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Urban Languages in Africa

Rose Marie Beck

Abstract: Against the backdrop of current research on the city, urbanity is understood to be a distinct way of life in which (in the spatial, factual and historical dimensions) processes of densification and heterogenization are perceived as acts of sociation. Urbanization is thus understood to include and produce structuration processes autonomously; this also includes autonomous linguistic practices, which are reflected as sediments of everyday knowledge in language and thus create the instruments needed for facilitating and generalizing such urbanization: urban languages. In this conceptual context, which looks at cities in Africa from the point of view of language sociology, two large phases of urbanization can be distinguished in Africa. The first phase is related to trade networks and cultural *métissage* of small groups of middlemen. The second phase, characterized by efforts to deal with Africa's colonial history and to catch up with "the world", presses ahead with the development of an autonomous, authentic modernity. The reconstruction of the development undergone especially by the more recent urban languages raises questions about the connotations of urbanization and modernization in contemporary Africa: on the one hand, dissociation from colonial legacies as well as from the postcolonial political elites, impotent administrations, and tribalist instrumentalizations of language and language policies; on the other, quite the reverse – the creation of autonomous African modernities that include the city (and the state), brought about by the interplay of both local dynamics and global flows.

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For some years now, urban development in Africa has been attracting more and more attention both among the public and on the part of scholars. The growth of African cities is unparalleled worldwide. While about 40 per cent of the population are already living in cities today, it is expected that the 50 per cent line will long have been crossed by 2030 (UN-Habitat 2008: ix). This goes along with overwhelming structural problems regarding supplies, traffic and communication. In addition, certain social, cultural and economic dynamics are due not only to the contrast between the largely pauperized majority of the population and the existing elites, but also to the fact that approximately 60 per cent of those who inhabit African cities are under 25 years of age (UN Habitat 2008: 23, 2010: 208ff). At the same time, cities magnetically attract people – this is, after all, why they are witnessing such enormous growth; they are places that give emergence to a new, autonomous modernity which enters into competition with the old colonial and postcolonial patterns.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, new linguistic phenomena came to be reported from some of these cities: so-called “urban vernaculars” (McLaughlin 2009a; Makoni et al. 2007) and youth languages (Kießling and Mous 2004). These “languages”, whose linguistic and language-sociological status is still largely unsettled, initially caused a stir among language guardians and educational politicians who were concerned about cultural decay and language loss in the population. This attitude has left its mark on some of the earlier scholarly literature on the topic. Today, however, linguistics is rather interested in the exceptional acceleration of language change, and in the question of whether language birth can be witnessed in contemporary Africa (e.g., Mous 2009). After all, linguistic creativity and rapid change, and the resulting ephemeral character of vocabulary, are distinctive features of youth languages as a special type of urban language. It is furthermore remarkable that these “languages” are denoted by names, yet that which is denoted can assume very heterogeneous forms. *Tsotsitaal*, for example, refers to a form of speech which is in some cases based on Afrikaans, in other cases on Zulu and/or Sotho. This puts theories about language change and about the very essence of language to a hard test. In light of African urban and youth languages, current assumptions about the homogeneity of languages need to be reassessed.¹

1 I am referring here to an ongoing discussion inside the discipline of linguistics. In urban language research outside African Studies, this problem has long been known thanks to the seminal research done by Labov (1966) and Fishmann (1971) in the 1960s. In German Studies, there has been a debate on this issue since at least the 1980s (Dittmar and Schlieben-Lange 1981/1982). In the context of African Studies, it is explicitly addressed by McLaughlin (2001, 2008a, 2009a), Dreyfus and Juillard

There is general consensus, however, that all these “languages” are urban phenomena, for example:

The islands of Goree and Saint-Louis and the early cities that came into being there [beginning in the mid-sixteenth century] played a pivotal role in the development of urban Wolof (McLaughlin 2009b: 83).

With regard to chiHarare, Makoni et al. (2007: 34) state the facts as follows:

Within Zimbabwe’s African urban space, “indigenous” languages have entered into new linguistic configurations in light of speakers’ adaptive responses in the form of linguistic practice to their changing environment and the new communicative needs it presents.

