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Wars, Schools and Cities: Language Spread in West Africa

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The theme of this gathering is "Governing Languages." Political scientists generally believe that states are more stable and governance easier in homogeneous language settings, and so "governing" language is often concerned with spreading a common one through a population. Linguists typically focus on education as the vehicle to local language preservation, and where education is regionally multilingual, as in much of Africa, this could be viewed as inhibiting a politically beneficial rationalization of language. This paper is less concerned with the ease of governance or the morality of language preservation. It is more curious about the assumption that governments indeed wish to play such a strong role in language governance. Three processes have profound influences on language spread and decline: deliberate government policies in education, individual migration choices in urbanization, and unintended consequences of war. They are sometimes discussed together but seldom compared for relative impact. This paper is a first cut at such a comparison. I begin by evoking some of the literature on these three topics, uncovering the expectations that are generated by each. I then select four cases in which to observe language shift over time: Senegal, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. The paper concludes that official education, at least on the continent of Africa, has had the smallest impact on language spread, and that this "failure" may itself be a deliberate choice on the part of self-serving governments.

Literature

This paper looks at three influences on language landscapes in Africa: war, schooling, and urbanization. It joins strands of literature that do not normally intersect – one on the process of state-building and the other on the process of language spread. They remain separate partially because the first is dominated by political scientists and the second by linguists. My training has been in the former, and so I welcome suggestions from linguists about relevant studies from the latter.

Education: Socialization and National Identity:

At its most spare, a state is defined as a "human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (M. Weber 1958, 78). After this forceful beginning, however, we expect a state to do more to build national identity among its citizens. The foremost tool for this has been the education system. Max Weber tells us that: "the elevation by authoritative fiat of a dialect to the status of an official language of a political entity has very often had a decisive influence on the development of a large community with a common literary language…. Furthermore, the domination exercised in the schools

stereotypes the form and the predominance of the official school language most enduringly and decisively" (M. Weber 1968, 941). Perhaps the best known account is Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976), which looks at the enormous effort expended by the French government to instill a sense of common identity over a motley collection of regional patois. He describes the long transformation, beginning in the 1700s, when the French language began to make headway among rural populations; before that, it was an elite affair. This had much to do with the possibility of mass literacy.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991) points to print capitalism as a vehicle for spreading vernacular languages and inspiring nationalism in Europe. By the 18th century, the ascendance of popular novels and daily newspapers gave people who never saw each other face to face the ability to imagine themselves as a community (Anderson 1991, 77). Rather than a thin stratum of elites, with only Latin and marriage ties in common, the bourgeoisie was deepening and dividing along linguistic lines. It was the rise in middle class literacy that led to mass nationalism; and Hobsbawm (1962) points to the importance of textbooks and newspapers in a national language.[1] Leaders began to see mass public education as a means of building integrated national polities. Anderson cites Germany's Joseph II in the 1780s, who saw the "necessity of a unifying language connecting all parts of his empire" (1991, 84). As England's dynamic industrialization improved the speed of the printing press, print capitalists continually competed for readership among vernacular-speaking populations. They held a critical interest in promoting literacy among potential readers.

The French Revolution and its aftermath provided a model for this deliberate literacy promotion, as its success raising citizen armies and spreading a nationalist ideology became well-known. Anderson argues that the simple existence of widespread print made the French Revolution a blueprint for future revolutionaries and state-builders to follow. But this recognition of education's role happened in a particular context. France demonstrates the significance of continual warfare, and Britain shows the importance of industrial growth. In each instance, single-language education allowed for greater control, loyalty, and extraction.

In France, primary schools had the "vocation not only to transmit knowledge but also to form the new citizens of the republic" (Chafer 2007, 439). They aimed to counter church schools and the influence of monarchist ideas with a secular French republicanism, which "embraced defending the principles of 1789 and inculcating notions of patriotism, civic responsibility and respect for order" (Chafer 2007, 439). Again, the Revolution was central. The Convention Speech in 1792 emphasized the importance of linguistic unity. E. Weber summarizes:

> Linguistic diversity had been irrelevant to administrative unity. But it became significant when it was perceived as a threat to political – that is, ideological – unity. All citizens had to understand what the interests of the Republic were and what the Republic was up to… Otherwise, they could not participate, were not equipped to participate in it… A didactic and integrative regime needed an effective vehicle for information and propaganda… The ideal of the Revolution lay in uniformity and the extinction of particularisms (1976, 72).

The Convention acted to abolish dialects and replace them with French, decreeing that everywhere "instruction should take place only in French" (Weber 1976, 72). Though the policy foundered initially, the principle survived (Bell 1995, 1406). A unified language was part of

[1] The "moment when textbooks or newspapers in the national language are first written or when that language is first used for some official purpose, measures a crucial step in national evolution" (Hobsbawm 1962, 135-6).

civilizing the peasantry. The rationalization of 88 *patois* into one single, standard language was a long-term process of creating citizens. Weber argues that "patriotic feelings on the national level, far from instinctive, had to be learned" (E. Weber 1976, 114).

The process happened somewhat later in England, and largely spurred by the motor of industrial growth. Abram de Swaan, *In Care of the State* (1988), focuses on the 19th century as especially important, since entrepreneurs, especially traders and publishers, were becoming more and more involved with commerce over wider distances. As they began to grasp the potential of a standard language to extend their markets, they became very supportive of universal education. Those "involved in supraregional commerce [would] support the promulgation of national codes of communication, of the standard language, of standard measures and currencies, of elementary arithmetic and geography, so as to facilitate exchange" (de Swaan 1988, 73). He shows that competence in the central language provides advantage of direct communication, as well as for passive translation, and that the acquisition of central language may become a self-accelerating process (de Swaan 1988, 72). With this constellation of preferences, the balance tipped toward support of universal education in the 19th century, and eventually a standard language curriculum prevailed throughout Europe.

European state-builders therefore were deeply invested in spreading a single language across their territories. Securing the loyalty of populations to a central ruler was a means of breaking ties to rivals to power, and it was facilitated by the teaching of unifying myths and symbols in a common language. A common language allowed for better coordination between officers and troops, and the patriotism that could be instilled through standard education helped produce loyal fighters. Finally, a common language throughout the territory improved opportunities for trade and economic linkages, improving productivity and deepening rulers' potential tax base.

The dominant view of statebuilding, then, is that governments will aim for linguistic homogenization through education, since a population educated in a single language will be more loyal and more productive. But there are opposing views. The germ of the formal idea that separate languages could be used as the building blocks of states rather than trying to homogenize them can be traced to early language planners in the 1960s, and a field of inquiry called Language Policy and Language Planning (LPLP).[2] One of the early thinkers, Das Gupta, proposed a multilingual alternative, his based on a familiarity of the Indian example. Though these scholars conceded that much language change is not planned, they were confident that deliberate attempts to influence the social use and status of language would be successful (Ferguson 1977, 9). Charles Ferguson argued that "the functional change which is most often the focus of political pressure and governmental policy making at the national level is probably the choice of medium of instruction in the education system" (Ferguson 1977, 12). As they readily admitted, the new states of Africa and Asia became a laboratory for language planning.[3]

These scholars have been joined by language rights activists and multicultural scholars, who see the preservation of cultural groups as an end in itself (Skutnab-Kangas 2000, Philipson 2000, 1994, etc). The dominant view expects that governments will vigorously promote a unifying language, while minority views advocate an alternative. But common to all is the idea

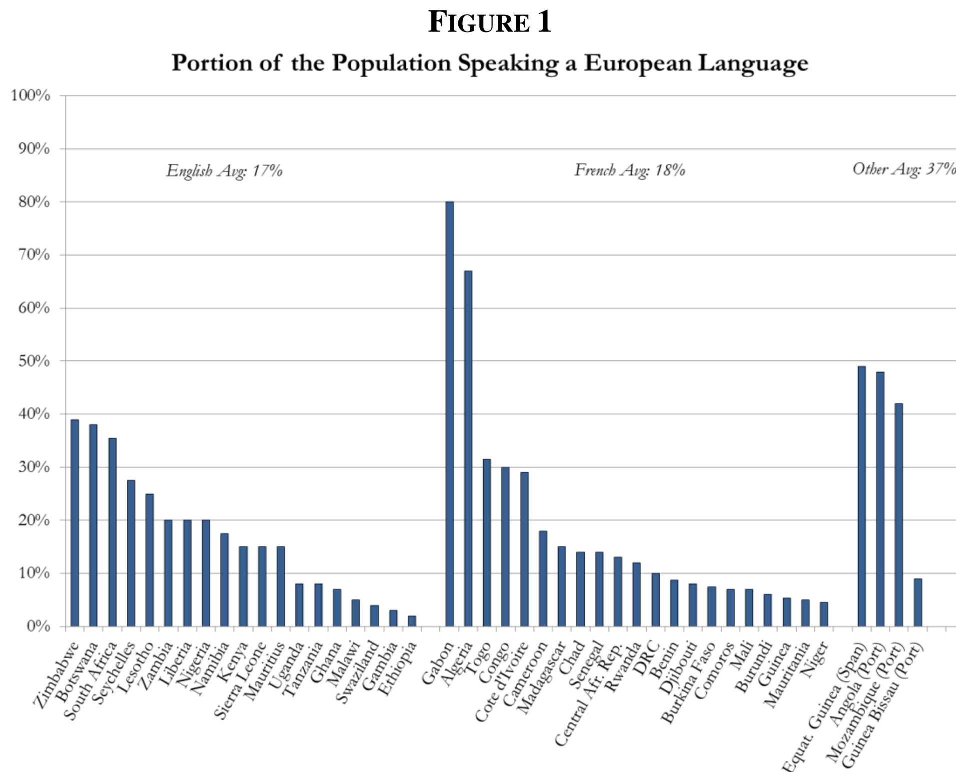
[2] The seminal work in the field was Fishman, Ferguson and Das Gupta, eds. 1968. See also Fishman 1974 and Rubin *et al* 1977.

[3] "The language problems of developing nations present sociolinguistics with a virtually inexhaustible and untouched field for the exploration of its central hypotheses and concerns" (Fishman 1968, 13).

that education is a powerful tool for language change – whether to spread, contain, or preserve. Languages can be planned and socially engineered.

Yet Africa seems to defy this planning. African states are among the most diverse in the world and retaining a 'neutral' European language in education has been the practical policy solution of most governments.[4] Regardless of the methods used (e.g. mother tongue en route to European-language acquisition or exclusive European language education), deliberate efforts at achieving a linguistically homogeneous population have borne little fruit; official language spread has been minimal. Overall, no European language has penetrated widely across the African continent. Figure 1 reveals that a majority of states boast less than 20% of their population speaking the official language.

