Different languages, different futures? Education, language, and (im)mobility in Dakar, Senegal

By

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Dedication

To my friend, teacher, and colleague, Ismaila Massaly.

"If it doesn't snow"

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This dissertation explores the links between education, language, and social class in Dakar, Senegal. It is based on 16 months of ethnographic field research in two private bilingual schools – a lower-fee French-Arabic *école franco-arabe* and a higher-fee French-English *école bilingue*. Drawing on theories of decoloniality, language ideologies, sociocultural (re)production, and aspiration frameworks, it traces the ways in which colonization, ongoing structures of coloniality, and globalization informed narratives about the purposes of education and the ways in which different languages are used and valued across the two focal schools. It also examines how larger societal views of these different types of educations and languages shaped the ways in which students imagined their own social positionings and futures within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces.

It argues that education is an institution onto which students project their hopes, aspirations, and desires, but that the ability of students to realize their aspirations in tangible ways is stratified across language and social class. The findings illustrate the ways in which different languages are linked to different forms and understandings of education, knowledge, and success. Arabic is understood as a language for religious pursuits, providing prestige in Islamic spaces in Senegal as well as in the larger Muslim, Arabic-speaking world. French is the language of the secular in Senegal, linked to Western-centric education and knowledge that in the past provided clear pathways to social and economic success. The concomitant shrinking of public employment opportunities and the rise of "global" English has seen the spread of private, English bilingual education which, though highly sought after, remains accessible primarily only to a small, well-off group. While this project examines schooling in Senegal, it speaks to larger concerns around the world about youth futures and the role of education as both empowering and disillusioning.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

[F]ull of hope, ambition, and generosity, [youth] are the vital force that inspires our march towards the Senegal of our dreams. And in the long term of the Nation, it is the youth of today who will maintain the legacy of our shared history tomorrow…There is no better gift than quality education and training to prepare our youth to overcome adversity and to pave the road to success.

— President Macky Sall, New Year Speech, December 31, 2017

In July 2020, a few days before the annual *Tabaski*[1] celebration, Ngoné Mbaye was stopped by a local news crew in a small market. She was selling rope for 500 CFA (approximately $1 USD) a piece, to be used to leash the *moutons* people bought for the holiday. Asked about her sales, Ngoné began speaking about her experience as a young mother struggling to support her family. Eventually she broke down in tears, saying,

> You study so hard but you don't have any work. You're not able to find work. It's really difficult. We study so hard and still we don't have work. No one helps anyone. This is why I didn't want to speak with you [the interviewer], because I'm going to cry. The people who are supposed to help you don't help. They just watch you suffer. You study so hard to avoid having to steal. I don't want to have to steal or sell myself. This is why I didn't want to speak with you.[2] (translation mine)

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[1] Also known as Eid al-Adha, Tabaski commemorates the sacrifice of a *mouton* (sheep/ram) by Abraham in place of sacrificing his son. Families buy *mouton* that they slaughter at home to cook for themselves and to share with poorer families. These *moutons* can range in price anywhere from 45,000 CFA to 500,000 CFA (approximately $80 to $900 USD), with some even selling for up to $3,500 depending on size of the animal and other breeding factors (Maclean, 2020; Ninot, 2009). During this time of year many people like Ngoné hoc items related to the holiday.

[2] The interview can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/G5FCEYpMdlo

Ngoné's interview went viral, striking a chord with other young "diplômés-chômeurs" (unemployed graduates) (Marie 2002, p. 208, as cited in Prothmann, 2019, p. 216). Ngoné, at least, has a seemingly happy ending, as 24 hours after the interview first aired she was offered a position with a local consulting firm.

Ngoné's situation is in no way unique. Youth around the world are repeatedly told that education is essential for both individual success and larger societal advancement, for a "better life" filled with gainful employment, increased wages, better health, and overall happiness (UNESCO, 2014; World Bank, 2011; Ray & Poonwassie, 1992). These promises of education have led many young people and their families to invest great amounts of time, money, and effort in completing education programs (Jeffery, et al, 2008, p. 9). However, even as access to education expands, the promised opportunities continue to remain elusive for most students (e.g. Vavrus, 2007; Bajaj, 2010; Froer, 2012; Maddox, 2010; Jeffery et al, 2008; Osella & Osella, 2000). This is the perpetual paradox of education, offering purportedly unlimited opportunities for social advancement and empowerment while at the same time remaining one of the most enduring institutions of inequality.

This dissertation examines this 'siren song' of education, looking at the ways in which language and social class intersect and shape the ways in which different types of education – and by extension people, groups, ideas, and epistemes - are valued. This project was conducted in Senegal, a Muslim-majority yet secular Francophone country, because of its long history of "parallel" education systems in the form of Islamic Arabic- and African language-medium education and secular French-medium education (Villalón & Bodian, 2012). Recently, increased efforts are being made to "modernize" Islamic schooling by including secular subjects and languages in the form of *écoles franco-arabes* (French-Arabic schools), as well as a growing private education sector that seeks to meet growing demands for English-language education in the form of *écoles bilingues* (bilingual French-English schools).

This project compares two of these different types of private bilingual schools – *écoles franco-arabes* and *écoles bilingues* - to trace the ways in which colonization, ongoing structures of coloniality, and globalization inform narratives about the purposes of education, the ways in which different languages are used and valued, and how these larger societal views of educations and languages shape the ways in which students imagine their own social positionings and futures. This dissertation asks the following questions: (1) How do linguistic, socioeconomic, and educational differences shape Senegalese students' aspirations and imagined futures?; 2) How are these students' educational and linguistic practices and ideologies linked to their understandings of and strategies for social mobility and success?; and 3) What do students' experiences in these schools reveal about how education, language, and social class (re)produce belonging and exclusion within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces?

In summary, this study examines Senegalese students' understandings, resistances, rejections, and reworkings (Katz, 2004) of linguistic and class-based structures, histories, and ideologies that mediate the transformative potential of their educations and their differential access and ability to bring this potential to bear in tangible ways to their everyday lives. In examining students' experiences at these two types of bilingual schools, I view education as a multiscalar temporal amalgamation of the hopes, fears, aspirations, and anxieties of individuals, families, and communities. In particular, I focus on the ways in which language and class influence students' experiences of education and shape their aspirations and future trajectories within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces.

Education: A contradictory resource

Education has long been a cornerstone of both nation-building and developmental policy, argued to reduce poverty (UNESCO, 2017), drive economic growth (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007), and foster peace and stability (Harris & Morrison, 2012), amongst many other contributions.

Billions of dollars have been spent by governments and international development agencies in efforts to expand education programs around the world. However, as many scholars have shown, there is often a profound difference between the promises of education and students' daily experiences of education (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Different types of education – public vs private, secular vs religious, monolingual vs bilingual - open different future trajectories and hold different social values, which are in turn mediated by local, national, transnational, and global histories and structures as well as by families' and students' means and abilities to gain access to specific educational spaces. What happens, then, when lofty goals and ambitions come into contact with the institutional reality of education, formed and tethered as it is to the historical legacy of colonization and mass schooling? How does the "sonorous rhetoric" about the promises of education mesh with youth's daily experiences in schools (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 61)? How does language mirror education as both inclusionary and exclusionary? How do youth reconcile education as a contradictory resource, as both empowering and disillusioning? These are the core questions this dissertation examines.

In examining these questions, it is important to first understand what is meant by the term "education". At its broadest conceptualization, education "subsumes culture and politics, the informal and the formal, the incidental and the intentional" (Varenne, 2007, p. 1570). It encompasses any activity that transmits between generations "knowledge, values, aesthetics, spiritual beliefs, and all things that give a particular cultural orientation its uniqueness" (Shujaa, 1993, pp. 330-331; Spindler, 1974). Education is the myriad ways, large and small, formal and informal, that parents, families, neighbors, and communities prepare children and young people to take on adult roles in their society (Moumouni, 1964).

Formal education, or schooling, refers to an institutionalized form of education. While formal education has a long history and has always been part of education writ large, formal

education as commonly thought of today is marked by increased national control and standardization and has its roots in the mass education efforts of Western European nation-states in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Ramirez & Boli, 1987). Modern schooling is guided by "the principle of the classroom" and "egg-carton" schools, where children are grouped together by age into graded classrooms, usually taught by one teacher, and learn from standardized curricula and materials (Meyer & Ramirez, 2000). When national governments and development agencies speak of the benefits of education, it is most usually formal education to which they refer.

This distinction between education as an institution and education as a broader concept points to the often ambiguous ways the term 'education' can be used by different actors. Exhortations of the transformative power of education (in the broad sense) are put into practice and measured in formal, institutional terms such as school enrolment, grades, completion rates, and the acquisition of official credentials. In dominant social imaginaries, education as a concept has come to be legible only through these institutional frameworks. This is not to say that other conceptualizations and practices of education beyond these institutional norms have ceased to exist; to the contrary, innumerable scholars, activists, and educators have worked to promote, protect, and reimagine education both beyond and within institutional boundaries (e.g. Freire, 1970/2005; Smith, 2005; Paris & Alim, 2007; Kane, 2012). However, these dominant social imaginaries about what education should look like and what students should receive from their education have great power, and they are in a mutually-reinforcing relationship with the institution of education.

Numerous critical scholars have argued that education as an institution is a central part of "the structure and exercise of power and hegemony in modern capitalist societies" (Schaller de la Cova, 2013, p. 4; Willis, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977/1990; Bowles & Gintis, 1976/2011; MacLeod, 2009). As a result, students and educations that are not easily legible through the institutional lens are too often overlooked, ignored, and blamed for their own struggles and failings.

In other words, unequal outcomes (e.g. dropping out of school, failing classes, difficulty finding post-graduation employment, etc.) are divorced from larger structures and practices that reproduce inequalities in terms of class, language, race, gender, and many other factors, with blame cast solely on the individual (Archer, 2007). In this way, education is a contradictory resource in that while it may offer "certain freedoms and opportunities, at the same time [it may also] further draw students into dominant projects of nationalism and capitalist labor formation, or bind them even more tightly to systems of class, gender, and race inequality" (Levinson & Holland, 1996, p. 1).

In conceptualizing how education acts as a contradictory resource in the postcolonial context of Senegal, I use decoloniality as a primary lens of analysis. Through this lens, I draw on theories of language ideology, educational and linguistic sociocultural (re)production, and aspiration frameworks in order to situate the predominantly Eurocentric discourses about the promises of education within the larger historical, cultural, epistemological, and political-economic systems that continue to influence the lived experiences and aspirations of those living in postcolonies (Quijano, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mignolo, 2011; Mpofu, 2013).

Decoloniality theorists argue that the power structures first established under European colonization continue today in the form of "coloniality." Arising out of colonialism, coloniality is the organizing logic, justification, history, and tradition that supports the reproduction of inequality. Coloniality goes beyond codified laws and structures of government; "it is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self…In a way, as modern subjects we breath coloniality all the time and everyday" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243).

The logics of coloniality shape and inform language ideologies, which are about much more than just language. Language ideologies are linked to the "construction and legitimation of power, the production of social relations of sameness and difference, and the creation of cultural

stereotypes about types of speakers and social groups" (Spitulnik, 1998, p. 164; Kroskrity, 2004).

They are also loaded with "moral and political interests" which serve to both explicitly and implicitly

normalize social hierarchies (Irvine, 1989, p. 254; Wortham, 2001). Schools are key sites where these

ideologies are developed and contested, serving to "reshuffle the symbolic hierarchy" of the various

linguistic repertoires of their students in such a way that the use and value of certain languages – and

by extension speakers - come to be normalized over others (Blommaert, 2013, p. 8).

Structures of coloniality reproduce the status quo in which European ways of speaking,

knowing, and being are understood as superior and therefore essential for future success. It is this

Eurocentric worldview that guides and shapes people's decisions and actions as they strive for social,

cultural, and economic success and mobility. Schools are part of a political economic and

sociocultural apparatus that shapes students' meanings, perceptions, and values (Hannerz, 1987).

They both produce and reproduce inequalities and disadvantages, and privileges and advantages

(Willis, 1977; Demerath, 2009; Howard, 2008).

Lastly, I draw on aspiration frameworks that foreground temporal considerations in analyses

of young people, education, and their imagined futures. Schools are an institution onto which young

people, families, and communities project their hopes for the future (Cole & Durham, 2008;

Haberlein & Maurus, 2020). Importantly, students' futures are neither completely predetermined nor

are they entirely based in the realm of imagination and wish; rather, futures are constructed through

ongoing "back- and forth processes" between actors and their social, economic, and environmental

conditions (Pelican & Heiss, 2014, p. 1; Martin, Ungruhe & Haberlein, 2016). Applying a future-

oriented aspiration framework to my analysis permits for an accounting of both "the role of the past

in processes of social reproduction, but also theorizes the conjuncture of differently valued and

realizable possibilities" available to students (Stambach, 2017, p. 3).

This framework allows me to conceptualize education as a site of fraught convergence between people's aspirations, lived experiences, and policy and structural constraints. Based in the Senegalese context, this project adds to larger discussions about education, inequality, and (re)production. It foregrounds the ways in which language and class influence student's experiences of education and shape their aspirations and future trajectories. It calls for increased attention to the temporal aspects of education as a site that encompasses past choices, present circumstances, and future imaginaries, and the ways in which students both situate themselves and are situated by others along this temporal spectrum. My work also shows how students interact with schools, families, and communities as systems and institutions and the ways that these systems enable or constrain students' aspirations both individually and collectively. In framing students' experiences of education as part of larger social projects of aspiration and future making, it elucidates the ways in which social realities emerge and are created that mediate the transformative potential of students' educations and the ways in which students make sense of the disjunctures between conventional beliefs about educational success, their aspirations and ambitions, and their lived experiences.

Dissertation Map

Chapter 2 provides a historical background for this study. I provide an overview of the Senegalese linguistic context, and trace the emergence of Islamic education, private schooling, and private bilingual schooling, as well as youth movements and understandings of success.

Chapter 3 expands on my theoretical framework. As many critical education theories developed in response to the needs and aspirations of Western oppressed classes and therefore do not include the ongoing effects of colonialism in their analyses (Santos, 2014), I use decoloniality as my primary lens of analysis. Through this lens, I draw on theories of language ideology, educational and linguistic sociocultural (re)production, and aspiration frameworks.

Chapter 4 explains research methods. Designed as a comparative case study between two

private bilingual schools (one French-English, the other French-Arabic), this chapter focuses specifically on the ways in which language shaped research interactions with participants, as well as analysis and writing of findings.

Chapter 5 presents ethnographic findings from the Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School (IMFAS). It examines the ways in which students talked about the relationship between education, language, and different forms of success. I argue that students struggled to make claims to three forms of citizenship: cultural citizenship (as arabophone Muslims), national citizenship (as francophone Senegalese), and global citizenship (as both arabophones and aspiring anglophones).

Chapter 6 presents ethnographic findings from the Bilingual Academy of Senegal (BAS). I argue that the culture of BAS was shaped extensively by a "global logic," wherein success was primarily defined as gaining English "native-speaker" fluency and attending university in Europe or North America. With success continuously framed as hinging on the acquirement of a white form of European bilingualism, students did not see the need to learn with and through their home languages. Thus, I argue that the education they were receiving both alienated them from their home communities and positioned them as perpetual "outsiders" within a modern world organized by colonial logics.

Chapter 7 looks at both schools and examines the complex interplay between students' middle-class identities, their educational experiences and linguistic skills, and their migration aspirations. I argue that education, language, and migration (both actual and aspired) play crucial roles in students' middle-class identity projects. This chapter illustrates how students' migration aspirations are heavily classed and languaged, in particular in regard to the ways in which students talked about and understood their language educations as providing both pathways and barriers to future migration.

Chapter 8 brings together the themes discussed in the previous chapters. It summarizes my

findings on the relationship between education, language, and social mobility and discusses this relationship shaped students' aspirations in both schools. It points to avenues for future research that bring together decoloniality and future-oriented aspiration frameworks in order to better conceptualize the temporal aspects of students' lived experiences.

Chapter 2

Historical Background and Context

In this chapter, I begin with a brief overview of the Senegalese linguistic context. I then trace the emergence of different types of education in Senegal and associated debates surrounding the purpose and value of education. Presented roughly in a linear fashion, the chapter sections are divided by type of education in order to more clearly present narratives that do justice to their complex histories and the ways they intersect with political, cultural, and social movements and values. I begin with a history of Islamic education in Senegal as it is one of the longest forms of education in Senegal, followed by colonial education and the formation of Senegalese public schooling, and then turn to the introduction of private educational institutions and bilingual schooling. These three histories are then followed by a discussion of different forms of success developed by youth and their responses to education as a contradictory resource.

Linguistic overview of Senegal

Senegal can be divided into two distinct linguistic areas: the north and the south. The northern linguistic zone is between Mauritania and The Gambia and has three main languages in terms of number of speakers: Wolof, Pulaar, and Sereer. The southern linguistic zone is called the Casamance and is located south of The Gambia and has a larger number of languages than the north; it also has stronger linguistic, cultural, and historical ties with neighboring countries Guinea Bissau, the Gambia, and Guinea Conakry than it does with northern Senegal (Ngom, 2004, p. 105). This study took place in Dakar, which is in the northern zone of Senegal.

According to Ethnologue, 37 languages are spoken in Senegal (Lewis, et al, 2013). Of these 37, French is the official language, with Jola, Malinka, Pulaar, Sereer, Soninke, and Wolof deemed national languages by Article I of the 1971 Senegalese constitution. In 2001, Article I was expanded, with the addition that "all codified languages are national languages." In order for a language to be

considered officially codified, it must have a defined writing system as well as an "elementary" grammar. Once this is done, "the language is recognized at the institutional level as the national language and it can be taught in schools" (Sall, 2009, p. 316). While there are ongoing programs and projects dedicated to introducing national languages into schools,[3] there is still no official national curriculum or policy mandating their use. However, as will be expanded on later this section, local languages are regularly used unofficially in schools. As of October 2020, 22 languages have been codified and are considered national languages.

As the official language, French is the primary medium of instruction in the public education system as well as in government administration. However, only 15-20% of the population speaks French, with only about 0.2% claiming French as their first language (Leclerc, 2015). French is mostly spoken in urban areas by a wealthy, well-educated minority. As such a small percentage of the population speaks French, Wolof has emerged as the national lingua franca. Approximately 42% of the population speaks Wolof as a first language, with 90% of the population speaking it as a second or third language (ibid).[4] It is regularly used in news programs, television shows, and even political speeches (Sall, 2009). The Wolof spoken in urban areas such as Dakar is markedly different from that spoken in more rural areas due to its significant borrowing of French loanwords. Importantly, the ratio of Wolof to French in a person's speech varies widely, ranging from some speakers who use "predominantly Wolof speech containing some French loan words or vice versa, to a code where the two languages are both lexically and grammatically thoroughly intertwined" (Versluys, 2008, p. 285). In contrast, *Olof Piir* ('pure Wolof'), which is spoken in more rural areas,

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[3] For more information about the use of national languages in education, see Dia (2016), Benson (2020), Seck (2009), and Dramé (2007)

[4] For more in depth history of the emergence of Wolof as a lingua franca, see McLaughlin 2009.

does not have many loanwords, if any. As the main difference between urban Wolof and *Olof Piir* is vocabulary, speakers do not have many issues conversing with each other.

Not all speakers of urban Wolof identify as members of the Wolof ethnicity, with Ngom (2004) arguing that urban Wolof has become "de-ethnicized, as it belongs to city people regardless of one's ethnic group" (p. 100). In her expansive work on urban Wolof, McLaughlin (2008) found that urban Wolof is frequently criticized as a "corrupt form of Wolof, that Wolof speakers have lost their roots in the city, have forgotten how to speak their ancestral language correctly and have to substitute French words because they do not know the right Wolof word" (p. 156). Additionally, other ethnic groups have expressed concern about the dominance of Wolof and its potential threat to the survival of their own ethnic languages (McLaughlin, 1995; Ngom, 2004; Sall, 2009).

French is not the only non-Senegalese language that has been incorporated into Senegalese linguistic practices. Arabic has been borrowed into many Senegalese languages. Importantly, even though Arabic was brought to Senegal through the spread of Islam, secular vocabulary such as "greetings, time units, including days of the week, and legal terms" are regularly used regardless of one's religion (McLaughlin, 2009, p. 151). For example, it is common to greet someone by saying "Salaam Maalekum" ("Peace be upon you" in Arabic), with the collocutor responding "Maaleekum salaam" ("And upon you" in Arabic). Analyzing the use of loanwords in urban Wolof, Swigart (2001) observed that it is common in Senegalese urban centers for conversations to begin and end in Arabic, with Wolof and French used interchangeably throughout (p. 100). Importantly, however, unlike French, Arabic "has never been used as a medium of communication in the daily life of the Senegalese people" apart from religious contexts (where use of Arabic is based more on rote memorization and not comprehension) and the borrowing of certain Arabic vocabulary and phrases (Ngom, 2003, p. 353).

English is also increasingly incorporated into people's speech in Senegal, though to a lesser

extent than French and Arabic. Comparing Wolof borrowings by language and semantic field, Thiam (2020) found that French loans were most used in relation to topics related to the "modern world," (i.e. "totally unknown concepts in traditional Wolof"), while Arabic was most commonly used for topics of religion and belief, and English trailed far behind both languages across all semantic fields (p. 156). While English is not borrowed as much as French and Arabic into daily speech patterns, it is by far the most desired language in education, as evidenced by the growing number of English-language centers and bilingual schools (Diallo, 2010). English is also more highly valued by younger speakers, with Ngom (2003) positing that it offers a form of "covert prestige" that challenges traditional political and religious valuations of language and is "perceived [by older generations] as a sign of rebellion of the urban youth against the pre-established traditional Senegalese values" (p. 359). I would add to Ngom's assertion that English is also a marker of socioeconomic capital, with levels of fluency correlated to one's ability to pay fees for private instruction and/or private school. Additionally, some scholars argue that because English "is not viewed through the same postcolonial lens as French most likely because it was not the colonizing language of Senegal" (Smith 2019, 48), its prestige seemingly transcends Senegal's colonial history. Rather than being a language of conquest, power, and violence, then, it is perceived in the popular imagination as the language of global opportunity and modernity.

This brief linguistic overview describes the ways in which different languages are used and valued in Senegal. As in most other countries, the education system plays a significant role in informing Senegalese linguistic practices and ideologies. I turn now to a discussion of the emergence of Islamic education in Senegal.

Islamic schooling in Senegal

Arabic-medium Muslim religious schooling has a long and complex history in Senegal. I provide here a an extremely general overview of the competing forces governing this type of

education in order to provide context for the development of schools such as IMFAS, and different views of the value and purpose of Islamic education in Senegal. I focus specifically on three main groups – the Sufi Brotherhoods (*tariqa* in Arabic, *confrérie* in French), the State (colonial and independent), and Islamic reformers (moderate and "radical").

In Senegal, the earliest form of Islamic education was introduced in the 11th century in the form of Qur'anic schooling (Ware, 2004, 2014). Qur'anic schools (*daara* in Wolof) at this time served primarily new converts, who would orally memorize the *hadiths, salats* (daily prayers)*,* and other necessary pillars of the religion in Arabic in order to properly practice their faith (Ndiaye, 1985). Initially, "Islam was a social status rather than a public religion" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 107). In a time organized by strict familial caste systems, conversion to Islam opened new opportunities for social advancement. As a new religious clerical caste emerged (commonly referred to as *marabout;* also called *sërigñ* in Wolof), it became possible for "casted people, slaves, and the descendants of slaves [to] become honored clerics through pursuit of [religious] knowledge" (Ware, 2014, p. 83).

Marabouts traveled extensively throughout West Africa, opening up their own Qur'anic schools that would in turn produce more religious scholars who would embark on their own journeys and create their own religious and scholarly communities. Boys were sent to the *daaras* around the age of seven to be *njángaan* (live-in students), while girls were only permitted to attend the school during the day (Ware, 2014). A central component of classical Islamic education is the intertwining of scholarly acts with physical deeds. As Ware (2014) explains, Islamic education encompasses "the three Rs - reading, writing, and recitation," which are accomplished through the three Arabic Hs (*hub, khidma, and hadiyya* – love, service, and gifts) and the three Wolof Ys (*yalwaan, yar, and yor* – alms seeking, bodily discipline, and internal possession)" (Ware, 2014, p. 76).

Focus was placed on memorization of the Qur'an, with emphasis on form and proper pronunciation, as opposed to understanding. Such an approach is based on the belief that "Divine

speech in classical Arabic [i.e. the language of the Qur'an] is untranslatable, because any translation

depends on the translator's interpretation; as the product of human effort, it is subject to error"

(Launay & Ware, 2016, p. 256). The values taught in the Qur'an were also heavily incorporated into

students' daily lives. For example, instilling humility in students was very important, so *yalwaan*

(begging for food and alms) was a cornerstone of the *daara* experience. Additionally, *njángaan* were

"explicitly expected to wear tattered rags, loincloths, and other sparse clothing meant to promote

humility and toughness" (Ware, 2014, p. 46).

Over time there developed an extensive network of Qur'anic schools and Muslim villages

across the region. As Ware (2004) explains, "Pedagogical relationships between students and

teachers combined with marriage ties to form the very foundation of the clerisy [i.e. the *marabout*

caste] itself. In clerical families, spiritual and biological genealogies were interwoven, tying men of

religion throughout Senegambia to one another and to their analogs throughout the Sudan and the

Sahara" (p. 46). Concerned about potential unrest in these new communities, local rulers worked to

accommodate the marabouts. Some of the more powerful marabouts were given the position of

serigne lamb ("drum" in Wolof), which carried "the same prerogatives as the traditional *kangam*

(holder of public office), the only difference between them being that the former was the leader of a

Muslim community and partly owed his appointment to this status" (Babou, 2007, p. 25). Other

marabouts, referred to as *serigne fakk taal,* preferred to stay out of politics, focusing instead on

religious studies, teaching, and providing spiritual guidance and support to their communities. Babou

(2007) describes the *serigne fakk taal* as "peace-loving farmers who primarily relied on their disciples'

labor and the support they received from local communities" (p. 25). Rulers had a great deal of

respect for the *serigne fakk taal,* at times asking them to act as advisors or, more frequently, as

"diviners and providers of talismans for the magical protection of the kingdom and its leadership"

(ibid). In the case of both types of *serignes*, as long as they maintained respect for the rulers, they and their villages were granted political immunity.

By the 17th century marabouts had gained increased influence due to their widespread reach across the region and the devotion of their ever-growing number of followers. As the Atlantic slave trade grew, tensions between the kings - who partnered with European slavers, frequently selling their own people into slavery – and marabouts, who largely opposed slavery, grew. As Ware (2014) explains, "[K]ings sold their own subjects to liquidate debts and to import liquor and guns. [Marabouts] developed a reputation for never selling their own people" (p. 108). As the kings sold more and more people into slavery, increasing numbers fled to the marabout communities, thus further strengthening their influence. The 17th to 19th centuries were marked by numerous violent struggles (referred to as the "marabout wars") between the kings and the marabouts and their peasant followers (Bathily, 1994). By the mid-1800s, France tipped the scale in favor of the marabouts, aligning with them in large part because their economic interests shifted from slavery (which France abolished in 1848), to goods such as groundnut and gum. The marabouts, who ruled large, predominantly agricultural, communities, became necessary allies.

By the 1850s the French began in earnest to conquer and colonize the region. Robinson (2004) points to the death of Lat Joor Joop, king of the Wolof kingdom of Kajoor, in 1886 at the hands of the French as the end of aristocratic rule and the beginning of colonial rule in Senegal (p. 185). The religious communities and networks built by the marabouts, however, remained strong against creeping imperial rule due to the "centuries of teaching, healing and proselytizing [that] had firmly rooted Islamic religious culture in Senegambia" (Ware, 2004, p. 54). Idrissa (2017) argues that during this period, Islamization became a "mass phenomenon" due to two major trends: the increasing economic autonomy of peasant farmers due to the French's desire for cash crops such as

groundnuts, which enabled farmers to support their marabouts; and the increased security provided by French colonial forces which "facilitated the circulation of people and ideas" (p. 117).

A major component of this increased circulation of people and ideas was the shift from "elite to popular Sufism" (Ware, 2014, p. 179). Sufism, commonly referred to as Islamic mysticism, is "a system of thought and a method for understanding and learning to control the *nafs* [the ego or carnal soul]" (Babou, 2007, p. 5). Over time, different *tariqas* (literally meaning "path" or "way" in Arabic) emerged. These *tariqas* were organized groups with distinct rituals and practices; they are named after their founders, on whose teachings the groups' practices are based (Ware, 2014, p. 178). The Qadiriyya *tariqa* (named after its founder, Abdul-Qadir Jilani of Baghdad) was the first to arrive in West Africa, probably around the sixteenth or seventeenth century (ibid). In the late eighteenth century the Tijaniyya *tariqa* (named after its founder, Ahmad al-Tijani of Algeria) grew in number and, under Tijani leaders such as Al-Hajj Umar Tal and Ma Ba Diakhou Bâ, became a rival to the Qadiriyya as well as strong resistors of European expansion (Robinson, 2000). During this time, "membership in the Qadiriyya and the Tijaniyya was limited almost exclusively to the spiritual elite of the clerical lineages" (Ware, 2014, p. 179). For the majority of Muslims who were not part of this spiritual elite, knowledge of the Qur'an and its teachings came only in the form of memorization in a language which they did not fully understand.

This dynamic shifted in the late 19th century due in large part to the work of reformers such as Malick Sy of the Tijaniyya *tariqa* and Ahmadou Bamba, a member of the Qadiriyya *tariqa* who later founded the Muridiyyah *tariqa* in 1883. Both Sy and Bamba came of age during this transition from aristocratic rule to colonial rule; they also both came from families of well-respected Islamic scholars, and thus spent their formative years devoted to intense study of Sufism, frequently traveling across the region to study with leading scholars. After completing their studies they both became teachers as well as prolific writers. Both Sy and Bamba were quite critical of the state of

Islamic education, arguing that Muslim teachers and scholars were corrupt, concerned more with gaining "prestige and wealth [than] their duty to dispense knowledge for the sake of God and the good of the community" (Babou, 2007, p. 80).

In response, Sy established criticized marabouts who claimed to have special powers or to have the ability to perform miracles; he also did away with the clientelist relationship between many teachers and their students, wherein the teacher "demanded a gift (*hadiya*) of their 'customers'" (Diallo, 2011, p. 30). Bamba's response was much more sweeping, designing a

> lifelong education [system] geared toward transforming the character and behavior of the disciple. It comprised three main steps: exoteric education, or *taalim*, which aimed at transmitting knowledge through the study of the Qur'an and the Islamic sciences; esoteric education, or *tarbiyya*, which targeted the soul; and ascension, *tarqiyya* (Babou, 2007, p. 81).

The goal of both leaders was to "make religious knowledge easily available to all Muslims equally" (Brenner, 2001, p. 20). Both eventually established their own religious and educational communities – Sy in Tivaoune, Bamba in Touba. Today, both cities serve as the capital of their respective *tariqas*, with thousands of followers traveling to them each year for religious study, contemplation, and celebration.

In addition to their issues with the "corruption" of Islamic schooling, Sy and Bamba were also wary of the ever-increasing French encroachment and its accompanying policy of *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission). In response to this, both leaders engaged in a "'jihad of the soul', that is, a social ideology that avoided the realm of politics while providing new structures of meaning and adaptation to the colonial world for the emerging Senegalese society" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 117). For both leaders, education was the cornerstone of this jihad of the soul. Sy's approach was to quietly subvert the educational arm of the French's *mission civilisatrice*. While he did not overtly resist French

authorities, his method of resistance was to send teachers to open Qur'anic schools in the same colonial towns where the French were establishing their own schools (Ware, 2014).

Bamba had a much more volatile relationship with the French. While he strongly and repeatedly expressed his desire to have nothing to do with politics – either with the aristocracy or with the French invaders – the sheer number and fervor of his followers made these rulers fearful of his influence. He was exiled first to Gabon for seven years (1895-1902), then to Mauritania for another four years (1903-1907), under dubious charges of conspiring to fight the French. His popularity only increased during exile, however, as "the voyage, trials in Gabon and triumphal return created the exuberant legend of blessedness, fortitude and miracles that turned the saintly status of Bamba into something nearly divine in the eyes of his followers" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 118). Throughout all of this, Bamba retained his focus on education as the "central instrument for the transformation of society…[He] called for a new pedagogy and teaching techniques that differed from those used in the classical Qur'anic schools, which primarily focused on the transmission of knowledge" (Babou, 2007, p. 113).

As Sy and Bamba were on their journeys from students to teachers to leaders, the French were implementing their own policies in regard to Islam and Islamic schooling. Believing that Islam "inculcated hostility towards the civilizing mission," French colonizers enacted numerous policies aimed at reducing the supposed radicalization that Muslim religious schooling purportedly entailed (Idrissa, 2017, p. 116). In addition to issuing numerous decrees designed to restrict the influence of Qur'anic schools, such as not allowing religious teachers to hold class during French school hours, crafting purposefully hard-to-pass authorization requirements for teachers, and forcing the closure of schools deemed to have too few students, French authorities also worked to restrict the use of the Arabic language by limiting the importation of Arabic-language publications and banning the use of Arabic in official State matters (Harrison, 1988). Such language restrictions were part of a larger

effort by the French to "quarantine" "Islam noir"[5] from the influence of the more "radical" [i.e. overtly resistant to French colonial expansion] Islam of North Africa and the Arabic world (Ware, 2014, p. 207). These "quarantine" measures, however, only served to increase solidarity with the Arabic language, with Arabic coming to be "increasingly understood as the symbol of Muslim identity" (Loiemeir, 2002, p. 125).

Such efforts were for naught, however; despite their best efforts, the number of Qur'anic schools grew exponentially, with leaders like Malick Sy and Amadou Bamba growing in popularity and further spreading Islam through their new educational approaches. In the first decade of the 20th century, the French therefore began moving from a policy of repression to one of "accommodation coupled with surveillance" (Robinson, 2000, p. 91). Such a realignment is evident in the French's attempt to create their own "modern" form of Islamic schooling that would teach students both Islamic subjects and Arabic, as well as French secular subjects. In 1908 the Médersa (taken from the Arabic word for school *madrasa*) was opened in St. Louis, which had been the capital of Senegal prior to 1902. Its purpose was "to train civil servants with a competence in both [French and Arabic], and to stress French values and civilization" (Cruise O'Brien, 1967, p. 312). While the French had great hopes that the Médersa would both "diffuse the Islamic threat and give [them] some control over the Muslim leadership" (Harrison, 1988, p. 64), in effect it served only to train a few hundred students (all men) to be "loyalist marabouts" (Ware, 2014, p. 200) and closed in 1922.

While the French's efforts to stifle Islamic schooling were not successful, their unceasing promotion of French schooling did have lasting effects on Qur'anic schooling and education at large in Senegal. Ware (2014) points to the 1920s and 1930s as a time of great transformation of the

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[5] This term was coined by colonial "experts" on Islam to refer to "African Islam" (literally it means "Black Islam"). For these "experts," "African Muslims were not true Muslims because they practiced a 'bastardized' form of Islam" (Harrison, 1988, p. 2).

traditional links between schooling and status. In early Qur'anic schooling, families rarely paid

tuition, instead supporting their teacher through the *njángaan* (live-in student) child's labor as well as

the child's earnings through *yalwaan* (begging). The lack of formal fees made religious schooling –

and therefore prestige and social status - available to all; such schooling was availed by those across

all social strata, from the nobility to former slaves. Beginning in the twentieth century, however,

more well-off families started to prefer using the economic capital they earned through the French

colonial economy to pay for their children to attend the fee-paying, selective French schools. Thus a

new relation between schooling and social status emerged; wealthier families increasingly preferred

the French school system in order to reap its economic rewards (although they also frequently used

their wealth to pay for additional Qur'anic schooling in order to preserve their social capital), while

poorer families only had access to religious schooling. In this way the associated prestige and status

of a religious education was transformed; as Ware (2014) explains, "The social significance of

mendicancy and servile labor in the *daara,* which had always mimed low status to teach

resourcefulness to the wellborn, began to shift as these activities came to be associated with true

poverty and low birth rather than their simulacra" (p. 188).