Urban languages thus emerge against the backdrop of dense multilingualism, the exact constitution of which differs from one city to the next in terms of languages actually spoken, the social, cultural, and economic value judgments associated with these languages, etc. No exact data are available on these phenomena; no one has yet drawn up sociolinguistic profiles of cities.² However, the languages spoken, their interrelationships, their meaning for private, public, and official life in any city are part of each individual city’s distinctness and structuration, and thus of its individuality: The languages spoken in Abidjan are different from those used in Nairobi, Johannesburg, or Khartoum, and the mixture of languages differs in each case as well. It is likely that all 500 languages of Nigeria are represented in Lagos, just as Yaoundé resounds with the approximately 300 languages spoken in Cameroon:³

(2001, 2005) and Nicolai (2007). Concurrently, Makoni et al. (2007: 28-32) are arguing in a historical vein, discussing colonial and missionary interests and the construction, based on linguistic arguments, of more or less arbitrary standards whose normativity has served, among other things, to establish and control the ephemeral character of ethnic differences. On the interrelationship of colonial interests and linguistics, see also Pugach (2001, 2002).

- 2 A sociolinguistic profile provides the descriptive categories that can then be used for purposes of comparison: a description of the variety in the context of its multilingual environment, the genesis of that variety, characteristics of the languages’ speakers, some linguistic particularities, domains in which the languages are spoken, media use, attitudes towards the variety, statements about future potentials for development (language vitality), specific features, degree of fluency, degree of literacy, environment in terms of language policy, language development/language planning. Due to the lack of adequate data, these issues will not be systematically addressed in the present contribution.
- 3 These figures relate to multilingualism as found on the level of the nation-state, and not to regional multilingualism, which may figure prominently not only within a state but also in an entire region due to the enormous magnetism of the cities.

[A]lthough there are some generalizations that can be made about the languages of urban Africa [, ...] each city is unique, and the particular linguistic outcome is the result of a complex variety of factors, including the ethnic and linguistic make-up of the city, the history and pattern of urbanization, the legacy of colonial policies, and numerous other factors (McLaughlin 2009a: 2).

Still, it is noticeable that there are also cities that have not developed any urban language of their own. This is true for not only Lagos – actually, the Nigerian cities in general are hardly ever mentioned in the literature on this subject – but also for Addis Ababa, Monrovia, Gaborone, Windhoek, Bujumbura, Lilongwe, Kigali, Kampala, Maiduguri (see, however, Miede et al. 2007) and Bangui (see, however, Pasch 1994).

Different types of cities quite obviously generate different types of urban languages. But why does a particular urban language exist in a particular city? What precisely are the factors that have given rise to its emergence? To what extent can an urban language characterize a city? As a matter of fact, research is still far from being able to answer these questions, because despite an increasing number of publications there is still a lack of two things: an adequate conceptual explanation of the interrelationship between language and city beyond empirical-descriptive evidence, and a broad research base. In the following, I will thus present a conceptual proposal guided by cultural sociological approaches to urban research, and praxeology, keeping in view how the interrelationship between city and language, and thus also between language and social processes, can be rendered fruitful for descriptions and explanations of urban language phenomena. In the second part of this contribution, I will address the question of what is actually known about city and language in Africa from a linguistic-sociological perspective.

In doing so, I intend to continue a discussion which so far has been largely dominated by sociolinguistic approaches.⁴ I am drawing on a corpus of data that has grown to be quite comprehensive and has been surveyed in particular by Roland Kießling and Maarten Mous (2004) and Fiona McLaughlin (ed. 2009), and on largely unpublished material (with the exception of Beck 2009) of my own gathered in Nairobi.

Abidjan, for example, was the destination of many migrants from Burkina Faso and Mali in the 1990s (Kube-Barth 2009: 104). However, such numbers with regard to languages have to be taken with a grain of salt, as it is very difficult to draw a line between languages and dialects (Heine and Nurse 2000: 1-3), and issues of language density have, to my knowledge, not yet been subject to concrete research.