FIGURE 1



Source: Albaugh (forthcoming), derived from Appendix A data.

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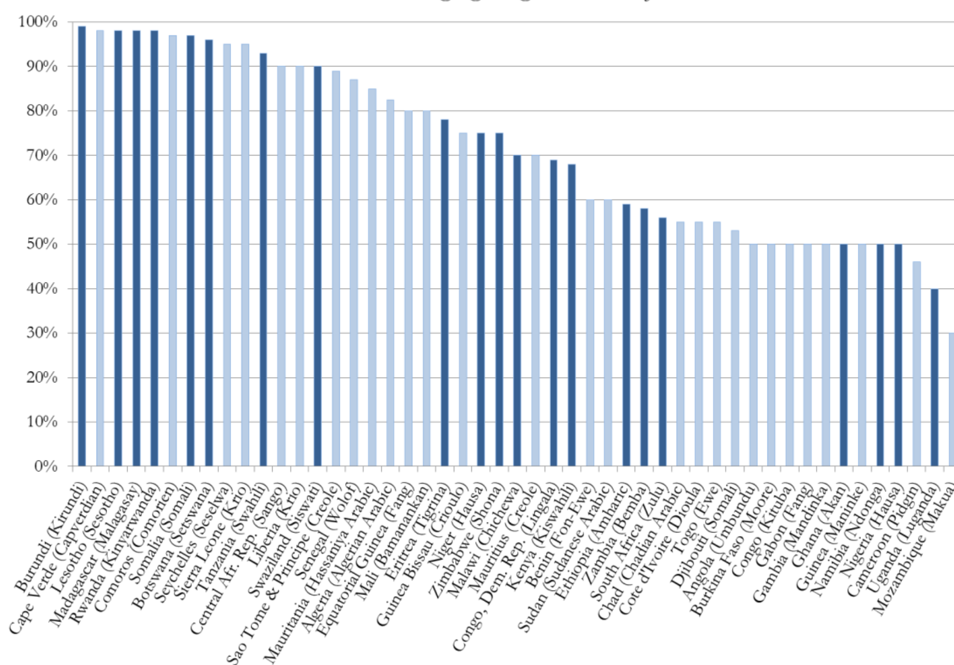
[4] Certainly, there are exceptions – Tanzania, notably, as well as Madagascar and Algeria. But even Tanzania aims for English acquisition at the upper levels, and Madagascar and Algeria reintroduced French after rejecting it for a time.

This comes as no surprise to many scholars, who bemoan the poor quality and contrived atmosphere of African school systems: “The very artificial technique of transmitting a language through the school system rather than through daily interactions with native or fluent speakers contributed to spreading the European colonial languages as elite lingua francas rather than as vernaculars” (Vigouroux and Mufwene 2008, 5). I will argue in the conclusion that there may be more to this failure than a poor method. Furthermore, despite the ineffectiveness of most education systems at spreading a single language throughout the entire population, indigenous languages *have* spread. Figure 2 shows the spread of non-European languages in Africa.

FIGURE 2

Portion of the Population Speaking an African Lingua Franca

Dark bars indicate language taught in school before 2000



Source: Albaugh (forthcoming), derived from Appendix A data.

Nearly all states – 46 out of 49– have a lingua franca spoken by 50 percent or more of the population. In more than half of states (26), a lingua franca is spoken by 70 percent or more; and in nearly a third (14), it is spoken by 90 percent or more. Languages indeed are spreading. Many of the high proportions of lingua-franca speakers occur in states where there is a single dominant group (say, more than 70 percent of the population). Language spread in these settings – Lesotho, Botswana, Comoros, Somalia – seems “natural.” In many other places, however, a language is spreading where its group is much smaller. We find very dominant lingua francas in

Senegal and Mali, whose largest languages are spoken as mother tongues by only 40 percent and 30 percent of the population, respectively, but they are used by more than 80 percent of the population. And we find widespread lingua francas in Sierra Leone and Tanzania – Krio and Swahili – languages that are not spoken by any but a tiny group as a mother tongue. In the first case (Tanzania), the colonial and independence government deliberately harnessed the historical dominance of Swahili, while in Sierra Leone, Krio was expressly not included in education. The spread of many African languages has occurred without the help or hindrance of governments. The light bars in Figure 2 show that more than half of these states have *not* used the dominant language in education. This again reveals the relative weakness of education compared to other forces propelling language spread in the African setting.

So what has motivated this? The stronger sources of language spread are beyond the reach of government policy, and reflect instead the influence of urbanization and war.

Urbanization: Networks and Rational Choices

Not deliberate government policies but individual choices are most important to the spread of languages. Sociolinguists are well aware of differential language prestige and diglossia, recognizing that people actively choose what varieties to learn and respect. Edwards (2011, 162) writes that "language spread has typically been a relatively unconsidered accompaniment of other social processes. Concerted attempts to impose one's language upon subordinate or conquered populations are historically rare, certainly up until the eighteenth-century enlightenment."

David Crystal's many books, including the recent *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (2010), along with de Swaan's gravitational model (2001) and Calvet's works (1987, 2006) point to individual rational, economic-based choices that induce the learning of larger link languages. The decision to migrate to cities is an individual choice based on economic considerations.

Political scientist David Laitin, *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* (1992) commends de Swaan's rational thinking about of communication and language choice for explaining incentives toward linguistic homogenization. He argues, however, that it is not sufficient to explain when *smaller* languages might instead gain strength and persevere. For this, he models language choices as binary, depending heavily on ethnic entrepreneurs and reflecting individuals' perceptions of economic payoff, in-group status and out-group acceptance of language shift (Laitin 2007, 32-33, 39-42, 55-56). He argues that rulers desire a standard language for ease of administration, while regional elites prefer to retain their mediation monopoly by retaining local languages. The bargain between these important actors in Laitin's formulation results in a multilingual outcome – rulers exchanging language rights in return for political support from regional elites' language groups. Laitin assumes that national leaders want to rationalize languages in the face of opposing regional pulls. With this foundation of preferences, Laitin predicts several results: maintenance of a European language, diffuse support for an indigenous national language, growth in pidgins and urban lingua-francas, and specific, regional support for vernaculars. All these contribute to what he calls a 3 ± 1 outcome. Generally, a person will need to be proficient in a European language, a language of wider communication, and his or her own regional language (3 languages). If this regional language

happens to be the language of wider communication, the number is reduced to two, and if the regional language is so small that it does not "count" as an official state language, the individual will know a fourth language. These individual repertoires are reflected and reinforced by language policies of the central government. I have argued elsewhere (Albaugh 2007 and forthcoming) that this view overstates the desire of regional elites to promote their languages *and* underestimates the apathy that governments have toward spreading an official language. But it does accurately predict the growth of lingua francas. Rather than government and elite negotiation, the stronger processes for language spread involve citizen choices.

Individual incentives to learn a language depend on their environment. The more people speak a single language, the more valuable is that language for all speakers. Urbanization, therefore, and the accompanying population concentration raise the benefits of learning a link language. Historically, however, there have been only a very few urban centers on the African continent. The nature of land tenure discouraged town development: when population reached a point where the land could not support it, some people moved (Hull 1976, xvii). Towns grew only where agricultural productivity could support food surpluses or where market activity could thrive – situation between coast and inland routes or on edges of savannah. The most enduring cities were those whose institutions were firmly rooted in trade (Hull 1976, 11) – e.g. Timbuktu, Djenne, Gao – which prospered as "great middlemen in trade between the forest zone, North Africa, and Egypt" (Hull 1976, 11). These cities gained prosperity from long-distance trade, and were sustained with stability in active local trade in agricultural products (*Ibid*, 13). But these islands of population density were relatively few until the 20th century.

There has been an explosive growth of cities on the African continent over the past hundred years, and even more in the latter half of the century. In 1960, only 13.6% of the population in Africa was considered "urban,"[5] and that average was pushed upward by South Africa and island states of Mauritius and Seychelles. Some states, like Burundi, Rwanda, Botswana, and Mozambique had less than 4% of the population residing in cities. Currently, nearly 40% of the continent's population is urban, and some states have seen phenomenal growth: Botswana from 3% to 62% urban, Mauritania from 7% to 42%, Benin from 9% to 45%.

I will demonstrate in the paper that this variable explains a large part of the spread of lingua francas. It does not always do so, however. The less benign process of war continues to induce language shifts, though not in the deliberate fashion described by the European state-building literature.

War: Conquest and Taxation

A famous quip defines a language as a dialect with an army.[6] When we think of war's impact on language in Africa, we think of the Sokoto Caliphate, the Mali or Ashanti Empires, whose expansion through subjugation and incorporation brought people in surrounding areas into their orbit, thereby expanding the reach of the dominant group's language. Richard Hull

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[5] The definition of urban is somewhat vague, according to the World Bank, since it depends on government reporting. Some census documents (such as one from Sierra Leone that I have been working with) define an urban area as one with more than 2,000 people. Other governments, such as Botswana's, define urban as an "agglomeration of 5,000 or more inhabitants where 75 per cent of the economic activity is non-agricultural" (World Bank Development Indicators)

[6] Discussed in notes to *Language and Society* 26: 3 (Sept 1997), 469:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500019679

describes the expansion of the core Ashanti state in present Ghana through the creation of new towns by transferring war captives to prisoner concentration centers on confederation's periphery. "The vanquished learned the values, languages, and lifestyles of their captors. It was an ingenious and surprisingly successful attempt to forge disparate peoples, anomized and traumatized by war, into a homogeneous culture. Once assimilated, they were considered members of the state" (Hull 1976, 18).

Historically, this was a rather uncalculated, even if violent, by-product of expansion. In the modern era of state-formation in Europe, however, Charles Tilly shows us that it became a more deliberate process associated with state-building. In his masterful *Coercion, Capital and European States* (1990), Tilly describes how rulers transitioned from loosely controlling outlying areas to incorporating them into what we now think of as a national-state: "In the period of movement from tribute to tax, from indirect to direct rule, from subordination to assimilation, states generally worked to homogenize their populations and break down their segmentation by imposing common languages, religions, currencies, and legal systems, as well as promoting the construction of connected systems of trade, transport and communications" (100).[7] Bruce Porter's aptly titled *War and the Rise of the Nation State* (1994) attributes this new era to the changing technology of war, particularly the important innovation of the *levée en masse* or mass armies. With its large population, France excelled at this attribute… As states had to pay more soldiers, they had to raise more taxes, and those who could do both best evolved into the strongest states; the weaker were consigned to being controlled… and learning the stronger group's language. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, Napoleon expended most of his energy on elitist military academies as a place for indoctrination of state-induced nationalisim (Porter 1994, 132). He unified the legal code, created a centrally appointed and regulated bureaucracy, and continued secularization of education to break the influence of the Catholic Church. The strict military discipline and military curriculum in his *lycées* derived from the "inexorable calculus of the military state" (Porter 1994, 134).