As this shift in schooling and status was taking place, the *tariqas* and the French colonial state

were coming to form what Cruise O'Brien (1992) refers to as a "social contract."[6] As Villalón (2004)

explains, "The system is built on the organization of disciples into associations [i.e. *tariqas*] tied to

religious centers led by the family dynasties that developed after the deaths of a generation of

'founding fathers' [e.g. Malick Sy, who passed away in 1922, and Amadou Bamba, who passed in

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[6] While Cruise O'Brien's concept of the "social contract" has had significant influence on
scholarship regarding religion and politics in Senegal, it has been criticized by some as overly
simplistic. For example, Babou (2013) argues that "the idea of blind submission of disciples and
unfettered power of the shaykh [religious leaders], which is at the core of the social contract
approach, needs to be mitigated" (p. 140-41).

1927] in the first quarter of the twentieth century" (p. 63). Broadly speaking, the leaders of these *tariqas* serve as an "interface" between the State and their followers (Dia, 2015, p. 2). Materially, they would support the State by paying taxes and by mobilizing the agricultural labor of their many followers to support the growing groundnut market. More importantly, however, they legitimized the State's authority in the eyes of their followers, agreeing not to engage in overt resistance[7]. In return, the State rewarded the *marabouts* with "various forms of formal sponsorship, including providing them with material resources" such as land (Cruise O'Brien, 1992, p. 9, translation mine). The State also allowed the larger *tariqas* a certain level of autonomy; for example, in 1928 the French officially recognized the territory of the city of Touba as private property of the Muridiyya, granting it a special holy status (Babou, 2013, p. 129). Importantly, as part of this autonomy, the colonial State almost completely withdrew from overseeing Qur'anic schools, which meant the *daaras* "were excluded from the possibility of state support, and left to their own devices" (Ware, 2004, p. 280).

Due to this "social contract," the *marabouts* grew in wealth and power. As Idrissa (2017) explains, "Not only did this role [as partners of the colonial State] not undermine their social authority, it actually enhanced their control (i.e. they were now much wealthier) – providing for the means to augment and reward clientage, among other things – and the political prestige they drew from the deference intentionally shown by high-ranking colonial officials and local politicians. Thanks to the religious bases of their power, the *marabouts* were able to remain independent of the colonial bureaucracy, even as they served the colonial regime" (p. 123). This mutually beneficial relationship continued until French power began to wane in the 1950s.

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[7] While many of the leaders such as Amadou Bamba had no interest in engaging in politics and therefore preferred to have the colonial State peacefully co-exist alongside their own autonomous religious communities, they remained staunchly against the French's *mission civilisatrice*, especially as it was promoted through education. They therefore engaged in what Idrissa (2017) refers to as "positive resistance," wherein instead of overtly resisting the encroaching French schools, they simply continued to expand their network and number of Qur'anic schools (p. 123).

It was during this time that a Salafist[8] *arabisant* reform movement was gaining traction. While the *arabisants* were not an entirely homogenous group, in general they consisted of Senegalese students who had returned to Senegal (in particular its urban areas) after studying at an Arabic university (Villalón, 1995). While there were earlier efforts to establish reform-minded organizations (referred to as *associations*)[9], it was the founding of the *Union Culturelle Musulmane* (UCM) in 1953 by Cheikh Touré, who had studied in Algeria, that brought the reformers' work to the fore. These reformers targeted both the colonial State as well as the powerful *marabouts*. Importantly, however, the majority of these reformers did not want to destroy Sufi social structures, "but rather invigorate them with new pedagogical approaches used elsewhere" (Ware, 2014, p. 225). Idrissa (2017) describes the UCM's three major demands thusly: "French cultural influence should be combatted by resort to the teaching of Arabic; maraboutism should be denounced; and a congruence between Islam and modernity must be worked out" (p. 125).

Education was the cornerstone of their work. They focused on transforming the classical model of Qur'anic schooling. The *arabisants'* critiques of the *daara* were twofold: pedagogically, they denounced the focus on memorization over understanding, preferring to incorporate more "modern" pedagogies that they themselves had experienced first in French schools in Senegal, and later in Arabic universities abroad; they also believed that *daaras* fostered and reproduced "social and spiritual dependency on marabouts," which they viewed as sacrilegious (Ware, 2004, p. 285). In place of the *daaras*, *arabisant* reformers began opening up their own *écoles arabes* (Arabic schools). In these

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[8] Salafists prefer a "return to pristine Islam as practiced by Prophet Muhammad" (Babou, 2007, p. 214). It derives from the Arabic word *salaf*, which means "roots"

[9] These associations included the *Union Fraternelle des Pélerins Musulmans de l'Afrique Occidentale Française,* founded in 1922, and the *Brigade de la Fraternité du Bon Musulman,* founded in 1934 (Ware, 2004, p 280). These earlier Islamic associations struggled to gain traction due in large part to the efforts of the French authorities. Idrissa (2017) links the French's distrust of these associations to their "paranoid fears" that they would ferment cultural and political dissent (p. 124)

new schools, reformers "hoped to use Arabic as a vehicle for the transmission of technical as well as religious knowledge as a means of modernizing society" (Ware, 2014, p. 213). Emphasis shifted from rote memorization with no concern about comprehension, to the teaching of Arabic grammar in the early years to ensure Arabic literacy. They also introduced subjects such as "history, mathematics, French, sports, geography, and grammar, and also started to teach subjects such as *hadith, fiqh* (law)*, and *kalam* (Islamic doctrine)" that had previously been restricted to only the most advanced scholars (Loimeier, 2002, p. 124). Crucially, these new educational forms were designed to re-make the social hierarchy wherein the religious elites (i.e. marabouts) would no longer be the "sole guardians of knowledge" (Gomez-Perez, as cited in Ware, 2014, p. 213).

To the French, these reformers "were seen as embodying a pan-Islamic threat, or even being agents of foreign regimes" due to the fact that many of them had studied in Arabic-speaking countries (Ware, 2004, p. 287). The marabouts were equally concerned, as these reformers posed a direct threat to their influence. The transition to independence was marked by complex political maneuvering between the outgoing colonial state, the newly burgeoning independent state, the marabouts, and the reformers. After the dust settled in 1960, Léopold Sedar Senghor (a Christian and Francophone[10]) emerged as the first president of the independent State of Senegal. The marabouts' mutually-beneficial relationship with the State remained largely intact. While Senegal would not be an "Islamic republic," which was the desire of the marabouts, but rather "a civil state respectful of the principle of secularism," Senghor promised that "that principle, in turn, would take into account [the marabouts'] demand for autonomy and the protection of (Sufi) Islam" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 129). In return, the marabouts would provide a large political base of support.

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[10] Idrissa (2017) describes the Francophones, who emerged after independence, as defined "by their acquisition of Western culture, their use of French as a group language, and their monopoly over state power" (p. 130). Religion is not a defining characteristic of this group, as the majority of them are Muslim in Senegal.

While the new independent State of Senegal worked to preserve this arrangement with the powerful marabouts, it also worked to forge alliances with *arabisant* reformers. Both *arabisants* and francophones were predominantly urban, educated in "modern" schools (i.e. not classical Qur'anic schools, at least not solely), and found it difficult to make inroads with the predominantly rural populations affiliated with the marabouts (Idrissa, 2017, p. 131). Both groups also had ambitions to reduce the power of the marabouts in order to "modernize" Senegalese society; while the *arabisant* reformers viewed modernization from a Salafi ideological standpoint, the francophone political elite wanted to mold Senegal into a secular "French-style civil society, that is, a society of citizens" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 130). However, the State also sought to control the influence of the reformers, as a significant part of their Salafist ideology also included critiques of the secular Senegalese State. The State therefore worked to both stifle reformist associations that were unwilling to cooperate by imprisoning their leaders and impeding their ability to hold rallies, while at the same time working to "coopt" those associations willing to work with them, rewarding them with civil service positions and appointing them to the diplomatic service to help strengthen Senegal's ties to the larger Islamic world (Villalón, 1995, p. 234; Loimeier, 2000).

Education again was central to this "religio-political chessboard" of independent Senegal (Idrissa, 2017, p. 129). Demand for Islamic schooling remained high, especially in the early school years. Recognizing the importance of Islamic education to the population, and also hoping to modernize this form of schooling, under Senghor state-run public schools (which had been little changed from the inherited French colonial model) began offering Arabic as an optional subject. The State also began aggressively funding scholarships for students to study at universities in Arabic

countries;[11] the recipients of these scholarships included both those from marabout families and as those aligned with the reform movements (Villalón, 1995).

Upon completion of their studies and return to Senegal, however, these new *arabisant* graduates "did not go to the mosques to lead prayers, as might have been expected, but they knocked on the door of the public service to demand paid employment" (Ndiaye, 1985, p. 146, translation mine). The majority were thus employed in the increasingly expanding Arabic education sector as instructors in either public schools or, much more commonly, in private *écoles arabes*. Such an arrangement benefited the State in two significant ways: first, it appeased both marabouts and reformers by supporting Arabic education and providing a new path to employment for a group that had limited career options; and second, it further tied the *arabisant* reformers to the State, "weakening the danger of an independent and thus radicalized critique of power" (Ware, 2014, p. 216).

While the State continued promoting and supporting its own sanctioned "modern" form of Islamic schooling alongside the *arabisants*, it also sought to undercut the influence of the classical *daaras*. The 1960s and 1970s were marked by a drastic increase in urban migration due to a series of droughts. As rural *marabouts* moved their *daaras* into the cities, the urban francophone elite grew increasingly frustrated; citing a public opinion poll conducted in Dakar in 1978 by the Institut Islamique de Dakar (IID), Ware (2014) found that "nearly two-thirds of those polled (65 percent) found *taalibes* (*daara* students) to be 'annoying [*gênant*]' for reasons of vagabondage [linked to the practice of *yalwaan*], delinquency, and poor hygiene" and that "nearly half of the respondents (44

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[11] Getting one of these scholarships, however, was quite difficult for the majority of students. For those who wished to study abroad without State support, they had to contend with complicated bureaucratic red tape in order to obtain an official exit visa "as a way to confirm their agreement that the State had no responsibility for their studies neither before leaving [the country] nor during their studies" (Dieng, 2016, p. 108, translation mine).

percent) found that Qur'an schools, such as they were, had no utility" (p. 217). Despite its issues

with the *daaras* and its continued desire to weaken the power of the marabouts, however, the State

was ultimately too dependent on the voting blocs provided by the marabouts to put forth any policy

that might be misconstrued as "anti-Islamic." It therefore put its focus on continuing to quietly

develop its alliances with cooperating *arabisant* reformers, "hoping to stay above the fray while the

reformers slowly undermined Qur'an schooling via their own educational agenda" (Ware, 2014, p.

220).

In 1980 Abdou Diouf, Senghor's hand-picked successor, became president. During Diouf's

presidency, the "religio-political chessboard" again shifted, with education at its center. New

reformist associations sprang up, due in part to frustration that the original associations were being

compromised by their close relationship to the State.[12] There therefore emerged two types of

reformist associations: more moderate groups who "organize and agitate for social reform within the

existing political framework" and were therefore more open to collaborating with the State, and

more "radical" groups "who organize to win state power, having concluded that the existing political

situation is the main obstacle to social reform" (Benga, 2015, p. 340). Under Senghor, the latter

category would have been stamped out, but, due to circumstances such as a growing number of

urban *arabisants* and a weakened economy, the new, more "radical" groups were able to find more

support in Senegal and, more importantly, in the larger Arab world.

Both reformist and "radical" groups, recognizing that their critiques of the *marabouts* had had

little to no impact on their deeply rooted support, began concentrating more of their efforts on

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[12] One of the most significant new groups to emerge at this time was an offshoot of the UCM - the Jama'at ibad ar'Rahman (JIR, Assembly of the Worshippers of the Merciful) (Idrissa, 2017). UCM founder Cheikh Touré, and other dissident members created this new association when they grew frustrated with the direction of the UCM, especially in regard to its close relationship with the State (Ware, 2014).

expanding their version of modern Islamic schooling. Both types viewed their schools as "not only an alternative way of education as far as the Qur'anic schools of the marabouts were concerned, but also as an alternative to the state controlled secular and francophone schools" (Loimeier, 2002, p. 125). However, there was disagreement as to what status their schools should have vis a vis the State. Radical associations preferred to keep their distance, instead relying on student tuition, community support, and financial aid from international Islamic NGOs and foreign governments;[13] these *écoles arabes* are thus frequently referred to as offering a non-formal education. Moderate associations, however, wanted official State recognition and support, agreeing to comply with State standards regarding private schools; these schools have come to be referred to as *écoles franco-arabes* (D'Aoust, 2013).

Both *écoles arabes* and *écoles franco-arabes* were quite successful, especially in urban areas, where *daaras* were generally looked upon negatively and public schools were unable to provide for everyone (Ware, 2014, p. 221). Unlike public schools or other private schools, the *écoles arabes* and *écoles franco-arabes* were much more affordable and accepted students who had been rejected by the public school system or by private secular schools (Loimeier, 2002, p. 125). Even in more rural areas, these schools were in many villages before public schools even arrived (Ndiaye, 1985, p. 147). They also were, by far, the largest employer of returned *arabisant* university graduates.

Despite the openness of the *écoles franco-arabes* to work with the State, they have struggled to receive adequate support and recognition. For its part, the State has had a rather schizophrenic view of these schools: on the one hand, these schools helped the State in its efforts to weaken the power of the *marabouts* by serving as a counterbalance to the *daaras*; however, they were also competition

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[13] For example, Ware (2014) found that financial support for schools have been provided by international religious organizations, such as the World Association of Muslim Youth and the International Islamic League, as well as from governments such as Saudi Arabia (p. 221).

for the State's public education system. In exploring the relationship between the *écoles franco-arabes* and the State, Dieng (2016) points to three periods. The first, from 1960 to 1980 (under President Senghor), saw the State refusing to recognize the religious nature of these schools, instead grouping them in the same category of private secular schools.[14] Dieng (2016) also found that from 1960 to 1969, no Islamic schools received official authorization from the State, and that between 1969 to 1980 only 13 of these schools were authorized, of which six "belonged to religious groups or politicians" (p. 108, translation mine). The second period under President Diouf, from 1980 to 2000, saw an increase in the number of authorized schools, from 13 to 145. It was the third period, however, from 2000 to present that truly "opened the floodgates and consecrated an era of reunion between the State and the heads of the private Islamic schools" (Dieng, 2016, p. 108, translation mine).

The year 2000 brought a presidential election in which Abdoulaye Wade defeated Abdou Diouf. The peaceful transfer of power was lauded around the world. Whereas Senghor and Diouf walked a tightrope between upholding the French legacy of *laïcité* (secularism) while also catering to the *marabouts* in return for political support, Wade instead "inaugurated his presidency by making his own trip to Touba. Instead of lecturing the Mourides [members of the Muridiyya *tariqa*] on secularism, however, Wade was shown earnestly stooping to receive the blessings of Serigne Saliou Mbacké, the paramount authority, or *Khalifa*, of the Mourides" (Idrissa, 2017, p. 104). It is not surprising, then, that under Wade great changes were made in regard to State support and recognition of Islamic schools. During Wade's tenure, the number of authorized Islamic schools grew from 132 to 364, an official State-sponsored public *franco-arabe* program was created in 2002,

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[14] It was also during this time that the State opened the first public *école franco-arabe* in 1963 in order to answer the demand for religious schooling. No other public *écoles franco-arabes* were opened, however, until the 2000s under President Wade. D'Aoust (2013) argues these were created in response to international pressure to increase enrollment rates.

and an official *Inspection des daaras* was created in 2004 (Dieng, 2016, p. 108). This trend of increasing State support has continued under current president Macky Sall, who was first elected in 2012. Most significantly has been the creation of a State-authorized *baccalauréat arabe* (Arabic baccalaureate exam, frequently referred to as the *bac arabe*) in 2013.

The international human rights community has also played a significant role in getting the State to more widely acknowledge the *écoles franco-arabes*. The *daaras* are a frequent target of attack from human rights organizations. Since 1990, when Senegal ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), numerous campaigns have been launched by international organizations such as UNICEF, USAID, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International focused on the "plight" of the *taalibés*, who are frequently referred to as child beggars that are exploited by their greedy *marabouts* (e.g. Human Rights Watch, 2019). Critics of these campaigns argue that they only show the "worst face" of the *daaras*, making "no effort whatever to contextualize or historicize the harsh living conditions, corporal punishment, or mendicancy reported by journalists" and human rights workers (Ware, 2014, p. 222).[15] Within this human rights framework, the State increasingly points to the *écoles franco-arabes*, with their "modern" pedagogy and State-sponsored curricula, as a popular alternative to the "oppressive" *daaras*. This pressure from the international community has also spurred more efforts by the State to create both public *écoles franco-arabes*, as well as what are referred to as *daara modernes*; both of these types of schools are very similar to the private *écoles franco-arabes*, their one main difference being that they are public instead of private.[16]

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[15] The complexities of such human rights campaigns and their intersections with neoliberal international development frameworks, western-dominated discourses and understandings about human rights, and general lack of understanding of Islam (especially in Sub Saharan Arica) could be an entire dissertation unto itself. One such dissertation is Hugon (2016), which I highly recommend for more background on this issue

[16] For more information about the emergence of the public *écoles franco-arabes* and *daaras modernes* see D'Aoust (2013)

Islamic education is an example of the tensions that arise between education as a concept and education as an institution. The multiple forms of Islamic education illustrate how education is more than just an institution – it is a way of thinking, knowing, and being with the world. It encapsulates religious, political, social, and economic considerations, but, as evidenced in this history, different actors foreground different considerations depending on their individual backgrounds and beliefs. As French colonial authorities worked diligently to elevate their institutional understanding of education above all others, Islamic education simultaneously resisted, adapted, and reformed, resulting in the myriad forms it takes today.

Public education and the school-to-employment pipeline

French colonial authorities explicitly designed their schools and curricula to "civilize" indigenous populations, recruit and train workers for the colonial administration, and promote the "superiority of French cultural, economic, and political achievements" (Duke Bryant, 2015, p. 19). A clear pathway was established between State-run formal education, with successful completion entailing acquisition of the official language of French, which in turn would lead to employment with the State and upward social mobility. As Kane (2016) explains, "many African Muslims resisted Western education because they feared – and rightly so – that it would acculturate their children to Western values and alienate them from much-cherished Islamic and African traditional values. Yet many others saw the tangible benefits of Western education and sent their children to the post-colonial modern schools" (p. 2). Importantly, colonial language policies instilled an institutional and ideological system of linguistic-socioeconomic hierarchies wherein colonial languages were viewed as superior to African languages as well as to Arabic, but acquisition of these colonial languages was reserved for specific elite groups through formal schooling (Errington, 2001). In other words, social mobility was only available for a select few and came at the cost of widespread assimilation and the reification of racial, linguistic, class, ethnic, and other inequalities.

Léopold Sédar Senghor, Senegal's first president (1960-1981), set about unifying the newly independent nation through education. Himself educated and celebrated in French academic and political circles, Senghor sought to create an education system that would both cultivate the heritages and knowledges of West African peoples, "while also acquiring necessary European skills and knowledge that would help Africans to compete on new terrain" (Gamble, 2017, p. 143). However, a common criticism is that the education system led by Senghor was largely a continuation of French educational policy and practice, with French remaining the sole official language of the country and of education (Rideout & Bagayoko, 1994). So while education could offer students pathways to employment and prosperity, the education-to-employment pipeline remained inaccessible and irrelevant for the majority of Senegalese citizens.

Abdou Diouf's (1981-2000) time as president was marked by economic, political, and social discord. The promises of the education-to-employment pipeline established under French colonization and continued by Senghor became increasingly feeble; the lack of employment opportunities coupled with a drought and food crisis and growing protestations of an elitist political system marked a critical moment for the nation. One of Diouf's first acts as president was to convene the 1981 *Etats Généreux de l'Education et de la Formation*/General Conference on Education and Training in order to speak to public demands for a more representative and accessible education system. Recommendations arising from the conference informed education policy, and, though no immediate sweeping reforms were made, symbolic and incremental gains for a more decolonized education system were won, including the renaming of any schools named after colonial officers and efforts to increase funding for expanded access to basic education (Diallo, 2010; Ndoye, 1997). However, the funds to realize many of Diouf's reforms, educational and otherwise, were received in large part from international donors through a Structural Adjustment Plan; this funding scheme, Mbodji (1991) argues, placed Senegal in a "submissive position [that] put itself at the mercy of the

IMF and the World Bank, whose dictates have varied depending on the West's economic situation"
(p. 125). Crucially, SAPs placed great emphasis on reducing State expenditures and increasing
privatization, which in turn served to exacerbate the economic and social precarity faced by young
people.

The tenure of Senegal's third president, Abdoulaye Wade (2000-2012) saw him go from
decolonial reformer and visionary to a symbol of rampant corruption and attempted
authoritarianism. Running on a platform of change (*sopi* – 'change' in Wolof), Wade mobilized and
energized young people frustrated by an inadequate education system, high rates of unemployment,
and the seeming impenetrable elite establishment that had ruled Senegal since its independence.
Under Wade, Senegal's education system saw many changes, including expanding State support and
recognition of Islamic schools and the passing of a new constitutional article that declared any
codified language to be a national language and therefore able to be taught in schools. Despite these
reforms, however, Senegalese youth soon became disenchanted with Wade and his administration as
unemployment rates remained high and he increasingly reprimanded youth themselves for not
working hard enough to develop Senegal and "catch up to the whites" (as quoted in Schaller de la
Cova, 2013, p. 244). With much public turmoil, Wade lost his controversial run for a third term.[17]

Macky Sall (2012 – present), the prime minister under Wade, continues the trend of viewing
education as a key mechanism that will increase Senegal's development and standing on the global
stage. His key policy framework, *Plan Senegal Emergent (PSE)*, aims to realize "*Un Sénégal emergent en
2035 avec une société solidaire dans un État de droit*/ A rising Senegal in 2035 with a united society under

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[17] Wade campaigned on a promise to limit presidents to two terms. Although he successfully
adopted the Senegalese constitution to set a limit to two presidential terms, Wade argued that the
provision did not apply to him because it was established after he was first elected, famously saying,
"Ma waxoon waxeet" (I said it, I [can] take it back).

the rule of law" (Republique du Sénégal, 2014, p. viii). Education is the "motor" of the PSE

(OECD, 2017), with President Sall declaring in his New Year Speech on December 31, 2018 that

> *L'éducation et la formation restent au Coeur de nos priorités. Chaque enfant de ce pays, quelles que soient ses*
>
> *origins sociales, doit avoir la chance d'aller à l'école, d'être utile à lui-même, à sa communauté et à la nation*/
>
> Education and training remain at the heart of our priorities. Every child in this country,
>
> regardless of their social background, should have the chance to go to school, to be useful to
>
> themselves, their community, and the nation.

The *Plan Stratégique pour L'éducation et la Formation*/ Strategic Plan for Education and Training

(PAQUET EF), provides the basis of the national education policy in line with the PSE. Using a

"global transformational perspective," PAQUET EF puts forth a vision for "a system of education

and training that is peaceful and stable, diversified and integrated to include everyone equally,

motivating and of quality for the success of all, relevant and effective as a tool for developing the

necessary skills for the emergence of a prosperous and united Senegal" (Republique du Sénégal,

2018, p. 18, translation mine). In achieving these goals, the private sector is featured heavily as a

means of investment, infrastructure, and overall support at all levels of education, from preschool to

higher education. The growing influence of the private education sector is in line with global trends,

with policymakers and donors increasingly promoting privatization as a way to "fill the education

gap" that cannot be met solely by public education (World Bank, 2013).

Supporters of privatization argue that it can help increase access to education (e.g. Pal &

Kingdon, 2010; Patrinos et al, 2009; Hossain, 2007), improve quality (e.g. Barrera-Osorio & Raju,

2010; French & Kingdon, 2010), and make education systems more efficient (e.g. Witte & Rigdon,

1993). At the same time, however, many researchers have shown that privatization does not

automatically equate to improved quality and learning outcomes and can exacerbate inequalities,

with only wealthier families able to afford the higher tuition rates of more prestigious private schools

(e.g. Levin et al, 2013; Chimombo, 2009; Ashley et al, 2014; Härmä, 2009). Though private education is often synonymous with elitism in more developed contexts, there is a large variety of private schools in countries such as Senegal that serve a diverse range of students.

The rise of private education

Senegal has seen a dramatic increase in private educational institutions over the last decade. At the preschool level (ages 3-5), 43% are categorized as private; 16% of primary level schools (ages 6-11) are private, and at the secondary level (ages 12-18) 73% are private[18] (Sénégal MEN, 2018). From 2007 to 2016, the number of private secondary institutions grew from 136 to 503; in contrast, public secondary institution growth during that same time period was 87 to 317 (Sénégal MEN, 2016). While the number of private schools is rising across Senegal, with all but two of Senegal's fourteen regions seeing a reduction in the number of public schools, the majority of private schools are located in Dakar and other urban areas. For example, over half of all registered schools in Dakar are categorized as private (Sénégal MEN, 2013).

Private schools are desirable to Senegalese families for two primary reasons: 1) they do not have frequent teacher strikes, as do public schools, which lead to interrupted learning for many students; and 2) they are able to offer education in different languages and draw on different knowledges than those of secular *francophone* public schools. In Senegal, private schools are funded and run by a variety of actors, ranging from private entrepreneurs to non-profit organizations to international charities to religious groups (Kaag, 2017). There are many different types of private schools that can be broadly categorized along religious and linguistic lines. Religious private schools are predominantly Islamic and Catholic. As previously described, Islamic schools have long been

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[18] This figure is for secondary institutions that include both lower and upper secondary grades. For private institutions with only lower secondary grades (ages 12-15), 21% are private. Similarly, 21% of upper secondary institutions (ages 16-18) are private (Sénégal MEN, 2018).

purposefully left out of State-sponsored education programming, making them private by default (Ware, 2014). Linguistically, Islamic schools are taught either entirely in Arabic, such as in *daaras* (traditional Qur'anic schools), or bilingually with Arabic and French, such as in *écoles franco-arabes* (French-Arabic schools).

Catholic schools, which are majority French-medium, have existed in Senegal since the early 1800s, although it was not until 1922 that French Catholic missionaries were allowed by the colonial state to officially open private schools (Foster, 2013). Catholic schools continue to be held in high esteem amongst Senegalese families because they are perceived to offer high quality education, with Catholic school students regularly getting top scores on national standardized exams. Their reputation (and ability to boast high success rates in exams) is upheld by their selectivity, with difficult entrance exams and high fees (Charlier, 2002). Although Senegal is a majority Muslim country, François Xavier Sarr, a representative of the *Syndicat National des Écoles Catholiques du Sénégal*/National Union of Senegalese Catholic Schools (SNECS) argues that these schools transcend religion because they are "open to all, without distinction of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity or religion. It is an educational framework rooted in the evangelical and universal values of respect, truth, dignity, freedom, and 'living together'" (Sarr, 2017, p. 103, translation mine). In my own discussions with Muslim Senegalese parents whose children attend Catholic schools, I have been told that "education is not religion", and that they want their children to receive the best education available.[19]

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[19] The "openness" of Catholic schools came under scrutiny in 2019, when the Institution Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc, one of the most well-known and respected Catholic schools in Dakar, enforced a new dress code that required the wearing of the school uniform "with an uncovered head for both girls and boys." This resulted in the expulsion of 22 Muslim students who wear hijabs. After much public outcry and intervention by the Minister of National Education, the dress code was revised and the girls were allowed back to school. However, there is concern that this is part of a broader pattern of deepening discriminatory acts between Catholic and Muslim communities (Ba, 2019).

The first generation of secular private schools date to the late 1920s, though they remained rare until the 1950s, when clearer and easier guidelines were established by the State as to how to officially register a private school (Soumaré, 2017). Private secular schools cover a range of tuition rates, grades, and educational philosophies. This diversity is both a strength and a weakness; a strength in that it provides students opportunities to learn in schools that are uninterrupted by teacher strikes and that may offer particular linguistic or cultural educations, a weakness in that unscrupulous school administrators can take advantage of the sometimes lax oversight of the Ministry and make themselves a hefty profit off the back of students' fees and teachers' low salaries. For example, Barry (2015) found that in contrast to public schools, where students' advancement is determined by grades, in some private schools "the required average is the parents' wallet: 'You pay, you pass'." Similar sentiments were shared with me by teachers at BAS, the French-English school, with one Senegalese teacher telling me that students in public schools are more motivated and that that is why they score better on national exams. He told me that students in private schools like BAS "*ont de l'argent donc s'ils ratent leurs examens ce n'est pas grave*/have money so if they fail their exams it does not matter." One of the foreign English teachers shared similar thoughts, comparing her experiences teaching in rural Burkina Faso, where "students were very serious about their studies because they knew it was their only way to succeed" to teaching at BAS where "students are not grateful. It's like their parents are buying their education."

This double-edged-sword of diversity also applies to private bilingual schools, which are particularly popular with families – especially those schools that teach English. As Thiam (2017) explains, there is little official oversight, with some schools claiming they are bilingual when they are not. This was supported in conversations I had with parents at BAS, with one mother telling me that she purposefully selected this school for her daughter because "there are other schools in Dakar that say they teach English, but they don't really." Despite the high demand for schools that teach

English, no in-depth scholarly or ethnographic work has been done at French-English schools; therefore, most of what is known about these schools is anecdotal.

The shift from public State-sponsored education to private education is indicative of larger and ongoing negotiations about what counts as education, the purpose of education, and new understandings and constructions of what constitutes success. Islamic education previously provided a way for (male) students to advance socially outside of strict familial caste systems. With the arrival of French colonizers, public French-medium schooling offered a new path to upward mobility and status (again, primarily for male students). However, the decline in amount and prestige of public sector employment, coupled with the integration of Senegal into global capitalist markets and the related emergence of English as a global lingua franca, has led many families, especially those in urban centers, to exit public education in favor of private institutions that promise to equip their children with the linguistic and other knowledge and skills necessary to successfully participate in a global marketplace.

Although these different forms of education purport to offer different pathways to success, young people's "post-education landscapes" remain precarious. Pre-COVID, Senegalese youth faced a grim reality of a 6.6% unemployment rate and a combined unemployment/under-employment rate of 31.5%; these statistics have only worsened (ILO, 2018; Naafs & Skelton, 2018, p. 2). More broadly, the breakdown of the education-to-employment pipeline has led to wider discussions about youth-adult transitions, as traditional markers of entering adulthood, such as stable employment and secure housing, are no longer attainable for many (Prothmann, 2019). Young people must navigate an uneven terrain, where they are expected to expend a great deal of time and energy in educational pursuits in order to show their worth and value, but "the contradiction is never admitted that not all can succeed, and that there is no point for the unsuccessful in following prescriptions for success – hard work, diligence, conformism, accepting knowledge as an equivalent of real value" (Willis, 1977,

p. 129). As a result, young people stuck in "waithood" limbo are reconfiguring new models and pathways of success, using "their agency and creativity to invent new forms of being and interacting with society" (Honwana, 2014, p. 30).

Forging new pathways to *tekki* [success]

In the past, understandings of social mobility and *tekki* ('success' in Wolof) were marked by "the myth of the intellectual, embodied by the Senghorian model" (Havard, 2001, p. 63). Completing a public *francophone* education – including French-language fluency and adaptation of a Western lifestyle – "paved the way for access to political power as well as employment in the administration" (Willems, 2014, p. 321). Although this model was not readily attainable for all young people, especially females, those who were poor, those living in rural areas, and, as will be discussed further in Chapter 5, those who chose an Islamic education, its allure held strong until the 1980s when SAPs "shattered the Senegalese socio-political model which steered young degree holders toward almost guaranteed public-sector employment" (Minvielle et al, 2005, p. 142, as cited and translated in Schaller de la Cova, 2013, p. 16).

Abdou Diouf's reelection in 1988 further solidified the growing chasm between the entrenched political elite of the Senghorian generation and the youth who were boiling over with frustration, resentment, and feelings of no control. The *Set-Setal* movement ("clean-to clean up" in Wolof) was one of the first organized youth responses. Taking its name from a Youssou Ndour song (Gellar, 2005), *Set-Setal* began in 1990 as a clean-up campaign organized by youth groups in the capital of Dakar. Working together, young people "launched an assault on the ruling class and its historicity with stones, frescoes and brooms" (Diouf, 1992, p. 42). The movement sought to both physically clean their streets and neighborhoods as well as morally clean the country of corruption, inequality, and injustice (Bryson, 2014). To achieve this, they protested in public spaces, cleaned the streets of garbage, and painted murals depicting models of leadership, success, and unity not

affiliated with the Senghorian model, such as Senegalese religious leaders Cheikh Amadou Bamba and Lat Dior, Senegalese intellectual Cheikh Anta Diop, and non-Senegalese figures such as Nelson Mandela, Thomas Sankara, Kwame Nkrumah, and Malcolm X (Havard, 2009, p. 325). Though relatively short lived, the *Set-Setal* movement represented urban youth's need to take charge of their own lives and futures. It was also the precursor to future youth movements, especially in regard to the harnessing of art and music as ways for young people to share messages and speak back to power.

Set-Setal* paved the way for the next youth movement, known as *Bul Faale.* Roughly translated as "don't worry" or "don't mind", the movement got its name from a 1995 song by the Senegalese rap group Positive Black Soul. Described by a journalist in 1997 as the unifying expression of "fed up young people at bay, idle and left to fend for themselves in the face of a socioeconomic crisis that is worsening day by day," *Bul Faale* harnessed the disillusionment and frustration of a generation unmoored (Diouf, 2002, p. 278). The *Bul Faale* movement offered new images of *tekki* (success) in the form of wrestlers, musicians, and dancers, all of whom were "characterized by the fact that their success [*tekki*] was achieved very quickly and therefore did not require going through school" (Ngom, 2017, p. 12, translation mine). The archetype of *Bul Faale* came in the form of Tyson, famed Senegalese wrestler. A high school dropout, Tyson (né Mohammed Ndao) broke into the notoriously closed off Senegalese wrestling community based on his sheer talent and athletic abilities. Identifying himself with the *Bul Faale* movement, he cultivated a public persona as someone who succeeded through his own hard work, breaking down the barriers put in place and upheld by older generations (Havard, 2001).

The disillusionment of *Bul Faale* gave way to real hope in the 2000 presidential campaign of Abdoulaye Wade. Having campaigned under the slogan *Sopi* ('change' in Wolof) since his failed 1988 presidential bid, the then 74 year old Wade struck a chord with young people fed up with the

entrenched political establishment that had ruled Senegal since its independence. Wade promised a new political and social landscape in Senegal where young people would be central to the revitalization and renewal of the struggling Senegalese economy. His victory over incumbent Abdou Diouf was momentous, as it made Senegal a bastion of democracy with a peaceful political turnover through official election processes. Filled to the brim with young, energized, and hopeful supporters, Abdoulaye Wade was sworn in at the Léopold Sédar Senghor Stadium where he famously declared, "*Il n'y a pas de secret: il faut travailler, beaucoup travailler, encore travailler, toujours travailler*/There is no secret [to success]: you must work, work a lot, work some more, work forever!"

Wade's promises of economic prosperity and revitalization proved to be hollow. The Senegalese economy continued to falter, young people continued to struggle to find employment, and Wade himself engaged in increasingly "patrimonial, autocratic, and even authoritarian" activities (Fredericks, 2014, p. 131). Betrayed by their "self-proclaimed savior" (Prothmann, 2018), young people took to the streets when Wade announced he would run for a third presidential term in 2011. The *Y'En A Marre* movement, translated as "Enough is Enough" or "We're Fed Up", started by a group of rappers and journalists, energized young people to become engaged politically and socially. Using music, public demonstrations, and other grassroots outreach such as door to door voter registration, *Y'En A Marre* worked to, in the words of co-founder Cheikh Fadel Barro, "make young people understand that it is by voting that one is master of one's destiny" (Carayol, 2011, translation mine). In March 2012, Wade lost the second round of voting by a wide margin. Young people were again central forces in a democratic transition of power, and they continue to be engaged politically, with *Y'En A Marre* continuing its activities and newer groups gaining visibility, such as *Aar li ñu bokk* ("preserve what we have in common") which organizes around natural resource protection and dispersal, land rights, and government corruption.