4 Such a discussion took place at a cross-sectional panel on the occasion of the conferences VAD and Afrikanistentag, which were held at the same time in Mainz in April 2010.

Urbanization and Language

Following the Darmstadt school of sociology (cf. the contributions in Berking and Löw 2005, 2008), I understand urbanity to be a distinct way of life in which, in the respective spatial, factual and historical dimensions, processes of densification and heterogenization are perceived as acts of sociation. By reverting to both existing and newly received and/or emergent inventories of knowledge and action, these processes give rise to the selection, institutionalization, and creation of organizational patterns and units of meaning that structure the city as a space of possibility (Berking and Löw 2008). This definition transforms the concepts of size, density and heterogeneity (Wirth 1938) into dynamical structuring principles, thus focusing on the processuality and perpetuation of urban ways of life. While these processes are all geared toward the production of a respective unit of meaning – the “city” – their specificity and space-structuring peculiarities need to be clarified in each individual case. This includes the analysis of urban economy as well as of a city’s architecture, its manner of sociation as reflected in the behaviour of taxi drivers, the analysis of the concrete form given the public order by official and informal actors, of textures of meaning in which the development of a city is encoded, and images of the city – or, for all intents and purposes, an analysis of a city’s language.⁵

If the city can then be viewed as a distinct life form with structuring principles of its own, we can consequently conclude from a language-sociological perspective that urban languages contribute to marking each respective unit of meaning called “the city”; they, too, are a result of processes of heterogenization and densification. As a sediment and practice, urban languages structure the city as a space of possibility. That is, they structure both the city-dwellers’ urbanity and the individuality of the respective city. This is much more apparent in contemporary African cities than elsewhere for two reasons: On the one hand, urban transformation is particularly conspicuous in these cities; on the other, a large number of languages tend to concentrate

5 By using a praxeological perspective (Reckwitz 2008), the concept of language is differentiated and defined as language and speech within an interrelationship of structure and action (Giddens 1994). For that reason, language/speech continuously contributes to processes of structuring, with which it is inextricably intertwined. Speech is made up of the precisely situated application of familiar routines and procedures which coagulate into institutions in the course of long-lasting practice and functionality. These procedures have become (ethno-) methodically solidified and embodied; their socialization comes with the acquisition of language and is then generalized. In that process, language, linguistics’ central object of knowledge, is assigned the status of the sediment of knowledge and the resource of action.

in these cities due to Africa's dense multilingualism.⁶ The concept of practice enables us to establish a connection between language as a sediment and the precisely situated use of the respective languages; this facilitates the exemplary description of the specific features of African urban languages and processes of urbanization.

In various ways and to various degrees, such practices give structure to the city. Striking examples include the emergence of an economic hub around the only functioning street light in Kinshasa, and the movement of humans and goods that went along with this development (Boeck 2007); the practice of privately organized public traffic, where the flow of traffic as well as the management of passengers and stops are densified into linguistic and embodied procedures familiar to everyone in the city (see D'Hondt 2009 with regard to Dar es Salaam); asking for the way and the explanations given in response, and all kinds of related situations involving the positioning and socialization of objects and people in the urban space; the city's socialized architecture which is used by taxi drivers for orientation; the taxi drivers themselves, experts in this socialized architecture, who in their everyday work routine pass on their knowledge to newcomers and thus socialize the latter "into the city". We can add to that list the specific and characteristic presence of particular languages in particular urban quarters (e.g. Adeniran 2009 for Porto Novo and Pellow 2002 for Accra); the constitution and demarcation of such quarters by means of linguistic innovation (Githinji 2006); the individual constitution of cosmopolitan or urban identity by means of purposeful, flexible choices regarding languages or varieties (for Harare, see Makoni et al. 2007; for Mail, Canut 2009; for Dakar, see also McLaughlin 2001); the use of metaphors and images of speech, whose development can