Applying these European state-building lessons to another part of the world, Jeffrey Herbst's *States and Power in Africa* (2000) argues that the weakness of states in this region stems from their difficult geography: low population density on mountainous or unproductive terrain inhibits the ability of states to project power. This has been true historically, he claims, and it explains the relative paucity of expansive states in Africa. The weakness is exacerbated because modern African states' borders were created for the most part with without rulers having to establish them through force, and they thus do not reflect the reality of governments' control over their territories. He finds that in general smaller states are more effective in projecting power over their hinterlands. Aside from its benefits in creating functioning bureaucracies – military and administrative – another "productive" byproduct of war in Europe was its consolidation of the nation; creating citizens out of a shared zeal against a common foe. African states have not for the most part experienced this kind of "productive" war, and for this reason remain weak. Herbst's thesis has drawn accolades as well as visceral anger, the latter because it seems to suggest that Africa needs more war. Specifically, what is missing is inter-state war, which induces the bureaucratic strengthening through taxation and nation-building that comes with uniting against a common foe.

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[7] Tilly (1990, Ch. 2) argues that before the era of the French Revolution, all states used some form of indirect rule. The transition to direct rule gave rulers direct access to citizens and the resources they controlled through household taxation, mass conscription, censuses and police systems.

These literatures on war and state-building point to a few common elements. First, the language of the victor spreads with war. Second, good geography (small homogeneous regions) will facilitate state-building and language spread. But what about civil war? While Herbst limits the 'productive' outcome of war to those conducted between rival states, it is not obvious why this should be true. I will probe this question more deeply in the cases of Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, two states that experienced recent civil war.

This paper aims to compare three influences on language spread – education, urbanization and war. It will argue that education is the least influential of all of these factors, primarily because governments in Africa do not have a real incentive to unify their populations in the way that European state-builders did. Fragmentation actually suits many rulers of African states just fine. Urbanization has a stronger effect, as people add more languages to their repertoires in personal cost-benefit calculations of economic survival. And though inter-state war has been largely absent from the last century in Africa, the continent has seen much civil conflict, particularly in the last two decades. I will argue that this civil conflict actually has had a discernible effect on language spread. In areas most touched by war, lingua francas have progressed faster than what would be expected through "natural" processes and individual calculation. If there is one glimmer of hope to take from states such as Sierra Leone decimated by a decade of war, it is that broader populations have a means of mutual communications, which may serve them well in their long-term quest toward stronger, democratic statehood.

Cases

Sierra Leone, Senegal, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are ideal situations in which to test these ideas. These are relatively small, comparable territories. They differ in heterogeneity at present, but in 1960, they were similarly fractionalized. Their "ethnolinguistic fractionalization" scores all showed extreme diversity: Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire were most alike, with no group significantly larger than the others. Senegal and Ghana each had one extremely dominant group and several other smaller ones.

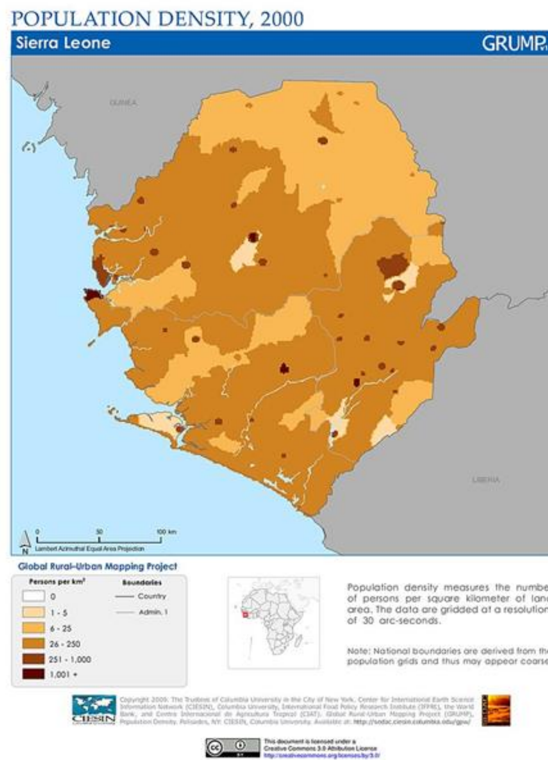
	Sierra Leone	Senegal	Ghana	Cote d'Ivoire
Country size	71,740 km²	196,190 km²	239,460 km²	322,460 km²
ELF 1960[8]	.76	.72	.71	.86
Two Largest Language groups 1960[9]	Mende: 34% Temne: 31%	Wolof: 44% Fulbe: 23%	Akan: 47% Mossi: 20%	Baole Anya: 23% Bete: 18%
Total Population 2013	5,245,695	12,323,252	24,339,838	21,058,798
Two Largest Cities	Freetown Bo	Dakar Touba	Accra Kumasi	Abidjan Bouake
% European Language Spread[10]	English: 4%	French: 9%	English: 32%	French: 29%
% of School-Aged Pop. Enrolled 1960[11]	14%	15%	34%	23%
% Indigenous Language Spread[12]	Krio: 95%	Wolof: 90%	Akan: 55%	Dyula: 55%

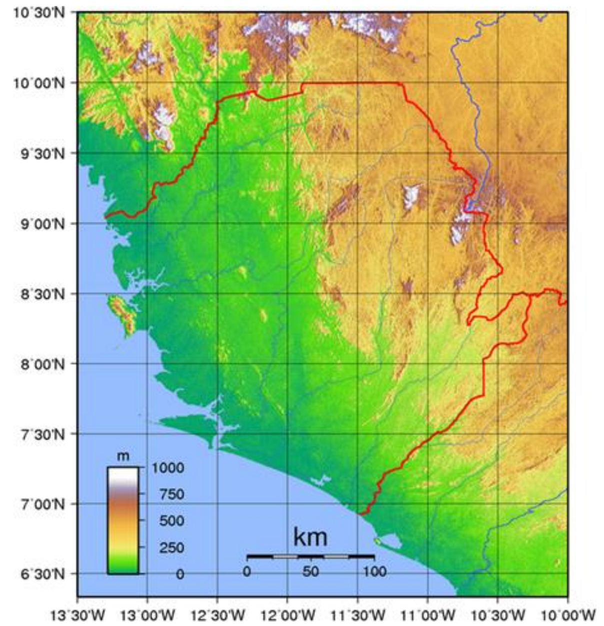
But today they differ significantly in the spread of a European language as well as in the spread of indigenous languages. Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, while similarly fractionalized initially, diverge now: A European language spread much more widely in Cote d'Ivoire but an indigenous language covers Sierra Leone. Some of this divergence has to do with initial "stock" of educated individuals at independence, which I will explore, but there are other reasons as well. And Senegal and Ghana began with similar constellations, but Ghana's largest language did not spread in the same way that Senegal's did. This paper begins to explore why these differences arose.

If language spread is part of state-building, we could follow Herbst (2000) in looking at geographic obstacles or contributors to this end. He divided Africa into difficult, neutral and favorable geography for power-projection. Assuming that language spread is part of the projection of power, one would expect that governments would be more successful diffusing a common language in a favorable geographic setting – which he defines as a small area, containing a concentrated, relatively homogeneous population. Conversely, in difficult geographic settings – large area, containing dispersed, heterogenous population centers – we would expect to see less diffusion of a government-supported language. In each of our cases, the official, government-supported language is European – English in Sierra Leone and Ghana, and French in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire – so this is the language we would expect to see the impact of state-sponsored spread. But geography does not consistently explain our cases. In the most

[8] Ethnolinguistic Fractionalization, a standard measure of diversity, calculated from Bruk and Alencenko's *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964). It represents the probability that two people drawn at random from a population will be from different groups.
[9] Bruk and Alencenko *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964)
[10] From 2004 Sierra Leone Census; 2002 Senegal Census; 2000 Ghana Census; Cote d'Ivoire's figure for French speakers is the average of estimations from OIF (2003, 16): 22% and Adegbija (1994, 11): 35%; and Dyula-speakers is based on of estimations by Baker & Jones (1998, 361) and Adegbija (1994: 11).
[11] Mitchell 2007.
[12] **Sierra Leon**e: Oyètádé and Luke (2008: 122); **Senegal**: McLaughlin (2008, 85) says close to 90% speak Wolof; 2002 Afrobarometer 2008 shows 92%; **Ghana**: Baker & Jones (1998: 360) report more than 50% of the population speaks Akan; Adegbija (1994: 9) says only 40%; Anyidoho and Dakubu (2008: 152) say more than 50%; **Cote d'Ivoire**: Djité (2000, 24) reports 43% speak Dyula as of 1993; Adegbija (1994: 11) reports 16% first-language speakers + 50% second-language speakers = 66%. Average= 55%.

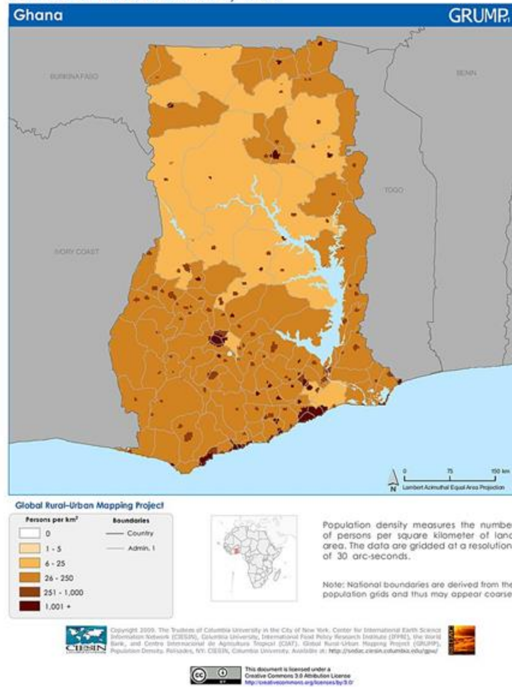
favorable geographic setting – Sierra Leone – we see the smallest spread of an official language (4%).[13]





The neutral geographic settings (of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire have the widest spread of official languages (32% and 29%).