At the same time that young people were negotiating and creating new social pathways to and models of success in Senegal, increasing numbers of young people were looking outside of Senegal for "social escapes" (Christiansen et al, 2006, p. 21). Though by no means a new phenomenon, clandestine migration reached a peak in 2006, as record numbers of young people – in particular young men – left Senegal in search of better futures (degli Uberti, 2014). The motto "Barça walla Barsakh" (Barcelona or death) became the slogan of the many young people who undertook the dangerous – and often deadly – trip to the Canary Islands and then, if lucky, to Spain and other destinations in Southern Europe (Scheld, 2007). As Riccio & degli Uberti (2013) explain, the term *barsakh* did not necessarily refer to a physical death – although that was a grim reality for many; rather, *barsakh* referred to the "social death of a person trapped in a state of involuntary immobility, due to the difficulty in being a success in the social context in which he [sic] lives" (p. 221). Recently, there has been a resurgence of clandestine migration, as evidenced in October 2020 when at least 140 migrants passed away when their boat caught on fire off the northern coast of Senegal.

This synonymization of physical and social mobility marks an important departure from earlier notions of *tekki*, with migration significantly altering social relations in Senegal wherein "it has become very difficult to think about a better future without thinking about migration to a place where one can make the money needed to realize that better future" (Graw & Schielke, 2013, p. 8). Understandings of success are no longer bounded by the nation-state; in fact, for many youth today the only pathway to success is to leave (Poulet, 2017; Ngom, 2017). Importantly, however, the ability and form of one's migration is deeply tied to social class (this will be further explored in Chapter 7). This is evident in the different forms "the migrant" can take in Senegal, wherein educational migrants (i.e. those who migrate for university) who usually come from wealthier families are more respected than the *modou modou*, who is a labor migrant (e.g. those who work in factories or sell

trinkets in the street), often lacks formal education and who may or may not have migrated through official channels. Despite these differences, however, "the migrant" remains one of the more enduring and powerful images of *tekki* for young people today, and notions of migration – of escape – permeate Senegalese youth's imagined futures.

All of these models represent different "social paths and social escapes" for young people to achieve their own understandings of *tekki* (Christiansen et al, 2006, p. 21). They all offer different means for youth to take some semblance of control over their destinies, be it through the take charge attitude of *Set-Setal*, the "cultural nihilism" of *Bul Faale* (Biaya, 2002)*,* the political activism and participation in *Sopi* and *Y'En A Marre*, or the life or death gamble of *Barça walla Barsakh*. Importantly, in these new models of *tekki,* formal education is no longer positioned as *the* essential key to success. In this way, the Senghorian model has been, if not entirely erased, demoted from the singular path to one of many.

Though facing much competition from other models of success, the idea of education and its promises remain powerful. Images of being an "educated person" still hold a great deal of sway around the world (Levinson & Holland, 1996; Newman et al, 2019; Abotsi, 2020). Vavrus (2007) argues that this persistent "desire for schooling", when coupled with economic decline, "lies at the heart of the postcolonial condition" (p. 6). The postcolonial condition, in turn, is found at the intersection of "historical trajectories of European colonialism, developmentalism, and global capitalism" (Gupta, 1998, p. 10 as cited in Vavrus, 2007, p. 6). Education plays different roles across these three trajectories, ranging from colonial views of education as assimilation to developmentalist models of education as empowerment to capitalist schemes of education as individual economic advancement. Together, this confluence of education ideologies has brought forth a dominant discourse in which certain types of education (i.e. Western-style formal schooling in colonial languages such as French or English) lead to specific types of social advancement (mainly in secular,

economic terms), though on the condition that one works diligently and remains focused (thereby placing the blame for any failings on the individual, with little to no recognition of historical and structural factors).

The result of such conflicting narratives – go to school and you will be successful, but if you struggle in school because it is not taught in a language that you know or because the content is not relevant to your community, or if you complete your schooling with top marks but cannot find a job, your failings are solely your own fault – leave young people increasingly frustrated and confused. Some look outside of education for social belonging and pathways to success, while many others choose to try their luck at the "educational lottery" (Post, 1985), hoping that they will be able to break through and leverage their education for employment and security. For many students, though, "alphabetic and numerical skills are empowering and open new worlds to those who acquire them, but.., formal education [is] not necessarily a passport to anything but frustration" (Katz, 2004, p. 251).

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the historical strands that continue to influence and shape contemporary education in Senegal, as well as the ways in which young people have creatively constructed alternative pathways for success. The history presented here illustrates the ways in which education is a reflection and amalgamation of where a community once was, where it is now, and where it wants to be in the future; to borrow the words of President Macky Sall, education is the means through which "the youth of today will maintain the legacy of our shared history tomorrow." In Senegal, education encompasses the centuries-long presence of Islam in the form of Islamic schooling, the colonial conquest by France in the form of public schooling, and the pressures and market logics of globalization and development enterprises in the form of private bilingual

schooling. Each of these historical strands make different claims as to what constitutes success and how to achieve it.

Language is a central component of this temporal amalgamation of education. The Arabic language is at the heart of Islamic education, French remains the core language of the public education system, and English continues to be one of the most in-demand languages due to its purported usefulness in global marketplaces. There are also major efforts to promote indigenous languages such as Wolof, Pulaar, and Sereer in an aim to reaffirm a community identity outside of colonizing and globalizing influences, though these efforts have yet to significantly break through to sweeping educational policy. Each of these languages, in turn, bestow their speakers with different forms of social status. Knowledge of Arabic grants a speaker "holy prestige" (Ngom, 2006), while knowledge of French marks one as an educated Senegalese citizen. Knowledge of English marks one as "worldly" and "sophisticated" (ibid), and fluency in "pure" forms of Senegalese languages illustrates a more distilled ethnic identity that is not corrupted by outside linguistic influences.

Several key issues emerge from the history of education provided in this chapter which are relevant to understanding the experiences and aspirations of students at BAS and IMFAS. Both schools are private and bilingual, but they have different histories and epistemologies about the purpose of education. IMFAS, the French-Arabic school, is tied to efforts to "modernize" classical Islamic education and bridge the gap put in place by French colonial authorities between Islamic education and secular *francophone* education. BAS, the French-English school, is part of the global privatization trend where families who have the means to exit public schooling in order to secure linguistic and other forms of capital for their children.

While efforts to increase access to all types of education have allowed more students to go to school, "the central problem for most children and youth is no longer gaining access to education but rather remaining motivated and present in school as they grapple with the privatization of

education, compounded often by woeful facilities and social discrimination" (Jeffrey, 2010, p. 499). The root of education as a contradictory resource is social difference. Students from different socioeconomic groups, geographic regions, linguistic backgrounds, etc. have different experiences of education as well as differential access to certain types of education, especially the types of education that are most privileged. Whereas in the past narratives of success consisted of gaining a holy prestige through religious studies, or completing a public *francophone* education and securing a position in civil society, the growing decline in the number of positions and overall prestige of public sector employment, coupled with the integration of Senegal into global capitalist markets and the related emergence of English as a global lingua franca, has shifted youth's understandings of success as being located outside of Senegal.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I expand on the theoretical framework laid out in chapter 1 to conceptualize how education acted as a contradictory resource for students and how they subsequently strategized for their futures. Because many critical education theories developed in response to the needs and aspirations of Western oppressed classes and therefore do not include the ongoing effects of colonialism in their analyses (de Sousa Santos, 2014), I use decoloniality as my primary lens of analysis. Through this lens, I draw on theories of language ideology, educational and linguistic sociocultural (re)production, and aspiration frameworks in order to more fully understand the complex ways in which language and class influenced students' experiences of education and shaped their aspirations and future trajectories within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces.

Decoloniality

Decoloniality originated with Latin American theorists Aníbal Quijano, Walter Mignolo, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Maria Lugones in their struggle to disentangle and overcome the "logic of coloniality underneath the rhetoric of modernity" that continues to exploit, dominate, and oppress the current residents and descendants of former colonies (Mignolo, 2005, p. 10). Although originally focused on the postcolonial situation of Latin America, the work of African and Caribbean authors such as Frantz Fanon and Ngugi wa Thiong'o were influential in the original conception of decoloniality. More recently, African theorists have continued to adapt decoloniality to African contexts (e.g. Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013, 2015; Dione, 2017; Mpofu, 2013; Nyamnjoh, 2012; Lebakeng, 2018).

Decoloniality troubles "modernity" as a Eurocentric concept and episteme, seeking to both reveal the ways in which Western/European modernity has come to be unquestionably viewed as

"the point of arrival of human history and the model for the entire planet" (Mignolo, 2011, p. xiv) as well as to recover "'indigenous' institutions, values and systems" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 6). As Kane (2012) explains,

> Colonialism, so the claim went, heralded an era of hope for Africa, a new history believed to be the beginning of history. Africans south of the Sahara were taught how to read and write. They were brought into the orbit of "civilization" by imperial Europe. Modernization, which the colonial encounter was believed to be delivering, was supposed to produce the transition from prehistory to history (p. 203).

As described in chapter 2, colonizing powers explicitly sought to undermine and other indigenous and non-European educations, epistemes, and beliefs. They sought to erase centuries-long Islamic and African educational traditions in favor of promoting a more "civilized" and "modernized" worldview that placed Western Europe as the arbiter and examplar of knowledge, success, and advancement. While they did establish institutional and ideological beliefs about the purpose and value of certain types of schooling over others, they were unable to completely eradicate and denigrate other knowledges and ways of being, as evidenced by the robust Islamic education offerings that continue to be found in Senegal and throughout Africa.

Decoloniality theorists argue that while *de jure* colonization may have ended in much of the world, its underpinning ideologies, hierarchies, and structures continue to shape contemporary social relations and experiences in the form of "coloniality" in both exceptional and mundane ways. There are three predominant forms of coloniality: coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, and coloniality of being.

Coloniality of power speaks to the geo-political makeup of the modern world, or, as Grosfoguel (2011) refers to it, the "modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system" (p. 5). Colonialism created race as a category of classification used to differentiate and organize the

colonized and the colonizers (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007; Wynter, 2003). These new social

identities came to be inextricably linked with labor and resource distribution, with cheap and often

exploitative labor reserved for non-white people. This racialized division of labor created a structure

wherein, as Fanon (1963) states, "You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are

rich" (p. 40). European colonial projects, therefore, established a capitalist world system with the

core comprised primarily of white societies and the periphery comprised of non-white societies

(Grosfoguel, 2007). Within this capitalist world system, success and upward mobility are understood

largely in terms of capital accumulation,[20] and the forms of capital that are most valued are those

associated with European/Western cultures (Wallerstein, 1979). In education, this belief works to

privilege schooling that offers specific forms of capital, such as being taught in a European language

instead of local languages. However, decoloniality theorists argue that due to the racialized and

Westernized nature of the current world system, regardless of how far they go in schooling, "African

people [continue to be] confined to the lowest echelons of power" within the current global order

(Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 333).

Coloniality of knowledge questions what 'counts' as knowledge and argues that

"Eurocentrism is an epistemic rather than a geographical issue" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 54). In addition

to physical violence and political oppression, a major component of European colonial expansion

was "epistemicide," which served to marginalize, erase, and silence indigenous knowledge and ways

of knowing (de Sousa Santos, 2014). As European colonizers established education systems modeled

after their own, they created a structure wherein their own knowledge and ways of knowing came to

be inextricably linked with 'success,' often in the form of colonial administrative appointments

(Bajaj, 2010; Gugler & Flanagan, 1978). Quijano (2000) refers to this Eurocentric knowledge as a

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[20] The most commonly cited form of capital is economic, but, as will be expanded in the next
section, there are other forms of symbolic capital that are also markers of success.

"distorting mirror" that has led the colonized "to see and to accept that [distorted] image as our own reality and ours only" (p. 222). Coloniality of knowledge, therefore, argues that the knowledge deemed necessary for success is a dehumanizing distortion that both erases non-Eurocentric knowledge and ways of knowing and masks the violent colonial legacy that arbitrarily allowed Eurocentric knowledge to be the dominant paradigm for the current world system.

Lastly, coloniality of being focuses on the effects of coloniality on the lived experiences of colonized peoples (Maldonaldo-Torres, 2007). The underlying logic of colonization was the dehumanization of the colonized. As Fanon (1963) writes, "Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: 'In reality, who am I?' (p. 250). The dehumanization of the colonized was legitimated through education systems that privileged Eurocentric ways of knowing and being. Education helped solidify the logic of coloniality of being within students; as Memmi (1974) stated, "in order for that legitimacy to be complete, it is not enough for the colonized to be a slave, he must also accept this role" (p. 133). Coloniality of being shows the long-lasting effects of this dehumanizing ideology and brings into focus the ongoing "objectification/thingification/commodification" of African identity and humanity (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015, p. 490).

Language is central to all aspects of coloniality, with coloniality of power, knowledge, and being all "legitimized on Greek and Latin categories of thought and their translation and unfolding in six modern European imperial languages: Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, and English" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 111). Importantly, structures of coloniality only privilege European languages, therefore purposefully overlooking the tremendous role the Arabic language has held for centuries as a "linguistic vehicle of knowledge transmission" (Kane, 2016, p. 7) and its status as what many scholars argue as "the Latin of Africa" (Hunwick, 2004, p. 133).

French colonial authorities regularly cited the importance of language and education in establishing their power and authority. For example, Henri Merlin, a Governor-General of French West Africa, wrote,

> Education's first and foremost priority is to disseminate the French language to the masses to consolidate nationality. It must then provide the native with basic yet essential general knowledge in order to ensure better living conditions, [and] open their mind to the French culture, to Western civilization (as cited in Moumouni, 1964, p. 46, translation mine).

It is clear in this quotation how notions of success were explicitly made to be linked to European languages and cultures, and education was positioned as the primary mechanism through which these forms of capital could be acquired. The result of these linguistic and educational policies was that the languages of Europeans were deemed 'real', while the languages of non-whites were viewed as simply 'gibberish' and therefore not useful or appropriate for schooling (Nyamnjoh, 2012). This logic speaks to the ongoing linguistic hierarchies that, as coloniality of knowledge shows, privilege European languages as forms of knowledge and theoretical production that are necessary for success, and simultaneously subalternize non-European languages and literacies as "sole producers of folklore but not of knowledge/theory" (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 218).

Discussions of education and language, therefore, cannot be separated from coloniality of power, knowledge, or being. As a theoretical lens, decoloniality helps reveal how these logics of coloniality continue to be legitimated in and through education, especially in regard to language. In the next section I expand on the relationship between the logics of coloniality and the formation and shaping of language ideologies.

Language Ideologies

Language ideologies are about much more than just language. As described in the previous section, they are linked to the "construction and legitimation of power, the production of social

relations of sameness and difference, and the creation of cultural stereotypes about types of speakers and social groups" (Spitulnik, 1998, p. 164; Kroskrity, 2004). They are loaded with "moral and political interests" which serve to both explicitly and implicitly normalize social hierarchies (Irvine, 1989, p. 254; Gal & Irvine, 1995; Heath, 1989). It is possible for speakers to draw on widespread language ideologies in order to position themselves in certain ways; for example, a speaker may adapt a particular accent or grammatical forms to mark themselves as "educated" or "successful" (Wortham, 2001).

Through colonial language and education policies, the language(s) of the European colonizers came to be ideologically linked to notions of success, to the detriment of the use and promotion of local languages. Today, discussions about language and success often center around the ambiguous catch-all term 'globalization' and the need to have common languages that cross international boundaries (Mignolo, 2012). However, it is predominantly only European languages that are viewed as connective, with other global languages such as Arabic (which has a much longer history and intellectual tradition in Africa than do European languages), understood as more relevant to religious realms, therefore relegating its usefulness as a global language to the Islamic/Arabic-speaking world (i.e. not the West/Europe). Kane (2016) attributes the erasure of the role of Arabic in Sub-Saharan Africa to Western academia's practice of dividing Africa so that "North Africa (Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt) falls within the realm of Middle Eastern studies, whereas the area south of the Sahara, considered Africa proper, is studied within the field of African studies" (p. 7). This division erases the centuries-long role the Arabic language has played as "the language of Islamic learning and liturgy, [and therefore] the glue holding together large populations of the Maghreb, the Sahara, and sub-Saharan Africa" (Kane, 2016, p. 7). In this way, contemporary global economic and social processes continue to be based on the logics of coloniality as well as a

"rhetoric of modernity" and thus continue to reproduce colonial and imperial difference (Mignolo, 2011, p. 161).

During the era of globalization, English has emerged as a dominant language due to its purported value in a so-called 'global economy' (Proctor, 2015; Crystal, 2005; Prah, 2009). In other words, English has become ideologically linked to success, to the detriment of the use and promotion of other former colonial languages such as French. This shift in larger understandings of which language(s) will lead to success is evident in French President Emmanuel Macron's controversial speech to university students in Burkina Faso in 2017. He tried to evoke a sense of community and pride in the French language, especially in the face of English dominance, when he said,

> Our French language is a gift to us and our language has a future. It is not just a heritage that needs to be preserved. This future will play out for many right here in Africa…Thus, simply put, I say make it [the French language] live, do not look at it as a language that some would like to see linked to a traumatic past. That is not the only thing, it is the language of your poets, your filmmakers, your artists. You have already made it your own, you have already reappropriated it! The French language of Burkina Faso, the French language of Senegal, French no longer belongs to France, it belongs to you, so proudly own it! …Limiting oneself to this or that language, rejecting the French language in order to adopt English simply because it is in vogue is refusing to look ahead! French will be the leading language in Africa, and perhaps the world, if we know how to proceed over the next decades. Let's take this challenge on together. Let's do it! Let's go![21]

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[21] (http://www.jeuneafrique.com/497596/politique/document-le-discours-demmanuel-macron-a-ougadougou/)

He links the French language to future advancement and success, arguing that it has overcome its violent colonial history and is now a common language of art and cultural pride. This argument also overlooks the complex and difficult conversations that have been happening amongst African writers, educators, community leaders, and politicians for decades in regard to language choice and use (e.g. wa Thiong'o, 1994; Achebe, 1964; Mbembe, 2002; Bamgbose, 2000; Bunyi, 1999).

In Senegal one of the most fervent supporters of the French language was poet and first president Léopold Sedhar Senghor. In the introduction to his poetry collection *Ethiopiques*, Senghor (1954) praises the French language, writing,

> [W]e express ourselves in French because French has a universal vocation. Because I know its origins for having tasted it, chewed it, taught it, and it is the language of the gods…French has given us abstract words – so rare in our mother tongues – where tears make precious stones. In our languages, the words are naturally encircled with a halo of sap and blood; French words radiate a thousand lights, like diamonds. Rockets that illuminate our night (as cited in wa Thiong'o, 1994, p. 19, translation mine).

His categorization here of the French language as superior to African languages is quite similar to that of French colonial officials. Other Senegalese authors do not share this enchantment with the French language. For example, after publishing multiple books in French, Boubacar Boris Diop decided to publish one of the first books in Wolof. He explains this decision as a response to the racism and political interference of France that he witnessed in regard to the Rwandan genocide. He expands,

> After all, my country, Senegal, entertains a relationship with France which calls itself cooperation, but which is in fact a neo-colonial relationship and therefore identical to that which caused Paris to compromise itself so gravely in its involvement with the butchers of Kigali and elsewhere. To write in Wolof is a way of taking shelter from all this nastiness and

filth and putting one's feet on firm and reassuring ground…Seeking to improve the literary

standing of African languages is not a rear guard action, but on the contrary the way into the

future (2014, p. 115-116).

In contrast to Macron's declaration that the French language can be the leading language in the

world, here Diop positions the use of African languages as crucial for future advancement. Debates

such as these illustrate two things. First, they show how language ideologies are not absolute; they

are in a constant state of production and reproduction as they interact with other ideologies, such as

those about globalization, colonization, race, and immigration. Second, these discussions show the

choices families and individuals must make – on the one hand, European languages are inextricably

linked with both the violent colonial history and current global inequalities and injustices; on the

other hand, these same languages seem to offer the greatest opportunity for success, as they

dominate arenas of business, travel, education, and popular culture.

For many students, "the commencement of formal education is usually one of the first

settings in a person's life when their language may be judged as right or wrong; when assumptions

may be made about their intelligence, family life, future potential, or moral fiber every time a

sentence is uttered" (Delpit, 2002, p. xx). The racial, linguistic, ethnic, and gender categories and

identities that students form and adapt are not "freely created by individuals but are embedded in a

cultural and ideological matrix which they alone do not control" (Kiesling, 2013, p. 450). Beliefs

about education and language are not just about schooling and language but are also closely tied to

"questions of identity and power in societies" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 11).

Global structures of coloniality assist in the circulation and upholding of Eurocentric

language ideologies that privilege certain ways of speaking and knowing and erase or reduce non-

European languages and knowledge systems. This serves to reproduce larger social disparities

because students who either attend non-Eurocentric schools and/or have different forms of, for

example, linguistic capital than those valued in schools are at a significant disadvantage. However, language ideologies and Eurocentric dominance is not absolute, and education can also provide spaces for other ways of speaking, knowing, and being to be celebrated and valued. In the next section, I bring in theories of (re)production to understand the ways in which education both reproduces unequal power structures and opens spaces to challenge dominant Eurocentric paradigms.

Education, language, and (re)production

A major way that European colonizers legitimated their authority and superiority was by linking western-style formal schooling to success (Duke Bryant, 2015). They made access to these schools selective and awarded those "lucky" enough to gain acceptance with employment and relative social prestige (West, 2002; Moumouni, 1964; Miller, 1974). Ideology plays a central role in the reproduction of coloniality and inequality. Speaking of a particular European geographic and historical context, Marx argued that the ruling class, in order to retain its position, is compelled to "present its interest as the common interest of all the members of societies… [so] it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and present them as the only rational, universally valid ones" (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 68). Extending this argument to colonial systems, Fanon (1963) refers to the "bourgeois ideology, which is the proclamation of an essential equality between men [sic] [that] manages to appear logical in its own eyes by inviting the sub-men to become human, and to take as their prototype Western humanity as incarnated in the Western bourgeoisie" (p. 163). This ideological work is a form of symbolic violence that reproduces inequality because it "codif[ies] the norms, and so select[s] for the success of those in relatively powerful positions, yet hold[s] sway among others whose lack of success thus appears justified as the result of 'deficits' or 'lacks', of aspiration or aptitude" (Zipin et al, 2015, p. 231). In other words, a person's success or failure is attributed solely to the individual, with judgements made about their dedication and work ethic;

there is no recognition of the institutional and structural barriers that are designed to limit who can be successful and who cannot.

Schooling is also central in reproducing language ideologies that privilege European ways of speaking over others. As Nyamnjoh (2012) explains,

English and other European languages are given status by associating them with civilization and enlightenment, while every attempt is made to reduce African languages to gibberish and chase them out of the mouths, ears, and minds of African students born into these languages (p. 140).

Importantly, European languages hold no inherent linguistic superiority to other languages; rather, they are privileged solely because of ideological constructs linked to race, class, gender, etc. that are informed by the logics of coloniality (Mignolo, 2012). In other words, European cultures, languages, and systems are not privileged due to their inherent worth; rather, symbolic, epistemological, and physical violence legitimize and delegitimize different forms of speaking, knowing, and being. The violence and stratification ultimately come to be perceived as natural and the system is thus reproduced.

While larger structures of inequality and their sustaining logics of coloniality make it difficult for most to satisfactorily acquire privileged markers of success, people are not necessarily bound to these constraints; they have agency and can take up, reconstitute, and/or reject dominant conceptualizations and categorizations of success (MacLeod, 2009; Banégas & Warnier, 2001). Speaking of the U.S. context, Apple (2004, 2006, 2013) argues that schools are not just sites of reproduction, but also sites of sociocultural production where cultural norms can be contested and recreated. Giroux (1981) similarly highlights the necessity to balance structural determinants and individual agency. He argues that scholars must recognize that "reproduction is a complex phenomenon that not only serves the interest of domination but also contains the seeds of conflict

and transformation" (p. 109). He argues that reproduction theories downplay human agency and resistance, thus missing opportunities to explore "whether there is a substantial difference between the existence of various structural and ideological modes of domination and their actual unfolding and effects" (Giroux, 1983, p. 259). He draws on Gramsci's concept of hegemony to stress the importance of exploring how ideologies are not only reproduced, but also produced through the "interconnections among specific kinds of social practices, meanings, and institutions" (Giroux, 1981, p. 101). In analyzing sociocultural reproduction, therefore, it is crucial to understand the complex ways people "mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structures of domination and constraint" (Giroux, 2001, p. 108). With this in mind, I turn to the final body of literature I draw on, aspiration frameworks.

Aspiration frameworks

While larger structures of coloniality definitely play a role in the reproduction of inequalities, people do not just passively respond and accept these structural pressures. In conceptualizing the complex link between structure and agency, and reproduction and production, aspirations are a useful framework because they are "rooted firmly in individual proclivity (agency) but also are acutely sensitive to perceived societal constraints (structure)" (MacLeod, 2009, p. 139). Aspirations are temporal, with individuals and communities drawing on "conceptions and experiences of short- and long-term temporal horizons" as they strategize for the future (Cooper & Pratten, 2015, p. 2). Schooling in particular is "always future oriented and aims to shape the future positively, but the future is uncertain and so is planning for it" (Haberlein & Maurus, 2020, p. 570). A future-oriented aspiration framework further refines understandings of coloniality and reproduction of inequality by "account[ing] for the role of the past in processes of social reproduction but also theoriz[ing] the conjuncture of differently valued and realizable possibilities that transform people into fuller social beings" (Stambach, 2017, p. 3). In other words, aspirations help illuminate the complex, often

difficult, but always inventive lives and logics of students as they navigate deeply unequal power structures to create and pursue their versions of the "good life" (Appadurai, 2004).

Aspirations are not solely an individual creation; rather, they are social, informed and shaped by temporal and scalar factors within multiple "cultural worlds" (Appadurai, 2004, p. 67). They reflect and refract global, transnational, national, and local histories, beliefs, and social frameworks. Individuals and groups "rework globally circulating commodities, ideas, and images" to fit their local realities and imagined futures (Cole & Durham, 2008, p. 3). This reworking may challenge, reject, adapt, or uphold dominant markers of success and the "good life," and as people's and groups' situations and experiences change they may move back and forth between different forms of reworking. In other words, aspirations are not entirely subversive of dominant frameworks nor are they entirely reproductive- they may be both or neither, they may encompass both hope and despair, and they may change over time and circumstance.

Education is a social field through which students, families, and communities project their hopes and fears and leverage their capacities to aspire. It encompasses "multiple possibilities, containing or promising an unspecified range of futures yet constrained by the limits of resources, information, and opportunities for participation" (Stambach, 2017, p. 10). The purpose and value of education is almost always in temporal terms in regard to what types of futures will become available to students if they 'focus on their studies' and 'work hard.' However, as reproduction theorists have shown, students' capacities to aspire are determined by much more than individual grit and resilience (e.g. Willis, 1977; MacLeod, 2009; Vavrus, 2007; Bajaj, 2010; Froer, 2012; Maddox, 2010; Jeffery et al, 2008; Osella & Osella, 2000). Education, then, encompasses both hope and frustration; in other words, as described in chapter 1, it is a contradictory resource in students' and communities' lives that both opens new worlds of possibility and significantly limits people's abilities to participate in these possible worlds.

Conclusion

The framework laid out in this chapter allows me to analyze students' experiences and understandings of education in ways that are "socially dynamic but historically meaningful," placing them within local histories and social relations as well as broader national, transnational, and global discourses and relations (Visweswaran, 1998, p. 79). Colonization ingrained an ideology about what it means to be successful and prescribed a narrow avenue through which to achieve this success – namely through western-style education and the acquisition of western languages. The ability to achieve these aspirations, however, is highly inequitable. While the logics of coloniality seem to envelop every aspect of modern life, that dominance is not absolute; people may resist or reject it. Because this logic and the system it supports is not natural, it must be continuously legitimated and is therefore always at risk. Acceptance of dominant ideologies is not automatic, and it is possible for individuals to creatively rework, reject, and/or accept these ideologies. Thus, education is a site of contradictions, where inequalities may be upheld and reproduced at the same time that new spaces of disruption, resistance, and reworking are forged to create new social relations and understandings of success.

Chapter 4: Study Design

This chapter begins with a discussion of my research design and methodology. It then turns to focus in depth on the ways in which language and its intersections with other factors of my positionality shaped site access, fieldwork interactions, and analysis and writing. This project took place over the course of 16 months, from December 2015 to April 2017. It is designed as an ethnographic comparative case study between two private bilingual secondary schools in the Senegalese capital of Dakar. The first focal school, The Bilingual Academy of Senegal (BAS), is a secular French-English school; the second focal school, the Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School (IMFAS), is an Islamic *Franco-Arabe*/French-Arabic school. I designed my study to focus on these two different types of bilingual schooling because the focal schools' languages (French, English, Arabic) represent the most popular languages in formal education and hold various forms of political, cultural, and religious significance (Diallo, 2010). This dissertation asks the following questions about these two schools: (1) How do linguistic, socioeconomic, and educational differences shape Senegalese students' aspirations and imagined futures?; 2) How are these students' educational and linguistic practices and ideologies linked to their understandings of and strategies for social mobility and success?; and 3) What do students' experiences in these schools reveal about how education, language, and social class (re)produce belonging and exclusion within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces?

Research Design

I used a comparative case study approach to research design. Originally I planned to compare three private secondary schools – French-English, French-Arabic, and French only. In selecting my field sites, I had three main criteria. First, focal schools must offer all secondary grades, from sixième (6th grade) to terminal (12th grade). As many private schools in Dakar are newer, they do not yet offer all of these grades. This criteria, then, would point me to more established schools.

Second, focal schools must have tuition levels comparative to other schools with similar language policies. This would help ensure that to an extent that focal schools were representative of the socioeconomic backgrounds of students that enrolled in different types of private language schooling. Lastly, I purposely sought to avoid the oft-studied *banlieues*[22] such as Pikine, seeking instead schools located in more 'middle class' neighborhoods in order to complicate popular imaginings of social class in Senegal and Africa writ large, which too often rely on a stark dichotomy between 'the poor' and 'the rich.'

Speaking with my social contacts in Senegal, who include educators, parents, students, and young professionals, as well as my own online searches, I came up with a list of 2-3 schools for each language type (French-English, French-Arabic, and French only) that met my three criteria. I was able to get permission from the school directors of my top choice schools, and for the first three months of fieldwork I was in three schools. I will expand on questions of access at BAS (French-English) and IMFAS (French-Arabic) later in this chapter. At the third school (French only), I decided to leave early because of a dispute between the acting school's director, who gave me permission to conduct research, and his father, the founder of the school who still lived on school grounds. When the founder learned that I was in the school he was unhappy, and, not wanting to cause further tension between father and son (and also because I was not entirely comfortable in the school myself), I agreed with the founder that I would no longer conduct my research at the school.

Thus, my comparative case study moved to a comparison between two private bilingual schools – The Bilingual Academy of Senegal (BAS) and the Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School (IMFAS). In addition to differing along linguistic and religious lines, the schools also served students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, as evidenced in the difference between tuitions. For

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[22] *Banlieue* literally translates to "suburb", but it is often used pejoratively to refer to housing projects or poorer areas that exist on the outskirts of urban areas.

example, the tuition at BAS was 140,000 CFA per month at the 12th grade level, roughly $230. At IMFAS, the tuition at the 12th grade level was 12,000 CFA per month, roughly $20.

A comparative case study approach calls for a simultaneous analysis over three axes – the horizontal, the vertical, and the transversal (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). The horizontal axis "compares how similar policies unfold in distinct locations that are socially produced," while the vertical axis focuses on comparison in and across different scales (ibid, p. 3). The transversal axis attends to historical considerations, contextualizing the processes on the horizontal and vertical axes historically. In this study, the horizontal axis looks across the daily lives of each focal school, examining factors such as language policies and practices, curricula, and discipline. This is joined by the vertical axis, which looks at and across different scales, such as individual students, grades, schools, and national and international policies and discourses related to education, language, and/or social mobility. This allows me to conceptualize how the logic of education for social mobility is constructed within and across scales. On the transversal axis, the horizontal and vertical axes are situated historically, with attention paid to the different histories of Islamic and secular education, the rise of private education, the role of language and education policies and practices in the development and sustaining of linguistic-socioeconomic hierarchies, and the evolving discourses about what constitutes success. Bringing these three axes together illuminates not only the ways in which institutional, structural, and historical inequities continue to affect students' lives, but also crucially the ways in which students are "both objects and agents, acquiring cultural knowledge and reworking it through the practices – intentional and otherwise – of their everyday lives" (Katz, 2004, p. 20).

Methods

Across the two schools, I conducted 103 interviews total with students, teachers, administrators, and parents; over 300 hours of classroom observations total; and over 150 student

questionnaires total. Interviews were semi-structured and I employed purposive sampling to represent the broadest range of people in regard to gender, grade level, socioeconomic level, ethnicity, and religious affiliation as possible. Numerous informal interviews were also conducted on a daily basis. Students chatted with me before and after class, and teachers spoke with me during their breaks and lunch time. Interview questions asked participants about their and their families' educational backgrounds, language practices (e.g. what languages they spoke and with whom), how and why they selected their school, whether the school met their expectations, their thoughts about the education they were receiving, and their aspirations and plans for the future. Student questionnaires asked similar questions to those asked in the interviews, such as "What languages do you speak?", "What languages do you speak with your friends/family/neighbors etc.?", and "What are your plans after graduation?" 167 students completed the questionnaires across all grades at the three schools. The purpose of the questionnaire was to triangulate my findings from interviews by allowing me to reach a larger number of students than I could with interviews alone (Fetterman, 2010).

I also conducted observations that looked across multiple spaces including classrooms, cafeterias, school courtyards, and hallways. Classroom observations took place across all subject areas and all grades as time and ability allowed. Particular focus was spent on sixième (6th grade) and cinquième (7th grade) classes, as these were students' first years at their secondary schools, as well as on première (11th grade) and terminale (12th grade), in order to compare how students' language skills and aspirations shifted as they moved up in their schools. The central purpose of these observations was to gain an understanding of the culture of each school, especially in terms of language practices and policies, and of how students make sense of social mobility. I paid particular attention to language practices (e.g. which languages are used and with whom), how teachers selected and enforced language choices in different spaces, and social groupings based on language, ethnicity,

socioeconomic status, gender, and religion.

Language and research subjectivities

My work cannot be separated from the legacy of foreign researchers working alongside and many times in direct collaboration with imperialist projects to stereotype, malign, and other "primitive" Africans and their ways of speaking, knowing, and being (Mudimbe 1988; Mawere & van Stam 2019). As Nhemachena et al (2016) argue, Africa has for centuries "suffered the curse of collectors of Africa's material resources, cultural artifacts, and knowledge. Cultures continue to be selected, collected, gathered and detached from original temporal occasions" (p. 19). Traditional ethnographic work shrouded questions of researcher positionality and power under the veil of "neutrality" and "objectivity" (Fine, 1994), ignoring the ways in which their "objectivity" "was already subjective in the value-laden classification, meanings, and worldviews they employed and superimposed upon peoples who were different from them" (Madison, 2005, p. 25). This history is the bedrock upon which ethnographic inquiry is founded, and issues of researcher positionality, power inequities, and the role of research in upholding structures of coloniality continue to be central to discussions on how to decolonize (Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2012), humanize (Paris & Winn, 2013), and make critical (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Fine & Weis, 1996) ethnographic work.

In discussing researcher positionality, Jackson (2004) cautions against merely writing a "grocery list" of one's social identities, arguing that "true reflexivity would trouble the very categories themselves" (p. 37). Following this, in this section I aim to analyze the ways in which language shaped interactions and understandings between myself and students, teachers, and administrators at the two schools. Cormier (2018) argues that "when a researcher doesn't speak the same dominant language(s) as their participants, data collection is impacted. In this case, the researcher's dominant language becomes a form of power they hold over the participants" (p. 328). This dynamic is especially heightened when the researcher's dominant language is a colonial

language.