6 German as spoken and familiar today has to be seen as an urban language as well. However, we have neither an everyday nor a scientific recollection of that fact: German is just absolutely omnipresent and generalized as a language standard, even though it is not necessarily practised as such everywhere – just take small rural corners of our contemporary German-speaking communities. In German Studies' dialectology, or variety linguistics, the topic of "German as an urban language" was first addressed by contributions on Hamburg, Berlin, Cologne and Vienna in the renowned series "Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft", Volume 3, Part 3 (ed. Besch et al. 1984). One important thesis links the development and spread of writing and the standardization of written language to urbanization in Germany (Dittmar and Schlieben-Lange 1981/1982: 49ff). In that context, it is primarily the relationship between urban and rural environments that is viewed as needing explanation. The dialectological legacy, which in a romanticizing manner assumes that the rural varieties are "pure" whereas the urban forms are corrupted, is very evident in this context (for a critical assessment of this issue, see *ibid.*: 9-14). While the parallels with urban language research in African Studies are striking, the interrelationships remain completely unclear.

be traced back in history, and in local prose and poetry (implicitly described for Mombasa by Abdulaziz 1979); forms of processing urban themes in the media – that is, film, journalism and music (e.g., Reuster-Jahn and Hacke, in print, Reuster-Jahn 2007), etc. As a matter of fact, any type of talk about the city can be viewed as a way of “doing the city” as well, ranging from administration officers talking about city planning to citizens discussing the shortcomings of the supply situation, politicians talking about law and order, etc.

Urban Languages in Africa

Viewed from this urban- and language-sociological perspective, two remarkable phenomena coincide on the African continent: tremendous urbanization rates and the occurrence of new language varieties in some, though not all, large cities. Language practices as defined in the present context have so far rarely been the subject of scholarly research,⁷ which has rather focused on the sediment of these practices – that is, the “languages” themselves – and some of the latter’s social and cultural contexts. In the following, we will thus have a closer look at these “languages” within the context of city and language outlined above.

From a historical perspective, we need to at least roughly distinguish two sets of urban languages, distinguished by their historical origins: urban languages whose origins were related to the importance of cities in trade networks predating, to varying degrees, European colonial rule, which began around 1880; and urban languages whose emergence can be traced to the development of an autonomous African modernity against the backdrop of the conflicting priorities of local, colonial and postcolonial-global interests. While the second phase began with colonial times, its heyday was during the postcolonial urbanization processes of the past 40 years. Within that phase, two types of urban languages need to be distinguished: those that are associated with slang and youth languages, and those that are not.⁸

In this inventory, the line separating the sources from the currently existing varieties is blurred. Particularly the literature of the 1990s is character-

7 In this context, the works of D’Hondt (2009) and De Boeck (2006), referred to above, need to be mentioned. The practice of giving informal names to streets (Myers 1994, 1996) and the graphic environment (Calvet 1994) might also be termed “language practices”, and the same applies to language usage in popular media such as music (*bongo flava*, hip-hop), literature, film, video, magazines, etc. This literature is so exhaustive that it cannot be discussed in detail here.

8 In the following, cities that have not (yet) given emergence to urban languages will not be discussed. Still, it is relevant to include these cities in future research, as such a comparison may help to flesh out particular characteristics of urban languages.

ized by a biased look at the deficits and deviations of these varieties compared to existing standards or “pure” forms of language, as well as by a focus on the particularities of the urban languages (code-switching, borrowing, structural reduction). These phenomena were first noticed by linguists, yet a linguistic-sociological perspective that was well developed in terms of methodology and theory was lacking in many studies. Since Africanist linguistic sociology has made remarkable progress, further interesting research results can be expected in the coming years.

“Old” Urban Languages

One quite remarkable feature of the “old” urban languages is that they have not usually been recognized and discussed as such. This is due, among other things, to the fact that urbanization and urban languages were largely viewed as postcolonial phenomena:

Urban African contact languages have typically been considered a postcolonial phenomenon, a new way of speaking that has emerged either since independence – which for most African countries came in the early 1960s – or shortly before, but usually no earlier than the beginning of the twentieth century. They bespeak a modernity and cosmopolitanism that identifies their speakers as urban and distinguishes them from the rural population [Spitulnik 1998, McLaughlin 2001], and they are often associated with youth [Kießling and Mous 2004] (McLaughlin 2008b: 714).