[13]Population density maps: http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/data/set/grump-v1-population-density/maps/7 ; topographical maps from mappery.com


POPULATION DENSITY, 2000
Ghana
GRUMP
Global Rural-Urban Mapping Project
Persons per km²
0
1 - 5
6 - 25
26 - 250
251 - 1,000
1,001 +
Boundaries
Country
Admin. 1
Population density measures the number of persons per square kilometer of land area. The data are gridded at a resolution of 30 arc-seconds.
Note: National boundaries are derived from the population grids and thus may appear coarse.
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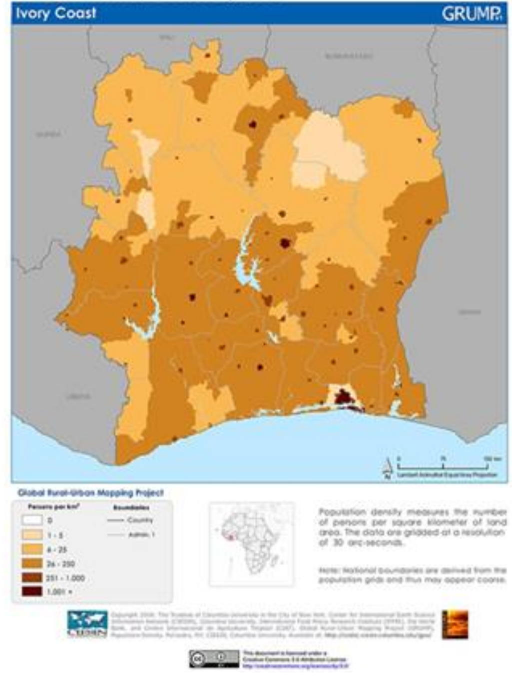
POPULATION DENSITY, 2000
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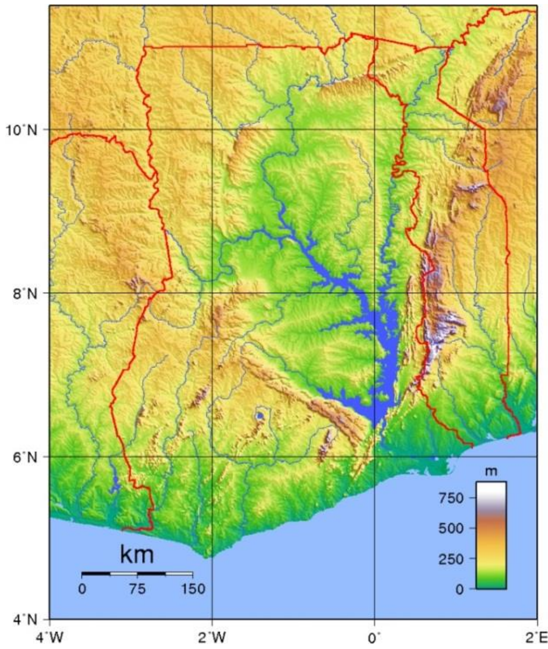
10°N
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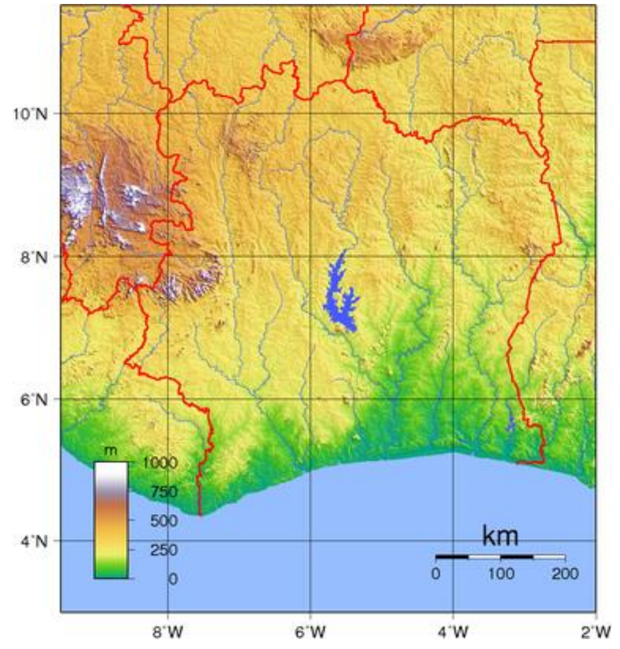
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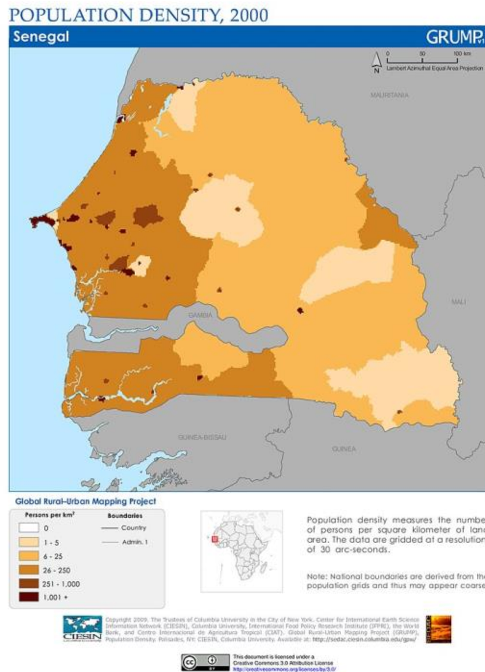
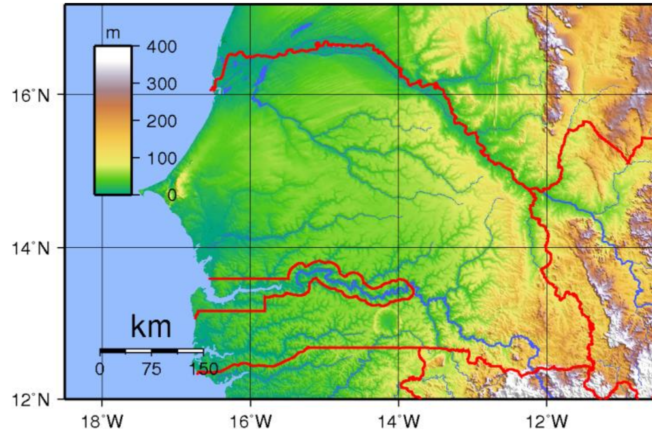
The most difficult geographic setting of Senegal (problematic according to Herbst 2000, 151 because of the separation of population caused by the Gambia), does conform to expectations, as we see relatively limited spread of French.





The geographic settings are not much more helpful in explaining the deliberate spread of language: while the "easy" geography seemed to facilitate the spread of Krio in Sierra Leone, and it resulted in relatively medium spread in both neutral geography countries, Senegal's "difficult" geography did not inhibit the spread of Wolof. We need to look further for more generalizable insights. The following section examines each state separately, looking first at the spread of the official language through education and then at the less deliberate spread of lingua francas through urbanization and war.

Spread of Languages through Education, Urbanization and War

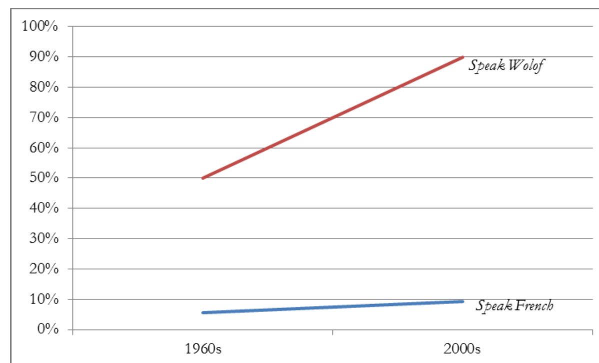
This section will show three things: First, it will demonstrate that formal education has not spread a common language in any state to the extent that would have been expected at the start of independence. While schools were built in nearly every town and village, the spread of English and French has been extremely limited. Second, it will argue that urbanization has spread lingua francas much more quickly than deliberate government effort. And third, even beyond urbanization, civil war has catalyzed language homogenization in ways not expected by traditional state-building scholars.

SENEGAL

Senegal was the star of French West Africa during the colonial period. The territory held more French nationals than all of the other territories combined, increasing from only 3,559 foreigners in 1921 to 26,036 in 1951.[14] Of all French nationals living in French West Africa, 55% were living in Senegal just prior to the state's independence. Most of them were clustered in the capital city of Dakar, where, along with other Europeans, they made up 11% of Dakar's population of 231,000.[15] Senegal itself only had 3 million inhabitants, and one might have expected French to diffuse quickly through this relatively small population.

In 1960, 15% of the school-aged population was enrolled, and UNESCO estimated that 5.6% of the population was literate in French in 1961.[16] But even with the status of Dakar and the concentration of French nationals, progress was not as expected. The 2002 census revealed that only 9.4% of the population could speak French as a first or second language. This was largely because 60% of respondents had attended no or only pre-school. Nearly a quarter of the respondents - 23% overall – had attended four years or more of school (much higher, of course in places like Dakar – 53%, Ziguinchor – 45% and Rufisque – 42%). But this exposure to a French-only curriculum had not yielded even close to a quarter of the population speaking French.[17]

FIGURE 3: Speakers of French and Wolof in Senegal



[14] Ministere des Affaires Economiques et Financieres, Ministere de la France d'Outre-Mer, Service des Statistiques, Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique D'Outre-Mer, Supplement Serie Etudes No. 33, "La recencement de la population non-originaire des territoires d'Outre-Mer et 1951"

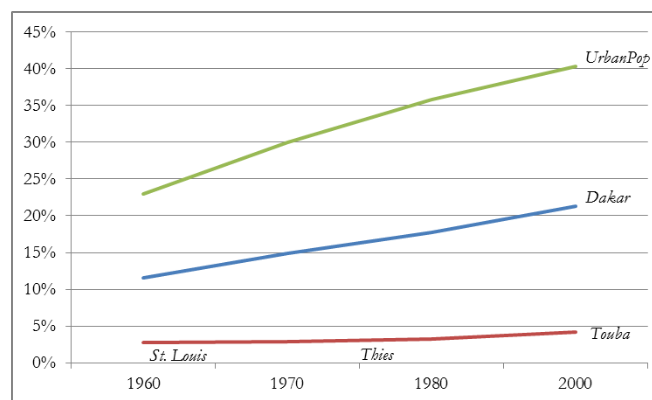
[15] Dakar 1955 (Republique du Senegal, Ministere du Plan, Du Developpement et de la Cooperation Technique, Service de la Statistique et de la Mecanographie: Recensement demographique de Dakar 1955; Resultats Definitifs. Paris, March 1992??), p. 4.

[16] Mitchell 2007; UNESCO 1961.