Participants' language practices and ideologies significantly impacted my interactions with them and the ways in which my fieldwork was conducted. I interacted with students, teachers, and administrators in French, Wolof, and English. I am a native English speaker and I speak French fluently. I speak Wolof at an intermediate level, and have difficulty fully understanding speakers who either speak fast or who use many colloquialisms. Srivastava (2006) argues that "the choice and use of a specific language is not merely a technical consideration but one deeply embedded in the social processes of engagement in the field" (p. 213). In my case, the choice of language was influenced by the preference of my interlocutors, my own language abilities, and perceptions of school personnel of which spaces I should and should not have access. I turn now to a discussion of how language affected my fieldwork at the Bilingual Academy of Senegal.

Language and research interactions at BAS

At BAS, the French-English school, I was readily welcomed. I had known of the school since my time as a teacher in Senegal (though I never taught there) and reached out to the administrators when I was looking for research sites. Mr. Jones, the English-speaking white school owner, was excited to have what he referred to as "an academic's perspective" on how the school was run and allowed me access right away.

All of my interactions with participants were in either English or French, as the use of Senegalese languages was not allowed in the school. Most of the Senegalese faculty as well as many of the younger students preferred to speak with me in French, as they either did not know English or were not comfortable expressing themselves in English. Older students all spoke with me in English, as they were in their final years of intensive English-language study and were quite comfortable conversing in it.

English was regularly used alongside French at the school, and there was a cohort of about

4-5 foreign English teachers who spoke French at varying levels, many of whom were young, white women from the U.S. My presence at the school, therefore, was immediately read by students and faculty as a new English teacher; this reading was helped significantly by the fact that school administrators partnered me with the lead English teacher in my first few weeks at the school, meaning that my first introductions and interactions were with students in their English classes. There were strict "English only" policies in the English classes, so when I introduced myself it was entirely in English.

In the younger grades, where students were still learning English, teachers used my introductions as an opportunity for students to practice their English skills, urging them to ask me questions. As a former English teacher in Senegal, I found myself slipping back into teacher-mode as I answered students' questions, making sure to speak clearly and to use vocabulary with which new learners would be familiar. Some students asked me about my research, not understanding why or how I was still a student when I was "so old." I was also commonly asked if I was married and had children. For example, during my third week at the school Awa, a 6th grade student, was sitting in front of me and turned around to whisper, "Est-ce que tu as des enfants?/Do you have children?" I responded no, and she asked, "Est-ce que tu es mariée?/Are you married?" I said yes, and she said, "Felicitations/Congratulations" before turning around again to complete her work.

In the older grades, the English teacher during the 2015-2016 school year, Lola, was quite keen to help me with my research, and regularly solicited students to talk with me. Some students were very happy to talk with me, with one terminale (12th grade) student telling me that she would love to talk about her future plans for college and career, because "that's all we think about!" Other students largely ignored me, as they were quite stressed and focused on their work (I expand on students' stress in chapter 4). All of these interactions were done entirely in English, even though I regularly heard them speaking with each other in French.

As fieldwork progressed and I was introduced to more of the Senegalese teachers, I was able to observe other classes besides English, such as History and French. French was used exclusively in these classes, and pedagogically they were much more teacher-centered, in contrast to the foreign-teacher led English classes, which relied much more on student interaction and discussion. While the foreign teachers regularly struggled to manage their classrooms, especially in the younger grades, the classes taught by the much more experienced Senegalese teachers were more subdued and controlled. I attribute this discrepancy to the vast differences in experience and understanding of Senegalese educational and cultural practices between the two groups of teachers.

During my time at BAS I became close with a few of the foreign English teachers due to our shared backgrounds and the fact that they were always at the school (they lived in apartments in the school building) and worked full time. The Senegalese teachers, though very friendly and open with me, rarely had time to chat outside of their classes, as they were only hired on part-time bases and thus worked at other schools in addition to BAS and so would arrive right before their assigned class, teach, and then leave immediately. I therefore found that I spent more time in the English classes because it gave me more leeway to interact with students and I could debrief with the teachers about things I had observed.

Over time, I actually ended up filling in for a few of the English teachers who were ill or running late to class. One teacher regularly lamented to me her frustration about how "out of control" the younger students were, and I shared with her a game I had used with my students called Mum's the Word. In this game, students sit on their desks and silently throw a ball to each other. If a student misses the ball or if they speak, they are out and must sit down. The teacher adapted this to have students conjugate a verb or share other English vocabulary when they caught the ball, with all other speaking not allowed. Students absolutely loved this game, and whenever I came to their classes they requested to play it. The game became a reward for good behavior.

At BAS, then, almost all of my interactions with students were in English. As the older students were largely fluent in English, this had little impact on my data collection. For the younger students, they would practice their English with me during nonformal interviews, and for formal interviews that I recorded they preferred we converse in French. Though linguistically my frequent use of English with students did not overall have profound effects on my data collection in terms of communication and understanding, it did affect the ways in which I was viewed by students. I became almost an adjunct English teacher in both practice and reputation, not only helping teach classes but also acting as one of the chaperones for the sixth grade field trip. Amongst the younger students, then, I was viewed as an authority figure and treated as one of their teachers, with students coming to me to discipline other students who had done things like stolen a pencil. While the older students treated me respectfully, they did not necessarily view me as an authority figure as did the younger students. For them I was a classroom visitor, and while they were generally happy to speak with me about their school and plans for the future, they did not look to me to discipline or teach them. I turn now to a discussion of how language shaped my fieldwork at the Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School.

Language and research interactions at IMFAS

At IMFAS, the French-Arabic school, administrators were more wary of my intentions than was Mr. Jones at BAS. When I first visited the school, I spoke with Mariama, the school's secretary, in a combination of French and Wolof. She was initially confused about what I was asking, but after answering her questions she agreed to set up a meeting for me with El Hadji Abdoulaye Fall, the school's director. However, due to his poor health he was rarely at the school and it took a month before I was able to meet with him in person. We did speak on the phone a few times, in French and Wolof, and during these conversations I noticed I had trouble fully understanding him. I later learned that he had had a stroke a year prior and that this significantly impacted his speaking.

Therefore, my husband, Mass, helped translate.

In our first meeting in person, we further discussed my work and background in Senegal. Mass also attended this meeting, and El Hadji spoke with him at length about Islam (Mass is Muslim). It was agreed that I would be able to observe classes and speak with students as long as Mass was there as well, as El Hadji had some concerns about how I would portray the school.[23] Initially Mass and I planned that I would do most of the interviews myself, and Mass would be present only as an assurance to El Hadji as agreed. However, as many of the students at IMFAS had moved to Dakar from rural areas and therefore did not use much French in their speech, I found that I was missing nuances and details that could have led to more generative discussions. Mass therefore took on a larger role than initially anticipated in interviews, helping with interpretation of interviews as well as translation of questionnaires. Initially we translated the questionnaires into Wolof[24] and gave them to students, but we realized quickly that a number of students had trouble reading and writing non-Arabic script. We therefore decided that Mass would orally deliver the questionnaire and write down students' answers.

During the second year of fieldwork, Mass could no longer help due to his work schedule, and my friend, Alou, took over assisting me. Mass is Wolof and Alou is Peul, and both were born and raised in Dakar and speak (urban) Wolof as their first language. Mass and Alou knew my research well, as I had spoken with both of them at length over the years as I honed its focus and

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[23] There is a dominant narrative in Western media and development work that reduce Islamic schooling in Senegal to only stories of abuse and exploitation (see e.g. Human Rights Watch, 2019; Bensemra & Jabkhiro, 2019; Epstein, 2016).

[24] While there is a standard Wolof orthography in the Latin alphabet, it is largely used by linguists and Wolof educators. Outside of official academic domains, Wolof orthography varies highly, with some using more of the standard form and others incorporating more French orthography. There is also a Wolof orthography that uses Arabic script, known as "Wolofal," that dates back to the 19th century. However, this too is not commonly known or used outside of academic spaces (McLaughlin, 2001; Ngom, 2010).

form, asking them about their educational experiences and using them as pilot subjects for my interview protocols. They also both completed CITI training, as required by the UW-Madison IRB, and followed all confidentiality and consent protocols. At IMFAS, Mass and Alou quickly got to know the students, as they are both quite outgoing and loquacious. They would chat about topics unrelated to my research, such as football, wrestling, or music. Initially I had many informal conversations with students, without Mass or Alou, asking them some of the questions from my interview protocol (it was during these informal discussions that I realized my linguistic shortcomings and need for help). As students became more comfortable with Mass, Alou, and me I began asking them to do formal interviews, which would be recorded. During official interviews, I explained to students that Mass or Alou was there to help me understand them better, since my Wolof was not as good as theirs. I explained that if I did not understand something they said, I would let them know, and they could either repeat it or we could ask Mass or Alou to translate for me. Over time, as Mass and Alou got to both know the students and my research even better, they would point out areas I could discuss further with students, leading to much more generative interviews. This was especially prevalent in relation to religious practices and topics, as I am not Muslim. We also debriefed after each day at the school, comparing our perceptions of different events, helping me flesh out my fieldnotes and identify nuances that I otherwise would have missed because my attention was focused on something else in the class.

While El Hadji gave his permission for me to conduct my research at the school, Mariama remained skeptical and, since El Hadji was not regularly at the school, it was Mariama and another administrator, Souleymane, with whom I worked out the parameters of my field work. During my time at this school, Souleymane and Mariama were the ultimate gatekeepers, and while I didn't interact with them much, the few times I did interact with them significantly shaped the form and direction of my research. While El Hadji, students, and teachers were quite open to me, Souleymane

and Mariama were always suspicious, and they repeatedly used language as a way to mark me as an outsider.

I began fieldwork in January 2016, as El Hadji had told me to start after the winter break. When I arrived on my first day, Aminata and Souleymane were not supportive of my presence. The following is an excerpt from fieldnotes of my first day at the school:

Monday, January 11, 2016

Today was my first day observing classes. Even though I had spoken with El Hadji (the director) last week and he said I could start today, when I arrived, Souleymane, the school administrator, and Mariama, the school secretary, said that I can't observe classes. Mariama said (in Wolof), "You're going to disrupt them [the students]" and that I would try to lead my own class within the class. When I told them that El Hadji had already given me permission, Mariama responded that the students wouldn't understand me because they don't speak English. I told her that I speak French and she said they don't speak French either. I said that I speak Wolof and that, if necessary, my husband Mass would also help me as my assistant. They turned their attention to Mass, asking him if I prayed. He said no, but that he is Muslim and knows that I'm not in the school to disrespect Islam.

Souleymane and Mariama conversed in Arabic, and then told me to wait. After about 30 minutes of waiting Souleymane handed me a partial class schedule for only the French and English classes and told another man (I don't know who he is) to take me to a class, but did not tell me which class or which grade. It ended up being the English class for 12th grade. I still don't have a complete course schedule, but I know when there is French and English class.

In this vignette, Mariama first makes her reservations about me clear when she says that I will disrupt classes and try to teach my own class within the class, which I understand as her concerns that I would try to undermine the Islamic education students were receiving. However, when I told her that the director had already granted me permission, she then turned to language as a reason why I should not observe classes. Multiple times she points to my language knowledge (or lack thereof) as a barrier to communicating with students.

Interestingly, during my entire fieldwork experiences Mariama was the only one to directly question my language ability. No one had ever challenged me on why I was choosing to impose myself onto these linguistic spaces where I did not share a common dominant language. Reflecting on this now, it's clear how the ongoing effects of coloniality continue to significantly shape linguistic interactions between westerners and Senegalese. For example, when I would introduce myself to school directors, teachers, parents, members of the ministry of education, etc., I would break into a pre-prepared spiel in *Olof Piir* ('Pure' Wolof) that I had worked on with my Wolof teacher about my research. Almost every single time my interlocutors commented that I used the Wolof word for research, *gëstu,* instead of the French term, *recherche.* However, after my pre-prepared elevator pitch I would almost always switch back to communicating in urban Wolof, with heavy use of French. The mere fact that I made an effort was seemingly enough to allow me entrance and validity to these spaces. That is, until I met Mariama and Souleymane.

In addition to my less than fluent Wolof, my lack of knowledge of Arabic was constantly pointed out to me by them. Although I have studied Arabic and can read basic texts, I cannot speak it or comprehend it. As seen in this vignette, they would frequently switch to Arabic when they did not want to include me in their conversations. In contrast, students and teachers were much more open to help me understand what they were saying in Arabic, with many students excited to teach me (one student even offered to tutor me, as he earned extra money as a private religious tutor).

Lastly, this vignette shows how Mariama and Souleymane significantly shaped the form of my fieldwork at this school. That first day they brought me to the English class and only gave me the schedule for the French and English classes. These were the linguistic spaces where my presence made the most sense to them. I actually ended up building strong relationships with the French and English teachers, who themselves felt like outsiders at the school because they had not attended Islamic schools and did not speak Arabic. Being sent to the French and English classes also greatly

influenced my relationships with the students, as evidenced in the following fieldwork vignette that took place almost a year after my first day of observing classes:

Tues, Jan 10, 2017

On my way to the school, around 7:50, Mr. Ly (the English teacher) texted me to tell me he would be late and to ask me to review with the 10th grade class. He said he would be there around 9:00. He didn't actually arrive until around 11:00, so he missed all of 10th grade and half of 11th grade.

During the 11th grade class, Mariama (the secretary) came in and asked the students in Wolof where Mr. Ly was. The students responded that they did not know. She asked the students who was teaching. They said me. She asked me where Mr. Ly was and I explained (in Wolof) he texted me and asked me to review with the class.

She called me and Alou (my friend and assistant) to the hallway and said (in Wolof), "You don't have the right to enter the classroom if the teacher isn't there." She said that if the director saw me teaching that I risked getting kicked out of the school. I apologized. Alou explained that I wasn't teaching, it was just that the students had been there since 8:00 and they only have two hours of English class per week and the teacher is always late. He also said that the students frequently asked me to help them with exercises.

Mariama responded (in Wolof), "It's not your role, or your duty, and you don't have the right." I apologized again and she left. Alou and I went back into the classroom. I asked Alou what to do and he said I should continue reviewing with the students. I asked the students, not wanting them to get in trouble with Mariama. They told me to continue and to ignore her, that she is always like this and creates lots of problems. We continued reviewing until the teacher arrived.

When I think back to this day, many questions come to mind. Was I overstepping, taking over for a teacher? Was I being taken advantage of by the teacher? Selfishly, did taking on the role of substitute English teacher hinder my fieldwork, as it took time away from observing classes and speaking with students? Who should I have listened to in this scenario – Mariama, or the students? Who was my commitment to, the school's administration, who had granted me access in the first

place, making it possible to even do my research; the teacher, who claimed that constant family issues and traffic kept him from showing up on time; or the students, who felt they were being cheated out of English lessons by their teacher? I also wonder how Mariama felt when she saw that I was teaching. Had her worst fears been realized, that I was teaching my own class within the class, undermining their Islamic education?

While stepping in for the English teacher actually did improve my relationships with students, allowing them to get to know me better and feel more comfortable asking me questions, this improved rapport was achieved through unequal power dynamics. I was now no longer the awkward *toubab* (white person/foreigner), looking to them as experts to help me. Now I was their teacher, the person who had privileged knowledge that they sought. Though I also stepped in at times as a teacher at BAS, the power balance was different, since all of their English teachers were white foreigners like me, and these students were receiving an education that had an intensive English-language curriculum. In contrast, at IMFAS I was the only foreigner, the only "native" English-speaker, and the students regularly expressed to me their desires to learn English and how they felt they were being cheated out of their English lessons because their teacher was regularly absent or late. Thus, my position of authority and as knowledge-giver was based solely on the unearned linguistic power granted to me as an English speaker.

From the field to analysis and dissemination

Questions of language, power, and positionality do not end with fieldwork. Speaking about analysis and dissemination, Srivatsava (2006) points to the need for a mediation between "the language I use to think in" and "the language of the data" in regard to "the role of language and translation in accessing, interpreting, and presenting data" (p. 211). The language I use to think in is English; the language(s) of my data are Wolof, French, and English. The discrepancy between these languages is most evident in my fieldnotes, where I recollected conversations I had had in Wolof by

their English translations, as evidenced in the two vignettes shared above. Writing about the use of translation in fieldnotes, Kouritzin (2002) cautions that "the rhetorical, narrative, and linguistic choices researchers make during the recording of fieldnotes can structure an interpretation or analysis" (p. 131). In an effort to address this issue, I asked Mass and Alou to recollect to me in their own words what had happened after these two interactions with Mariama and Souleymane at the end of that day of fieldwork. Mass did so orally, while Alou wrote down his remembrance. I made sure that our recollections matched, and shared my written field notes of these events with them to check for accuracy.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim in their original language. I transcribed all interviews in French and English myself, and a Senegalese linguist who is friends with Mass transcribed all interviews in Wolof. None of the interviews were translated to English for analysis, coded instead in their original language. If issues arose with my comprehension of the Wolof transcripts, Mass helped me paraphrase for the purposes of coding.

As I began writing my dissertation and selecting specific data from field notes and interviews, I translated the relevant excerpts into English, since the audience for this dissertation is English-speaking. I have also translated excerpts into English for conference presentations and publications. Thus, issues and questions of translation become "more and more pronounced as degrees of formal presentation increase" (Srivastava, 2006, p. 218). Writing about issues with translation, Temple & Young (2004) argue that "the fundamental issue is how the expediency of translation reinforces the invisibility of the source language – an issue that is both political and methodological" (p. 166). The act of translation puts the researcher in a position of power over the research participants, as choices about how to balance comprehensibility for the English-speaking reader and accuracy of translation lead to sometimes difficult decisions when a word or concept does not have a direct English translation. To address these concerns, I follow Srivastava's (2006)

model of providing translated passages to multilingual and monolingual speakers with knowledge of the research context to provide further feedback about accuracy and representation (p. 218). I also include the original transcription alongside the translation so that speakers of the original language can check my translations.

This discussion of my linguistic positionality and the ways it intersected with other factors such as my race, age, gender, and nationality brings to the foreground the power dynamics and imbalances that shaped my fieldwork and the findings presented in this dissertation. I do not view research as neutral and recognize the legacy of epistemological violence in postcolonial contexts that shapes ethnographic work, especially that done by scholars such as myself who benefit from structures of coloniality. In the subsequent chapters I examine the ways in which language ideologies circulated at the two schools and the ways in which they informed students' future aspirations. These same language ideologies also shaped students', teachers', and administrators' interactions with me, as well as my own understandings and representations of my data.

Chapter 5

(Re)configuring belonging across worlds: The Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School

Xam nga adina ñaar la. Bu fekke ñun jullit, danga wara xam luy doxal sa mbiradina. Mais wallu diine pour nga xam ko il faut nga ñëw nga jang arabe. Ak tamit bu fekke fii ci Sénégal danga wara jang francais. Looloo tax ñuy bëg di ñëw ci franco-arabe. Be, dinañ xam langue française bi, yu bari ci dëkk bi duñu jaaxal. Beneen bi aussi, arabe bi amnañu ci deux avantages: bu njëkk bi mooy dinañu xam ñum, musulmans, dinañu xam suñu diine en plus dinañu xam langue arabe.

-   *Sokhna, Première*

You know there are two worlds. If you're Muslim you must know how to practice your religion, and to know your religion you must study Arabic. In Senegal, you also have to study French. That is why we go to a Franco-Arabe school. First, if you know French you will understand a lot of what's going on in Senegal. Second, learning Arabic has two advantages: it lets us as Muslims know our religion, and we get to learn it as a language.

-   Sokhna, 11th grade

As Sokhna describes above, students at IMFAS found themselves across two worlds. As Muslims, they join a centuries-long tradition of Islamic schooling centered around the teachings of the Qu'ran through the medium of the Arabic language. As Senegalese, they are also part of a secular, francophone state. Their schooling, a Franco-Arabe private school, is one of multiple forms of Islamic schooling in Senegal. While Islamic religious schooling is often referred to by scholars as a "parallel" education system alongside the State's public education system (e.g. d'Aiglepierre & Bauer, 2018; Grysole, 2018; Gandolfi, 2003), Franco-Arabe schools are one manifestation of efforts to "modernize" this form of schooling and bridge the gap between these two systems.

This chapter focuses on students at one such school: The Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School (IMFAS). In exploring the ways in which these students make sense of their place as arabophone[25] Muslims within a secular francophone state, I draw on theories of cultural citizenship (Leblanc & Gomez-Perez, 2007) and dis-citizenship (Ramanathan, 2013) and the ways in which language and language ideologies intersect with students' understandings of what it means to be Muslim and Senegalese. With this framework, I view citizenship as not simply a person's legal status and political rights vis-a-vis a nation-state, but rather as complex constructions of belonging and exclusion within and across scales that are historically embedded in social, political, and economic domains.

Speaking of Muslim youth in francophone West Africa, Leblanc & Gomez-Perez (2007) conceive of cultural citizenship as "a set of practices and rights (rights to expression, identity, self-determination, diversity, etc.) capable of suggesting that a given society is not limited to a restricted political and economic space" (p. 44, translation mine). Practices of Islamic cultural citizenship range from the personal, such as wearing a beard or a veil, not shaking hands with a member of the opposite sex, or participating in the Hajj (the annual pilgrimage to Mecca) at a younger age, to the social and political, such as creating or joining Islamic community organizations, building and supporting local mosques, and using new forms of media to proselytize and/or foster community

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[25] Senegalese speakers of Arabic are referred to as *Arabophones* or *Arabisants* in both academic literature and in popular discourse. However, there is no consensus as to the exact use of these terms (Kane, 2016). While many of the student participants at IMFAS used the term *arabisant* in talking about themselves, there was disagreement about whether the term applied to them when asked explicitly. For some, the term *arabisant* was synonymous with *arabophone* and taken to refer to anyone who spoke Arabic. For others, *arabisant* referred only to those with Arabic heritage. For these students, *arabophone* is the more appropriate term to use for them since they are Senegalese. Adding to the confusion is the use of the term *arabisant* in some academic literature to refer to Senegalese who have studied Arabic in Arabic countries (e.g. Brossier, 2016; Villalón, 1995). For this chapter I will use the term *arabophone* to refer to students like those at IMFAS, who are learning Arabic in Senegal. I will use the term *arabisant* to refer to those who have studied in Arabic countries.

engagement (ibid, p. 49). For young people, Islamic cultural citizenship is a way for them to make claims to participate in spaces they are otherwise barred from "either because of the inescapable weight of elders in traditional [religious] institutions or because of the hegemonic politics of the State" (ibid, p. 53, translation mine).

In the Senegalese context, claims to Islam-inspired cultural citizenship were first raised by *arabisant* "counter-elites" (Fall, 1993) who found themselves effectively barred from meaningful participation in francophone, secular political and public life because they had been educated in the Arabic language in Islamic schools. Importantly, *arabisants* and *arabophones* are not necessarily excluded from secular public life because they are Muslim. As Camara & Bodian (2016) explain, "Islam forms a constitutive dimension in the lives of most Senegalese. Religion transcends ethnic and regional specificities and structures the life of students in a way, regardless of their social background, their education level, their ethnicity, or place of origin" (p. 394). The exclusion of *arabisants* and *arabophones*, then, is linked more to their education in Islamic schools and their training and use of the Arabic language, which differentiate them from other Senegalese Muslims who have been educated in secular schools in French.

I contend that IMFAS students' responses to their exclusion from public life as *arabophones* constitute claims to *arabophone* cultural citizenship. *Arabophone* cultural citizenship is closely related to Islamic cultural citizenship in that it is part of a Muslim religious identity, but it is also distinct in that it entails a specific type of educational background and language training that not all Senegalese Muslims have. To examine the role of education and language in claims to *arabophone* cultural citizenship, I draw on the concept of dis-citizenship, which foregrounds the role of language and its ties to individual and group identities in relation to one's ability to participate fully in civic activities (Ramanathan, 2013). As Heller (2013) explains, "Dis-citizenship is a matter of struggle over access to resources, framed within the dominant ideologies of language and culture connected to the

workings of the nation-state" (p. 191). The Senegalese State as created by French colonizers explicitly excluded Islamic education and worked to undermine use of the Arabic language in efforts to maintain its power. The colonial legacy continues today, with Islamic schools only recently beginning to be formally recognized by the Senegalese State, and the Arabic language continuing to hold no official status in the country. Additionally, the Arabic language is widely perceived to be solely the language of Islam and is not viewed as a language of communication that can be used in non-religious spaces (Ngom, 2003).

In response to this historical exclusion from public life, *arabophone* students and graduates continue to organize in efforts to gain more opportunities and recognition from the State. For example, the *Mouvement des arabophones du Sénégal* (Movement of Arabic-speakers of Senegal) held a public forum in April 2021 titled "*L'Education, Formation, et Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes Arabophones du Sénégal: Problematique et Solutions*" (Education, Training, and Entrepreneurship of young Arabic-speakers of Senegal: Problems and Solutions) where they detailed the difficulties faced by *arabophone* students (Dakaractu, 2021). They are currently campaigning the State to build a public Arab-Islamic University so that graduates can continue to higher education; they also call for the qualifying elementary exam *Certificat de Fin d'Etudes Elémentaires/CFEE* (Certificate of End of Elementary Studies) and the qualifying lower secondary exam *Brevet de Fin d'Etudes Moyennes/BFEM* (Certificate of End of Middle School) to be offered in Arabic, as was done with the *baccalauréat* exam in 2013 (Campus Teranga, 2021). The organizing work done by the *Mouvement* is, I contend, an example of *arabophone* cultural citizenship.

The following section provides a brief overview of the history and culture of the school. This is followed by a discussion of students' educational trajectories to IMFAS and how it fits with their identities as *arabophone* Muslims. The next section examines students' frustrations at the lack of opportunities for them to use their education and language skills outside of religious spaces. The

final section explores the rise of a new type of citizenship in Senegal – global citizenship – and its ties to the English language.

"*Il faut avoir un programme qui répondre à nos réalités et qui est ouvert au monde extérieur/* There must be a program that responds to our realities and is open to the outside world": The Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School

IMFAS was founded by a moderate reform group, the *Association Religieuse des Musulmanes du Sénégal (ARMS)*, in the 1970s[26]. The director of the school, El Hadji Abdoulaye Fall[27], has been active in ARMS since its inception. He described the three main objectives of the association thusly:

Bu njekk mooy yar doomu jullit yi, jangal leen mooy objectif numéro un. Ñareel bi mooy éveiller le people Sénégalais en matière de la religion par des conferences et des émissions à la radio. Troisièmement, montrer au monde extérieur qu'il y'a des associations qui s'occupent de l'éducation et de l'enseignement.	First is to educate Muslims, to teach them is the first objective. The second is to awaken the Senegalese people about religion through conferences and radio transmissions. Thirdly, to show the outside world that there are associations that work on education and training.

Such a focus on education is common of reform groups such as ARMS; as described in chapter 2, in the 1970s reform groups made significant increases in their educational activities, creating more "modern" franco-arabe Islamic schools such as IMFAS in efforts to better bridge the chasm between francophone secular institutions and Arabic Islamic institutions. The use of conferences and radio transmission to "awaken the Senegalese people" about religion is an example of Islamic cultural citizenship. In contrast to more traditional *daaras* that focused on rote memorization, at IMFAS emphasis was placed on Arabic literacy to ensure that students could understand the

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[26] Following ethnographic practices, details have been changed to protect the identity of the school.
[27] The title "El Hadji" is given to a Muslim man who has completed the pilgrimage (*Hajj*) to Mecca.

teachings themselves. In describing the type of pedagogy used in the upper grades, El Hadji Fall explained, *"On prend le texte, on lit le texte, on degage les grandes idées, et après on résume le contenu et le sens.*/We take the text, read it, analyze the main ideas, and after we summarize the content and meaning." While memorization was still a component of the classes I observed, especially in the lower levels, there was always room for (frequently quite active) discussion between the teachers and students.

The majority of the teachers at IMFAS were *arabisants* who had studied at university abroad, in particular in Egypt and Morocco. A smaller number had done all of their schooling in Senegal; this included the French and English teachers, who did not know Arabic. In addition to ensuring that the teachers had the proper qualifications to teach at IMFAS, El Hadji Fall said it was also a priority that the teachers *"d'avoir la bonne conduit, de ne pas fumer dans les classes, de ne pas insulter les élèves en classe. C'est d'être toujours à l'heure pour être l'exemple aux élèves et d'être toujours propre et bien habillé pour apprendre les élèves les bonne habitudes.*/have the right conduct, not smoke in the classrooms, not insult the students in class. They must always be on time to be an example to the students and always be clean and well-dressed to teach the students good habits." Thus, one aspect of the school's understanding of Islamic cultural citizenship entailed not only Arabic literacy and Islamic studies, but also the need to make sure that students' lives outside of school were in accordance with Islam.

IMFAS also placed a great emphasis on being "open." In our first meeting, El Hadji Fall made it clear that they were not like *"des Islamistes qui [tuent] les gens, qui imposent leurs idées*/Islamists who [kill] people, who impose their ideas." Rather, he continued,

Nous étions toujours des hommes au juste milieu – ni en haut, ni en bas. Parce que l'Islam nous a demandé d'être des hommes au milieu. Cela veut dire nous devons avoir l'écout de tout le monde. Nous devons discuter avec tout le monde. Si on les convaincre, on leur donne la raison en changeant d'habitude. Voilà pourquoi nous somme aimés par tout le monde. Tous les pays arabse nous aiment. Même en Arabie Saoudite, qui est un peu dur, ils vont avec nous. Parce que'ils savent que nous somes cultivés aussie comme eux sinon plus qu'eux. Parce qu'ils sont enfermés quant à nous, nous sommes ouvert. Voilà pourquoi nous n'avons aucun problème avec aucun pays arabe, ni non-arabe.

We have always been men in the middle – not on top, nor on the bottom. Because Islam asks us to be men in the middle. That means we have to listen to everybody. We must discuss with everyone. If we convince them, we give them reasons to change their habits. That's why we are loved by everyone. All Arab countries love us. Even in Saudi Arabia, which is a little extreme, they go with us. Because they know that we are educated like them, if not more than them. Because they are closed off, but as for us we are open. That's why we have no problem with an Arab or non-Arab country.

This is quite different from the classical, hierarchical *tariqa* model of Islamic cultural citizenship, wherein the *marabout* knows all; it is also different from the "radical" reformist model that seeks to impose its own form of societal control and organization. For El Hadji Fall and ARMS, Islam is about humility and cooperation, which in turn earn respect.

Following this, ARMS has frequently collaborated with other moderate Islamic associations to build relations with Arabic countries to help students pursue higher education abroad. As El Hadji Fall explained,

Leegi nak, à partir de ce moment le monde est ouvert. Nous avons tissé des relations avec les pays arabes auquels nous envoyons des étudiants qui se sont formé en Arabi Saoudite, au Maroc, en Algérie, en Tunisie, en Egypte, et au Lybie et au Quwait. Partout dans les pays arabes nous avions des étudiants.

So then, from that moment the world is open. We have developed relationships with Arab countries to which we send students who have been trained in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Kuwait. All across the Arab countries we have had students.

Such openness and collaboration also extend to the Senegalese State, where they have worked to ensure employment for their returning *arabisant* students:

Quand [les étudiants] sont revenus, nous avons mis le gouvernement pour qu'ils aient le travail. Ils sont utilizer comme enseignants, certains comme ambassadeurs, comme dans les tribunaux, certains dans l'agriculture, partout certains dans les mosquée pour être Imam.

When [the students] came back, we went to the government so that they would have jobs. They were used as teachers, some as ambassadors, in courts, some in agriculture, and everywhere in the mosque as Imam. [28]

Thus, this Islamic cultural citizenship based on openness also intersects with claims to national citizenship and State recognition, in this case in the form of opportunities to work in the civil service.

For El Hadji Fall, the need for a more centralized system of Islamic schooling has always been essential if *arabisants* were to gain recognition by the State. Upon becoming the director of IMFAS, he began work to create a unified curriculum and administration for all Franco-Arabe schools in the country. He explained,

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[28] An Imam is the person who leads prayers at a mosque.

Avant moi il n'y avait pas de programme commun [entre les écoles franco-arabes]. Chaque école enseignait selon sa vision. Mais, quand je suis arrive en tant que directeur, j'ai dit, 'Non, il faut avoir un programme qui réponde à nos réalités et qui est ouvert au monde extérieur.'

Before me there was no common program [between franco-arabe schools]. Each school taught according to its vision. But when I came in as director, I said, "No, there must be a program that responds to our realities and is open to the outside world."

His declaration that an educational program is needed that both reflects and responds to the realities of Muslims in Senegal, while also being open to the "outside world" clearly illustrates how Islamic cultural citizenship is viewed at IMFAS and ARMS, wherein being Muslim and being Senegalese are in no way contradictory.

To expand this notion of cultural citizenship, El Hadji Fall worked with other associations and the State to expand the Ministry of Education's inspection department to include franco-arabe schools, as well as set up association-level supervisory offices. Most recently he helped develop the official baccalauréat Arabe (bac Arabe)[29]. He explained that prior to 2013, each franco-arabe school used their own bac exam. Some schools would use the bac from countries such as Morocco, while others would create their own. He said that IMFAS used one created by ARMS that was in Arabic and included both the religious and secular subjects taught in franco-arabe schools; it also included French and English as separate subjects. With so much variation across schools, it was extremely difficult for students to pursue higher education in Senegal or abroad, or to find employment outside of the religious sector. El Hadji recollected how the official bac arabe came about:

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[29] Adopted from the French education system, the baccalauréat (referred to colloquially as the *bac*), is a national academic qualification that students must pass in order to complete secondary education and attend university.

Avec l'arrivée de Macky Sall [en 2012], quand il voulait organizer le pays en general, [quand il] arrive à l'enseignement arabe il a dit, 'Non, beaucoup de baccalauréat ça ne marche pas. Il faut avoir un seul bac donné par l'Etat.' Il nous a consulté et on a créé un comité. Ici on a délégué un programme, on a dressé un programme et on a formé des commissions. Trois mois durant, on a soumis à l'Etat le programme. Après l'avoir étudié, il l'a accepté. On a fait le premier examen baccalauréat franco-arabe de l'Etat en 2013. Cette année [2016] ça sera la quatrième édition.

With the arrival of Macky Sall [in 2012], when he wanted to organize the country in general, [when he] got to Arabic teaching he said, "No, a lot of different baccalaureates does not work. It is necessary to have a single bac that is given by the State." He consulted us and we created a committee. We delegated a program, drew up a program and formed commissions. After three months the program was submitted to the State. After studying it they accepted it. We had the first State franco-arabe bac in 2013. This year [2016] will be the fourth edition.

The creation of a unified bac arabe was a huge milestone in terms of State recognition of Islamic schooling. It provided a form of legitimacy in the eyes of the State, which, due to increasing pressure from the international community (as described in chapter 2), sought to standardize the disparate, widespread forms of Islamic schooling. It also helped solidify a form of Islamic cultural citizenship that placed great value on cooperation and understanding.

However, while the official bac arabe marks a step forward in terms of State recognition for Islamic schools, there still exist substantial barriers to the inclusion of these students in the secular public sphere. Most importantly, the bac arabe is not recognized by Dakar's public university, Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD). Therefore, even if a student passes the bac arabe, they are not eligible to enroll. El Hadji Fall and others therefore pushed the State to allow them to offer their bac arabe alongside the State bac. Students at schools like IMFAS, therefore, must take two bac exams – one Arabic, one French. This is a major area of contention for *arabophone* students, who

argue that it is unfair that they must pass two extremely difficult exams, and that acceptance to UCAD hinges on their passing a bac that is given entirely in French, a language they are only taught as a separate subject.