In the course of sociolinguistic research on “urban Wolof”, Fiona McLaughlin was struck by the remarks of a 68-year-old male teacher, who said that they had “always” talked that way (McLaughlin 2009b: 75, see also 2008b: 731). This was surprising, given that it was uttered by someone who might typically be expected to support conservative educational positions, and thus purist language ideologies. With regard to “urban Wolof”, McLaughlin reconstructs that the language originated in Gorée and Saint-Louis on the West African coast, and that there was a correlation between urbanization and language development:

There is strong evidence [...] that it was a robust variety in the mid-nineteenth century, and there is compelling historical evidence to indicate that an urban variety may have emerged in the late eighteenth century or even earlier (2009b: 73).

The urban character of Swahili (the language) and the Swahili (the people) has hitherto been taken for granted as well, and was thus not considered as needing, or warranting, any explanation. Despite long-standing criticism of

ethnifying concepts (e.g., Eastman 1971 and Salim 1976, among others), the focus has so far been more on the cultural unity of the coastal region than on its urban character. However, it is obvious that the development of the Swahili language is inextricably linked to the emergence of the cities along the East African coast, that is, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Pemba, Kilwa and – since the mid-nineteenth century – Zanzibar. There are notable parallels with the discussion about the Oyo kingdom (Nigeria): In that case, too, a colonial-minded academic environment made it inconceivable to apply prevailing categories of “city” to an African setting.⁹ The essentialist ascription of an intrinsic ethnification and rurality to Africa was not reconcilable with concepts of urbanity and Western modernity (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1991).

Likewise, the Ga language spoken in Accra is closely associated with the role of the Ga as ruling elites during the urbanization process, which took place from the eighteenth to the twentieth century (Kropp Dakubu 2009: 24f; Parker 2000). This is by no means the end of the list: Shortly before the onset of Belgian colonial occupation, the Lingala language spoken in Kinshasa and Brazzaville developed out of an independent lingua franca used along the trade routes in the Congo Basin (Bokamba 2009). It is possible that the Songhai spoken in Timbuktu, which reflects the influence of a multitude of contacts (Nicolai 1984), may also be newly assessed from the perspective of urban languages. Yoruba as the language of the Oyo kingdom – one of those regions in Africa assumed to have undergone an “indigenous” urbanization (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1991: 15ff) – may be still another “ancient” African urban language, but there is no literature on this. The same is possibly true for the Hausa language, which would be unimaginable without the cities of Kano, Katsina, and Zaria, as well as the trade networks associated with these urban centres (Richard Kuba, personal communication).

A feature common to all these languages, and indeed to urban languages in Africa as a whole, is their emergence against the backdrop of the multilingualism of both their speakers and the communities involved. As far as the older cities are concerned, we can safely assume that their languages are a result of the speakers’ participation in trade networks and their cultural and economic specialization in the role of middlemen. In this context, Parker (2000: xxvi) refers to “Accra’s middleman identity”, and Middleton applies the same term to both the Swahili language and its speakers (Middleton 1992). McLaughlin describes the importance of the *métis* for the emergence of the “urban Wolof” language; descendants of African mothers

9 On this discussion with regard to the African cities in general, see Coquery-Vidrovitch (1991), Robinson (2005).

and French fathers, they profited from their double roots and liminality (McLaughlin 2009b: 80).¹⁰ The origin myths of the Swahili people point to the importance of newly emerging societies or groups as well; they tell of seafarers from the Indian Ocean who used to marry the daughters of the local rulers along the coast, sealing the pact with the exchange of fabrics for ivory or comparable goods (Middleton 1992, Schadeberg 1999). In that process, it was essential that the hierarchical differences between the “intermediaries” not prevent cultural, social, and economic integration on the part of both sides, but rather facilitate a “cultural *métissage*” (McLaughlin 2008b: 713), which in terms of language took the form of an absorption of linguistic material from several sources into the “mediating language”. Accordingly, all these urban languages are primarily characterized by loans in their vocabularies; influences on the structure of the languages are quite marginal.¹¹