[17] Again, there was variation by region, with Dakar having the most claimants at 23%. Saint Louis and Zuiguinchor tied with about 12.5% each. Several regions had 3% or fewer French speakers: Diourbel, Fatick, Kaolack, and Tambacounda. The 2008 Afrobarometer raises these figures, since it allows respondents to list *all* the languages they speak well. According to 2008 Afrobarometer, In the Dakar Region [256 respondents], a full 50% listed French among the languages they spoke well. Overall, 30% of respondents listed French as a language they spoke well, with the regions reporting as follows: Ziguinchor [out of 56 respondents] 55% listed French as a language they spoke well; Dakar [256] 50%; Tambacounda [80] 39%; Kolda [96] 38%; Thies [168] 29%; Fatick [72] 29%; St. Louis [80] 20%; Louga [80] 15%; Matam [56] 14%; Diourbel [128] 10%; Kaolack [126] 9%. World Bank figures for 2006 claim that 50% of the population in Senegal is literate in French. This seems quite a stretch, even given the generous figures from Afrobarometer.

This is largely because of the predominance of Wolof and the unique urbanization pattern in Senegal since 1960. In a population census of 1950-51, the Cap-Vert region (including Dakar, Gorée, Rufisque, Sangalkam, Sebikotane) only made up 11% of the total country's population, while the cercle of Kaolack made up 23%, Ziguinchor made up 18% and Thies made up 14%,[18] showing that there were populated cities in each district. Senegal's population was relatively evenly distributed along the coast at this point. By 1960, however, Dakar (including Pikine, Rufisque, etc) contained 12% of the country's population. This was a dramatic increase from only 2% in 1921. And this predominance has continued to grow over the past half-century. In 2010, the Dakar agglomeration made up 21% of the country's population,[19] with the next largest city being Touba, holding 4.3% of the country's population.

FIGURE 4: Urbanization in Senegal



This unique urbanization spread the language of Wolof because of its overwhelming dominance in the capital city. Urban Wolof had actually emerged first in the older coastal city (and former capital) of Saint-Louis (McLaughlin 2008, 714). McLaughlin quotes Governor Faidherbe reporting in 1864 that the Wolof lingua franca "is the commercial language of all Senegal; half of the Trarza [southwest region of present-day Mauritius] speak it. It extends along the African Coast to Sierra Leone" (2008, 719). In the mid-19th century, the language was clearly already dominant along the coast, the traditional heartland of the Wolof population, but it spread exponentially to other groups after independence because of the spectacular growth of Dakar. It held "first-mover" status like no other, a language that benefited from the 'founder principle' (Mufwene 2001).[20]

The process of Wolofization has become more intense with a rapid increase in urban migration that began in mid-20th century. Tabouret-Keller (1971, 191) noted that eight of nine largest cities, including capital of Dakar, are in the Wolof area. She cites a 1960 study that says that 95% of Toucouleur migrants into Dakar, whose native language was Peul, used Wolof

[18] Senegal Population en 1950-51 Par Canton & Groupe Ethnique (Chiffres Provisoires), Haut Commissariat de l'Afrique Occidentale Francaise, Service de la Statistique Generale
[19] Population figures from (http://www.geonames.org/countries/SN/senegal.html) [re-check]
[20] Attitudes show that "older people in particular are much less judgmental about French borrowings in their Wolof and do not seem to feel the anxiety that many younger people do that they are becoming 'inauthentic' and 'deracinated'" (McLaughlin, 2008, 731). This reveals a climate of longstanding tolerance for urban variety that "has much to do with the status and prestige of Saint-Louis that lingers in the Senegalese popular imagination" (Ibid).

(ibid). "Wolof is not only dominant through the number of speakers but also through the prestige of the Wolof as successful people to whom early contact with colonialism had given many advantages" (1971, 191). She attributes its spread to its prestige, urbanization, the practical outcome of mixed marriages (1971, 192).

In 1955, the population of Dakar was 231,000, of whom 48% were Wolof or Lebou (a subgroup of Wolof), and 11% were European. Of this population, 44% were born in Dakar, and another 34.5% were born in Senegal's interior, meaning that nearly 80% of Dakar's population was from Senegal. The remaining fifth came from neighboring countries (11%) or outside Africa (10.5%). Wolof/Lebou made up a plurality or majority of 19 out of 29 districts in the city of Dakar, while Europeans made up a majority in 8. And Wolof/Lebou made up the majority of all but one district in the outskirts of the city (banlieus).[21] This meant that for any inhabitant of Dakar or newcomer, it was economically rational to learn Wolof, rather than any other language. The more people spoke it, the more benefited, in a virtual cycle of expansion.

In the 2002 census, 72% of respondents claimed to speak Wolof as a first or second language, and the census does not include third-language competence. All scholars agree that proficiency in Wolof is above 90% throughout Senegal.[22]

GHANA

Counterpart to Senegal, Ghana was the star of *British* West Africa. Entering independence, it had 680,000 pupils in school, and a staggering 177,000 of them were at the secondary level. This was higher secondary attendance even than Nigeria, with seven times Ghana's population. Overall, Ghana enrolled 34 % of school-aged children in 1960.[23] The census that year showed that 17% of the population was literate in their language and/or in English; for most of them it was the latter. With its strong secondary enrollment, likely to produce teachers, the prospects for its educational take-off were bright.

While the growth in literacy has certainly been stronger than Senegal, with 32% of the respondents to the 2002 survey claiming they could speak English, like Senegal, Ghana has simply doubled its numbers. It is true that in the Accra District, English facility was more than half, at 55.45%. Much of the present literacy is attributed to growing private provision of education by wealthier parents in the capital city, rather than an effective public school system. Without Greater Accra, the country average was 25.43%, and the districts demonstrated wide discrepancies.[24]

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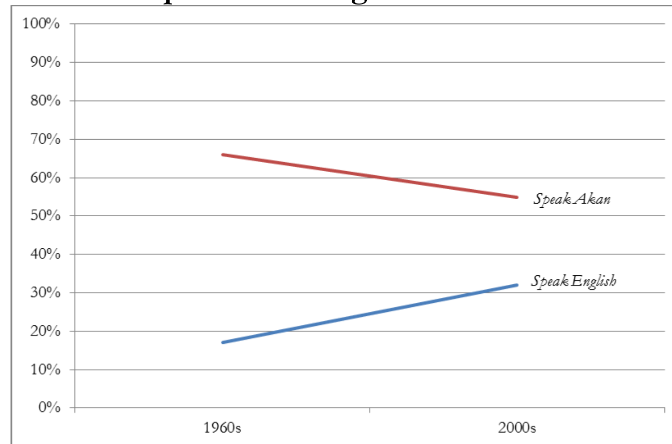
[21] Dakar 1955 (Republique du Senegal, Ministere du Plan, Du Developpement et de la Cooperation Technique, Service de la Statistique et de la Mecanographie: Recensement demographique de Dakar. (Table A.7, p. 5)

[22] Again, the Afrobaromeber 2008 figures are higher, since the question about language proficiency is open-ended. Of 1200 respondents, 1101 claimed to speak Wolof well. This is 92%. The Dakar, Diourbel, Fatick, and Thies and Kaolack regions had 98%-100%; Ziguinchor and Louga claimed 93% and 96%, respectively; Kolda, St. Louis, and Tambacounda all hovered around 80%, and only Matam appeared to have low proficiency (39%).

[23] Calculated from Mitchell 2007.

[24] Accra, Tema, New Juaben, Ga, Cape Coast and Kumasi all were above 45%; West Gonja, Bole, Nanumba, Cherepong, Savelugu, Bawku East, Tolon, West Mamprusi, Zabzugu, Bawku West, and Gushiegu all were below 10%. Afrobarometer 2008 again revealed higher figures: 49% claimed English proficiency and 81% Akan/Twi.

FIGURE 5: Speakers of English and Akan in Ghana



Perhaps more surprising is fact that Ghana's largest indigenous language has not spread as expected. Like Senegal, Ghana had a very dominant language group, whose numbers accounted for nearly half of the country's population at independence. The 1960 Census identified 44% of the population as Akan[25] (Gil 1964, 1). The Census also showed that 66% of the adult population was literate in a variety of Akan.[26] Other groups had learned Akan, including, most impressively those such as the Yoruba and Ibo from neighboring Nigeria, more than 80% of whom claimed literacy in some form of the dominant language. Tabouret-Keller observed at that time that some form of Twi served the whole of Ghana as a lingua franca. She noted that the Asante dialect was that of Kumasi, former capital of Ashanti empire, while the Akuapem dialect, spoken north of Accra "has great prestige, partly perhaps because it was used for an early translation of the Bible… colonial education developed first in the southern part of the country… and educated people e.g. civil servants then carried the Akuapem dialect north into the interior… Today the importance of Twi is linked with urbanization, with the development of markets and with trade in imported goods being carried inland by lorry-drive[r]s and merchants" (195). Even more, markets, woman's preserve… play an important part in extending the use of Twi. Citing a 1955 study, she notes that "In northeastern part of Ghana where second language of the men is Hausa, women, and particularly women traders in the markets, have Twi as their second language" (Tabouret-Keller, 196).

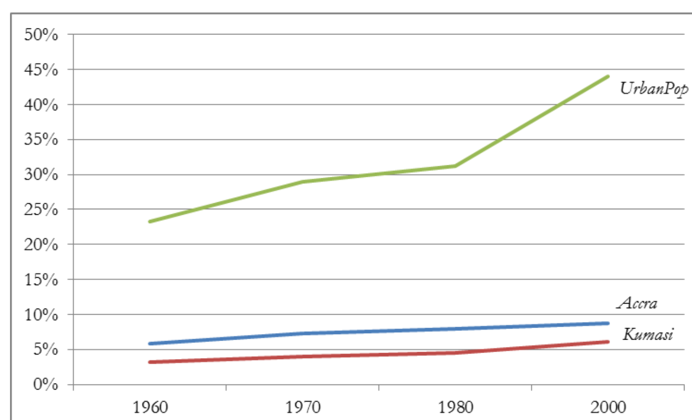
And yet, in the 2000s, Akan seems to have declined in its reach, or at least has not spread. Hausa is more dominant in the north, and English in the capital. The lack of Akan diffusion stems from two causes. First, unlike Senegal, the numerically dominant group was *not* identified with the colonial capital of Accra, and instead was associated with the older capital of Kumasi, inland from the coast. The composition of Accra was very different from Dakar, and therefore spurred different kind of language spread. Furthermore, government policy toward education actually had some effect on language in the interior of the country: on its containment, rather than its spread.

In 1911, the town of Kumasi had a larger population than Accra (24,000 vs 19,400).[27] Neither one was enormous at this time, and in the intervening years, Accra did increase exponentially to nearly 500,000 people. But Kumasi held its ground with nearly 200,000. And it

[25] "Akan" included subgroups Nzema, Anyi-Bawle, Twi-Fante, and Twi (Akyem, Akuapem, Asante, etc.)
[26] Table 4.7.4. 'c', p. Lxviii. This is not exactly comparable to present figures, which looks at *overall* population.
[27] http://www.populstat.info/Africa/.htm

has continued and even accelerated its growth after Ghana's independence. Today, Kumasi holds 6% of the country's population, while Greater Accra holds 8-9%.