When I asked El Hadji Fall if he was happy with the steps the State has taken in regard to Islamic schools, he responded, "*Nous sommes content de ce que l'Etat a fait. Mais comme il ne prend pas beaucoup des nôtres, nous nous organisons notre bac*/We are happy with what the State has done. But since they don't accept many of our students, we still organize our own bac." He shared that since the majority of IMFAS students do not pass the State bac, they instead can seek opportunities in the Arab world, explaining that *"les pays arabes preferent notre bac parce que les matières qu'on donne ici sont différentes que le programme de l'Etat…Si [les élèves] ont la bourse arabe, ils vont dans les pays arabes*/Arab countries prefer our bac because the subjects we give are different from those of the State…If [the students] have a scholarship, they go to the Arab countries." Recent events, however, call into question whether the official bac arabe is truly respected by Arab universities. For example, in the summer of 2019, Senegalese students at Al-Azhar University in Cairo occupied the Senegalese embassy there to protest a variety of issues. Among them was the lack of equivalency granted them in regard to the Senegalese bac arabe. These students claimed that even though they had passed the bac arabe in Senegal, upon arriving in Egypt they were required to take a placement test before being placed in either high school or sometimes even in middle school; to gain admittance to the university, they must pass the Al-Azhar bac (e.g. Dakaractu, 2019; Thiang, 2019).

In summary, at IMFAS, Islamic cultural citizenship entailed a strong dedication to religious scholarship (which includes learning the Arabic language), a commitment to understanding and cooperation, and an openness to both the secular as well as the more "radical" Islamic world. Within this schema, to claim such cultural citizenship in no way precludes a person from also claiming national citizenship. As the work of El Hadji Fall shows, they are continuously working to claim

their rights as national citizens in the form of employment opportunities in the civil service and in recognition of their schooling system. However, as will be examined later in this chapter, many students did not share the optimism of El Hadji Fall as to their future opportunities.

_"Ku jang arabe connait tout de l'Islam/_Whoever studies Arabic knows everything about Islam": The path to IMFAS

In Senegal, the selection of a school inherently also implies the selection of a language and an epistemology. Attending "une école arabe" means that not only are you learning in the Arabic language, but you are also learning through an Islamic epistemology, whereas attending "une école française" means that you are learning French through a secular epistemology. Each language is therefore linked to different knowledges and histories. Thus, when students would talk about their schooling, other factors such as language, type of school, and epistemology were frequently referred to synonymously.

In Senegal, the Arabic language and its speakers hold a unique position. In a country whose population is over 95% Muslim, it is "granted a holy status" because it is the language of the Qu'ran (Ngom, 2003, p. 353). Similarly, arabophones are marked as "knowledgeable in Islam and are [therefore] highly regarded" (ibid, p. 357). However, not every person who attends an Islamic school is arabophone. In Senegal it is quite common for Muslim families to have their children receive some kind of religious education. The form of this religious education tends to differ based on factors such as social class and urbanicity. Urban families frequently send their children to local *daara* day schools between the ages of three and six before beginning secular school, or, if they are wealthy, hire private tutors to teach their children the Qur'an in the evening and on weekends. Unlike attending the *daara*, which is largely attended at a young age before beginning primary school, private tutoring can continue through high school, as was the case with some of the students at BAS. In rural areas, children also frequently attend a *daara*, but, depending on the family's economic

resources and level of ruralness, this may be the only form of schooling children have. As previously described, the general focus of *daaras* is on memorization of the Qur'an, rather than understanding of Arabic. Therefore, those students who attend a *daara* before public school or on weekends would not be considered to be *arabophone* because they do not have the requisite linguistic skills.

At IMFAS, all of the students had previously attended at least six years of Islamic schooling, either in a *daara* or in other franco-arabe schools. While they had varying levels of fluency in Arabic, they all had a high enough level of literacy to participate in their courses at IMFAS and therefore be considered to be *arabophone*. Students would frequently help me with my extremely basic Arabic language skills (I can read the alphabet and a few basic words), explaining what teachers were saying in class and teaching me vocabulary during breaks.

The majority of older students at IMFAS originally came from rural areas and emigrated to Dakar to continue their studies, usually living with older siblings or extended family; many of the younger students came from the outskirts of Dakar or surrounding regions. In tracing their scholarly trajectories to enrolling in IMFAS, three general paths became apparent. The first included the small group whose fathers were *marabouts*. As described in chapter 2, the power and influence of *marabouts* is historically based on family lineage. While not part of the elite of the Brotherhoods, the *marabout* family members of IMFAS students still held local prestige in their home communities. As local *marabouts*, they provided spiritual guidance for their community and usually taught Qur'anic studies in their own *daara* or in the local mosque.

Mamadou, a 12th grade student, said he first attended a *daara* before enrolling in IMFAS *"parce que notre famille est une famille religieuse. Mon père était un grand marabout. C'est pourquoi. Malheureusement il est mort lorsque j'avais cinq mois. Mais c'est pourquoi ils on dit qu'il est normale que j'aille dans les daara/*because our family is a religious family. My father was a great marabout. That's why. Unfortunately he passed away when I was five months old. But that is why they told me I should go

to a daara." Similarly, Baba, another 12th grade student whose father was the *marabout* for his village on the northern border between Senegal and Mauritania, previously attended a *daara,* as did his three older brothers. However, while his older brothers then chose to enroll in public schools, he opted to continue in a franco-arabe school. He explained, *"J'ai des frères qui ont choisi le français, qui ont choisi l'anglais, mais moi j'ai choisi le franco-arabe parce que je veux parler l'arabe*/I have brothers who chose French, who chose English, but me I chose a franco-arabe school because I want to speak Arabic." Here, Baba is using language and type of schooling synonymously. While his brothers chose French and English – i.e. secular schools – he selected an Arabic school – i.e. an Islamic school.

The second path to IMFAS was those who were selected by their parents amongst their siblings to attend an Islamic school. It was quite common to find students who were selected by their parents to be the child who will attend an Islamic school, while their siblings attended public school. For example, Djiby, a 12th grade student who had first attended a *daara*, explained his trajectory:

Teresa: Donc tu as commence dans le daara. C'était toi qui a choisi ou tes parents?	Teresa: So you started in a daara. Did you choose it or did your parents?
Djibi: Non, c'est mes parents qui m'ont amené là-bas.	Djiby: No, it was my parents who took me there.
Teresa: Et tes frères, est-ce qu'ils sont allés au daara aussi?	Teresa: And your brothers, did they also go to a daara?
Djiby: Non non.	Djiby: No no.
Teresa: Pourquoi est-ce que tes parents ont choisi toi seulement pour aller au daara?	Teresa: Why did your parents only choose you to go to the daara?
Djiby: Tu sais dans la vie on prend tout pour atteindre un sommet, quelqu'un qui part ici	Djiby: You know in life we do everything we can to reach the summit, someone who

et va atteindre le sommet.	leaves here and will reach the summit.
Teresa: Le sommet de quoi?	Teresa: The summit of what?
Djiby: Sunu diiné comme nous sommes	Djiby: Our religion as we are Muslims.
Musulman.	Teresa: So that's why your parents chose you to
Teresa: Donc c'est toi qui tes parents ont choisi	study religion in the daara?
pour apprendre la religion dans le daara?	Djiby: Arab, yes.
Djiby: L'arabe, oui.	Teresa: And your brothers, they went to public
Teresa: Et tes frères, ils sont allés à l'école	school?
publique?	Djiby: Yes, public.
Djiby: Oui publique.	

Such strategizing about school choice is quite common, with parents calculating the returns of education (not only economic, but also spiritual and cultural) in relation to variables such as their own economic resources, children's birth order, as well as their children's individual personalities and potential (Grysole, 2018). Linguistically, it would also make sense that parents would want their children to learn a variety of languages, as each provides access to different spaces and opportunities. Many of the students who were selected by their families for Islamic schooling were younger siblings whose older siblings were often working to both support their family in their hometown as well as supporting their younger siblings through school.

The third pathway was those who self-selected to enroll and/or continue in Islamic schooling. For example, Coumba, a 6th grade student, was enrolled in a local Arabic school by her parents. Her five older brothers had previously been enrolled in *daaras* by their parents. However, as Coumba explains, her brothers eventually decided to switch to the public school system, while she and her younger sister opted to continue in the Islamic system:

Coumba: Ils ont laissé l'arabe et ils continuent	Coumba: They stopped Arabic and continued

le français…Et moi, quand j'étais enfant j'ai aimais l'arabe.	with French…And me, when I was little I loved Arabic.
Teresa: Donc ca c'est pourquoi tu a choisi de continuer?	Teresa: So that's why you chose to continue?
Coumba: Oui, moi et ma petite soeur.	Coumba: Yes, me and my little sister.
Teresa: Vous deux, vous avez choisi de continuer l'arabe? Pourquoi?	Teresa: Both of you, you both chose to continue Arabic. Why?
Coumba: Oui. Parce que c'est bon et il me permet de connaître mon diine.	Coumba: Yes. Because it's good and it lets me know my religion.

This third pathway was the most common amongst students, who typically explained that they made this choice because they wanted to learn more about Islam in order to better practice their religion. When I asked Daba, a seventh grade student who also chose to continue in Islamic schooling, why it was important for her to learn Arabic, she responded, *"Parce que ku jang arabe connait tout de l'Islam*/Because whoever studies Arabic knows everything about Islam."

Regardless of how they came to be enrolled at IMFAS, a common theme across interviews with students was that as Muslims, it was "normal" that they would receive a religious education in Arabic. In this regard, they shared a similar sense of cultural citizenship with El Hadji Fall, wherein education and Arabic fluency are the most important parts of claiming this form of citizenship. However, as I spent more time at IMFAS, attending classes and talking with students, it became abundantly clear that they did not share the same optimism of El Hadji Fall in regard to their ability to also claim national citizenship. Many students shared that they were extremely hurt by their exclusion from opportunities that other students seemed to take for granted, such as acceptance at UCAD. They also shared with me great frustration with IMFAS, complaining that it did not provide

them enough support. In the next section, I explore how students understood this tension between being both Muslim arabophone cultural citizens and Senegalese francophone national citizens.

_"Nous sommes tous des Sénégalais/_We are all Senegalese": National dis-citizenship

Moi, je suis vraiment content d'avoir passé par le daara parce qu'ici c'est notre coutume, c'est notre tradition. Lorsqu'on est des enfants, on nous amène des daaras pour nous bien éduquer en Islam, aussi, parce que nous sommes des musulmans après tout. Mais le fait que je ne suis pas passé par l'école français m'a un peu pénaliser. Je pouvaient mieux developer si j'avais passé par là, mais malheureusement je n'ais pas passé par là. C'est la seule chose que je regrette.	I am very happy to have gone through the daara because here it's our custom, it's our tradition. When we are children we are brought to daaras to educate ourselves in Islam because we are Muslims, after all. But the fact that I didn't go through the French school penalized me a little. I could better develop if I'd studied there, but unfortunately I didn't go there. That's the only thing I regret.
- Pape, terminale	- Pape, 12th grade

The above quotation from Pape is representative of how the students at IMFAS talked about their education. None of them regretted their religious education; to the contrary, they were all proud of it. However, when talking about their plans for after IMFAS, students frequently became emotional, sharing deep frustration and anger at the lack of opportunities available to them as _arabophones_. For example, Habib, a 10th grade student, shared:

Habib: Xam nga arabe yi ci Sénégal, deñu leen humilié, deñu leen humilié trop parce que joxuñu leen seen gëdd, joxuñu leen seen respect. Normalement joxuñu len kii bi war.	Habib: You know arabophones in Senegal, are humiliated. They are humiliated because they aren't given respect.
Teresa: Lutax? Ci yow lutax?	Teresa: Why?
Habib: Je ne sais pas. Peut être l'état. C'est l'état qui	Habib: I don't know. Maybe the State. It's the State that doesn't respect Arabic students,

ne respecte pas les étudiants arabes, c'est l'état qui est négligeant.

Teresa: Ndax xam nga lutax l'état ne vous respecte pas?

Habib: Parce que pays bi c'est un pays laïque français. Lañu gëna bëgg que arabe, français bi mooy numéro un. C'est à cause de ca qu'ils negligent l'arabe. Donc français bi opportunité yissi am, buntu yi pour mën na liggey moo gëna facile pour arabe bi. Français bi tu peux être un douanier, mën nga nekk magistrate, mën nga nekk enseignant, mën nga nekk avocat. Par contre, ñun deñu humilié, lo jang arabe enseignant rekk ngay nek do mëna nekk leneen.

it's the State that is negligent.

Teresa: Do you know why the State doesn't respect you?

Habib: Because our country is a French secular country. Because of that our government doesn't really consider the Arabic language. So with French there are lots of opportunities and it's a lot easier to find jobs . With French you can be a customs officer, you can be a magistrate, you can be a teacher, you can be a lawyer. But with the Arabic language you can only be an Arabic teacher. That's why we feel humiliated.

Habib's lament as to the dearth of employment opportunities for *arabophones* in Senegal was shared by many of his fellow classmates. I was repeatedly told that the only jobs they could have where they could use their linguistic and religious knowledge was to become teachers in schools such as IMFAS, as there was no path to university without passing the State bac and students were only taught French as a separate subject and thus not entirely fluent. Thus, even though there may be more State recognition for Islamic schooling, there is not a simultaneous expansion of employment opportunities for graduates, which in turn further exacerbates the already existing chasm between students in State public schools and those in Islamic schools.

Compounding the issue of lack of employment opportunities is the fact that if they did decide to become teachers, their pay would be exceedingly low. Abdou, an 11th grade student, explained:

> *Si tu obtiens ton bac, après le bac tu ferais rien. Tu peux être enseignant et même si tu es un enseignant tu ne vas pas avoir l'argent qu'il te faut pour faire débrouiller, pour faire construire ta maison, tu vas régler beacuoup de chose. En faites enseigner et qu'on te paye ça seulement ne te suffit pas.*

> If you get your bac, after the bac you can't do anything. You can be a teacher but even if you are a teacher you're not going to have the money you need to get by, to build your house, take care of things. You teach but what they pay you is not enough.

While making ends meet as a teacher in the public school system is quite difficult (e.g. Barro, 2017; Dembélé & Mellouki, 2013), *arabophone* teachers are at even more of a disadvantage due to the fact that most of the franco-arabe schools are private. As private schools, they receive little to no subsidies from the State. Nabou, an 11th grade student, shared,

> *Gouvernement bi dimabliwuleen [écoles franco-arabes]. Parce que duñu gene joxe te loolu tamit problème la boy jang bëgg école bi am xaliss faut que ngay investor di defar di xool ndax tables bi yakkuna nga jënd table, nga xool ne tableau bi c'est difficile pour écrire nga jem ko réparé pourtant loolu après day jox ambition élève bi pour ñu gëna bëgg jang. Ñun ñëpp ay majeur lañu heur bi waroon nañu fekk ñuy ligeey mais giss nga ici c'est l'Afrique. Dafa meti.*

> The government doesn't really help [franco-arabe schools] financially. In my opinion, if franco-arabe schools want to make money, first they need to invest and make sure that everything is good. That might help motivate students to study more. But unfortunately it's very difficult to use the blackboards or read what is written on them because of the bad quality. We are getting old and we should have had jobs a while ago. But we're in Africa. It's hard.

Importantly, many of the écoles franco-arabes are not private by choice, but rather by default. As explained in chapter 2, the French colonizing authorities went to great lengths to promote their vision of a francophone secular education system. While their efforts to eradicate Islamic schooling were unsuccessful, they did succeed in keeping religious schooling outside of the responsibility of the State. This arrangement continued under President Senghor, who valued secularism.

Their status as private schools has a significant impact on teacher salaries, which rely entirely on student tuition and the generosity of individual school administrations. At IMFAS, a few teachers told me that the administration did not pay them on time. Many of the teachers were therefore frequently late to class or absent. The French teacher even went on strike during part of fieldwork due to lack of pay. The issue, they explained to me, was not the director, El Hadji Fall, who, in the words of one teacher, was *"bien, beaucoup d'expériences, connaissances, et de relations/*good, lots of experience, knowledge, and relationships," but rather those who worked under him. Due to his old age and poor health, El Hadji Fall was not able to oversee everything; thus most of his duties were delegated to two individuals in the front office. While not directly speaking about IMFAS, Mr. Ndiaye, the English teacher, shared with me,

> Here [in Senegal] the problem is a lack of management. Sometimes you'll see a school which is managed by people who do not have the proper diploma to run it. You see private schools who are managed by relatives. You will not give it to a person who is not fit to do that job, but you give it to a relative in order to allow him to get a job and to earn money. But the problem is if he earns money, he's delaying the educational field as he does not know much about it.

I subsequently learned through discussions with students that the two front office workers, Mariama and Souleymane – who I discussed in chapter 4, were in fact relatives of the director.

In addition to the teachers, students also had many issues with the administration. Pape, the student whose quote opened this section, shared,

J'ai duré ici parce que ici c'est moin chere. Je n'ai pas les moyens nécessaires pour aller dans d'autre établissements. Mais ici pour un élève qui veut réussir dan l'avenir je ne le conseille pas de venir ici. Parce que la direction ne pay pas bien les professeurs, et il ne respect pas la condition de vie des élèves….Il n'y a pas de tableaux nécessaires, il n'y a pas de tables bancs. Tout ça manque.	I've stayed here because it's cheaper. I don't have the means to go to other schools. But here, if a student wants to succeed in the future I advise them not to come here. Because the administration doesn't pay teachers well, and it doesn't respect the living conditions of the students…There are not enough desks, there are no benches. All of that is lacking.

As I spent more time with students they opened up more about their frustrations with the school, frequently pointing to the broken desks and chairs, the cracked chalkboards, broken light fixtures, and frequent tardiness and absences of teachers. They tried multiple times to organize and speak to the administration, but each time their complaints fell on deaf ears. This left many of the students feeling even more frustrated about their futures.

Seeing how their teachers were treated by the administration made some students prefer to become Arabic teachers in public schools. For example, Amina, a 7th grade student, explained, *"Dama choisir suma jange ba pare ma dem jangale ci école française yi. Moom laa bëgg mais bëggumaa ki ci franco-arabe yi. Bëggumaa jangale ci franco-arabe ndaxte am na problèmes yu bari*/If I teach I choose to teach in a French school. That is what I want but I don't want to teach in a franco-arabe school. I don't want to teach there because there are lots of problems." Others preferred to not even pursue teaching, instead planning to do *formation* (training) in fields such as IT or engineering, or to do *commerce* (business, trade). These students all acknowledged that they would not be using their Arabic language skills. As Fatou, a 12th grade student explained, *"Tu peux aller faire des formations mais en faisant*

formation tu abandonnes la langue arabe pour suivre la langue française/You can go do training but you will have to abandon Arabic for French."

In addition to language, gender is also a factor in students' post-education trajectories. Scholars have examined women's roles in Islam in Senegal and the ways in which they utilize gendered practices, secular calls for equality, and Islamic principles to make new claims to authority in highly patriarchal religious spheres (e.g. Buggenhagen, 2009; Hill, 2010; Bop, 2005). In my own research, only one student brought up questions of gender. Sokhna, a terminal (12th grade) student, was very vocal about the challenges she and other women faced translating their Islamic educations to post-graduate livelihoods. She said,

Sokhna: Fii Sénégal moom liñu gëm moy bo jangul français rekk so pare jang arabe soit bude goor dangay dem jite ji ci jakka yi ay tudd ak ay ngente. Jigenn bo jange ba pare amul dara loy def, dangay dem rekk, dangay dem nekk femme de ménage ngay nekk di gérer kër. Sénégal moom loolu lañu gëm mais aussi loolu sen gëm gëm boop la.

Teresa: Ak xalaat nga dina tanne?

Sokhna: Bu fekkon teni gëm gëm boobu ñëpp amnañuko, maanam arabisants yëpp, arabophone yëpp xamnañuko dina changer. Mais ñu barri nañu gëm ni bo pare ci étude yi jangale ji wo imam ngay nekk ci mosquée yi wala jigeen ñi dem tok gérer ji kër yi te

Sokhna: In Senegal what we believe is if you only study Arab, as a man your only skill is to go to the mosque and lead prayers or officiate marriages. For women, if you study Arab the only thing you can do is be a housewife and take care of the home. That's what we believe in Senegal.

Teresa: Do you think this will change?

Sokhna: If we have the strong belief that we can change it, meaning all *arabisants*, all arabophones, I know it will change. But so many believe that when you finish your studies the only option is to go to the mosque to lead prayer, or if you are a woman the only option you have is to

loolu du xalaat.   become a housewife and that's not a good

                                                                 idea.

As Sokhna points out here, post-graduation opportunities are even more limited for female students,

who are not permitted to lead prayers at the mosque or conduct other religious practices. They thus

face double discrimination within religious spheres due to gender and in secular spheres due to their

education.

Students' claims to national citizenship involved demands for fair and equal employment and

the need for increased State recognition and acceptance of Islamic schooling. Language was a huge

factor in delegating their status as 'dis-citizens,' as Arabic is not a recognized language in any official

capacity in Senegal (Camara & Bodian, 2016, p. 381; Ramanathan, 2013). For some students, this

meant that they had to effectively "abandon Arabic for French" in order to make a decent living.

However, other IMFAS students forcefully argued that being *arabophone* should not preclude them

from the benefits of national citizenship. This was eloquently stated by Baba, a terminale student:

Il y a des jeunes qui choisissent français, il y a des jeunes   There are young people who choose French,

qui choisissent l'arabe, mais ils se doivent   there are young people who choose Arabic, but

l'égalité…Nous sommes tous des Sénégalais - ceux qui   they must be equal…We are all Senegalese –

ont choisi l'arabe et ceux qui ont choisi le français.   those who choose Arabic and those who

Nous sommes tous des Sénégalais et on ne veut que   choose French. We are all Senegalese and we

servir notre pays.   only want to serve our country.

For students such as Baba, the State needs to fully recognize that while they are *arabophone*, they are

also Senegalese and therefore deserve the same opportunities enjoyed by those who are

francophone.

While historically the demands of the *arabophone* community focused almost entirely on

claims to national citizenship, in light of ongoing segregation of this group from the public sphere,

IMFAS students began looking outside of the State for opportunities and belonging. For some this entailed extending what it means to be *arabophone* by looking to the wider Arab world; for others, their focus was on the West and the opportunities that the English language would (purportedly) open up for them.

"Arabic and English are biggest languages!": Reconfiguring belonging

Students at IMFAS were coming of age in a time of ever-increasing globalizing forces shaped by neoliberal ideologies, Western-centric epistemologies, and the dominance of the English language. As shown throughout this chapter, while Islam and Arabic remained strong markers of cultural citizenship and belonging, outside of religious spheres they did not provide access to the kinds of opportunities typically linked to social advancement (e.g. attending university, finding employment that allows one to support a family, etc.). IMFAS students therefore had to contend with the question, "What happens when getting a good [religious] education, having strong ambition, and staying out of trouble do not necessarily lead to a 'good life'?" (Simone, 2010, p. 146).

For many students, the answer lied beyond Senegal in the Arab world. For them, countries such as Egypt, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia held many more employment and scholarly opportunities than did Senegal. They also represented spaces where their linguistic skills would be used and appreciated. Abdou, a 12th grade student, explained that even if they passed the State bac and were admitted to UCAD, they could only really study in the Arabic department. In contrast, Arab countries offered many more opportunities for study:

Tu ne peux qu'enseigner si tu étudier à Cheikh Anta Diop parce que le domaine de l'arabe ce n'est pas large. Mais quand tu allais dans les pays des arabe, c'est toi qui choisit ce que vous voulez. Il y a des médecines là-bas. Mais ici non il n'y a pas [des choix].	You can only teach if you study at Cheikh Anta Diop because the field of Arabic is not large. But if you go to Arab countries you can choose what you want. There are doctors there. But here there are no [choices].

Studying in an Arab country, then, theoretically opened up many more avenues. The issue, however, was how to support oneself in another country. These financial barriers meant that for many IMFAS students such travel and study remained out of reach, at least for the near future. However, some still remained optimistic that they would either receive a scholarship or be able to save enough money to move and find local jobs.

As will be expanded upon in chapter 7, others preferred to travel to countries such as Italy, Spain, and the United States to work unskilled jobs, such as street vendors. Just as in the Arab world, there are large transnational Senegalese communities in these Western countries. The main difference with these countries was that their Arabic language skills would be of little use. Learning English therefore became a major priority for some students. One such student was Ibou, an 11th grade student, who shared, *"Anglais bi moom moodoon sama souhait ma degg ko ndaxte mooy langue universelle. Dalay permettre comme bo tukke genre yooyu nga mënë jëflënte ak nitt ñi mooy première langue deff naa/* It's my wish to know English. It's my favorite language because it's a universal language. It helps you travel because you can communicate easily with everyone." Importantly, such aspirations to move outside of Senegal did not imply a simultaneous abandonment of their Islamic cultural citizenship. For students at IMFAS, becoming a global citizen meant moving beyond the francophone State, but not necessarily becoming "Westernized". In such a conception of global citizenship, the Arabic and English languages were most privileged. This was apparent from my first day at the school, when a student came up to me and said, "Our goal is to learn language. Arabic and English are biggest languages!"

In looking beyond the Senegalese State for traditional markers of social advancement such as higher education and employment, IMFAS students were reconfiguring what it meant to be a global citizen. As will be expanded upon in the next chapter, many discussions of global citizenship focus on westernization and the dominance of English (see e.g. Koyama, 2015; Shultz, 2007). At the same

time, much of the literature about Senegalese who migrate to Arab countries, Europe, or the United

States talk about them in terms of a "transnational elite" (Kaag, 2013; Diouf & Rendall, 2013).

However, this latter group of literature focuses only on those who have already migrated, as

opposed to those like the students at IMFAS who aspire to migrate but may not actually be able to.

As Herrera & Bayet (2010) argue, while young people living in the "global North" [i.e. those who

have already migrated] and those in the "global South" [i.e. those who have not yet migrated or who

may be unable to migrate] "share many common points of identification and collectively take part in

multiple aspects of belonging to a global generation, their actual physical location in different parts

of the world holds great significance, especially when it comes to issues involving citizenship,

livelihoods, and lifestyles" (p. 358). I would add to Herrera & Bayet's (2010) argument that there is

also a significant difference in regard to aspirations. For students at IMFAS, who have not yet left

Senegal (and may never leave), their claims to global citizenship are founded on their experiences as

both arabophone Muslim cultural citizens and as national dis-citizens within Senegal. This question

of citizenship and aspirational belonging within and across local, national, transnational, and global

spaces will be further explored in chapter 7. In the next chapter, I further examine notions of global

citizenship and its intersections with language and social class at the other focal school – the

Bilingual Academy of Senegal.

Chapter 6

Language, coloniality, and becoming 'global' at the Bilingual Academy of Senegal

Interview excerpt with Amina, 12ᵗʰ grade student, 2-9-16

> Teresa: I never hear the students speaking Wolof.
>
> Amina: Yeah, because we don't have the right to.
>
> Teresa: What happens if the teachers hear you speaking Wolof?
>
> Amina: You get in trouble.
>
> Teresa: What happens?
>
> Amina: I know that I got caught speaking Wolof a lot of times and all you have to do is
>
> you have to clean the tables at the cafeteria. And people are really, really gross when
>
> they eat at the cafeteria so it's not pleasant.
>
> Teresa: Are other schools like that, are they that strict about speaking Wolof?
>
> Amina: I don't think so…I don't know why they don't want us to speak Wolof, actually.
>
> Teresa: Mr. or Mrs. Jones, they never said anything to you?
>
> Amina: No. They just say we can't speak Wolof.

Interview excerpt with Mr. Jones, husband of school directress and co-owner, 1-26-16

> Mr. Jones: I don't think I've ever heard a student speak in an African language to
>
> each other. I haven't heard them. And it would be very discouraged. Not because we don't
>
> like their home languages. We've never said to them, we don't say anything about it. But
>
> they just speak in French and on the days when it's English they should speak in English.

When I began my research at the Bilingual Academy of Senegal in 2015, I expected to hear

frequent code switching in the hallways between classes, and perhaps even in the classrooms between teachers and students. When I taught in Dakar, this was a common practice in the various schools where I had worked. I quickly realized, however, that BAS was different. In the 16 months I conducted research, I only heard a small handful of Wolof phrases and words uttered by students in the school, and each time it was either done in a hushed whisper or the speaker was quickly reprimanded by their fellow students.

The students at BAS all came from families with relatively high socioeconomic status. This provided them access to a school like BAS, which imparted them with linguistic capital unavailable to the majority of Senegalese students. Through official language policy, curricula, and overall school culture, students were molded into "global citizens" who, in the words of Mr. Jones, the co-owner of the school, would learn to "respect other people and can be comfortable anywhere in the world."

In this chapter, I draw on a decoloniality framework to examine the ways in which structures of coloniality manifested in the school in regard to speaking (with particular focus on school language policies), knowing (with a focus on the school's curriculum), and being (with a focus on the school's dress code). I argue that the school's efforts to create global citizens perpetuated coloniality. I begin with a brief overview of the history and culture of the school, then turn to three school policies – language policy, curricula, and dress code – and trace how they are expressions of what I refer to as the school's global logic. Finally, I discuss the physical and psychological price of becoming global in the form of intense pressure and stress experienced by students.

"It's a Senegalese school, but an international Senegalese school": The Bilingual Academy of Senegal

The Bilingual Academy of Senegal (BAS) is owned and run by a white European couple, the

Joneses, who opened the school in the early 2000s.[30] During that time, Mr. Jones was working for an international educational organization and, when on mission to Senegal, decided with his wife to open a school and make her the director.[31] She had lived in Senegal as a child when it was still under French colonial rule. Mr. Jones recalled their decision to open the school thusly,

> I said I'm going to Senegal…why don't you come. And she said 'Oh, if you're going to Senegal I'll come and see how it's changed." So she came on the trip and we traveled to other places, but when we came to Senegal and we went around, and she looked at places she knew and she still knew a couple people here and things like that, and that was how the school started. So on the way back on the plane I said to her it's a pity [my organization won't be able to start a program here]. Because I visited some schools, I visited the Minister of Education, and the people were quite positive, but I could see that it would be difficult, there was a lot of work to do. Not because they're not intelligent, the teachers or the kids - they are - but it's just the structure of Africa is not the same structure as we have elsewhere. And so I said it's a pity, we should start our own school, because that would work. And I said actually maybe you'd like to start a school…And she said "oh". And I said I think you'd probably only need to come for six months or maybe a year to get it all started and then you'd find a good director who could take over. So she took up the challenge. And a couple of years later we decided to go ahead and that's how it started.

It is easy to see in this anecdote echoes of Africa's colonial history. White foreigners, with no real ties to local African communities, come in and create Western-style schools. These foreigners, like

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[30] Due to IRB restrictions, the name of the school and all participants have been changed. Additionally, some of the identifying characteristics of the school have been modified or omitted.
[31] Mrs. Jones' prior experience as an educator was debated amongst staff. Mr. and Mrs. Jones said she had taught French in university, though teachers – especially the foreign teachers – did not believe this to be true.

Mr. Jones, view their adopted African communities through a deficit lens, continuously comparing it to the "superior" structures and policies of their home communities. The result is that "…Africa is always imagined, represented and performed as a reality or a fiction in relation to master references – Europe, whiteness, Christianity, literacy, development, technology – mirrors that reflect, indeed refract Africa in peculiar ways, reducing the continent to particular images, to a state of lack" (Zeleza, 2006, p. 16). Indeed, the comparison Mr. Jones makes when he states, "the structure of Africa is not the same structure as we have elsewhere" is indicative of the Joneses' approach to running the school. There were frequent comparisons between Senegal and Europe, and issues ranging from physical infrastructure to student behavioral problems to school fees and materials were often explained away with the oft-repeated reasoning, "That's just how it is in Africa."

The first few years of the school, Mrs. Jones was heavily involved in the day-to-day goings on. However, neither of the Joneses ever settled in Senegal full-time. Eventually they appointed Madame Cardoso, a Senegalese teacher who had been at the school since its opening, to be the acting director in Mrs. Jones' stead for the majority of the year. Madame Cardoso was quite beloved by everyone at the school, with many participants telling me that she is the heart of BAS. However, it was also understood by many that Madame Cardoso's ability to affect greater changes in the school was limited by the Joneses, with one teacher sharing, "Madame Cardoso is great, she's phenomenal, I love Madame Cardoso. But at the same time her influence at the school is very limited because of the Joneses' control of the school, everything has to go through them." In the 16 months that I was in the field, Mr. Jones visited three times and Mrs. Jones visited twice.

Although the Joneses spent most of their time in Europe, they still retained great control of all aspects of the school, and their presence loomed large. Mr. Jones was in charge of hiring teachers. He explained what he looked for when hiring a local Senegalese teacher:

We're looking for quite a lot of experience. All of the teachers we have, I think every one

of them, would have at least ten years' experience. Some of them have got twenty or even

thirty years' experience. So we're looking for experience there because we know it's here and

we know there are good teachers. We hand pick them.

Indeed, most of the local teachers had decades of teaching experience and advanced degrees in their

fields. However, all of them were hired only on a part-time basis[32] and were therefore required to

have other jobs at other schools and local universities.

In addition to the local teachers, the Joneses also went to great effort to hire a small group of

three to four foreign teachers (mainly American) to teach English classes at all levels (from 6th to 12th

grade), as well as math and science in 6th and 7th grades (in English) and geography in 8th and 10th

grades (in English). In contrast to the local teachers, these foreign teachers were not required to

have any teaching experience, yet were hired on a full-time basis. As explained by Mr. Jones,

In the English teachers, we're not looking for very experienced teachers because if we

did they would expect to be paid like they would be in their own countries. So we're looking

for people who are younger and who we hope they've had two or three years' experience,

but they don't all have that…I come and do a training session at the beginning of the year

and usually they can pick up enough in that to actually work out well in class.

Because English was the most valued language in the school, and there was a great emphasis on

making sure that students acquired "native-speaker"[33] speaking patterns, foreign English teachers

were wooed with free housing, full time employment, and higher paychecks than their local

colleagues. However, there was also extremely high turnover amongst the foreign teachers, who

were predominantly recent college graduates looking for a gap year before beginning their careers.

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[32] Though not officially stated, based on other discussions with the Joneses and teachers I surmise
local teachers' part-time status was a cost-saving measure.

[33] The concept of "native speaker" is problematic and I will expand on critiques later in the chapter.

During fieldwork, three of the foreign teachers left abruptly without warning, citing lack of preparation and support, personality conflicts with the Joneses, and issues with housing (such as frequent flooding) as reasons for leaving. One teacher even quit the second day of the teacher training workshop, having never stepped foot in front of a class, due to a confrontation with Mrs. Jones.

While BAS school fees were quite expensive – students in terminale (12th grade) paid 140,000 CFA (roughly $230) per month, not including other fees such as books, uniforms, transportation, etc., the school was more affordable than other French-English private bilingual schools that catered to expatriates. Many of the students' parents worked for international organizations, such as the United Nations; others had occupations such as doctor, lawyer, and engineer, or worked in business and finance. At the time of fieldwork there were approximately 250 students enrolled; unlike other French-English private bilingual schools in Dakar, the majority of students were Senegalese, with a smaller number from other African countries. Additionally, some students had dual citizenship in France or the United States. I asked Mr. Jones during our first interview whether he and his wife had set out explicitly to have majority Senegalese students, or if it happened organically. He responded,

> We didn't really quite know when we opened it, but we said we really want to make this attractive to Senegalese parents. So we based the economy of the school on the developing world that is Senegal, not on salaries like in the private expat schools which are based on European and American type salaries. And so there was a conscious effort to be able to bring local children into the school…It's basically, I'd say, 98% African students and probably 90% Senegalese. Which really pleases us because it's very good because in essence, it's a Senegalese school, but it's an international Senegalese school.

Thus BAS found its niche in Senegal, promoting itself as an "international Senegalese school" that catered to local families whose parents were well-educated and had incomes that allowed them to

pay for private schooling, but could not afford the more elite expatriate schools. Ostensibly, BAS provided the same type of education as more expensive French-English schools, but at a more affordable price point.

Managing this balancing act of offering an "international" education with local prices did create frustration between the Joneses and teachers, families, and students. Much of this frustration revolved around the physical infrastructure of the school, which was a converted villa that the Joneses rented. Consisting of two small buildings and a small courtyard that simultaneously served as cafeteria, gymnasium, and assembly hall, it neighbored private residences of similar size. This was the second location of BAS; they had moved there ten years earlier after outgrowing their initial rented property, a much smaller private residence.

