural realities. We have met a few of them in the West who are better speakers of Lingala and French than of Kizombo and Portuguese, or any other Angolan language. In this case, as in many others, of refugee exodus caused by armed conflicts, more important proportions of speakers of the language were left home than fled to other countries. The question is whether cases exist where most speakers of a particular language left, leaving behind a small number who need to join other groups that welcome them to survive?

There are also many (im)migrants whom the late American president Gerald Ford once identified as economic refugees. They have generally relocated not as groups but as individuals, have settled where they could find a roof and earn a living, have often not found people speaking the same ethnic vernacular and have communicated with people from the same country either in one of the

national languages or in their ex-colonial European official language. Many of them have experienced attrition of their knowledge of their ethnic languages and have not transmitted them to their children. The dynamics of language competition in exile is precisely one way to consider the practice of Wolof as a Senegalese language among Senegalese expatriates, as discussed by Fiona Mc Laughlin in Chapter 7. Similar observations have been made by Vigouroux (2008; also Chapter 11, this volume) about usage of Lingala and Swahili among DRC Congolese in Cape Town (South Africa) and by Meeuwis (1997) and Meeuwis and Blommaert (1998) about Lingala among the same Congolese immigrants to Belgium, where a particular neighborhood in Brussels is nicknamed *Matonge* (after a neighborhood in Kinshasa) because of the exceptionally high concentration of them. There are undoubtedly many Congolese who have learned Lingala there rather than in DRC.

All in all, such cases of competition of languages indigenous to Africa abroad shed light on the fact that even at home indigenous African languages compete more among themselves than with the European languages of their respective countries. While globalization has dispersed speakers to various places around the world and subjected the competence of some of them to attrition, it has not changed the nature of the competition among first-generation immigrants, even when the host country's language has imposed itself as the new vernacular of many.

Notes

- ¹ As becomes obvious later, we use *vitality* as an umbrella term for the maintenance, endangerment and loss of languages.
- ² In the interest of avoiding digressions, we will specify the relevant meanings of these terms only at critical points of this chapter, when it is evident that the reader would be confused if we did not make obvious which particular interpretation applies. The wealth of interpretations that the reader should be aware of will thus emerge gradually.
- ³ This peculiarity of the American trade colonies still calls for an explanation. Elsewhere, even in Canton, where the Chinese kept the English at bay and stipulated the conditions of trade with them, the lingua franca was generally a European language, regardless of whether or not it evolved into a pidgin. The adoption of indigenous languages in the colonization of continental Africa, which would lead to the emergence of new varieties such as Kikongo-Kituba, Lingala and Sango and the further expansion of others such as Hausa, Swahili and Songhai, was concurrent with the exploitation colonization of the land (Mufwene 2008).
- ⁴ This raises interesting questions. For instance, what is the impact of the national boundaries inherited from the European colonial regime on how different individuals identify the boundaries of their ethnic affiliations. When ethnicity straddles across national boundaries, do the latter affect their sense of ethnolinguistic

identity? How do populations' attitudes toward ethnicity affect the vitality of the languages of their repertoires?

⁵ Chaudenson's comment here partly echoes a curious ideology within the Organisation Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie according to which partnerships can be formed between French and the indigenous languages of member states to ward off the dangerous expansion of English. This official position is akin to Swaan's (2001) and Calvet's (2006) 'gravitational' model of language constellations, according to which, as explained in passing earlier, 'peripheral languages' can be rallied around 'central' languages to support each other against external influences such as the expansion of English, a 'supercentral language' in the context of globalization as a worldwide network of interdependencies. Ironically, Robert Chaudenson (p.c. 2005) does not believe that the gravitational model is an adequate representation of the coexistence of languages within national boundaries or of the ethnographic division of labor between them.

⁶ Ironically, Claude Hagège himself, a Frenchman, has also published in English!

⁷ It is informative that in the North American colonies the first immigrants who shifted languages were the economically most destitute, namely, the African slaves and the European indentured servants, who had immediately been integrated in the socioeconomic architecture of the relevant colonies. It took the populations that were economically more autonomous and settled by nationalities a longer time, sometimes up to the twentieth century, to shift to the prevailing language, English (Mufwene 2008). As is quite evident from the histories of Quebec and Louisiana in particular, the socioeconomic pressures are felt the most when the relevant populations have access to the relevant job markets or are absorbed in the relevant socioeconomic structures.

⁸ While Mufwene (2008) is correct in analogizing the loss of African languages on the plantations of slave colonies with the emergence of monolingualism among the indigenous populations in African cities, we must note that his emphasis was on the role of children as the central factor in language shift at the population level. Otherwise, the shift is not complete yet.

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