Swahili, for example, is in the upper-mid-range worldwide in terms of the number of loan words found in its vocabulary.¹² Schadeberg (2009) has shown that words were borrowed from the trade sphere of the Indian Ocean, in particular from Arabic and Hindi (or related languages of the Indian subcontinent), when the language emerged and underwent its first phase of development between 800 AD (that is, at the time of the Hijra) and the middle of the second millennium. Contact with the Portuguese after the sixteenth century left only selective marks, such as terms related to navigation and shipbuilding, the suits of playing cards, and words for a number of other utensils of everyday life (Schadeberg 1989). Loan words from the Arabic dialects of the Indian Ocean are related to Omani rule, which lasted from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. English-language loans were not incorporated into Swahili until colonial times.¹³ Arabic has had such a pro-

10 In Accra, the Euro-Ga seem to have played a crucial role in the city’s development as well (Parker 2000; Pinther, personal communication).

11 It is unknown whether there are any African urban languages that contain only few loans. (In this respect, by the way, German is one of the most conservative languages worldwide, cf. the World Language Database WOLD, Haspelmath and Tadmor 2009, also accessible at <<http://wold.livingsources.org/>> (13 March 2011). Research is also needed in the other direction, to explore whether there is evidence for a connection between borrowing and urbanization in Africa, and whether this might help shed new light on some discussions on the origin and development of languages, such as Songhai.

12 “The [Leipzig] loan word typology project finds ca. 28% loan words in the Swahili list, which makes Swahili a slightly higher than average borrower among the 41 languages compared.” (Tadmor 2009: 56). I thank Thilo Schadenberg for drawing my attention to this source.

13 Upon independence, the standard form of Swahili became the national language of both Tanzania and Kenya. Swahili’s sphere of influence thus came to extend way beyond the “old” Swahili cities. While there is still borrowing from English, it now

found influence on Swahili that loans from it are subject to morphological rules of their own. In addition, and in contrast to the neighbouring languages, tone phenomena have been reduced to mere stress accent phenomena in Swahili.

The Ga language, according to Kropp Dakubu (2009: 26),

expanded its vocabulary considerably by acquiring a very large number of loan words, possibly more than [the closely related] Dangme did, which underwent similar influences but has never been urban to the same degree. Most of them are from Akan or from various European languages, first Portuguese, then Dutch and Danish, some Hausa, now English.

As Ga is spoken exclusively in Accra and its environs, it is not possible to distinguish between an urban and a non-urban variety, in contrast to “urban Wolof”, which still today is distinguished from a variant of *olof piir* (a French loan word: *Wolof pur*) (McLaughlin 2001: 163, 2009b: 73). The difference is, of course, that “urban Wolof” has a high proportion of French vocabulary which, like Arabic vis-à-vis Swahili, is integrated into Wolof phonologically and morphologically, with “urban Wolof” being the unmarked form (McLaughlin 2009b: 74). While it is interspersed with French loan words to varying degrees depending on speakers and situations, its use does not depend on the speakers’ actual command of French: “[E]ven speakers who use many French borrowings in their Wolof may not actually speak French” (McLaughlin 2008b: 715).

If we look at the contemporary situation of the three languages brought into focus here, we note that at least two of these, urban Coastal Swahili¹⁴ and Ga, seem to be in decline while “urban Wolof” is not. As far as Mombasa is concerned, the old-established Swahili keep complaining that KiMvita, the dialect of that city, is disappearing. In Accra, Ga has been replaced by Akan as the most important language, as is reported by Essegbey (2009) and Kropp Dakubu (2005). Both languages are apparently in the process of becoming displaced, and both speaker communities are said to be characterized by a certain seclusiveness, or exclusiveness toward the “newcomers”

occurs within the context of the urbanization of the two nation-states, and no longer of the coastal cities. This will be shown below particularly with regard to Sheng.