Each grade level (6th to 12th grade) was assigned a classroom where they spent their day, and teachers would rotate between the grades' rooms. The classrooms were quite spartan, consisting only of blackboards, desks, and chairs; most had bare walls, although a few in the younger grades had some student artwork or a map of Senegal. Below is an excerpt from my fieldnotes on my first day at the school:

> *I am led to the sixième (6th grade) classroom by one of the teachers. I sit in the back of the room. I am struck by how bare the room is. The chalkboard is rather small, taking up only half of the length of the wall. Students in the back of the room often struggle to read what is written on it. The door is glass, and students get distracted when other classes let out. The sole bulletin board has two pieces of paper pinned to it in the left corner. To the right of the bulletin board is a clock that doesn't work. In the back of the room is a map of Senegal. Its edges are frayed. There are two small fluorescent lights and two overhead fans. There is one window in the back of the room that is open; it has iron bars, but no screen, letting in mosquitos and other insects. The walls are painted a combination of white on top and a tannish yellow on the bottom. The floor is white, mismatched tile. The students' desks and chairs are wood with varying amounts of graffiti and general*

wear and tear. Students have assigned seats and leave their belongings (pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.) inside the desks.

Most of the other classrooms were similar to sixième's; the most significant difference depended on how large the class was. For example, later on during my first day at the school I observed terminale (12th grade) and wrote in my fieldnotes:

Compared to the room this morning, this room is extremely cramped and much hotter. The chalk board is much bigger, but there is no room to walk around the classroom. There is a narrow space in the front of the room, but to get to the back you have to climb over desks.

As the school grew in size, they had to build extra classrooms on the roof. These rooms were constructed of plywood and housed, at different times throughout fieldwork, cinquième (7th grade), première (11th grade), and terminale (12th grade). The following are excerpts from my fieldnotes on my first visit to these rooftop classrooms:

I follow Amanda, an American English teacher, up the stairs to the roof. On the way she says that while these two roof classrooms are the best in terms of space, they are the worst in terms of heat and insects. When we get to the roof I see what looks like a gigantic shed made of plywood. It has two doors, each leading to one of the rooms. We walk into the room on the right for cinquième. The classroom is indeed significantly bigger than the ones on the lower levels. It has a gabled ceiling, and the sole light in the room is attached to the center ceiling support beam. The light isn't needed, however, as there are six windows to let in sunlight, three on each side; four of them have curtains made of cheap looking blueish fabric. The windows at the front of the room next to the chalk board do not have curtains, allowing the morning sun to blind students sitting in certain desks. To block the sun, the students take the bottom of the curtains from the other windows and attach them to nails on the wall, making a sort of hanging tarp. One of the roof panels is missing in the back of the room, and the panel next to it is only hanging on by one side; throughout the class, when the wind blows it flaps

open and shut, making a boom noise. Everything looks and feels like it is covered in chalk. Unlike the desks

for the other classrooms, these don't open, leaving no storage room for the students.

Overall, the school was bursting at its seams as the number of students grew. Students were not allowed to leave the property, leaving little room for all 250 of them to run around during breaks. The older students laid claim to the courtyard, leaving the younger students to make do with the narrow sidewalks between the school building and the perimeter wall.

During my time at BAS, I heard frequent complaints about the school's upkeep from teachers (especially the foreign teachers, who lived at the school in apartments in the main school building – some apartments were directly across from classrooms) and students. Many of the teachers questioned the Joneses' motivations for opening the school. One American teacher said plainly, "I don't think they have the best intentions for the school. I don't think that they have the best intentions for the students. I think this is part of their retirement plan. I think that they're taking a large portion of the money for themselves, that the school makes [for themselves]. They have not been upkeeping the school." One of the Senegalese teachers shared similar thoughts when I asked her if she thinks the Joneses own the school to make money. She responded, "Probably. They make a lot of money from here. There's 200 something students here times 120,000 CFA – that's a lot!"

Two of the biggest complaints were the heat in the rooftop classrooms, especially during the hottest months of September and October, and recurring plumbing issues that flooded the entire school, causing classes to be cancelled for multiple days. The following interview excerpt with Fatma and Marie, two terminale (12th grade) students, is representative of conversations I had with other students regarding their concerns about the school's upkeep and the Joneses' control of the school:

> Fatma: This class [the room on the roof] is way better [than the other classrooms]. It's not as
> nice as the others, but we have more space.

> Teresa: I've heard it gets very hot up there, especially in September.

Fatma: Last year we could not deal with it! It was way too hot but we are obliged [to be

there]. And when you ask for a fan – someone brought his own fan to put in but

they confiscated it.

Teresa: Why?

Fatma: I don't know. It's how the school works.

Marie: Like some parents proposed to buy the air conditioner, but Mrs. Jones refused. She

said that she was the one who is paying electricity. But I think that it's not really

intelligent because they're trying to help us.

Fatma: Mostly that's why students are very angry at the school.

Teresa: They're angry?

Fatma: Yeah because we always have money problems with this school. For example, when

we are doing activities, they will ask us to bring money and most of the schools in

Dakar do not do that. If you have a school [event], if it's not you paying for yourself,

the school needs to provide us buses. But everything [here], the students need to pay.

And when you ask, "Why do we need to pay?" they say, "Your parents have more

money than we do so just pay." No! Our parents have other obligations, we are not

the only ones in our family.

Teresa: So is that coming from Mr. and Mrs Jones?

Marie: Yes. And they don't want to spend their money on the school. And they need to do

it because we are paying, our parents are paying for us to be here.

Fatma: For example, when we wanted to do a bake sale, [Mrs. Jones] said that we are

obliged to put the money into fixing the basketball court. But they are the ones that

are obliged, that are supposed to do it because it's their school and we're just coming

here to pay for the teachers.

Teresa: And what's going on with the flooding? You've had two days now where classes have been cancelled.

Fatma: Yeah and when I was talking to Miss Amanda [an American teacher] the thing that surprised me was that she said Mr. Jones said it was Africa. And that, I don't know, that sentence is still in my head and sometimes I think about it and I'm like no, I don't have that at my house because my parents take care of the house. So it's not because of Africa's fault. It's your fault if your school has flooding problems, so I don't think he should say it's Africa as if it was Africa's problem.

BAS was constructed to cater to Senegal's wealthier families who were not wealthy enough to afford the elite private bilingual schools. In the words of Mr. Jones, "It's a Senegalese school, but it's an international Senegalese school." Permeating every aspect of the school, however, from physical upkeep to admissions policies to hiring practices to curricula, was an enduring comparison between Africa's supposed state of lack and Europe's superiority. BAS was supposed to be a bridge for its students, molding them into global citizens who could speak "proper" French and English, converse comfortably about European philosophy and literature, and overall present themselves as Westernized "global citizens." I turn now to a discussion of the school's Global Logic.

"We really hope they will become citizens of the world": The Global Logic of BAS

We really hope [the students] will become citizens of the world who respect other people and can be comfortable anywhere in the world because they will be able to go and ask sensible questions and realize people are going to be different and not make faux pas... That they will respect their own culture, of course, and that they will know it, but that they will use that as a way of understanding others. We hope that they will be people who will show intercultural understanding and comprehension of others. That they will realize that other people who act differently are not necessarily bad – they're different, and they speak differently, speak different languages, and maybe they have some customs that we don't like, but it's just that we don't

know them, and they're different.

- Mr. Jones, interview excerpt, 1-26-16

One of the primary goals of the Joneses in running BAS was to mold its students into global citizens. As seen in the above quote from Mr. Jones, global citizenship was understood primarily in terms of intercultural understanding and tolerance. The emphasis was not on having students better understand their own cultures and histories, but rather on leveraging their individual cultures in order to create deeper connections with others from different backgrounds. Such a conceptualization of global citizenship is an almost textbook example of Koyama's (2015) description of "the archetypical global citizen, [who] simultaneously holds his global identity with, if not above, his national, regional, or local memberships. He claims belonging, membership, and participation in the world" (p. 2). Importantly, however, such an understanding of global citizenship is "shackled by its association to the West's long engagement in normative undertakings in non-Western countries and fraught with naïve conceptions about the realities of interconnectedness and belonging" (Koyama, 2015, p. 2). Indeed, there was a significant disconnect between the values of understanding and respect espoused by Mr. Jones above and the constant comparisons between Africa and Europe wherein Africa was regularly positioned as significantly lacking.

I refer to the school's desire to create global citizens as the Global Logic of BAS. The Global Logic provided a blueprint for success, which was contingent on three primary factors: 1) attaining fluency in English, including acquiring a "native speaker" accent; 2) learning to present oneself as a Westernized global citizen, which included immersion in Eurocentric canons; and 3) attending university abroad, with particular emphasis on universities in Europe and North America. Though couched in the benevolent language of helping the students succeed, the Global Logic masked an underlying ideology about what it does and does not mean to be global – namely to be Western, not

African. By linking success to Western ways of speaking, knowing, and being, the education students received at BAS both alienated them from their home communities and positioned them as perpetual "outsiders" within a modern world organized by colonial logics (Imoka, 2018). In this section, I trace how the Global Logic manifested in three school policies: language, curriculum, and dress.

Speaking

> *"I think Wolof is more for people that are kind of not too into school. It's more normal to speak French [when you're out]. And then English is when you're [feeling] a little bit higher and better."*

- Jasmine, première (11th grade)

Language was a central component of the Global Logic of BAS. French-English bilingualism was often cited by participants as an unimpeachable requirement for future success. Mr. Jones described its importance thusly:

> Bilingualism is the future. These days if you want an interesting job, and most of the interesting jobs have international connections or involve you traveling internationally, then speaking one language is history…And so the parents who really think about this know that if you want to get a good job, particularly if you're French speaking, you should be speaking English as well.

Embedded within this promotion of French-English bilingualism was a distinction between "global" European languages and "non-global" African languages. This distinction was reflected in the school's language policy, which explicitly forbade the use of African languages in any capacity anywhere in the school. One student, who speaks Wolof, explained what happened if students were caught speaking African languages:

> Student: If you speak Wolof you're punished. You have tables to clean up during lunch.
>
> That is mostly the reason why we have to clean up the tables, because you speak

Wolof.

Teresa: I haven't heard any students speak Wolof.

Student: We do. And we got caught. By Mr. Thiam [a Senegalese administrator].

Teresa: I heard he's the strictest about it.

Student: Yes

Teresa: What did he say when you were all speaking it?

Student: If he hears one word, one word of Wolof, you have tables.

Teresa: But what about saying "Asalaa malekuum?" Technically that's not Wolof.

Student: He doesn't count that. But let's say you say, like somebody annoys you and you

say "Buul me fonto" [Don't make fun of me]. And that is a reflex. You have tables

for that. You absolutely cannot speak Wolof.

When I asked Mr. Jones about the rationale for this policy, he explained that it was the parents who did not want their children to speak African languages in the school:

The parents say we send our children here to learn English and speak French. We can speak

in our Wolof or Sereer, whatever it is, at home. And they say these are not world languages,

and they say we'd like them to keep up their culture but this is not a priority for us. The

priority is that they learn good French and good English.

This was supported in two interviews I had with parents. One mother said that she wanted to send her daughter to BAS because it was important that she learn English for future employment and that "other schools in Dakar say they teach English, but they don't really." As a result, Wolof was rarely heard in the school.

These policies and approaches to language shaped how students understood themselves and their languages. As illustrated by Jasmine's quote at the beginning of this section, the school not only did nothing to push back against linguistic hierarchies, it actively reproduced them, with local

languages understood as separate from schooling, and French and English held as the languages of being "higher and better" than others. At BAS then, as in most schools around the world, the language of schooling at BAS was separate from the language(s) students used outside of school (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002; Alim, 2007).

When asked about the school's language policy, students often focused on the promised benefits of the education they were receiving, framing the policies as being in their best interests. In particular, the students were quite proud of the linguistic capital they were gaining from their education. Absa, a première (11th grade) student,

> I think [the school] really reinforced my French because I can use all those pretty thesaurus words and those intelligent words…Also in English, because I think in America you learn how to speak English but you don't learn how to write English, because a lot of American speakers, they can speak English real, real, good, but if they are asked to define certain words they won't even know it or they won't have the same writing style. So I think that in our class people have a better English instruction than native speakers.

Becoming linguistically competent, therefore, meant using "pretty thesaurus words" that would mark the speaker as "intelligent." In fact, this student felt that their academic English would be stronger than native speakers.

Acquiring a native English-speaking accent was particularly important to students. Moussa, a terminale (12th grade) student, explained,

> I think it's really a good thing [to hire foreign teachers] because we get to have accent and speak around people that actually live in the United States, so when we go there we're just used to it…English-speaking Senegalese people, it's not that their English is bad, but it's not the same English than those that are in America. So you need, there's a

difference between the two. So Mr. Jones always looks for those teachers that have the English-speaking accent so that we can get on that accent. So if you listen to the people speak in my class you would think they are native speakers because they have the accent, most of them.

Interestingly, while students repeatedly spoke of "native-speaker accents," with particular focus on American accents (a fact I theorize was due to the majority American foreign teachers at the school), there was no recognition that there is not a singular American accent, let alone a singular native-speaker accent. Based on discussions with students and their critiques of each other's speaking, I surmise that for them a native-speaker accent was defined more by what it was not than by what it was. For example, one of the upper level students had a heavy French accent when he spoke English. He was frequently pointed to by students as an example of someone with a lower level of English, even though he was quite proficient and easily comprehensible. Thus, a "native-speaker" accent for BAS students was marked by a lack of French or Senegalese linguistic characteristics.

When asked about the use of African languages in education, students generally opposed it, citing the fact that they are not "international" languages. For example, one student said, "I think that if you're teaching just Wolof as a language, I don't think that's really relevant because you need to admit the fact that Wolof is a language that's only spoken in Senegal." Another student echoed these sentiments, saying, "[Wolof] isn't a language that everybody would be able to use in other countries. It's not a language that you're going to be able to use when you're doing international conferences or things like that."

Despite the school's strict language policies, there were some who did not agree. Most vocal was Madame Cardoso, the acting director, who argued:

Il faut promouvoir les langues du pays où on est…Il faudrait que les élèves puissent	You have to have the language of the country…Students should be able to practice

pratiquer leurs langues parce qu'on parle de	their languages, because we are talking about
culture. Ce que les gens ne savent que c'est que	culture. What people do not understand is that
la langue Wolof, c'est une langue très, très	the Wolof language is a very, very rich
riche. C'est dommage qu'on l'ait pas travailler	language. It is a pity that we do not work [to
[de l'inclure dans l'école].	include it in the school].

While on the one hand Madame Cardoso's argument was in contrast to the students, as she argued that there are other ways to value languages, on the other hand her argument also reinforced the notion that English is purely an economic vehicle devoid of its own culture. Students, therefore, continued to learn in an environment where a language's value was linked solely to its utility in international contexts, thus devaluing African languages and reinforcing the ideology that these languages are not appropriate for school settings.

Knowing

Excerpt from field notes 12-17-15

It is my second day at the Bilingual Academy of Senegal. During a break between classes I chat with Lola, one of the foreign English teachers, who has been at the school for two years. We chat about the English literature classes she is teaching for première and terminal (11th and 12th grades). I ask her what books are in the curriculum and she lists off <u>Animal Farm</u>, <u>The Crucible</u>, <u>Hamlet</u>, and <u>Remains of the Day</u>, amongst others. I inquire whether any African authors are in the curriculum; she shakes her head, explaining, "They do read African authors in their French class. Like for example, I know they read <u>Things Fall Apart</u>. But in the English classes there's no African authors." I ask her who sets the curriculum and she says it's Mr. Jones. She pauses for a moment, then shares that she had asked Mr. Jones if she could include the book <u>Purple Hibiscus</u> by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her terminale (12th grade) class, but that he had told her the book wasn't academic enough. She then recollects him saying that if she wanted to add a novel about Africa that she could teach Joseph Conrad's <u>Heart of Darkness</u>. My face betrayed my shock at this selection

and Lola said she was happy I had that reaction because it was the same one she had had. The bell rings and

the break is over. As we get up and head off to class she says, "You know, the way the Joneses run the school

is really colonial."

Literature played a central role in the legitimation of colonization, the production of

derogatory stereotypes, and the imposition of European languages over African languages

(Willinsky, 1998). For students who are being introduced to literature through school, the books

they read shape how they view the world and their places in it (Sanchez, 2001; Bean & Moni, 2003;

Mar & Oatley, 2008; Luke, 1988). The selection of readings for a literature course is therefore not

neutral, but inherently a social and political issue "mediated by hierarchies of humanity and human

agency imposed by particular relations of power" (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p. 130).

At BAS, Mr. Jones was in charge of selecting the books students would be assigned in their

literature classes. While their French literature classes included both European and African authors,

such as Chinua Achebe and Mariama Ba, the books that BAS students were assigned in their English

classes included only Western authors such as William Shakespeare, Ernest Hemingway, and Arthur

Miller. In an interview with Mr. Jones, I asked him how he selected the books for the English

classes:

Teresa: How are the books selected?

Mr. Jones: I think initially I sat down and I just looked through books, probably books I

> *knew, and I tried to mix it up of course, some that were written by people who were not originally*

> *English authors, because we want some world literature as well, that sort of thing. And then over*

> *the years we changed it, not a tremendous amount, but over the years we've taken books out and*

> *changed here and there because teachers come and suggest different books. So initially it was probably*

> *me and then after that it was to some extent preferences of the teachers, but, as I explain to all the*

> *teachers, we don't just change the book because you're here for two years maybe and we're here for the*

long haul.

I attribute this discrepancy between the French literature classes and English literature classes to the fact that while the official Senegalese *programme de français* (French curriculum) offers suggestions of both European and African works to be taught in secondary grades, the *programme d'anglais* (English curriculum) focuses more on basic language skills and provides shorter readings for students that are at a level much lower than that of the BAS students. So while Mr. Jones could use the official *programme* for help selecting novels for French literature classes that ensured inclusion of African authors, there was no similar list for English literature classes. The result was that he selected works that he enjoyed and thought important for students to learn; his selections, however, emphasized European and European-American authors and were far removed from the background experiences and cultural knowledge of students.

The selection of works from the prescribed Eurocentric literary canon "valorizes not just certain literature but also certain ways of thinking about the world" (Agee, 2000, p. 307). For BAS students, like many students around the world, the literature they were reading in their English class valorized Western experiences and viewpoints; as Africans, students' experiences were either completely absent in these pieces, or they were viewed through a lens of "other". An example that illustrates this was the process of selecting Heart of Darkness and the subsequent challenges the English teachers faced in teaching this text to students. In the field notes excerpt that began this section, Lola described how Mr. Jones turned down her request to teach Purple Hibiscus. A month after speaking with Lola, I asked Mr. Jones about the inclusion of African authors in the English classes:

> Teresa: And do you try to get a lot of African authors in [the English curriculum]?
>
> Mr. Jones: There's not a lot there. I think there's only, is there any this year?
>
> Teresa: I don't think so. Right now they're starting Heart of Darkness, which I thought

was really interesting.

Mr. Jones: Joseph Conrad.

Teresa: Yes. Just with its whole history, it's been quite criticized by African authors.

Mr. Jones: Exactly. I think Miss Lola told me. I hadn't realized, but she pointed out to me

that there weren't any African authors. And so then I suggested Joseph Conrad,

because I think he's a great writer. She suggested another book, which was <u>Hibiscus</u>

(sic). Have you read it? It's about Nigeria, written by a Nigerian author. I'm trying to

think of the name.

Teresa: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie?

Mr. Jones: Yes, I think that's who it is…And so I read the book and I thought this is a

really good book about problems in Nigeria and so on. And what I said to Miss Lola

was that I don't think it represents great writing in the sense of somebody like

Joseph Conrad, who was a more mature writer. I probably would not have said the

same thing about Mariama Ba. Do you know Mariama Ba?

Teresa: Yes.

Mr. Jones: Because I think she's written some wonderful stuff. I liked it, but it wasn't the

same. I don't know. I mean, it's a very sad, it's terrible, you know? The way the

father is so bigoted and puritanical and religious, Protestant or whatever it is he was,

treating his children like he did. It was just horrific. But what I did was I simply, I got

out my <u>Heart of Darkness</u> and I looked up some passages. And I remember in <u>Heart

of Darkness</u> a passage I've never forgotten. And it's something about where he's

back in England and he's looking into the Thames, so he's in his later, his older life.

And Joseph Conrad says something like, "And he gazed into the venerable stream" –

meaning the Thames – "he gazed into the venerable stream not in the vivid flash of

the day that comes and departs forever, but in the august light of abiding memories."

Now that is great writing! That is great writing. I didn't find any phrase like that in

that book [Purple Hibiscus].

Teresa: And are you at all – because that book is quite controversial.

Mr. Jones: In what way?

Teresa: It's been criticized as being very colonial and racist.

Mr. Jones: It has? Well this is why it's good for the kids. They need to have their own

criticism. They need to see what they think. Do they agree? Particularly as Africans.

But to answer your question, they have quite a bit of African literature in their

French literature class.

Mr. Jones' approach to defining great writing joins a long line of "Eurocentric standards of

judgement" that takes for granted a specific Western literary canon as the litmus test against which

all other literature is compared, where certain places such as London are viewed as universal, while

other places such as Nigeria are considered to be too local to be able to encapsulate the human

experience (Ashcroft et al, 2002, p. 7).

In his critique of Heart of Darkness, Chinua Achebe (1988) famously wrote,

The real question is the dehumanization of Africa and Africans which this age-long attitude

has fostered and continues to foster in the world. And the question is whether a novel which

celebrates this dehumanization, which depersonalizes a portion of the human race, can be

called a great work of art. My answer is: No, it cannot.

Indeed, it is striking that in an effort to include African voices in the English curriculum, Joseph

Conrad was determined to be the best selection. The inclusion of Conrad in a curriculum devoid of

African voices or other depictions of Africa "sends messages to students not only about what kinds

of literature are valued but also who is valued" (Agee, 2000, p. 306). The result is that students at

BAS were "made to see the world and where [they] stand in it as seen and defined by or reflected in the culture of the language of imposition" (wa Thiong'o, 1994, p. 17).

Heart of Darkness was taught both years of my fieldwork to two different groups of students. The first year the teacher was Lola and the second year the teacher was Maggie, both of whom were White. Unsurprisingly, both teachers struggled with how to teach a book with such a complex and problematic history. On her first day of discussing the book, Maggie told me that she was nervous because of the frequent use of the word "n-----" and she didn't know how to address it with the students. She told me that she had reached out to a former teacher she knew for advice but that it wasn't very helpful, and even asked me what I would do in her situation. The following exchange is taken from my observation of Maggie's first class discussing Heart of Darkness:

Maggie: There's one word we have to discuss before we get started. The author does not

describe African people nicely.

Student 1: Does he call them n------?

Maggie: Yes, he calls them n------. What do you know about this word? How do you

feel about this word, n-----?

Student 2: It diminishes the status of Black people.

Student 3: It's racist

(Another student says he is uncomfortable using the word and suggests replacing it with

the word "nugget" in classroom discussions. Maggie asks the class if anyone else feels

awkward using the word. Another student raises their hand).

Maggie: We have to look at it from the perspective of the author and its context.

Student 4: Is darkness in the title related to being Black?

Student 2: White people use Black people as a symbol of darkness of the White people.

(Maggie asks her to explain what she means by 'darkness.' She says she means "ill

personality," that racism is a defect of a person's personality. The class continues discussing the meanings and interpretations of darkness until the bell rings).

In a subsequent class Maggie took suggestions from the students of what word they should use as a replacement. Suggestions included "monster," "ninja," and "ghost." Ultimately the class voted to use the word "monster" when reading passages aloud.

In assigning this book, Mr. Jones showed no consideration for how its racist language and overall depiction of Africans might affect students. Instead, he defended his choice as "good for the kids. They need to have their own criticism. They need to see what they think. Do they agree? Particularly as Africans." However, as he purposely hired English teachers with little or no teaching experience, teachers struggled with how to even approach the book, let alone how to foster a safe environment for students to fully dissect its complicated history. Additionally, while students overwhelmingly agreed that the book was incredibly racist, they were too overwhelmed with other schoolwork and preparing for their *baccalauréat* exam to fully engage in discussions. For example, when I asked Lola if students were upset they were assigned the book, she responded,

> By the time we had read it – because we were reading Night and Day by Virginia Woolfe –
> we were getting close to the baccalauréat exam and so I think if they had a lot of
> time to marinate on it and kind of really reflect on it, they would have probably been upset.
> But because it was getting so close to the deadline, I asked them this question [if they were
> upset] and they were like, "We just want to get through the bac and we just, we can't really
> be bothered. I mean, it's too late now anyway." And they were really focused on getting their
> exams done so it was really more kind of 'we have to get it done.'

Mamadou, a terminale (12th grade) student who read the book the second year it was taught by Maggie, similarly described his experience reading the book:

> Mamadou: [The book] was good. It was long. It was complicated. There was a lot of stuff,

vocabulary, that I didn't know. And I think that the discussions we had together

were helpful because I didn't really get what was happening. Sometimes I didn't even

read it because it was too difficult – I had too much other stuff to do. So yeah, the

discussions helped me keep up with the book. I liked the plot, the story. It was quite

interesting, but it was tiring to read because it was long, complicated. I could fall

asleep reading the book if the chapter wasn't interesting.

Teresa: Did you ever talk about whether the book was racist?

Mamadou: Yeah. It *is* racist. Because they are treating Black people as nothing, beyond

nothing. Because when the protagonist arrived in the Congo, the poverty was

represented by Black people. And you could see that Black people were dying.

Black people were described as really nothing. It was like a piece of nothing on the

floor, lying dead or something.

Teresa: Are you glad you read it?

Mamadou: Kind of. Because the original book [Night and Day] was interesting but long, like

really long.

Other students shared with me similar sentiments to Mamadou, agreeing that the book was quite

racist, but they preferred to read it because it was significantly shorter than some of the other works

they were assigned. Students' heavy workloads and laser-like focus on passing their baccalauréat

exams left little to no space for deeper interrogation and analysis.

When I asked Lola if she had support from Mr. Jones or other more experienced teachers in

helping her prepare lessons she replied, "We get the course syllabus and the books and that's it. So I

pretty much have to come up with my own activities on my own." Students at BAS, therefore, were

getting extremely different levels of instruction and facilitation in their literature classes. In their

French class, they were reading both European and African authors and were taught by an

experienced Senegalese teacher. On the other hand, in their English class they were reading

exclusively European and American authors and were taught by an inexperienced American teacher.

As Imoka (2018) argues about a similar private school in Nigeria, such a curriculum "prepares

[students] for Eurocentric exams that facilitates entry into Western universities" to the detriment of

developing students' sense of selves as *African* global citizens (p. 84).

Being

> *[Mrs. Jones] has so much tantrums [sic]! Like today [she said], "These kids, they don't look proper, you*
>
> *need to all clean your clothes and tomorrow you'll see if you look proper." Or "your hair is not normal, you*
>
> *look like a crazy woman. Go comb your hair" or something like. She always has something to say to us.*
>
> - Mariama, terminale (12th grade)

Coloniality of being "directly addresses the physical and psychological predicament of

colonized beings" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 55). Dress is an important component of coloniality

of being, as it is a significant way in which a person constructs their identity (Roach-Higgins et al,

1995); it is also a site in which "power is represented, constituted, articulated, and contested"

(Allman, 2004, p. 1). Much like language, dress has long been a fraught terrain in Africa, and "the

struggles over the way in which [African] bodies were to be clothed and presented – struggles at

once political, moral, aesthetic – were not just metonymic of colonialism. They were a crucial site in

the battle of wills and deeds, the dialectic means and ends, that shaped the encounter between

Europeans and Africans" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 222). Thus, just as BAS's language policy

and curriculum cannot be divorced from the larger logics of coloniality, its dress code must also be

placed within its specific historical and cultural context.

As in most other private schools in Dakar, students at BAS were required to wear uniforms.

Boys were able to choose pants or shorts, and girls were able to choose between pants or a skirt.

Every student wore the same type of shirt, which had the school's name and the phrase "citizens of

the world" printed on it. Although students wore the uniform, Mrs. Jones still spent a great deal of her limited time at the school making sure students looked "proper." She scolded them for not ironing their shirts, chastised them if their shoes were smudged, and criticized their hair styles if she deemed them too wild or unkempt.

Mrs. Jones also dictated what teachers were allowed to wear in the school. Her rulings most greatly affected the Senegalese teachers, as I learned during an interview with a Senegalese English teacher who worked at the school for just a year:

Teacher: Mrs. Jones doesn't like the teachers wearing Senegalese clothes.

Teresa: Do you know why?

Teacher: …One Friday I wore my Senegalese clothing. I remember Mrs. Cardoso told me that Mrs. Jones doesn't like these kind of clothes so you can put just very small one but not these big boubou. Because she doesn't like. I said ok, no worry. For me, I don't have any problem. And then one day I saw Mrs. Jones tell me 'Oh, come. I am very proud to have you here. I know that you are a very good teacher. But please, this is not, I don't like you to put these kind of clothes in this school because this is known to be an international school. And you know, an international school we don't have to show our cultural belonging, that we belong to this culture or another culture. So we don't need to show it, we just need to dress like internationally' [laughs]

Teresa: What does that even mean "we have to dress internationally"?

Teacher: Like a shirt and a trouser or a jacket, I don't know. And then I said 'no, it doesn't matter. You don't like it in your school, I'm not going to put it again in your school. So don't worry'. She said "Ok. It doesn't matter?" "No matter, actually". And that's

it. I don't have any problem. She said, "I don't like it in my school", I said, "No

problem. I won't put it again".

Teresa: Have you heard of other places, whether it's at offices or at other schools, where

they have that rule here, or is it just at BAS?

Teacher: No. This is the first time I've heard about this. This is the first time actually. The

first time. [laughs]

Just as the school promoted English and French as crucial for success because they are

"international," the school put forth a Eurocentric value system regarding what style of dress is

appropriate in order to be a successful global citizen. Mrs. Jones' reasoning for such a dress code (as

recollected by this teacher) provides insight into how she views her students and teachers. She says

that she wants her teachers to dress "internationally", which this teacher understood to mean

Western style clothing such as trousers and a jacket. Implicit in her demand is the understanding that

anything African cannot also be international. Additionally, embedded within her argument that "we

don't have to show our cultural belonging" is the implication that international (i.e. Western)

clothing is cultureless. As decoloniality theorists argue, one of the most significant effects of

colonization was the unquestioned normalization of the idea that anything Western and

White was the neutral default from which all else springs (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Quijano, 2007).

From such a perspective, anything deviating from this default marks one as an outlier and outsider.

Such a worldview fits with the school's Global Logic as it seeks to mold its African students into

non-African global citizens.

When I asked Madame Cardoso about the teacher dress code, she shared:

Je ne suis pas d'accord [avec la régle]. Le boubou qu'on port ce n'est rien avoir avec la religion. Pourquoi elle a souci ce boubou avec un religion? Non…Elle ne	I don't agree [with the rule]. The boubou that we wear has nothing to do with religion. Why

comprende pas que le boubou ce n'est rien a voir avec la religion. Moi, je suis chretienne, mais je porte ce boubou parce que c'est une tunu senegalaise… C'est comme si aujourd'hui, moi j'allais a Paris, j'ouvre une ecole et je dis aux francais non, vous portez le boubou. Ici on porte le boubou. C'est le meme choses. Ce n'est pas parce que au Senegal on a adopté le tunus europeens, les pantalons, le tailleur, la jupe. On l'aime bien. On est a l'aise dedans. Mais ce n'est pas parce qu'on est a l'aise qu'on doit le porter…On est une ecole laique, c'est vrais, mais la boubou n'a rien de religion.

is she fretting about this boubou with religion? No…She doesn't understand that the boubou has nothing to do with religion. Me, I am Christian but I wear a boubou because it is Senegalese clothing… It's like if today I went to Paris, opened a school and said to the French, 'No, you must wear the boubou. Here you will wear the boubou.' It's the same thing. It's not because in Senegal we adopted European clothing – pants, suits, skirts. We like those. We are comfortable in them. But it's not because we are comfortable in them that we have to wear them…We are a secular school, it's true, but the boubou has nothing to do with religion.

In her analysis of Mrs. Jones' rule, Madame Cardoso touches on another aspect of coloniality – religion. The earliest European schools in Africa were missionary schools that sought to convert Africans to Christianity. There is therefore a long, troubled history between schooling and religion on the continent. Neither of the Joneses expressed any kind of religious identity or affiliation; based on observations and discussions with teachers and students, it seems that they preferred to keep their school in line with the French policy of *laïcité* (secularism), which dictates strict separation between Church and State. Reading Mrs. Jones' dress code through this lens reveals another layer to the Global Logic, wherein a conspicuous religious identity is incompatible with a global identity.

Many teachers tried to avoid Mrs. Jones when she visited; numerous teachers told me that she would frequently threaten to close the school during bouts of frustration. However, while Mrs.

Jones was a force to be reckoned with when she visited, she was not physically present for the majority of the school year. When she was not in Senegal, teachers would frequently wear Senegalese clothes while teaching. While none of them explicitly declared their clothing to be an act of resistance, it did illustrate how coloniality and the Global Logic are not absolute; rather, they must be continuously cultivated and reinforced.

"BAS is a place to suffer": The price of becoming global

> *A parent meeting is held in the courtyard/cafeteria/assembly hall for lower secondary (sixième/6th grade to troisième/9th grade) parents. Mr. Jones runs the meeting with Madame Cardoso; five teachers sit to the side – two foreign English teachers and threes Senegalese teachers. There are approximately 15 parents present. After a bit of discussion about school policies, questions about textbooks, and an appeal to parents to volunteer for Saturday activities, a father raises his hand. Mr. Jones calls on him, and he says he is concerned about the amount of homework his sixième/6th grade daughter has every night. He is concerned that there isn't enough time for the students to rest, and because of this they do not do well on their homework. Mr. Fall, a history teacher, stands up and addresses the father: "We give students lots of homework for a reason. You shouldn't ask BAS to change its methods. Our students do very well. We know what we are doing. If you bring your child to BAS, you get results/Nous donnons aux étudiants beaucoup de devoirs pour une raison. Vous ne devriez pas demander à BAS de changer ses méthodes. Nos élèves réussissent très bien. Nous savons ce que nous faisons. Si vous amenez votre enfant à BAS, vous obtenez des résultats." When Mr. Fall is done speaking, a mother in the audience applauds.*

> - Field notes excerpt, September 21, 2016

Students would often talk about BAS with a mixture of gratitude and frustration. Through discussions with participants, it became clear that there was a general sense that the way the Joneses ran the school was problematic, but there was also recognition that it was one of the only schools that offered this kind of education at this price point.

Students were in school from 7:30 to 5:00 every weekday; older students also had classes on Saturdays. Additionally, they regularly had three to four hours of homework every night. As Aissatou, a terminale student, explained:

Aissatou: We've been suffering for seven years.

Teresa: Suffering?!

Aissatou: Yeah. BAS is a place to suffer. Really. I think that the best experience that BAS gave us is endurance. Because I stayed up at night, I didn't sleep all day long to work on my essays and to work on projects. I went to friends' houses to work on projects. So I think that it created a bond between [all of the students in her grade]. We were suffering together.

Surviving the stress and pressure of BAS was both a badge of honor as well as a bonding experience between students. It was quite common to see students nodding off in class due to lack of sleep. When I would chat with them between classes and ask how they were doing, I was frequently provided a long list of all the assignments and projects they were either currently working on or had to start working on.

At BAS there was an ethos that students needed to constantly be working and that stress was a good thing, since it showed that students were working and not wasting their time being lazy. This approach was clear in the two-day teacher training seminar Mr. Jones provided for the foreign English teachers, who taught primarily sixième (6th grade) and cinquième (7th grade). He stressed that students should have homework every night, and that the teachers must "have firmly in your mind that they won't all have done it, nor done it well." He spent fifteen minutes going over how teachers should check students' homework, having them role play as students; he urged them, "You have to have a strategy for checking homework. The students will remember if you check it or not." He warned the new teachers, "Always arm yourselves with some paper" in case the students get out of

line.