FIGURE 6: Urbanization in Ghana



Accra in 1960 was a diverse city. Unlike Dakar, however, the country's largest group did not dominate the capital. The capital city was "owned" by the original inhabitants, who made up 50% of the metropolitan area. The Akan group made up only 16% of the city's population, with Ewe nearly equal at 15%.[28] This meant that Akan would not be used as the language of the capital, and furthermore the Ga population happened to be extremely literate in English, having been early exposed to mission schools. This resulted in a capital that while growing was not spreading the Akan language. Instead, English is spreading. Based on a survey in the capital city, Ghanaian language specialists Anyidoho and Kropp-Dakubu write that "certainly it has never been explicitly advocated that English is or should be a marker of Ghanaian identity. Nevertheless, we propose, somewhat contentiously, that the situation is developing in this direction" (2008: 144).

In the interior of the country, where the Akan language had been spreading through urbanization and prestige, colonial and independence education policy constrained it. Several regionally dominant language earned official support and were used widely in primary education. In the north, Dagbani, Dagaare, Gonja were used in specific regions, for example. Where Akan might have served as a "link language" in these areas, the focus on written form of regional languages reduced this possibility and contained Akan to its regional boundaries.

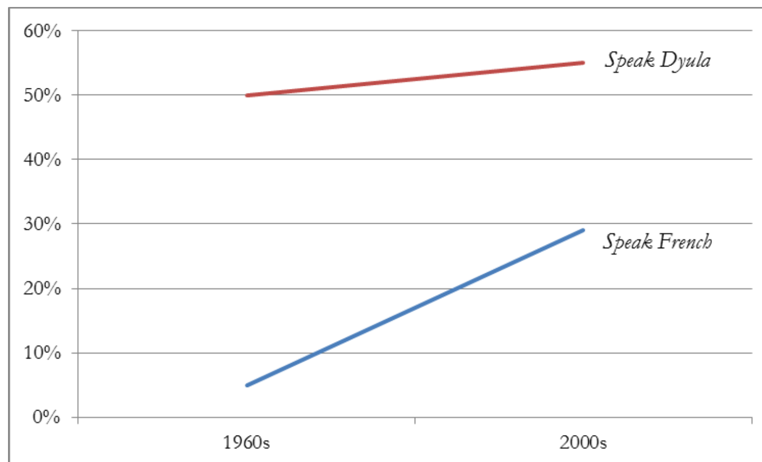
Unlike Senegal, where Wolof "crowded out" the official language of French, in Ghana, the dominant Akan has not become a lingua franca far beyond its own group. This is caused by differential composition of the capital city, parallel urbanization, and government policy.

[28] 1960 Census

COTE D'IVOIRE

Like Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire experienced explosive growth in its capital city after independence. The composition of that capital city, however, was different from both Dakar and Ghana. And while French had an early foothold and Dyula emerged quickly as a viable contender, a stalemate civil war bifurcated the linguistic landscape of the country.

FIGURE 7: Speakers of Dyula and French in Cote d'Ivoire**



**These figures should be taken with extreme caution. There is no really reliable data for either Dyula data point or for the 2000s spread of French. This is partially because of the rise of "popular French," which could be interpreted as a separate lingua franca (see Djité 1988).

Figures for Cote d'Ivoire in general are difficult to establish, since there was no nation-wide census before 1975, and there has not been one recently because of the civil war. UNESCO gives a figure of 5% French literacy in 1962, and the OIF estimated in 2003 that 22% of the population spoke French, while the World Bank estimated 34% literacy in the late 1990s. A reasonable estimate for current French speakers is 29%. This is appreciably higher than in Senegal, but not what might have been expected given Cote d'Ivoire's propitious beginning.

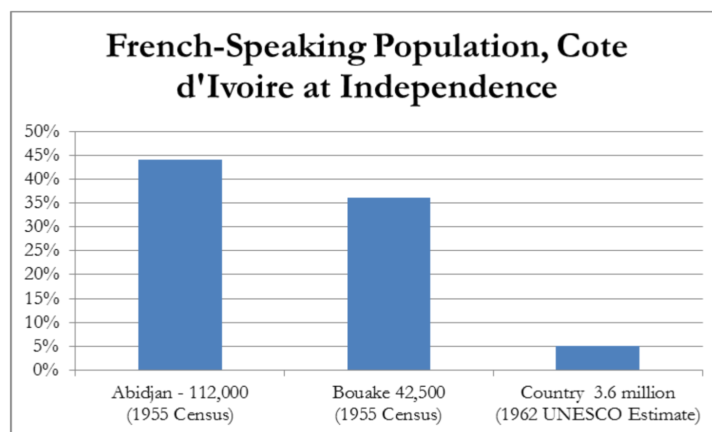
Abidjan was a tiny town at the onset of colonization, a capital wholly constructed to serve the export needs of the metropole. In 1921, it had only 5,364 people, growing to just over 86,000 by 1951.[29] [30] In this year, 6.5% of Abidjan's population was European. While not reaching the scale of Dakar, nearly 17% of French Nationals residing in French West Africa lived in Cote d'Ivoire, and nearly all of them in Abidjan.[31] Any migrant to the capital came for their association with the French colonizers. This was demonstrated with the remarkable proficiency

[29] Abidjan had only 5,200 'originaires' and 164 non-originaires in 1921. This was not too different from Bouake, which had 3,600 originaires and 45 non-originaires. Abidjan grew more quickly, however, to 81,000 originaires and 5,297 non-originaires in 1951, compared with Bouake's 30,000 originaires and 753 non-originaires.

[30] "Recensement de la population non autochtone de l'Afrique Occidentale Francaise en Juin 1951, Dakar, French West Africa. Haut Commissariat. Service de la Statistique Generale.

[31] Ministere des Affaires Economiques et Financieres, Ministere de la France d'Outre-Mer, Service des Statistiques, Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique D'Outre-Mer, Supplement Serie Etudes No. 33, "La recencement de la population non-originaire des territoires d'Outre-Mer et 1951"

evoked by a 1955 census of Abidjan. Of the domiciled population, 59% of men and 19% of women, or 44% overall, reported being able to speak, read or write French.[32] In 1955, of the small population "de passage" 14 or older living in Abidjan, 44.9% of the men and 20.85% of the women reported they could speak, read or write French.[33]



In 1960, a remarkable 23% of the school-aged population was enrolled in school, a much higher percentage than in Senegal. Even in important cities in the interior, French was surprisingly vigorous: in Bouake,55% of resident adult males and 12% of females, or 36% total could speak or read/write French.[34] Cote d'Ivoire was therefore poised to spread its French. But it had a competitor – not in the form of a large group, but an existing lingua franca. Unlike Dakar, which had an obviously dominant language, Abidjan did not. And only 62% of the city's population was actually from Cote d'Ivoire: 13% were from Upper Volta, 16% from other Francophone African countries, and 8% from Anglophone African countries. This meant that 37% of the capital city was from elsewhere.[35] No group held majority status. The largest grouping was "Eburneo-Beniniens," but this was a motley grouping that included a wide continuum of groups with different languages: Attie, Abidji, Ebriee, Abouri, Akan, Baoule, Adja, Yoruba.[36] "Voltaics" and West Atlantic groups made up 20% each, and 15% were from Soudan (Mali).

Just after independence, Cote d'Ivoire's and Upper Volta's "Manpower bureaus" made an agreement with "aim of continuing the flow of Voltaic workers formerly organized by the colonial authorities" (Cutolo 2010, 543). Abidjan's large foreign contingent, then, was not accidental, and migrants would contribute to the 'Ivoirian miracle'. It was "within this process that the assimilation of foreigners with northerners into a single 'Dyula' social referent was completed" (Cutolo 2010, 543-44). "As a social category, the Dyula encompassed all Ivorians coming from the northern

[32] Recensement d'Abidjan 1955, Republique de la Cote d'Ivoire, Ministere des Finances, des Affaires Economiques et du Plan. Population (over age 14) living in Abidjan who speak French (Table AR 5, p. 69)
[33] These literacy figures are remarkably similar to the figures given for religious affiliation. In 1955, 43% of Abidjan's population reported being Christian (34% Catholic), while 37% reported being Muslim. Recensement d'Abidjan 1955, Republique de la Cote d'Ivoire, Ministere des Finances, des Affaires Economiques et du Plan, (p. 49 and Table AR 2, p. 67). *Literacy must have something to do with the high exposure to Catholic education.*
[34] Ibid, Table 2.6 Population domiciliée de 15 ans et plus selon le degre d'instruction et le sexe, p. 38
[35] Recensement d'Abidjan 1955, Republique de la Cote d'Ivoire, Ministere des Finances, des Affaires Economiques et du Plan
[36] Recensement d'Abidjan 1955, Table AR 1, 63-66.

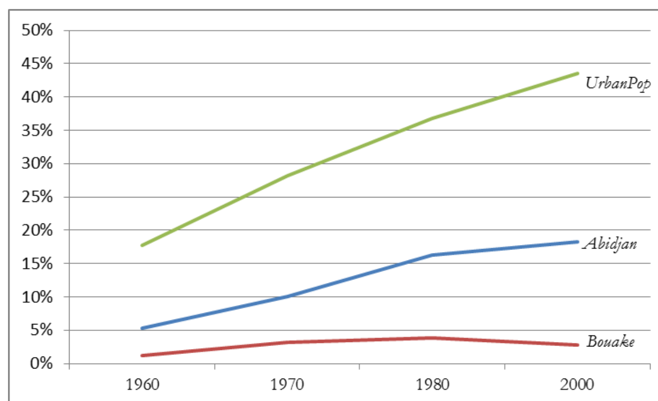
regions, in spite of their ethnic diversity (Senufo, Malinke, Lobi, etc), as well as immigrants from countries like Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea" (Cutolo 2010, 543).

The 1955 Census reported about 47,000 male workers in Abidjan; of these, 15% were in building/construction, an occupation dominated by Mossi. The second largest sector (12%) was commerce, dominated by Mossi, Dioula, and Malinke. The Mossi also dominated the "no Profession and Undeclared" categories – another 15%. The only sectors dominated by Baoule were teaching and railway transport. Mossi was the largest single ethnic category of the male labor force.[37]

These workers would have spoken the Dyula language. Tabouret-Keller wrote that Dyula meant merchant as well as member of Dyula tribe (citing Delafosse 1901, Tabouret-Keller, 197). The 'tribe' has no precise geographical location. At beginning of century and certainly still today [1971], "Dyula is the principal language of the market-place and hence the most important lingua franca of the country" (Tabouret-Keller 1971, 197). It spread not only in northern part of the country but all along the trade routes and in all the southern markets… "basic Dyula is the most spoken language in various non-formal situations of social life, particularly those with a traditional aspect e.g. in the markets" (*Ibid,* 197).