14 I make a clear distinction here between the Swahili that has been spoken for more than 1,000 years as a native language in the urban, cosmopolitan entrepôts of the East African coast and the Swahili which, due to colonial and postcolonial language policies, became the most important lingua franca in the African countries of Kenya and Tanzania and is increasingly spoken as a mother tongue in the latter country.

(for Accra: Kropp Dakubu 1997; for Mombasa: Kresse 2009; information gathered by the author). However, the situation is different for each of these two urban languages: Ga is exclusively spoken in Accra (*ibid.*) and thus cannot fall back on any linguistic “hinterland” to keep the speaker community alive; instead, it had to compete particularly with Akan (Twi) on the language market, and lost its status as a lingua franca in that process. Mombasa, on the other hand, and KiMvita, the Swahili variety spoken in that city, are both part of an urban culture which stretches over the entire East African coast, from Mogadishu all the way down to Zanzibar. Moreover, the loss of the Swahili spoken in Mombasa is simply less conspicuous because it is treated as a dialect of Swahili, and thus slips beneath the radar of current linguistic debates about language documentation and language shift. While Ga continues to play a central role among the (ethnic) Ga and in the city quarters they dominate along the Atlantic coast, KiMvita seems to be disappearing even in Mombasa’s old town; there has not yet been any research about what variety of Swahili is replacing it.

The question then becomes: How is the “market value” of languages assessed under conditions of massive immigration found in both Accra and Mombasa? However, noteworthy youth languages or slang phenomena indicative of the substantial adoption or emergence of a “young” urban language (see below) can be observed neither in Mombasa nor in Accra. This is all the more remarkable as the powerful urban, youth language Sheng is spreading from Nairobi to all parts of Kenya, yet has so far been able to gain only a marginal foothold on the coast, even in the cities’ outer quarters dominated by immigrants. In my opinion, this indicates that two different and (so far) equally powerful urban paths of development are competing with each other, and that the decision in favour of one or the other has either not yet or only recently been made. With regard to Mombasa, this would mean that existing patterns of urbanization, thus spatio-structural processes shaping that city in a unique manner, will undergo changes; the question is how far-reaching such processes may be, and how much time they will take. On the other hand, these developments will depend on which city emerges successful in the age of globalization: Nairobi, the centre of political power still dominated by corrupt elites, or Mombasa, the economic centre that has been orienting itself toward the Indian Ocean, and thus toward the whole world, for a millennium.

Only “urban Wolof” has made a triumphant advance everywhere in Senegal, and is even widely used as a national lingua franca far beyond Dakar. In that process, it is displacing the other languages, with the result that some scholars are already talking about the “Wolofization” of the Senegal, or at least of Dakar (McLaughlin 1995, 2001, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Ngom

2004; Cruise O'Brien 1998). While the prestige today attributed to “urban Wolof” is largely due to that language’s long and successful history, it is doubtlessly also owed to its combination of urbanity and autonomous African modernity:

“It is the best way to communicate and the way we’ve always spoken,” a 68-year-old male teacher in a 2005 sociolinguistic interview opined of Dakar Wolof. Attitudes such as this reveal a climate of long-standing tolerance for the urban variety of Wolof that, I contend, has much to do with the status and prestige of Saint-Louis that lingers in the Senegalese popular imagination (McLaughlin 2008b: 731).

That is to say, the urban context of emergence itself already allows for a transfer into the contemporary context (McLaughlin 2008b) in which allusion is made to an *ethnie sénégalaise* or *ethnie urbaine* (McLaughlin 2001: 171).¹⁵ In the Senegal, we thus observe a linguistic development and continuity whose extent or validity with regard to both Dakar and Senegalese society as a whole still needs further clarification.