This kind of stress and workload is not in any way unique to BAS. Numerous scholars have noted an increase in credentialism and high-stakes competitiveness in education systems around the world (e.g. Lareau, 2003; Ball, 2003; Apple, 2006). Labaree (1997), writing about the U.S. context, argues that as education is increasingly understood as a private commodity, "the educational system begins to assume a sharply hierarchical shape in order to provide some students with ways to raise themselves above the crowd and others with ways to fail and exit the system early" (p. 2). Within such a stratified and high-stakes system, where an individual student's success or failure is theoretically in their own hands, students feel immense pressure from their families, teachers, administrators, society, and themselves to get higher grades, participate in extracurricular activities, and attain high level credentials in order to successfully compete with their peers (Demerath, 2009).

As shown in the field notes excerpt that opened this section, however, not everyone agreed that students' heavy workloads and stress levels were helpful. In the English teacher training, Sere, an American teacher, pushed back on Mr. Jones's emphasis on homework:

Mr. Jones: What do you do if students don't have their homework? Do you "stomp" them?

Sere: No.

Mr. Jones: Eh? You should have said yes!

Sere: They already have so much work, it's not always productive to just assign more work.

Much like the father at the parent conference, Sere's concerns were brushed aside with the response, "BAS gets results." Indeed, BAS did get results, with many graduates attending universities in Europe or the United States such as McGill University, Northern Kentucky University, Penn State University, NYU Abu Dhabi, NYU Shanghai, The University of British Columbia, University of Texas-Austin, University of Montreal, Florida International University, Université Laval, ESSEC Business School in France, KEDGE Business School in France, EDHEC Business School in

France, DePauw University, and University of Ottawa.

Importantly, however, not all BAS graduates achieved all of the markers of success as prescribed through the Global Logic. In one of the graduating classes I met during fieldwork, five out of the 28 terminale (12th grade) students did not pass their baccalauréat exam, which required them to retake it at a later date and postpone their post-secondary schooling. Speaking about this, Mr. Jones shared with the new English teachers at the teacher training, "We're happy a few of them didn't get it. We're not looking to be 100% all the time. The students were very surprised and very upset, and I say good because this is a message to all of them to take their work seriously." This rather cavalier attitude encapsulates the underlying ruthlessness of the Global Logic, where students were expected to mold themselves into the ideal (and therefore non-existent) global citizen, and any inability to meet these arbitrary standards are blamed on the individual students and their lack of work ethic. The school's focus on language, knowledge, and appearance obscured the physical and psychological effects of stress on students (Demerath, 2009), as well as the larger structural implications of such high-stakes competition and who is set up to succeed and who is destined to fail (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977/1990; MacLeod, 2009; Bowles & Gintis, 1976/2011; Ayling, 2019).

BAS students were under similar pressure to compete and succeed as their European and American counterparts; however, their experiences diverged in regard to where they were positioned within global structures of coloniality. As shown in this chapter, BAS was structured to continue the "hegemonic discourse of 'West is best', [which] is driven by the West's desire to maintain the power structures in the global field of power" (Ayling, 2019, p. 129). BAS students had to not only learn new languages, but also erase any African linguistic markers from their speech; they had to consume a Western literary canon wherein their experiences were either ignored or othered; and they had to physically present themselves as part of a so-called "cultureless" international community. In addition to all this, they then had to navigate the complex bureaucracies of not only applying to

foreign universities, but also finding ways to pay for the oft-higher tuition rates for international students and securing visas – the latter of which the vast majority of their American and European peers did not have to concern themselves. All of these were markers of success, and students were under immense pressure to meet these prescribed benchmarks of global citizenship.

Conclusion

The Global Logic of BAS continued the tradition of epistemological violence originated with colonization. Despite the students' relatively privileged socioeconomic statuses, "Nobody escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies" of coloniality (Grosfoguel, 2011,p. 4). Students learned in and through Western languages, studied Western authors, and learned to comport themselves as Westerners through dress, speech, and mannerisms. This is how coloniality operates; it promises success if you assimilate to a "prototype of Western humanity" (Fanon, 1963, p. 163), but ultimately, regardless of how perfect your accent is, how you dress, or how knowledgeable you are about the Western literary canon, assimilation – and therefore success – is always just out of reach (Memmi, 1974).

Chapter 7

Migration, education, language, and being/becoming middle class

In this final chapter, I examine the complex interplay between students' middle-class identities, their educational experiences and linguistic skills, and their migration aspirations. I understand the concept of middle class to refer to an active, relational, and ongoing identity construction. I argue that education, language, and migration (both actual and aspired) play crucial roles in students' middle-class identity projects. I use aspirations as a lens through which to examine this identity construction because it foregrounds the ongoing and future-oriented nature of being/becoming middle class. Additionally, viewing the middle class as aspiration provides insight into the complex tensions that emerge when great hope and optimism for imagined futures intersect with structural barriers.

The chapter begins with a brief literature review of current scholarship on African middle classes, followed by the conceptual frame used in this chapter. I then examine the relationship between migration, social class, education, and language. The following section describes how students talked about their own social positionings in Senegal, with particular attention paid to how students used their private educations as a way to compare themselves with social groups above and below them. The next section dives into students' migration aspirations. It focuses in particular on the complex ways students' language educations were indicators, but not necessarily determinants, of their future migrations. The following section looks at the tensions between students' migration aspirations and their abilities to migrate. This chapter concludes with a summary of how students' migration aspirations are heavily classed and languaged, in particular in regard to the ways in which students talked about and understood their language educations as providing both pathways and barriers to future migration.

Literature review of African middle class scholarship

While social class analyses of African societies have existed since the early 20th century, specific interest in the concept of an African middle class came to the fore in the 2010s. This interest in the African middle class is part of a wider interest in the 'global middle class.' While the concept of middle class is notoriously amorphous, with definitions highly influenced by historical period, national context, and academic discipline, amongst other factors, this ambiguity did not concern organizations such as the OECD (e.g. Kharas, 2010) and the World Bank (e.g. Ravallion, 2009), as well as scholars (e.g. Banerjee & Duflo, 2008) from heralding the "new middle class(es)" of the "developing" world and linking their growth with indicators such as private sector growth and more democratic governance (Easterly, 2001).

What brought Africa to the fore in these discussions was a 2011 report by the African Development Bank (AfDB), that was later expanded into a book (Ncube & Lufumpa, 2015). This report argues that the middle class holds "the key to a rebalancing of African economies", stating that "growth of the middle class is associated with better governance, economic growth, and poverty reduction" (p. 1). Defining the middle class as those who have a per capita daily consumption of $2-$20 per day, the report states that 34.3% of the African population were middle class, up from 26.2% in 1980 (p. 2). It divides the middle class into three categories, defined based on their daily consumption levels: the "upper-middle" class ($10-$20 per day), the "lower-middle" class ($4-$10 per day), and the "floating" class ($2-$4 per day). The floating class is so named because it "floats" between poverty and middleclass status and, according to the report, makes up the largest group of the African middle class at nearly 20% of the entire category (p. 3).

This report led to a surge of interest in the African middle class; investment firms such as Goldman Sachs (Scott-Gall, 2012), Standard Chartered Bank (Kim & Kapstein, 2013), and Deloitte & Touche (2013) all published reports touting new investment opportunities related to increased middle class consumer demand. Magazines such as *The Economist* (2015) published pieces about this

new push for investment, while the *Guardian* (e.g. Sumner & Birdsall, 2011) published op-eds questioning the validity of this "baiting [of] scaredy-cat investors and lobbying [of] the media" (Enaudeau, 2013).

Scholars soon responded to this new trend. For the sake of clarity, I divide these studies into two categories – those who use primarily economistic definitions (based on income, consumption, expenditure, and occupation) and those who use more cultural definitions (based on sensibilities, aspirations, and symbolic capital). These groups can also be divided methodologically, with the first using predominantly quantitative methods and often drawing data from large-scale surveys, and the second using more ethnographic qualitative methods. This distinction is not exact, and there are authors who incorporate aspects of both into their analyses.

A major debate amongst those utilizing economic definitions is whether to use more relative or absolute criteria. Absolute definitions provide a range of income or some other indicator that is to be used across all contexts. An example of this is the AfDB's salary-based definition. Relative definitions, on the other hand, define the middle class in terms of their income relative to the median income of their country. For example, Birdsall et al (2000) defined the middle class as people with incomes between 75% and 125% of the median in a given country. Visagie & Posel (2013) investigate the absolute versus relative debate by looking at the middle class in South Africa. Using data from the 2008 National Income Dynamics study, they apply both the absolute definition of $10 to $70 per capita per day and the relative definition of 50 to 150% of the median income in South Africa to see if there are any differences. They found that the size of the middle class depends on which definition is used. When using the absolute definition, they found that 20.4% of South Africans are middle class, and with the relative definition the percentage increases to 31.6% (p. 158). Another difficulty of large-scale quantitative definitions of the African middle class is the lack of reliable data (Resnick, 2015; Jerven, 2013). This leads many studies to use proxies, such as material

possessions and geographic location (e.g. urban versus rural), which have varying levels of usefulness and applicability (e.g. Banerjee & Duflo, 2008).

In contrast to these more quantitative studies, ethnographic studies look more closely at non-economic factors such as attitudes, preferences, and tastes. Unlike economic-based studies, these researchers do not view class as a stable category, but rather as a fluid and contextually dependent phenomenon (Schielke, 2012). Some scholars argue that the middle class should be analyzed as an aspirational category because "middle-class membership becomes a powerful, life-altering goal for many of those poised on its margins" (Heiman et al, 2012, p. 19). Lentz (2015) proposes exploring African class relations in terms of "'doing being middle class', as bundles of discourses and performances that can, in specific situations or even over longer periods, be mobilized or demobilized, emphasized or de-emphasized" (p. 42). Other scholars have called for a move from a theory of "the African middle class" to the more expansive "African middle classes" in order to take into account this fluidity and contextual specificity (Scharrer et al 2018).

The majority of scholars producing the literature described in this section are not African. It is therefore important to keep in mind the politics and power relations inherent in any analysis, including this one, that are derived by outsiders using concepts originally conceived in relation to non-African contexts. In response to this, Spronk (2018) argues that analyses of African middle classes should theorize *from* Africa, as opposed to falling back on supposed universal class concepts; she explains, "the aim is to look for theory in the same place where we might, otherwise, look for data: that is to say *out there* in everyday lives, political economies, and historical trajectories on the African continent" (p. 323). With this in mind, I turn to the conceptual framework for this chapter.

Conceptualizing the middle classes as aspiration in Senegal

I do not take for granted that a Senegalese middle class (as a coherent, stable social category) actually exists. Instead, I adapt Scharrer et al's (2018) framework of multiple "middle classes" in

order to speak to people's various cultural practices that are imbued with different meanings depending on the specific relational aspects of a given context. An important relational aspect of middle-class cultural practices is the temporal, as the middle classes are often framed in future terms. As Schielke (2012) explains, "it is less about being than it is about becoming, about aspiration to a place, so to speak, in the middle of the society as a respectable person in relative comfort and with an optimistic future" (p. 40). However, just as the middle class is not a universal category, so too does it not represent a universal future for all.

I therefore use the lens of aspirations in order to both capture the future-oriented nature of being/becoming middle class, as well as to provide insight into the tension between an unbridled hope for a better future and constrained prospects of making these hopes a reality. As MacLeod (2009) explains, "aspirations provide a conceptual link between structure and agency in that they are rooted firmly in individual proclivity (agency) but also are acutely sensitive to perceived societal constraints (structure)" (p. 139). This link between structure and agency is also intertwined with temporal considerations between the past, present, and future. In the same way as larger structures may shape an individual's future trajectories, a person's past and present do have some amount of bearing on their possible futures. Importantly, however, just as one has agency to respond to and navigate around structural barriers, one is also not completely beholden to their past and present; rather, it is important to "imagine possibilities of futures as an alterity of the present, rather than as a distant eventuality" (Pink et al, 2017, p. 133).

Education has long viewed as an investment in one's future, and the purported promises of education – of increased social, political, and economic mobility – remain a strong driver of people's aspirations (Mathew, 2018; Trudell, 2010). Less attention has been paid to the role of language in relation to one's capacity to aspire. However, education and language are deeply intertwined; the perceived value of education is mediated through the language(s) of that education, regardless of

content. In contexts such as Senegal, where local languages (and Arabic) are widely believed to hold little economic or social value, education becomes even more important as it is one of the only ways to learn more supposedly profitable languages such as French and especially English. Both education and language, then, are central components of people's aspirations, as they are positioned as increasing students' capacities to aspire by providing them desirable linguistic capital, as well as access to social networks and credentials.

Historically in the Senegalese context, "success and social prestige were closely tied to knowledge and education (symbolized by a diploma), French language and a Western lifestyle, which paved the way for access to political power as well as employment in the administration" (Willems, 2014, p. 321). However, in response to the continued decrease in both the number and prestige of these public sector jobs, many Senegalese youth are recalibrating their aspirations to focus on international and transnational migration. I turn now to a discussion of migration aspirations and the Senegalese middle classes.

Migration aspirations and the Senegalese middle classes

Recently, migration has become a central focus of class analyses in Africa. Scholars are pushing back against more static conceptualizations of social class, which are often bounded within the nation-state, arguing that to understand class relations under global capitalism, a transnational framework must be adapted (e.g. Prothmann, 2018; Lentz, 2016). They argue that Africans attempt to resolve unequal wealth distribution in their local contexts by migrating and that aspirations to migrate are part of globally circulating images of middle-class membership (Coe & Pauli, 2020). Thus, these scholars argue, migration has significantly altered social relations on the continent, where "it has become very difficult to think about a better future without thinking about migration to a place where one can make the money needed to realize that better future" (Graw & Schielke, 2013, p. 8). Indeed, the majority of students at the two schools talked about leaving Senegal after

completing their secondary studies, as neither group felt that there were opportunities for them to advance if they stayed in Senegal. While united in their aspirations to migrate, however, the form and ability to realize these aspirations were stratified across the two schools.

In thinking about the relationship between migration aspirations and the middle classes, I bring together Carling's (2002) "aspiration/ability model" of migration with Cresswell's (2010) politics of mobility and Flamm & Kaufmann's (2006) concept of motility. Carling's (2002) "aspiration/ability model" aims to refine theorizations of migration, arguing that it is important to distinguish between the aspiration to migrate and the ability to migrate. He identifies three categories of people: those who both aspire to migrate and have the ability to do so (migrants), those who aspire to migrate but lack the ability to do so (involuntary non-migrants), and those who do not aspire to migrate and who may or may not have the ability to do so (voluntary non-migrants). These distinctions, he argues, reflect the different hierarchies of globalization, where some are able to realize their migration aspirations while many others are denied these opportunities (Carling, 2002, p. 37).

Cresswell (2010) similarly seeks to refine theories of mobility. He argues that "mobility is one of the major resources of 21st-century life and…it is the differential distribution of this resource that produces some of the starkest differences today" (p. 22). In order to understand how this differential distribution plays out, he identifies six aspects of mobility: why a person moves; how fast they move; the rhythm in which they move; the route of movement; how the movement feels; and when and how the movement stops. All of these aspects of mobility are intertwined, with "legitimate" and "illegitimate" forms dictated by a politics of mobility. This politics of mobility entails "the ways in which mobilities are both productive of social relations and produced by them" (p. 21). The politics of mobility is intimately intertwined with regulation of movement (e.g. visa requirements, the "Muslim ban"). Thus, to return to Carling's model, the ability to migrate is not just

determined by individual factors, but also larger political and social factors (i.e. the politics of mobility), which in turn are highly classed (e.g. visa requirements related to one's bank accounts, property, etc.).

Lastly, Flamm & Kaufmann's (2006) concept of motility speaks to this tension between the aspiration to migrate and the politics of mobility. They define motility as "how an individual or group takes possession of the realm of possibilities for mobility and builds on it to develop personal projects" (p. 168). Importantly, these possibilities for mobility are not necessarily realized. In their conception of motility, focus is more on "the logic of an actor's actions, in particular the reasons behind the choice of tools and localizations" as opposed to larger structures of politics of mobility (p. 169). In other words, they are more concerned with a person's creative agency than with limiting structures. To understand the ways in which people develop personal migration/mobility projects, Flamm & Kaufmann identify three factors at which they look: access (e.g. cost); skills (i.e. acquired knowledge and organizational capacity); and cognitive appropriation (what actors do with access and skills) (p. 169).

Education and linguistic repertoires are, I contend, central to these three aspects of motility, as they are simultaneously skills in and of themselves (e.g. speaking a language), provide access to migration opportunities (e.g. alumni networks), and assist with cognitive appropriation (e.g. provide students support and tools to apply to university). Importantly, however, not all educational and linguistic repertoires have the same value, nor are they accessible to all. Therefore, I argue, in examining the classed relationship among migration aspirations, education, and language, it is crucial to take into account the ways in which these three factors are mutually constitutive. For example, if one aspires to migrate to a specific geographic location, one can (in theory at least) seek out a language education to acquire the relevant linguistic capital necessary to live more comfortably in this location. Thus, one's education and linguistic repertoire are shaped by one's migration

aspirations. Crucially, this relationship between migration aspirations, education, and language is deeply classed, as access to different types of language education – and by extension the migration opportunities associated with these different types of education – are deeply contingent on one's social class.

Bringing theories of migration together with the literature on African middle classes and aspiration frameworks, my work shows how navigating this complex interplay between migration (whether aspired to or realized), education, and language are central components of the ongoing project of being/becoming middle class. Just as middle-class identity is a project that is constantly under construction, so too is the project of migration. Both projects straddle the hope for a better and different future and the weight of present circumstances. Both are "pursued, enacted, and expressed through symbolic and material discourses" that are simultaneously global and local, and students in contemporary Senegal are simultaneously navigating local histories and practices, ongoing structures of coloniality, and ever-increasing pressures to become part of a globalized world as they creatively work to forge better futures (Donner & de Neve, 2011, p. 13).

As will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, no singular trajectory is *the* middle-class pathway, and language education plays a central role in shaping students' potential futures. The following section looks at how students made sense of their social positioning in Senegal, in particular the role of education as a relational marker of being middle class.

"Ni riche, ni pauvre"/ "Neither rich nor poor": Education as a relational marker of the middle classes

As described above, social class is a deeply relational concept. As Heiman et al (2012) explain, "class formations emerge only in relation to other classes, none more so than middle classes, which appear between – and in constitutive tension with – classes above and below" (p. 13). Importantly, however, people in the middle classes draw on a variety of reference groups in defining

their social location, which in turn accounts for the plurality of definitions of who is middle class (Melber, 2016).

In discussions with students, none of them explicitly used the term "middle class" to refer to their social location; instead, they repeatedly referred to themselves as "ni riche ni pauvre"/ "neither rich nor poor." It is clear here in this phrasing that they are comparing themselves to those 'above' (i.e. the rich) and 'below' (i.e. the poor) them. Importantly, in comparing themselves to these other classes, students repeatedly focused on education as a marker of class-belonging. Specifically, the ability to attend a private school over a public school was a crucial marker of being not poor. Ndeye, a 10th grade student at IMFAS, explained why public schools were not as good as private schools:

Probleme bi fii Senegal école publique yi soo fa nekkee dañu bari grève. Quand à l'école privé il n'y a pas de grève. C'est parce que chaque mois tu paies dangay jang doo grève prof yi chaque fois dañuy ñew…Imagine nga jang ba année bi des tuuti après ñu grève, ñu wara def examen prof ni duñu jangale parce que fayu ñu leen amuñu xaalis affaire yooyo. Ecole yi nga xam ni privée lañ yooyu amu ñu fa dangay jàng après so pare nga dem.

The problem with public schools in Senegal is that there are many strikes. But in private schools there are no strikes. That is because every month you pay to study so the teachers come every month…Imagine if you studied for a year and then there is a strike. You have to take your exams but the teacher does not teach because they are not paid.

Marie, a 6th grade student at IMFAS, lamented the lack of opportunity to learn for children from families who could not afford a private school:

Il y a un problème là-bas par ce que y'a des gens ils n'ont pas les moyens de payer l'école privée. Bon c'est enfants-là, ils vont avoir des

It is a problem because there are people who do not have the means to pay for a private school. And those children, they

problèmes pour apprendre. Y'a beaucoup d'ici c'est pour cela que y'a beaucoup d'enfant qui apprend pas. Ici à Dakar y'a beaucoup d'enfants ils sont intelligent mais ils n'ont pas les moyens d'apprendre, leurs parent n'ont pas d'argent pour payer les inscriptions et tout ça.

are going to have trouble learning. It's a big problem because there are a lot of children who do not learn. Here in Dakar there are a lot of children who are intelligent but they don't have the means to learn, their parents don't have the money to pay for school fees and everything.

Having the means to escape public school for a private school separated you from those who were poor and lacked the financial means to pay private school fees. One marker of being "not poor," therefore, was attending a private school.

However, simply attending a private school did not automatically make one "rich." In the following fieldnotes excerpt, students at BAS are seen explicitly talking about the differences in private schools.

May 31, 2016

Ms. Knicks, the upper level English teacher, dedicated some of her class time in the 11th grade English class to a discussion about human rights in Senegal. As the discussion progresses, talk about social class comes up. Ms. Knicks, knowing my interest in the middle class, takes the opportunity to ask the students their thoughts. Below is a rough transcription of the discussion that transpired:

Ms. Knicks: Why would parents not send their children to school?

Student 1: Not enough money.

Ms. Knicks: But public schools are free.

Student 1: In Senegal, public schools aren't good. Sometimes the problem comes from the country.

Ms. Knicks: Where do people in the middle go to school?

Student 2 (whispering): BAS.

Student 1: Private schools. They have more opportunities.

Student 3: There is a difference between types of private schools for rich and middle class. The rich have

    prestigious schools and the middle class have private schools but they are less expensive.

Student 1: Middle class parents make more effort and work harder than rich parents to get their kids into

    private schools.

Student 3: If public schools were good we would probably be there. But our parents, thank God, have the

    money to send us to private schools.

Similar to the students at IMFAS, for these students the financial ability to attend a private school marked one as "not poor." However, simply attending a private school did not automatically make one rich; rather, there was a spectrum of different kinds of private schools. For BAS students, their school was solidly middle class. In later conversations with students, I found that they frequently compared BAS with the International School of Dakar (ISD), where many children of ex-patriates attended. The tuition at ISD is exorbitant, roughly four times that of BAS[34]. For a Senegalese family to be able to send their child to ISD meant that they had to be rich, as they were not eligible to receive the tuition benefits available to the ex-patriate families.

    The ways students talked about their education in relation to others is revealing about how they saw themselves positioned socioeconomically in Senegal. While students at both schools agreed that they were neither rich nor poor, there were different emphases placed on being either "not rich" or "not poor" depending on the reference groups upon which they drew. At IMFAS, students largely compared themselves to others who were in public school, thus placing the most emphasis

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[34] The tuition for BAS was 140,000 CFA per month at the 12th grade level, roughly $230. At IMFAS, the tuition at the 12th grade level was 12,000 CFA per month, roughly $20.

on how they were "not poor." In contrast, BAS students were more apt to compare themselves to students at more expensive private schools, emphasizing that they were therefore "not rich."

These different conceptualizations of being in the "middle" illustrate the importance of relationality in class analyses. As Scharrer et al (2018) argue, such a "plurality of lifestyles in the middle ground means that those who occupy it manifest various social entanglements with, and social mobility between, those classes above and below it" (p. 9). Education was an important marker for these students as they examined their social positioning within Senegalese society, comparing themselves to those in classes above and below them. Importantly, while students at both schools saw themselves as in the "middle" of Senegalese society, they did not necessarily see themselves as part of a united "middle." These different middles became especially apparent in discussions of their migration aspirations. In the following sections, I examine the complex interplay between language, education, and migration aspirations as a nexus of middle-class identity constructions.

Migration, language, and education from the middles

BAS and IMFAS offered their students linguistic, cultural, and social capital that linked them with various transnational networks and offered potential pathways to migration. Students at both schools were highly multilingual, with many speaking at least three different languages. However, as Tavares & Juffermans (2019) point out, "multilingualism remains a site of struggle and selection where certain kinds of it are privileged and others are devalued…It is not a question of having diversified multilingualism, the point is to be associated with the right multilingualism in a particular place" (p. 231). One's ability to be associated with the "right" multilingualism is highly contingent on one's social class and access to language education.

While the students at the two schools had the means to escape public schooling, they were receiving very different private language educations. On the one hand, the two schools can be easily

divided along these linguistic lines, with BAS focusing on Western languages – in particular English and French – and IMFAS focusing on Arabic. These different linguistic lines, in turn, provided connections to different migration trajectories, namely to Europe and North America for the former and Arabic-speaking countries for the latter. Indeed, both the Western and the Arab have strong transnational educational legacies in Senegal. As part of its policy of assimilation, France offered scholarships for secondary and higher education, with many prominent politicians and authors completing their studies abroad both before and after independence (Timera & Garnier, 2010; Bugul, 1982). There is an even longer history of Islamic educational migration, with *arabisant* students traveling to Arab countries for continued religious study and higher education.

On the other hand, these seemingly distinct language-linked migration trajectories are deeply interconnected, embedded within the "intermeshed histories of capitalism and colonialism" that work together to create a world system where certain languages and knowledges are more privileged than others (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 3). As Heller & McElhinny (2017) explain, "multilingualism in important market languages, understood as the standardized forms of former imperial nation-state languages, is a signature of the cosmopolitan elite whose members compete for access (especially for their children) to Mandarin, English, Spanish, and French" (p. 234). Students and families are vying for access to the languages they perceive to be most highly valued in the global market; due to the legacy of colonialism and imperialism and the ongoing effects of coloniality, the most valued languages are the languages of former imperial powers. Access to the "correct" forms of these most valued languages, however, is highly classed; this class-based stratification is most evident in language education, in particular private language education.

In Senegal, the languages most valued by market logics are French and English. While French's market value is quite evident, as it is the official language, English's value is deeply tied to its perceived status as a global language and the benefits it purportedly provides for aspiring

migrants. Although Arabic can potentially offer similar migration benefits, it is not as highly commodified as English or French, instead understood predominantly in terms of cultural and religious capital, as opposed to economic. With limited job prospects for youth remaining in Senegal, English provides the 'linguistic golden ticket' that allows students to migrate anywhere in the world in search of brighter economic horizons.

Students at both schools were highly aware of this linguistic hierarchy. This does not mean that they agreed with this hierarchy, as evidenced by the students at IMFAS lamenting the lack of status afforded Arabic-speakers. However, they all were working to navigate these larger global structures and histories as they sought to build a future where they could support themselves and their families. For the majority of these students, migration was a necessary part of this.

In analyzing students' migration aspirations, I propose the concepts of "Western globals" and "Arabe globals" in order to encompass both the linguistic and geographical components of students' migration aspirations, as well as the multitude of ways students' migration aspirations are shaped by structures of capitalism and colonialism. I use the term "Western" to refer to the geographic locations of former colonial powers (e.g. France, England) and current global economic powers (e.g. U.S., Canada) and their official languages (e.g. French, English). I use the French term "Arabe" because it refers not only to the many varieties of Arabic language, but also Arab countries and people. I use the term "global" to refer to the overarching structures of colonialism and capitalism that commodify languages and education, limiting them as simply means to economic ends; "global" is both ideological and aspirational, as it encompasses the ways in which people understand the purpose(s) and value(s) of language educations, which in turn influence students' aspirations. I purposefully use the plural term "globals" in order to encompass the various ways students imagine and experience these spaces and their potential futures in them.

As will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, while language education was a strong influence on students' migration aspirations, its impact was not absolute. Students' language educations were not their destiny. Additionally, even when students did aspire to migrate to the path most closely aligned to their language education, their pathway was not free from obstacles; they still had to navigate potentially obstructing structures and ideologies linked to language, class, religion, and race. I turn now to a discussion of migration aspirations at BAS.

"I want to be rich!": Educational migration aspirations at BAS

At BAS, talk of migration centered around attending a university in Western Europe or North America. During the course of fieldwork, numerous college recruiters visited, coming from schools in the United States such as Penn State, University of Bridgeport, Northern Kentucky University, California State Bakersfield, and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; they were also visited by the French university Group Sup de Rochelle, the Spanish university Universidad del Atlántico, and the Senegalese university Institut African de Management (IAM). These visits from the college recruiters and students' responses to them are illustrative of both the relationship between education, language, and social class, and the ways in which specific migration trajectories were valued over others.

The first college recruit visits I observed were from Penn State and the Institut African de Management (IAM), who visited on the same day. The following is an excerpt from fieldnotes of the Penn State visit:

February 9, 2016

A recruiter from Penn State visited the school for an hour in the morning. She was a white American woman, probably in her early thirties. She shared that she lives in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where she works for the university recruiting African students. At her presentation there are students from première (11th grade) and terminale (12th grade).

She begins saying, "I'm so excited and I'm already impressed! How's your English?" Students mumble and she continues speaking, but speaks very slowly and enunciates in a very obvious way. She continues, "Penn State is hoping to gain brilliant West African students like you. I want to talk to you about why it's important to study in the United States, why it's important to study abroad. Most important, it makes you a lot more marketable to employers." She talks about why Penn State is so interested in recruiting African students, saying, "We want to develop Africa. We want Dakar to be like the U.S. or France. For me, Dakar is already like Paris." A few students scoff. The recruiter quickly adds, "Compared to Ouagadougou."

The recruiter continues with her prepared presentation. She asks the students, "Who can define globalization?" Students call out things like "interconnectedness," "cultural exchange," "travel," "the economy" and "global citizenship." The recruiter continues, "These are the things the educational system in the U.S. can offer you…There are other systems, but the U.S. system is the best for offering these things."

The recruiter then begins talking about how much "Penn State loves Africa." She describes in detail an annual event called "Touch of Africa night," where African students can share and present their cultures with clothes, food, and performances. The recruiter exclaims, "It's my favorite night of the year!"

She then talks about the campus itself, asking the students if they know where Pennsylvania is. The students respond yes and proceed to name all the bordering states. The recruiter seems a bit surprised. She then says that there are over 100,000 students at Penn State and asks what benefits might come from such a large student body. Students say things like "diversity" and "open-mindedness." The recruiter says that the main benefit is the large alumni network, explaining "It's almost like an automatic in" with job interviews if the job interviewer also went to Penn. She concludes by saying, "Sometimes when you go to university in West Africa you only have a few options. At Penn State, if you can dream it, you can do it."

The recruiter asks if anyone has any questions so far. A student asks if there is a Greek life. The recruiter responds, "Huge! Like too big in my opinion." The next question is about SAT and TOEFL scores. She reassures students that they shouldn't worry because "You seem like very intelligent students with very good English." She also

explains that all international students are "reviewed for the whole picture individually," so their standardized test scores are not the only thing taken into consideration.

The recruiter returns to her prepared presentation, talking about the different majors available at Penn State. She asks the students what they are thinking of majoring in and they respond engineering, math, and business. I notice the lack of liberal arts majors mentioned. She encourages the students to know their major before starting, not to apply as undeclared.

Next she talks about the application process, explaining that the application fee is $65 and that students can pay with a credit card. She also explains how the university is working with the U.S. embassy to offset the costs of the TOEFL and SAT exams. A student asks about scholarships and the recruiter talks about a new scholarship for "elite students with no money." She says, "We're targeting West African students for this scholarship. If your performance is very high and you have a good story and maybe you just don't have the money, this is a good scholarship for you. Every student who applies from my recruitment will be considered for this scholarship, but you have to let me know if you think you are that kind of student." She mentions another scholarship given through the Honors College, saying, "Having Honors College on your resumé is huge. It will open lots of doors for you."

Another student asks about acceptance rates, but the recruiter says she doesn't know. She says instead, "We are pushing for West African students, so we are begging you to come!" She adds, "You're not competing like Chinese students are competing."

A student asks about the NCAA division. Again the recruiter doesn't know. Instead she says, "The athletics department is the richest in the university."

The recruiter then talks about study abroad programs at the university, talking primarily about programs in Europe (Spain, England, France, etc.). She says, "We are pushing students to be global citizens. I want you to imagine yourselves going abroad, without any obstacles. Whatever your motivation is I want you to follow it." Students call out their motivations, with one proclaiming, "I want to be rich!" and another exclaiming, "Money!"

The last question students ask is what life is like at the university. The recruiter responds that it is always "exciting, invigorating, positive, and friendly." She then talks a bit about what it's like to live at Penn State, talking about how it's in a region referred to as Happy Valley. She adds, "Many people are educated, so that helps." She shares she wishes she had attended Penn State as an undergraduate. She exclaims, "I should have gone to Penn State for engineering. I would be so rich!"

The recruiter says her time is up and thanks the students. She gives them her contact information and urges them to reach out with any questions they may have. She ends by urging the students to "Follow your dreams, even if you don't go to the States or Penn State."

Sitting through the presentation, I was struck by how explicitly the recruiter and the students linked education with money. While students and school administrators did frequently talk about the importance of higher education in terms of future employment, these discussions had also been accompanied by other statements such as the importance to be educated in order to foster global understanding. I was therefore a bit surprised at how blatantly students (and later the recruiter) talked about wanting to be rich. My surprise was not due to their focus on education solely as a means to gain economic capital (that had always been clear since my first day at the school), but rather how other values of education that had previously been expressed at the school were not once mentioned. When the two students called out their motivations to go to college as "I want to be rich!" and "Money!" I laughed to myself, thinking this conversation could be used verbatim to explain neoliberal approaches to education.

These discussions of education and money also provide more insight into the relativity of these students' socioeconomic statuses. Within Senegal, these students enjoyed a class status that gave them access to a school like BAS, which in turn gave them access to recruiters from universities like Penn State (most high schools in Senegal are never visited by college recruiters). In this way, these students are part of an elite group within Senegal. However, if they do draw on their class

status to attend a university such as Penn State, they are no longer elite, they are now "elite students with no money," as expressed by the recruiter in describing available scholarships. To be clear, none of these students came from families with no money. In comparison to most Senegalese families, these students were indeed quite wealthy. However, when taken out of Senegal and put into comparison on a global level, their class statuses significantly shift.

When looked at in this way, it begins to make sense why BAS students considered themselves to be middle class instead of rich. Through their education at BAS and its Global Logic, they were not looking at their class statuses within Senegal, but rather globally. Even when comparing themselves to other schools in Senegal, as described in the previous section, it is quite telling that they most frequently used the International School as their barometer; indeed, the International School is an American school attended by majority expats. For BAS students, then, they are middle class in that they may lack money (I use the term "lack" here very loosely) and are therefore not rich, but they are also not poor because their education and language skills give them an elite status.

Interestingly, students' elite status (as given them through their education and language skills) was not readily recognized by the Penn State recruiter. This was first apparent in the beginning of the recruiter's presentation, when she spoke very slowly and overenunciated. While the recruiter did not explicitly state that she thought the students' English levels would be low, students read her slow speech pattern as evidence of such. After the presentation I chatted with one of the students who had attended, asking her what she thought. She said, "I was really excited, but she [the recruiter] was talking so slowly! It was kind of irritating [laughs]." I asked the student why she thought the recruiter was talking so slowly and she responded, "Because she probably thought we didn't understand English very well. So she wanted to speak slowly so we could feel comfortable." There was clearly a

mismatch, then, between the recruiter's expectations of her audience's skills and their actual skill levels.

This mismatch was not only apparent in regard to language, but also to students' education. For example, when the recruiter asked the students if they knew where Pennsylvania was located, she appeared surprised when they told her that not only was it in the northeast of the United States, but also all of its surrounding states. Indeed, the students were quite well-versed not only in U.S. geography, but also many aspects of life at a U.S. university, as illustrated by their questions about Penn State's NCAA division and Greek life. These instances again point to the nature of social class as an active, relational, and ongoing identity construction. During this recruitment presentation, students' class status was actively constructed in their back and forth with the recruiter across the axes of language and education. They went from low-level English speakers with little to no knowledge of colleges and life in the U.S., to fluent English speakers with deep understandings of the U.S. college system. In this way, their language and education secured their status as "elite," as far as the recruiter was concerned; however, when placed in comparison with their peers around the world, they were labeled as "elite with no money," or, in other words, middle class.

As shown thus far, education and language skills were important parts of the construction of students' class identities; additionally, their class identities were highly relational and context specific, as evidenced by the ways in which they can simultaneously be categorized as elite, elite with no money, and middle class, depending with whom they are compared. Since class status is not static, students had to continue to leverage their education and language skills in order to retain and hopefully increase their class status. For most students at BAS this meant leaving Senegal in the form of educational migration.