So while Abidjan indeed grew dramatically – from 5% to 18% of the country's total population - the speakers within this city were diverse. Urbanization did not homogenize the population as expected. Instead, there was bifurcation.

FIGURE 8: Urbanization and Growth of Largest Two Cities, Cote d'Ivoire



Among laborers, Dyula dominated, and among the elite, it was French. While surveys in Abidjan in 1974 and 1985 showed that Dyula was spoken by 74% and 85% of the respondents as a first or second language (Djité 1988, 219), Tabouret-Keller focused on the pervasiveness of French in the capital: "In a shop in Abidjan, or even on the street, one is possibly more likely to be answered in French than in any of the indigenous languages. There is certainly a marked trend towards the use of French in dealing with the administration" (Tabouret-Keller, 197). But outside Abidjan, particularly in the north, she agreed that Dyula *was* dominant. "Dyula is otherwise the lingua franca of the whole of the Ivory Coast" (Tabouret-Keller, 195).

[37] Recensement d'Abidjan 1955, Republique de la Cote d'Ivoire, Ministere des Finances, des Affaires Economiques et du Plan, (Table AR 13, p. 79)

With Abidjan's diversity and the lack of dominant 'owner,' Dyula might have taken over. It did not, however, stopped by the "first-mover" status of French in the capital. And then came war. War was actually a turning point that might have diffused Dyula even more deeply within the capital city and through the South. Hellweg (2004) explains that as the state's security apparatus deteriorated with economic decline, northerners took security into their own hands. Dyula and Senufo hunters (*dozos*) became urban security agents across Cote d'Ivoire in the 1990s. They used "Benkadi procedures" of agreement, dispute resolution and patrols. As state security forces struggled to contain violence, Benkadi methods spread further. These traditional hunter groups began dealing with armed robberies on busy stretch of highway. "When dozos succeeded at discouraging bandits along this artery, they gained public approval, national notoriety, and enthusiastic support from local administrators. Soon the movement moved southward to the rest of the country" (Hellweg 2004, 6-7).

But in the national climate changed after the death of Houphouet-Boigny, when Bedie's government began to portray dozos along with all northerners as enemies of the state. Dyula quartiers in Abidjan were referred to as *quartiers criminogenes, nids de malfrats* (robbers' dens). They were associated with increase in street crime and insecurity in Abidjan (Cutolo 2010, 545). "In public discourse Dyula language… historically the lingua franca of the markets in this part of West Africa, was depicted as the language of the street, of illiterate strangers who could not speak French, of shantytowns" (Cutolo 2010, 545). The government characterized dozo hunters as them as an illegal 'parallel police force' (Hellweg 2004, 9). And called on them to put down their arms and end their patrols. In 1998, the Interior Minister declared an end to dozo patrols below the northern half of the country, thus restoring "the primacy of state police in the south while leaving open the possibility that dozos continue their security patrols in the north" (Hellweg 2004, 9). Cote d'Ivoire experienced open conflict from 2002-2004, followed by an uneasy stalemate that broke the country in two until flawed elections in 2010 and renewed fighting, which ended only in 2012.

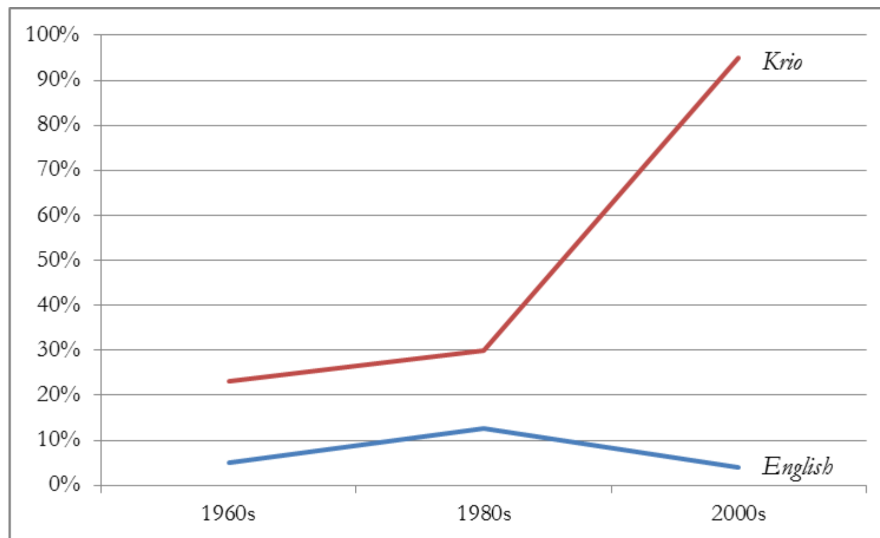
French held its ground in Abidjan much more firmly than it did in Dakar, certainly because there was no competing prestige language. Outside Abidjan, however, Dyula dominated as a lingua franca. Dyula might have overtaken the capital as well with the progression of war (much as in Sierra Leone, described below), but because the war ended in a stalemate, with Dyula-speakers expelled from the south and contained to the north, its reach has slowed.

SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone's 1963 Population Census reported that 5.37% of its total population (and 29.77% of the population in Freetown) was literate in English.[38] . The country's most recent Census in 2004, a sample of 10% of the population, found that only 3.8% of respondents said they could speak English (and 15.48% of respondents in Freetown).

[38] The World Bank and UNESCO figures for 1963 were 7% and 6.7% of adults, respectively.

FIGURE 9: Speakers of English and Krio in Sierra Leone



This is clearly a reduction in English competency from the earlier census. Part of this is the disruption caused by a brutal civil war from 1991-2002, but even before this, English was not making strong headway. In 1960, 14% of the school-aged population was attending school. Enrollment rates grew for the next 15 years at a yearly rate of about 6.5%. The 1985 census reported that 30% of the population had ever attended school,[39] and though there was not a question that asked English proficiency, it was assumed that all those who had completed primary school were likely literate. The literacy figure was therefore claimed to be 12.7% (Kroma 1992, 48), and is put on the graph, but with caution. We know from census results in the other cases that school attendance does not necessarily result in literacy, and this is demonstrated again in Sierra Leone. From 1985 to 1990, enrollment growth fell to only 2% a year, and the war made schooling even more challenging.

The 2004 Census indicated that 37% of respondents had been to some school, and 27% had completed four years or more. But only 3.8% of the respondents claimed to speak English. In Freetown, the comparably schooled population is more than 50%, but only 15.48% said they were able to speak English. It seems clear that the official school system is not spreading English.

Outside the school system, however, a language did spread. This is Krio, formerly associated with the Creoles of Freetown, but now estimated to be used by 95% of the population. In 1831, the population of Freetown was 30,000 "of whom somewhat more than half were Creoles" (Banton 1965:135). These were descendants of freed slaves settled by the British in the 18th and 19th centuries. After 1918, however, the population balance changed: of 44,000 inhabitants in the city, less than 16,000 were Creoles (Banton 165: 137). The population shift was accompanied by a shift in political power after 1957 against the dominant Creole and toward 'tribal' groups – Temne, Mende, Limba migrants, who kept in close touch with their districts of origin (*Ibid*).

[39] 1985 Population Census of Sierra Leone, Vol. 1, p. 44. Males with some schooling: 36%; Females with some schooling: 23%; Avg = 30%.

Tabouret-Keller (1971, 193) claimed that the language most spoken in capital was Temne, which had in 1948 at least 250,000 speakers in northern Sierra Leone. The Mende-speaking group covering the southern part of country was about the same size. "Together Temne and Mende represent about 60% of the total population of the country, and about 60% also of the population of the capital" (Tabouret-Keller 1971, 194). Though acknowledging that the high-status Creoles in the capital spoke Krio, "in this case however the capital's former first language has not spread out over the rest of the country; rather, the most widely spoken African languages have invaded the capital" (Tabouret-Keller 1971, 194). This observer, then saw the interior languages coming into the capital, rather than Krio moving outward. This is the baseline condition to which we compare the subsequent change.

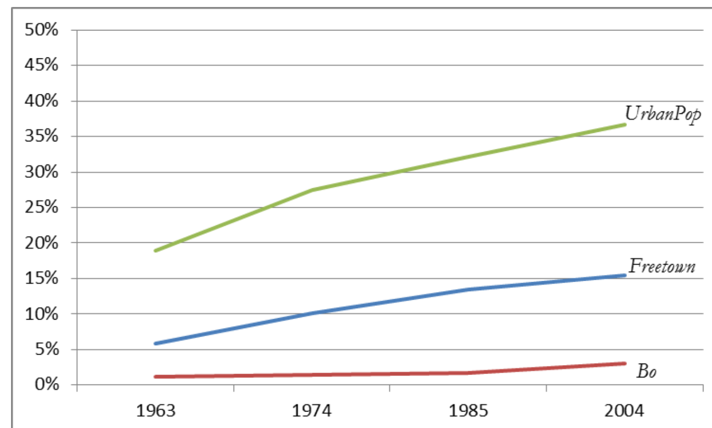
The 1963 Population Census identified 41,783 Creoles in Sierra Leone.[40] This represented less than 2% of the total population, and 90% were concentrated in the Western Province, primarily Freetown. There were no figures in this census for actual *speakers* of the language. Eldred Jones suggested at that most of the residents of the Western Province had a working knowledge of Krio, and suggested that the language was dispersed over the whole country in urban and semi-urban areas outside the Western Area. He claimed that a reasonable estimate would be 500,000 speakers of Krio (Jones 1971, 67), or 23% of a total population in Sierra Leone of 2,180, 355. Fifteen years later, Johnson (1986, 118) reported that 50,119 people spoke Krio as a mother tongue (still about 2%) and estimated that 30% of Sierra Leoneans had a knowledge of the language.

Presently, it is estimated that 95% of Sierra Leoneans can speak Krio (Oyètádé and Luke, 2008, 122). The 2004 Census (sample of 10% of the population) indicates that 9.6% Speak Krio as a mother tongue and 50.9% use it as a second language (60.5% total), but this does not count those who might use it as a third or fourth language. Most scholars agree that 90-95% of the population can speak this lingua franca.