The Penn State recruiter echoed this imperative that they leave Senegal, beginning her presentation by saying, "I want to talk to you about why it's important to study in the United States,

why it's important to study abroad. Most important, it makes you a lot more marketable to employers." According to the Penn State recruiter, students should engage in educational migration (i.e. study outside of Senegal) in order to get access to a supposedly superior educational system in the U.S. and become a part of the vast Penn State social network. Additionally, the recruiter urged the students later in her presentation to again migrate in the form of study abroad. Interestingly, despite the fact that Penn State offers study abroad programs to different African countries, she only talked about programs in Europe. She taps into the global citizen discourse circulating at BAS, proclaiming that Penn State, like BAS, wants its students to be global citizens. Being a global citizen, then, seems to be contingent on a specific type of migration (i.e. educational) to specific geographic locations (i.e. Europe or North America). Importantly, however, this type of migration is accessible only to those who have specific forms of economic, linguistic, social, and cultural capital. For those who do not have ready access to this type of educational migration, more considerations must be taken into account.

Such a perspective was presented to students later the same day, when visitors from the private Senegalese university Institut Africain de Management/African Institute of Management (IAM) came to visit. Founded in 1996, IAM describes its vision thusly: "*Être la première Business School d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre formant des global leaders adossés à l'Africanité et préparés à la Gouvernance des nouvelles économies numérique et verte*/ To be the first Business School in West and Central Africa that forms global leaders backed by Africanity and prepared for the Governance of new digital and green economies" (www.groupeiam.com). The following is excerpts from their visit:

Later in the afternoon representatives from Institut Africain de Management (IAM) in Dakar visit. Unlike the Penn State visit, which was attended by both première and terminale students, this visit is only with terminale students. Along with the recruiter from IAM are three current students. They are all Senegalese. The entire

presentation is in English. The students seem much less interested in this visit than they did Penn State. Adding to this disinterest is the fact that after this class the school is having a Mardis Gras party.

The recruiter asks them if they know about IAM and the students are all seemingly quite knowledgeable about its history and founding. I learn that two BAS students attended IAM in the past. The recruiter talks at length about the benefits of staying in Senegal for university. He explains, "I did my studies abroad but I wish I had stayed here because I would have spent less money and traveled more with the money I saved." The students ask him where he studied abroad and he says Morocco and Germany. He continues, "A year in the U.S. can be very expensive. You can do exactly the same program and stay here [in Senegal] for two years. At the end of the day you can do the same program and spend less."

They talk more about the school, saying there are around 2,000 students in Dakar and 4,000 students around West Africa. One of the BAS students asks about internship opportunities and the recruiter says that there are many opportunities, adding, "Before having your bachelor degree you should have at least one internship."

They then turn to the different programs offered, highlighting business and engineering. They say that studies can be done in English or French. They also talk about a program for graphic design/3D animation that is a partnership between IAM and the European Union. One of the IAM students says, "Business or engineering is good if you want a good salary." A BAS student questions, "Everyone in Senegal chooses to do business. So us going to IAM, what will make us stand apart?" The recruiter responds, "That depends on you. Some people here in Senegal may have their PhD and be jobless the rest of their lives." The IAM student says that students can start their own business, mentioning "the guy who started Facebook." Another IAM student adds, "Macky Sall is right now the president but he was just an engineer."

Outside the music for the Mardis Gras party can be heard and the students are antsy, ready for this presentation to be finished. They do not seem at all enthused about IAM as a possible university. The visitors hand out posters with information about the school and its programs, thank the students, and end their presentation. The students excitedly get up and leave to get changed for the party.

The question of whether and how to migrate was much more of a concern in the IAM presentation than in the Penn State presentation. In the latter's visit, the economic cost of leaving Senegal for university was abated through talk of potential scholarships and, most importantly, the significant benefits students would accrue that seemingly outweighed any costs. In contrast, the IAM representatives questioned this cost-benefit ratio, arguing that students could "do the same program [as in a U.S. university] and spend less" if they stayed in Senegal. Importantly, the IAM representatives were not arguing against migration; rather, they argued for deferred migration.

In response, the BAS students were highly skeptical as to the advantages of staying in Senegal for university. They, like many other students around the world, preferred to migrate for higher education because they believed that local credentials and qualifications were less prestigious than international - especially European or North American - ones (Irungu, 2013; Maringe & Carter, 2007). This belief was clearly evident when one of the students pointedly asked the IAM representatives, "Everyone in Senegal chooses to do business. So us going to IAM, what will make us stand apart?" This question of how to "stand apart" is at the crux of students' concerns. As Ferguson (2006) explains, "How is one to escape the low global status of being 'a poor African'? Not through 'patience' and the progress of national or societal development, but by leaving, going elsewhere" (p. 190). In other words, deferred migration meant deferred social advancement. For the students, the upfront economic costs were commensurate to the benefits they would get from attending a foreign university, such as more employment options, higher income, improved linguistic skills, and increased cultural capital that comes with living and studying in another country (Kauppinen et al, 2014).

In arguing the benefits of remaining in Senegal, the IAM visitors drew heavily on neoliberal ideologies that place the onus of success on the individual. For example, in response to the student's question of how they would "stand apart" if they went to IAM, one of the current IAM students

argued that it "depends on you. Some people here in Senegal may have their PhD and be jobless the rest of their lives." The representative then urged students to be entrepreneurial, starting their own business like "the guy who started Facebook." Such a neoliberal worldview makes individuals "accountable for their predicaments or circumstances according to the workings of the market as opposed to finding faults in larger structural and institutional forces like racism and economic inequality" (Wilson, 2007, p. 97). Importantly, it is because of these larger structural and institutional forces that migration has become positioned as the primary, and oftentimes sole, means of social advancement in Senegal; it is colonization and ongoing structures of coloniality that created and continue to foster the belief that African universities are inferior to Western universities (Rizvi, 2011). The influence of neoliberalism and coloniality were evident in the presentation when, even as the IAM students argued the benefits of staying in Senegal, they still touted their university's partnership with the European Union, urged students to travel and migrate after studying at IAM, and conducted their presentation entirely in English – a language that has no official status in Senegal.

Both the Penn State and IAM presentations promoted migration as a means of social advancement, albeit in different timeframes and forms. However, the ability to access these forms of migration is highly contingent on whether one has access to specific forms of economic, cultural, and social capital, and represents some of the many ways in which students could engage with Western global spaces. Recall that I proposed the concept of Western globals to speak to the linguistic and geographical components of students' migration aspirations, as well as the multitude of ways students' migration aspirations and experiences are shaped by structures of capitalism and colonialism. All of these aspects are evident in the two presentations. Linguistically, students' English language skills made it possible for them to even speak with the recruiters, let alone apply to and possibly attend an English-speaking university like Penn State. Geographically, the recruiters

spoke only of migrating to the U.S. or Western Europe. Where they differed was in the timing and form of students' migration, with the Penn State recruiter speaking of educational migration (i.e. the students migrate as students) and the IAM representatives speaking of business migration (i.e. the students migrate as educated, likely white-collar employees).

Through all of these discussions the influence of capitalism and colonialism/coloniality are evident; however, the different recruiters were speaking from very different positions within these structures. The Penn State recruiter spoke from a position of a privileged colonizer who believes they are helping to develop Africa by making it more like the West, as evidenced by her neo-imperialist assertion that "We [Penn State] want to develop Africa. We want Dakar to be like the U.S. or France." In contrast, the IAM representatives were speaking from a position of independent colonized, working to bridge Senegal with global capitalism and be, as described in IAM's vision statement, "global leaders backed by Africanity."

Examining the intersection of language, education, geography, capitalism, and coloniality illustrates the great paradox of social class mobility in Africa. As students like those at BAS succeed individually (with success here referring to upward social mobility marked by increased economic, social, and cultural capital), the structures that continue to oppress and stifle African knowledges, ingenuity, and economies are further strengthened (Kapoor, 2011). Their success, in other words, reinforces the inequalities they are seeking to overcome, rather than eliminating them.

Students like those at BAS represent a small minority in Senegal who have both the economic means and requisite linguistic and cultural capital to migrate for education. Drawing on Carling's (2002) "aspiration/ability model" of migration, they would fall into the category of migrants – those who aspire to migrate and have the ability to do so. In the next section, I turn to a discussion of students' migration aspirations at IMFAS and explore the experiences and aspirations of students who fall into Carling's other two categories of migration - involuntary non-migrants

(those who aspire to migrate but lack the ability to do so) and voluntary non-migrants (those who neither aspire to migrate nor have the ability to do so).

"Dans les pays des arabes tu peux choisir n'importe quoi/In Arabic countries you can choose anything": IMFAS and Arabe globals

IMFAS students were gaining the linguistic skills needed to study and live in Arabic speaking countries. There is a long history of Senegalese *arabisant* (Arabic speaking) scholars studying at universities in Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Algeria, among other countries. Some students did have hopes of continuing this legacy of study abroad. One such student was Baba, who I got to know very well during my time at IMFAS due to his gregariousness and his insights about the historical repercussions of colonization and how it affected education and language policy in Senegal. He grew up in a small village on the northern border between Senegal and Mauritania where his father was the local *marabout.* Prior to enrolling in IMFAS he had attended a *daara,* as did his three older brothers. However, while his older brothers then chose to enroll in public schools, he opted to continue in a franco-arabe school because *"je veux parler l'arabe."/"* I want to speak Arabic." He was living with one of his older brothers in Dakar while he finished his studies. Unfortunately, he did not pass either the *bac Arabe* or the State bac on his first attempt, so he repeated the 12th grade. In the following interview excerpt, which was conducted during his second year in 12th grade, I asked him what he hoped to do if he passed the exams:

Baba: Tu sais au Senegal la langue arabe, c'est la langue français qui dominit ici. C'est parce qu c'est les français qui ont colonisés, la colonization. C'est a cause de ça. Mais personnellement ce que je voulais quand je reçu le bac je veux partir à l'etat des arabes pour continuer mes études.	Baba: You know in Senegal the Arabic language, it's the French language that dominates here. That's because it's the French who colonized us, colonization. It's because of that. But personally what I want to do when I get my bac is I want to go to

Teresa: Donc tu veux aller au université là bas?

Baba: Oui.

Teresa: Et qu'est ce que tu veux étudier au université?

Baba: Tu sais il y a des choses, tu ne peux qu'enseigner ici à Cheikh Anta Diop. Le domaine de l'arabe ce n'est pas large, mais quand tu allais dans les pays des arabes, tu peux choisir n'importe quoi. Il y a des médecines là-bas, ce que vous voulez. Mais ici non y'en a pas.

Teresa: Qu'est ce que tu veux suivre là-bas? Quel est ton choix d'étude?

Baba: Moi, en tout cas je pourrai faire mon choix, je ferai l'Islam.

Teresa: Islam comme la religion étude, la théologie?

Baba: Voila.

Teresa: Et après qu'est ce que tu veux faire comme travail?

Baba: Begg na nekk comme islamologue.

Teresa: Et tu penses que tu vas rester dans les pays arabe après tes études?

Baba: Non non. Je reviens ici c'est ça que je veux. Après je reviens ici pour server mon pays.

an Arabic country to continue my studies.

Teresa: So you want to go to university abroad?

Baba: Yes.

Teresa: And what do you want to study at university?

Baba: You know you can't do anything except teach at Cheikh Anta Diop [the local public university]. The Arabic department isn't big. But if you go to an Arab country you can choose anything. There are doctors there, anything you want. But here we don't have that.

Teresa: What do you want to study?

Baba: If I can have my choice I would study Islam.

Teresa: Islam like in theology?

Baba: Exactly.

Teresa: And after what do you want to do for a job?

Baba: I want to be like an Islamologue.[35]

Teresa: And do you think you will stay in an Arabic country after your studies?

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[35] An Islamologue is a researcher and scholar specializing in the study of Islam.

Baba: No. I want to come back here to serve

my country.

Baba was committed to both his Islamic education, as well as to serving his country as a Senegalese citizen. He frequently lamented the lack of opportunities for *arabisant* students such as himself in Senegal, as shown in his observation that while the Arabic department at Cheikh Anta Diop university was small, there were many opportunities in Arab countries, where one could study to be a doctor, not only a teacher. The best way for Baba to use his education to help his country was, paradoxically, to leave Senegal for higher education. It is difficult, however, to get a scholarship to these universities, and, once there, students must deal with the realities of living in a foreign country, such as racism, feeling isolated, financial instability, and intensive studies (Bava & Sall, 2013). For these reasons many return to Senegal after completing their university studies. However, they face difficulties in finding employment in Senegal since their training, regardless of their subject of study, was in Arabic, but in Senegal French is the dominant language in most sectors (Brossier, 2019).

In response to these barriers, some students preferred to focus on staying in Senegal for *formation* (training). One such student was Awa, a 12th grade student, who explained:

Awa: Après le bac je veux faire une formation. Mais   Awa: After the bac I want to do training. But I

    je ne peux pas aller à l'université.   can't go to university.

Teresa: Tu ne veux pas ou tu ne peux pas?   Teresa: You don't want to or you can't?

Awa: Je ne veux pas.   Awa: I don't want to.

Teresa: Pourquoi?   Teresa: Why?

Awa: C'est dur.   Awa: It's hard.

Teresa: Lutax?   Teresa: Why?

Awa: Université neexul, il n'y a que des problèmes.   Awa: The university isn't good, there is nothing

    Toujours il y'a des grèves.   but problems. There's always strikes.

Teresa: Waaye am na université privée?	Teresa: But there are private universities?
Awa: Oui il y a des universités privées…	Awa: Yes there are private universities…
Teresa: Kon loolu nga bëgg def?	Teresa: So what do you want to do?
Awa: Wala ma def formation.	Awa: I want to do training.
Teresa: En lan?	Teresa: In what?
Awa: Informatique.	Awa: IT.

Many other students had similar plans to Awa, preferring to stay in Senegal and do technical training. Importantly, this technical training would be in French (most likely it would be offered in French officially but there would be regular use of Wolof or other Senegalese languages in spoken interactions). Students' Arabic-language skills, therefore, would play little to no role in either being admitted to a training program or in finding a job.

Other students aspired to leave Senegal, though not necessarily to an Arabic-speaking country. As an American, many of the students shared with me their aspirations to travel to the U.S. For example, on my first day of fieldwork, a 10th grade student passed me a note in English that said, "I will visit America." That same day a 6th grade student excitedly told me about her plans to open a hair braiding salon in New York. While some, like Baba above, wanted to leave Senegal to study, many more wanted to leave in order to find work. One such student was Ahmed, a 12th grade student:

Ahmed: Si j'obtiens le bac, pour le moment je veux laisser les études. C'est vrai que les études sont des choses bon mais aussi pour apprendre il faut avoir quelque chose. Maintenant je voulais faire laisser les études à l'extérieur.	Ahmed: If I get the bac, at the moment I want to leave my studies. It's true that studies are important but also in order to learn you need to have money. So now I want to leave my studies to go abroad.
Teresa: Tu veux partir? Tu veux aller où?	

Ahmed: Actuellement mon plus grand rêve c'est l'Amérique.

Teresa: Ak lan nga bëgg deff foofu?

Ahmed: Ce que je veux c'est d'être commerçant.

Teresa: Commerçant en quoi?

Ahmed: Je ne sais pas. Business man. Tout ce que je trouve là-bas, que ça soit bon rekk.

Teresa: You want to leave? Where do you want to go?

Ahmed: At the moment my biggest dream is America.

Teresa: And what do you want to do there?

Ahmed: What I want is to be a trader.

Teresa: What kind of trader?

Ahmed: I don't know. Business man. Anything that I find over there that is good.

While Ahmed wanted to specifically go to the U.S. for work, other students were more open to where they would go. Some cited older siblings or aunts and uncles who lived in countries like France, Spain, and Italy and hoped to join them there. Others focused more on going to Arabic-speaking countries, such as Morocco or Saudi Arabia, because they felt they would have better chances of finding employment with their language skills. Still others cited countries in both Western global and Arabe global spaces, seemingly open to whichever trajectory presented itself first, with the seeming assumption that they would pick up whatever language skills they needed while abroad.

On the one hand, then, it would appear that IMFAS students had more opportunity than BAS students, as they could travel to either Arabic-speaking countries (i.e. Arabe globals) or other countries where they could theoretically pick up the language (i.e. Western globals). Indeed, there are thriving transnational Senegalese Muslim communities linked to the different Brotherhoods in locations such as France, New York, Italy, and Spain (e.g. Kane, 2011; Carter, 1997; Smith, 2019). Importantly, however, it is not the Arabic language that binds these communities, but rather religion. Knowledge of the Arabic language is not a pre-requisite for membership, although attending a religious school does provide helpful religious capital. As Carling's "aspiration/ability model"

highlights, the desire to migrate does not mean one will actually migrate. It is to this tension between aspiration and ability that I now turn.

"Lu si mën am damay dem/No matter what I will go": Leveled migration aspirations

While students at both schools had migration aspirations, they differed not only in the form (educational vs labor) and location (Western globals vs Arabe globals), but also in the type and amount of linguistic and financial capital to which they had access. BAS was explicitly preparing students to circulate in Western global spaces for educational migration, as evidenced by the intensive English-language study and the visits by college recruiters from abroad. In contrast, IMFAS was providing a religious education that linked students to a larger Muslim and Arabic-speaking community but did not provide them the same opportunities as BAS for how to engage in this larger community if they desired.

In short, education sets students up for certain imagined migration trajectories; however, all of the students faced difficulties when their aspirations came into conflict with their abilities. At IMFAS, a few students shared with me stories of trying to attain travel visas. One 11th grade student, Gora, shared his story of attempting to get a visa to the U.S.:

Gora: C'était 2012. Buma jange daara ba pare dafa am sama benn makk bu nekkon Etats Unis. Mu né ma pare nga daara. Mu né waaw buggoon nala yob fële Etats Unis pour nga dem jang fa. Mu né ko foofu est ce que am na arabe? Mu né waaw man am na foo xamanteni deñuy jang arabe. Mu né ko waaw. Loolu baax né mu woo sama yaay wax ko ko. Sama yaay né ko lo ko mën ti defal rek sa bopp nga ko defal. Sama yaay né ko leegi defal leen

Gora: It was 2012. I was studying in the daara and my older brother was in the United States. He told me to leave the daara and come study in the United States. I asked him if I could study Arabic there. He said yes. So I said great and we told my mother. My mother told me that whatever he does to help me will also help him [this is a Wolof proverb]. So I went with my brother's friend

lumunti baaxe rek moo gënn. Après mu boolema

ak sama benn xaritam, am na benn xaritam bu

nekkon fii mu boolee. Ma ak moom ñuy dem fële

ambassade di ñëw am benn jour ñu dem foofu mu

lajj ma est ce que am nga foofu compte. Ma né lenn

waaw ma jël sama compte numéro bi. Joxlenn mais

boobu noonu amuma woon compte de waaye dama

defar compte joxlenn. Après sama makk mu

duggal foofu xaliss moom mu jox ko numéro

compte bi. Mu xool ko. Après ma def vaccination

yi, yëpp. Leegi mu né ma genal, ma gen après ma

bayi sama caritu frère bi ma bayileen ci biir ñi nekk

foofu. Après mu gen, ñu ñibi kër gë mais moom

waxuma dara de muy jo ko ak sama makk. Leegi

benn jour ñuy toog ma woo sama makk fek sama

boobu dafa fek sama yaay dafa voyage dafa dem.

Me woo sama yaay mu né ah affaire bi sotiwul de

nanguwul.

Teresa: Waxuñula lutax nanguwul?

Gora: Non waxuñu dara ba leegi

Teresa: Sa makk bi waxulako?

Gora: Ba leegi

Teresa: Dinga ko essayer encore?

Gora: Waaw bëggoon naa de waaye fiimutoll ni kay

to the embassy. They asked me if I had a bank account. I told them yes and gave them the account number. I gave it to them but actually I didn't have an account, my brother had opened it just for me and he put money in it. After that I got my vaccinations, everything. Then they said I could go and my brother's friend talked to them. Then we went home and I overheard my brother's friend talking to my brother about how I didn't get the visa.

Teresa: They didn't tell you why you didn't get it?

Gora: No they haven't told me anything

Teresa: Your brother hasn't told you?

Gora: Nothing

Teresa: Are you going to try again?

Gora: Yes I want to. I would love to go there to study.

xana suma deme foofu ma dem pour jang

Gora's experience is representative of those of other students at IMFAS who had either applied for a visa and were rejected, or who wanted to apply but had no idea how. The difficulties they faced in getting a visa and in understanding the process, are illustrative of Cresswell's (2010) theory of the politics of mobility, wherein "mobility is a resource that is differentially accessed" and the multitude of forms and experiences of mobility "are thoroughly infused with power and its distribution" (p. 21). Mobility is deeply intertwined with factors such as social class, education, and language. As shown in Gora's story, one must have access to certain types of economic capital (i.e. one must not only have the financial means, but these means must be legible to embassy officials in the form of a bank account), one must have the requisite linguistic skills to be able to interact with embassy officials (in my own experiences helping my husband and others through the U.S. visa process, embassy employees' French language skills are not uniform and they were openly hostile to those who did not speak French), and one must be educated in such a way as to understand and keep track of the numerous forms and documents required.

Due to their social class, education, and language skills, these students were relegated to the confounding category of "involuntary non-migrants" (Carling, 2002). For students like Gora, being denied a visa was confusing, frustrating, and hurtful. In talking to me about their experiences, what students shared with me was more than mere disappointment; rather, it was a feeling of rejection. Ferguson (1999) refers to this complex of emotions as "abjection," explaining that it is "a sense that the promises of modernization had been betrayed, and that they were being thrown out of the circle of full humanity, thrown back into the ranks of the 'second class'" (p. 236). IMFAS students were navigating their futures in a world that is at once deeply connected, yet, for them, remained out of reach. Paradoxically, however, despite these setbacks, Gora and other IMFAS students' aspirations

to migrate were heightened after their initial rejections, and they told me they were determined to try again.

In contrast to IMFAS students, many BAS students had already traveled outside of Senegal for vacation; some had been born in the United States or France and lived there before moving to Senegal. There was also a school-sponsored trip for 11th and 12th grade students to travel to Pennsylvania for a week as part of an exchange program with another high school. The obstacles BAS students faced for their migration aspirations had to do with getting high enough grades to be accepted to university. In addition to this, they also shared concerns over prejudice based on their religion. For example, a 12th grade student shared, "When we apply for university, there's the religion affiliations question and each time I hesitate because I'm scared that if I put Muslim, people won't accept my application just because I put Muslim."

Students at both schools had to seriously reconsider their migration aspirations with the 2016 election and subsequent Muslim Ban. Right after the election, a 12th grade BAS student told me, "The US had an IQ test and they kind of failed." Trump's outrageous persona was a topic of amusement for many of the students at BAS. For example, in a presentation about the novel <u>Animal Farm</u>, a 12th grade student presented in the character of Trump:

He [the student] has changed out of his uniform into a white button down shirt, tie, and jacket (although he is still wearing his uniform khaki shorts). His presentation begins with him making a grand entrance into the classroom, accompanied by the song "Here Comes the Money" by Naughty By Nature. He saunters to the front of the classroom where he pretends to make it rain on his classmates. He proceeds to give his entire presentation as Donald Trump, doing the voice and adding phrases like "Wrong!" and mentions of Mexicans coming to take jobs, Trump Tower, and the wall throughout. His classmates occasionally turn around to look at me and the teacher (who is also American) to gauge our reactions. The bulk of his presentation is about capitalism versus communism. As Trump, he is quite against communism. Throughout

his presentation he has organized it so that his friends will ask him questions, as if in a press conference. For

example, as he is talking about Stalin's rise as a dictator, a student raises her hand and asks, "Isn't it ironic

because people think you're going to be a dictator?" He responds, "Wrong!" and argues that people don't

know the real meaning of a dictator because of the bad education system, before launching into a textbook

definition. At the end of his presentation the teacher asks him why he chose this format and he explains that

he thought it would be funny to have the leader of the U.S., a capitalist country, talk about communism.

While the election results were both entertaining and disappointing for many of the students, they

did not really alter their migration aspirations since many had never planned to go to the U.S.,

preferring Canada instead (this includes the student who presented as Trump). However, for a small

handful of BAS students, the election results significantly altered their migration aspirations. One

student told me, "My father, who is very involved politically, told me I can't go to the U.S. So now I

have to change my plans." As a result, he shifted his focus to universities in France. Another student

shared, "I'm concerned I'll get into a university but won't get the visa." Her classmate added, "I'm

concerned I won't be accepted into a university because of Trump." Both of these students changed

their region of focus from the U.S. to Canada, even though one of them held a U.S. passport.

Ultimately, most of the BAS students ended up studying in Canada or France. A few did study in the

United States at schools such as Penn State, Northern Kentucky University, and Florida

International University.

At IMFAS, students were initially more curious about the election and Trump. For example,

right after the election I observed the sixth grade English class:

A male student sitting behind me randomly started whispering "Donald Trump" repeatedly. I made a face

and the female student next to me asked me why I didn't like him. I asked her if she likes him and she

responded that she doesn't know him. Both students then asked me if I went to the U.S. to vote, and I

explained to them about absentee voting.

 In January of 2017, with the enactment of the Muslim Ban, IMFAS students were less amused by

Trump's election. One of the school administrators sought me out one day and lectured me about

the many problems of the US and told me that something had to be done. Students began having

stronger opinions about him, saying things like "*Il est méchant et racist*"/He is mean and racist". A

number of students asked me how he was elected since he did not win the popular vote, and I tried

my best to explain the electoral college. Most energized was Niass, a 12th grade student who

frequently asked me for advice on how to get a visa to the United States. When he learned about the

Muslim Ban he ran up to me asking me if I had heard about it. He was quite surprised, shocked, and

upset. He kept repeating "*Ce n'est pas normal!*/It's wrong!" I asked him if he still wanted to go to the

U.S. and he said, *"Lu si mën am damay dem*/No matter what I will go". Other students overheard our

conversation and chimed in that no matter what the politicians do, it won't stop anything because

people will find a way.

    These responses to the 2016 U.S. election are an example of how the politics of mobility

shape student's migration aspirations. While the Muslim Ban did not directly include Senegal, it had

far reaching effects on how students made sense of where they could migrate, how they would

migrate, and what their lives might be like if they migrated. The connection between social class and

migration is quite apparent here, as the wealthier BAS students could rather easily look to other

geographic locations in Western global spaces for their studies.

Conclusion

    The findings presented in this chapter show how migration is deeply tied to education, social

class, and language. While the reasons people migrate may be similar, in that they are in search of

better opportunities, the ways in which they migrate vary greatly; these variations are intricately

connected with the amount and type of capital they have (with capital referring not only to financial

capital, but also linguistic, cultural, and social). Migrating to attend university is different than

migrating for labor in regard to how this migration occurs, who has access to this migration, as well as how this migration is read by others.

Students' migration aspirations reveal many trajectories of middle-class identity construction. Though I distinguished Western and Arabe trajectories along both linguistic and geographic lines, they are united in that they are all deeply informed and shaped by colonialism and capitalism. Students at both schools were ultimately concerned with how to support themselves and their families and were strategic in how potential migration would help them economically. The many types and locations of migration expressed by students at BAS and IMFAS illustrate different configurations of what it means to be middle class. They are united in their migration aspirations but divided in their ability to realize these aspirations. While students in these schools have markedly different levels of financial resources, language and education also play crucial roles in determining potential migration trajectories. The intensive English language study of BAS students makes it much easier for them to realize their aspirations of migrating within Western global spaces, while the Arabic education of IMFAS students sets them up to circulate within Arabe global spaces.

However, these linguistic differences are not set in stone. As Juffermans & Tavares (2017) argue, "While we have little choice over what languages we are socialized in, or the places we are born in, we can, to some extent, take actions to influence or manage our linguistic repertoire as well as the places to which we move…The past is irreversible and affects although not completely determines the future course of the [life] trajectory" (p. 112). While students' current language educations may seem to put them on particular migratory trajectories, especially in regard to their linguistic skills, students are not bound to them. It is in these ongoing negotiations across past, present, and future temporalities that the construction of middle-class identities take shape. To be part of the African middle classes means to engage in this ongoing negotiation and construction of where one was, where one is now, and where one wants to be.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have examined education as a contradictory resource in students' lives, providing both pathways and models for success as well as perpetuating and upholding inequalities and barriers to opportunity. I traced how students made sense of the ways in which the knowledges and languages they were learning, as well as the knowledges and languages they themselves brought to school spaces, were differentially valued and recognized. I have argued that education is an institution onto which students project their hopes, aspirations, and desires, but that the ability of students to realize their aspirations in tangible ways is stratified across language and social class. Thus, education is a site of both deeply constrained and unbridled hope and possibility.

Chapter two traced the history of different types of schooling in Senegal and tied this to the current Senegalese linguistic context. Arabic is understood as a language for religious pursuits and religious education, providing prestige in Islamic spaces in Senegal as well as in the larger Muslim, Arabic-speaking world. French is the language of the secular in Senegal, linked to Western-centric education and knowledge that in the past provided clear pathways to social and economic success. The concomitant shrinking of public employment opportunities and the rise of 'Global' English has seen the spread of private, French-English bilingual education which, though highly sought after, remains accessible primarily only to a small, well-off group.

Chapter 3 brought these histories into conversation with my theoretical framework. Using decoloniality as a primary lens of analysis, I drew on theories of language ideology, educational and linguistic sociocultural (re)production, and aspiration frameworks in order to more fully understand the complex ways in which language and class influenced students' experiences of education and shaped their aspirations and future trajectories. I argued that colonization ingrained an ideology about what it means to be successful and prescribed a narrow avenue through which to achieve this

success – namely through western-style education and the acquisition of western languages. The ability to achieve these aspirations, however, is highly inequitable and is largely contingent on a person's access to capital (broadly defined). While the students at both schools come from very different backgrounds and are receiving very different types of educations, they all live within the colonial matrix of power that informs their experiences and understandings of belonging within and across local, national, transnational, and global spaces (Mignolo, 2011).

Chapter 4 described my study design, explaining how I used a comparative case study approach and ethnographic methods to explore my research questions at the two schools. It also examined the ways language shaped my research, from fieldwork to analysis to writing, and interrogated issues of power in regard to language.

Chapter five examined how students at the Ibrahima Mbaye Franco-Arabe School made sense of their places as arabophone Muslims within a secular francophone state and an English-dominant global economy. While students found great spiritual and communal value in their Arabic-medium Islamic education, they were frustrated at the lack of opportunities for them to use their education and language skills outside of religious spaces. Language was a huge factor in delegating them to the status of national 'dis-citizens,' as Arabic is not a recognized language in any official capacity in Senegal (Camara & Bodian, 2016, p. 381). For some students, this meant that they had to effectively "abandon Arabic for French" in order to make a decent living. Other students forcefully argued that being *arabophone* should not preclude them from the benefits of national citizenship, such as the opportunity to pursue studies at the public university. While historically the demands of the *arabophone* community focused almost entirely on claims to national citizenship, in light of ongoing segregation of this group from the public sphere, IMFAS students began looking outside of the State for opportunities and belonging. For some this entailed extending what it means to be

arabophone by looking to the wider Arab world; for others, their focus was on the West and the opportunities that the English language would (purportedly) open up for them.

Notions of global citizenship were further interrogated in chapter 6 about the Bilingual Academy of Senegal. In this chapter I argued that BAS's efforts to create global citizens perpetuated coloniality. Students learned in and through Western languages, studied Western authors, and learned to comport themselves as Westerners through dress, speech, and mannerisms. I traced the ways the school's Global Logic and desire to forge the students into global citizens masked an underlying ideology about what it does and does not mean to be global, as evident in the school's language policy that banned all African languages, the curriculum that elevated western authors over African authors, and the school's dress code that mandated teachers and students present themselves as 'international' and not as African or Senegalese. I also discussed the underlying ruthlessness of the Global logic, where students were expected to mold themselves into the ideal (and therefore non-existent) global citizen, and any inability to meet these arbitrary standards were blamed on the individual students and their lack of work ethic. The school's focus on language, knowledge, and appearance, I argued, obscured the larger structural implications of high-stakes competition and who is set up to succeed and who is destined to fail.

Lastly, chapter 7 interrogated both understandings of being/becoming middle class as relational between the poles of 'rich' and 'poor,' as well as the ways in which these understandings manifested in students' migration aspirations. With migration increasingly understood as a necessary requirement for success (however defined), regardless of one's geographic location, class, or background, it is a clear practice through which to observe both students' aspirations and their capacities to aspire. Students at the two schools were largely united in their aspirations to migrate but were divided in their abilities to do so. This differential ability was linked to class, education, and language. Importantly, however, even when confronted with barriers to their migration aspirations,

such as difficulty getting a visa or concerns about Islamophobia, students continued to strategize ways to realize their aspirations. This continued optimism in the face of widespread, violent discrimination was exemplified by Niass's reaction to the U.S. Muslim Ban when he said "Lu si mën am damay dem/No matter what I will go."

A central argument of this dissertation is that different language-linked histories and understandings of education, knowledge, and success intersect and are represented in complex ways in students' lives. In other words, although colonization and ongoing structures of coloniality work to present secular *francophone,* Islamic *arabophone,* and global *anglophone* educations and knowledges as mutually unintelligible, my findings illustrate this is a false binary. Many families in Senegal find value in both secular *francophone* and Islamic *arabophone* education, with the French school valued "because it [leads] to the award of a degree and recognition, and the Qur'anic school [valued] because it shape[s] its students' sense of belonging to Muslim personality" (Kane, 2016, p. 3). Many students at BAS were Muslim and studied the Qur'an at weekend *daaras* or with private tutors; at IMFAS, students pushed for the institutional boundaries between the secular and Islamic 'worlds' to be more fluid and accepting. Additionally, at both schools English was a popular and desired language amongst students.

Although focused on the Senegalese context, these students' experiences and the ways in which they imagine their futures have broader relevance for educational research concerned with education's role in the reproduction of inequalities, the effects of globalization on education and youth around the world, and the ways in which education as an institution does or does not provide for sustainable and meaningful livelihoods. The narrowing of opportunities for young people is not unique to Senegal, nor to the African continent. The promised benefits of education, which a generation ago offered viable and attainable pathways to secure livelihoods, are eroding around the world. Concerns about the "precarity" of youth futures abound across the globe (e.g. Allison, 2012

studies youth in Japan; MacDonald & Giazitzoglu, 2019 write about the gig economy and youth in the UK; Corbett, 2007 focuses on youth in a rural community on the coast of Nova Scotia; and Kalleberg, 2018 examines youth responses to uneven job opportunities and advancement in the U.S.). The particularities of IMFAS and BAS students' experiences and aspirations are indicative of the myriad ways in which global ideologies, structures, and discourses are refracted, reflected, and adapted in and through local histories and lenses.

This dissertation thus contributes to a larger scholarly tapestry focused on young people's resilience and reworking of structures, histories, and ideologies that mediate the transformative potentials of their educations and their claims for better futures. This study also illustrates how schools – in particular schools with different languages of instruction - are fruitful sites to further interrogate larger questions surrounding the ways in which education, language, and social class are related to the reproduction of inequality, movements towards social justice, and the dismantling of structures of coloniality. How do young people's hopes and aspirations shift, change, and adapt over time? How do they make sense of disjunctures between rhetorical promises and imaginaries of bountiful futures and lived experiences? How are language ideologies incorporated into dominant discourses of success and of what 'counts' as education? How do hope, desire, despair, and frustration shape students' imagined futures and their strategies for getting there?

In summary, this dissertation shows how education and language play significant roles in shaping students' trajectories and aspirations. Students at both schools had similar aspirations – to travel, to have gainful employment, to support their families – and they had to strategically navigate structures and histories of coloniality in order to realize these aspirations. A key takeaway from the findings presented here is that although structures of coloniality and inequality continue to influence popular discourses and understandings about the purpose of education and dominant imaginaries of success, they are neither entirely representative of people's lived experiences nor are they absolute;

because these structures are not natural, they must be continuously legitimated in order to continue

and are therefore always at risk. Acceptance of dominant ideologies is not automatic, and it is

possible for individuals and groups to creatively rework, reject, and/or accept these ideologies.

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