But unlike Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire, it is not urbanization that is spreading Krio. It is certainly true that Freetown, home to Creole-speakers, grew more rapidly after 1960 than before. In 1910, there were only 6 towns with more than 2,000 people and one with more than 20,000 (Freetown) in the entire territory. This gave Sierra Leone an urbanization percentage of only 3.8%. In 1963, there were 60 towns with more than 2,000, meaning the urban population had risen to 18.9%. By 2004, there were 124 towns with more than 2,000 people, including Freetown with more than 500,000, making Sierra Leone 36.7% urban (Sesay et al, 43). Currently Freetown holds 15.5 of the entire population (Sesay et al, 12).

[40] 1963 Population Census of Sierra Leone, Table 3 "Tribal Affiliation for the Provinces, Districts, Chiefdoms, Western Rural Areas and Freetown: 1963", p. 13. Central Statistics Office, Freetown, 1965.

FIGURE 10: Urbanization and Growth of Largest Two Cities, Sierra Leone



But two-thirds of the population continues to live in rural areas. And even this population speaks Krio. The 2004 census shows that of *rural* respondents, a full 46% spoke Krio as a first or second language, and likely many more as a third or fourth. If the major mechanisms for language spread identified in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire were urbanization and migration, it is war that has dramatically spread Krio in Sierra Leone. To observe whether this is actually the case, we would want to look at a rural area that was linguistically homogeneous, whose population would presumably not need to learn a different lingua franca for communication. This is precisely what we see in the eastern districts of Sierra Leone. In Malema Chiefdom, for example, which borders Guinea, 88 % of the population speaks Mende. This chiefdom is completely rural, with no major cities, and yet 48% of its population speaks Krio as a second language, and likely many more as a third or fourth.

It is war that has spread this language. This is not only through the mechanism of raising armies from civilian populations, as is the typical mechanism in historical state-building accounts. A horrifically comprehensive report prepared for the truth and reconciliation process in Sierra Leone[41] details the atrocities that occurred during the decade of conflict. Civil war impacted language through micro-processes of population movement, recruitment, sexual slavery, and governance relationships. First, rural civilians fleeing fighters moved into other areas, mixing with neighboring populations in urban centers and needing to communicate through a common language (e.g. NPWJ, 166). Second, many civilians were recruited to carry property for the rebels as they moved across territory and looted villages. For example, the report notes that 400 civilians were abducted by the RUF in Firawa town of the Diang Chiefdom to carry goods to Kono district further south (NPWJ, 182). Fighting forces also used women as "wives," to cook, wash, and perform other duties. As the fighting progressed, forces from all sides of the conflict established relationships with civilians in the areas they were taking by force. They were to provide certain amounts of livestock, oil, salt, groundnuts and other food items to support the fighters; men were to provide firewood and women to deliver water and cook (NPWJ, 175). Toward the end of the war, the "capture of all the major towns in Diang, Neini and Neya Chiefdoms [Koinadugu district] refocused RUF/AFRC strategy away from bush fighting and raiding, towards occupation and consolidation of control" (NPWJ, 182). As they

[41] "No Peace Without Justice" Conflict Mapping report: http://www.npwj.org/ICC/Sierra-Leone-Conflict-Mapping.html

administered, various rebels had to communicate with populations in a common language. That language was Krio. It was used in mining towns in the east, and it diffused through the rural populations because of the war.

Knorr (2010) explains the recent spread of Krio as deriving from a change in how local languages associated with traditional authorities are perceived in Sierra Leone. Reputation of powerful traditional authorities and institutions suffered in eyes of younger generation b/c unable to protect people from rebels. Krio-speaking elite claimed not to have been involved in war as perpetrators "Krio's alleged lack of indigeneity and ethnic authenticity have disavowed their legitimacy to play a political role on the national level. Now that tradition – represented in the form of ethnic and indigenous institutions, values, hierarchies, and identities – has lost in esteem and social acceptance, what had formerly been perceived as Krio deficiencies can now be gerrymandered into a Krio advantage" (Knorr, 745). Their "in-betweenness" better than purely native or purely foreign (e.g. NGOs). Many people in Sierra Leone praise the Krio for at least having provided Sierra Leone with a lingua franca – Krio – which more than 90% of Sierra Leonean population can speak. The group is gaining status for having a reconciling effect on society at large (746).

But I would argue that the prestige came *after* the violence spread the language. This is a case in which civil war, just as powerfully as inter-state war, can serve to homogenize a population linguistically.

Conclusion

This paper has placed much emphasis on pragmatic individual choices and reaction, as opposed to deliberate government action to spread languages. I conclude with the highlights:

1) *If there is only one large city, the city's language will spread with urbanization, crowding out others.* Urbanization explains much of language spread in West Africa. During the pre-independence period, most of the colonial capital towns were relatively small. Senegal's Dakar was unique in that it grew to contain more than 12% of the population at independence. Its six-fold expansion in the 40 years before independence, along with the city's composition, provides most of the reason for the conquest of Wolof.

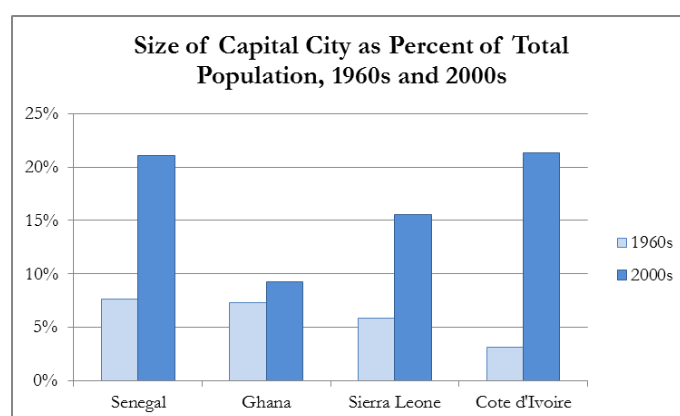
Pre-Independence Urbanization

	Sierra Leone[42]		Senegal[43]		Ghana[44]		Cote d'Ivoire[45]	
	@1900	**1960**	**@1900**	**1960**	**@1900**	**1960**	**@1900**	**1960**
Territory Population	1,156,700	2,180,355	1,460,000	3,047,804	1,550,000	6,726,815	1,825,000	3,638,385
Size of Largest City[46]	34,500	127,917	33,412	353,024	17,700	491,817	5,364	191,849
% Largest City	3%	6%	2%	12%	1.1%	7%	.3%	5%

Post-Independence Urbanization

	Sierra Leone		Senegal		Ghana		Cote d'Ivoire	
	1960s	**2000s**	**1960s**	**2000s**	**1960s**	**2000s**	**1960s**	**2000s**
% in Largest City*	6%	15%	12%	21%	7%	9%	5%	18%
% in 2nd Largest City	1%	3%	3%	5%	3%	6%	1%	2%
% Urban	19%	37%	23%	40%	23%	44%	18%	44%

**Urban agglomeration*



2) *If the language of the largest city is* not *the language of the largest group, there will be a bifurcation.* Accra also grew six-fold, but it was not dominated by the territory's largest group, and it competed with Kumasi, limiting the spread of Akan.[47] Cote d'Ivoire also grew dramatically prior to and after independence, and either French or Dyula should have triumphed. But two forces worked against this: first, no group 'owned' Abidjan, and French penetration proved to be relatively fleeting; second, the substitute language of Dyula was contained by war.

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[42] Sierra Leone (Freetown): 1901/1963 from http://www.populstat.info/Africa/sierleot.htm and Sesay et al, 2006, 43

[43] Senegal (Dakar): 1921/1960 from Ministere des Affaires Economiques et Financieres, Ministere de la France d'Outre-Mer, Service des Statistiques, Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique D'Outre-Mer, Supplement Serie Etudes No. 33, "La recencement de la population non-originaire des territoires d'Outre-Mer et 1951"; http://www.populstat.info/Africa/senegalc.htm

[44] Ghana (Accra): 1901/1960 http://www.populstat.info/Africa/ghanac.htm ; 1960 Population Census of Ghana

[45] Cote d'Ivoire (Abidjan): 1921/1960 from Ministere des Affaires Economiques et Financieres, Ministere de la France d'Outre-Mer, Service des Statistiques, Bulletin Mensuel de Statistique D'Outre-Mer, Supplement Serie Etudes No. 33, "La recencement de la population non-originaire des territoires d'Outre-Mer et 1951" http://www.populstat.info/Africa/ivorycoc.htm

[46] http://www.populstat.info/Africa/.htm

[47] In 1911 Kumasi had 24,000 people vs. Accra's 19,600 and in 1960 had 180,000. In the post-independence period, it has grown even more rapidly: in 2002 had 627,600 in city proper and 929,100 in agglomeration: http://www.populstat.info/Africa/ghanat.htm

3) *Where there is extensive experience with war across an entire territory, a common language will spread.* Freetown only doubled, so its urbanization cannot fully explain the spread of Krio. But Cote d'Ivoire showed that this does not work always. *Where there is a stalemate, language will spread only within certain boundaries.*

Finally, returning to the deliberate efforts by governments to spread languages, we find an interesting outcome:

4) *If the colonizers educated in regional languages, this will inhibit the spread of a lingua franca.* Ghana's choice to use northern languages in their regions limited the spread of Akan that appeared to be happening spontaneously.
5) But *in all cases, education does not spread a language as quickly as does war or urbanization.* We saw that initial 'stock' of students enrolled in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire propelled higher proportions of students presently speaking European languages than in Sierra Leone and Senegal. But in no case has there been sustained effort by governments to dramatically increase literacy in a common language. Huge amounts have been invested by the international community in education, and rising enrollment rates are largely the result. But governments themselves are doing very little. Why is this so? I argue that it is not because governments are not able to do this but because they do not see mass education as critical to their hold on power. They do not actually care about diffusing a common language within their citizenry.

Recall the reasons that European state-builders imposed a standard language. First, it would break the mediation monopoly of regional elites and facilitate central control. A single language allowed the state and its agents to communicate directly with citizens without relying on local intermediaries. Second, it provided a means for patriotic inculcation and the raising of mass citizen armies, a necessity for 19th century warfare. Third, it would facilitate industrialization – enabling producers to interact with each other, which would increase productivity, thereby widening the base for taxation. McWhorter argues that the "urgencies of capitalism require governments to exact as much work and allegiance from their populations as possible, and the imposition of a single language has traditionally been seen as critical to this goal" (2002, 261).

African states collect smaller portions of revenue from local taxation than any other region in the world. Governments in this situation do not need to ensure face-to-face communication with citizens. African armies are the smallest in the world. None- save Eritrea – have mass citizen armies. Finally, Africa is the least industrialized region in the world. Most economies are based on agriculture or extracted resources. A common language does not improve these processes. These realities explain why official language spread through the education system has been so stunted. Urbanization and warfare continue to be, as they have been through history, much stronger forces in the spread of indigenous languages than government will.

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