New Urban Languages

Since the first half of the twentieth century, the existence of autonomous slang phenomena has been reported from various cities – more precisely, from Johannesburg (Hurst 2009: 245) and Nairobi (Mazrui 1995: 173). We know by now that these were at least the harbingers of today’s “urban languages”; that is to say, they developed into important contemporary urban language phenomena referred to by that term. This is what can be deduced from the data currently available; future research will show whether additional such cases can be reconstructed. If we allow for some margin in terms of time, we can assume that the emergence of the “new” urban languages came along with colonial urbanization, which gained momentum at the beginning of the twentieth century. At any rate, these languages, just like the cities, have been definitely booming since at least the 1980s and thus are primarily related to an African, urban modernity.

These “new urban languages” include a specific group of urban languages, so-called “urban vernaculars” such as Town Bemba (Lusaka, Spitulnik 1998), chiHarare (Makoni et al. 2007), and the Krio vernacular spoken in Freetown (Mufwene 2001: 172, quoted in McLaughlin 2008b: 712). These

15 McLaughlin comments with regard to such concepts: “[T]he terms of the new paradigm are not forthcoming, but the terms of the old no longer mean what they once did” (McLaughlin 2001: 170).

cannot be related to any middlemen societies of precolonial trade networks, nor is there any relevant connection with youth languages or slang. Often they are named after the city where they are spoken.

The majority of languages are made up of varieties referred to by names that do not give any explicit clue to the respective cities. While they have a definite connotation of being youth languages, they are showing an increasing tendency to develop from youth languages into urban languages: Sheng in Nairobi (Ferrari 2004, 2006; Githinji 2006, 2008; Githiora 2002; Ogechi 2002, 2005a, 2005b); Lugha ya Mitaani in Dar es Salaam (Reuster-Jahn and Kießling 2007); the Tsotsitaal/Isicamtho complex in Cape Town and Johannesburg (Hurst 2009, 2010; Mesthrie 2008; Slabbert and Myers-Scotton 1996; Aycard 2010); Camfranglais or Français Élastique in the big cities of Cameroon (Féral 1993, 2006, 2009, 2010; Stein-Kanjora 2008; Tiewa 2010); Indoubil in Kinshasa (Goyvaerts 1986, 1988) and in Lubumbashi (Mulumba 2010); and Nouchi in Abidjan (Kube-Barth 2005, 2009). In addition, there is a growing body of literature on slang and youth languages that are found almost everywhere in Africa's larger cities, such as Ouagadougou (Prignitz 1994), Bamako (Dumestre 1985), Brazzaville (Massoumou 2006), Accra (Kropp Dakubu 2009) and Conakry (Abdourahmane Diallo, personal communication).

These languages, too, all have emerged against a multilingual backdrop, which becomes apparent from the influences of the colonial languages of English and French. It can generally be assumed that unlike the *koinés* (or pidgins), they did not emerge out of some communicative necessity. In all cases, alongside the languages that were introduced by the colonizers and are nowadays established at an official level (English, French, Portuguese), there was already a local lingua franca that was available to all city-dwellers, including newcomers, and that could be learned quite quickly even without formal education: Swahili in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Bemba in Lusaka, Shona in Harare, Afrikaans, Sotho, Nguni and Xhosa in Cape Town and Johannesburg, Lingala in Kinshasa, Wolof in Dakar, *Français Populaire* in Douala, Yaoundé and Abidjan. The new languages are based on these languages – that is, the latter provide both the grammar and a considerable proportion of the lexicon.¹⁶

The multilingual context is particularly evident in the lexical material, which enters into the languages via mechanisms such as extensive and routinized code-switching and pragmatically motivated borrowing. In that process, the giver languages are those that are represented in the city by its

16 It is interesting to note that there are no English-based youth languages, with one possible – and contested – exception, the “Engsh” documented in Nairobi (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997; Barasa 2010).

speakers but do not form the basis of the “new language” – that is, local languages such as Dholuo, Gikuyu, Kamba and Luhya in Nairobi; Pidgin English, Ewondo and Douala in Yaoundé; Douala, Dioula, Baoulé and Bété in Abidjan, etc. A particularly conspicuous feature is the incorporation of English, as well as of fragments from Portuguese, Spanish, and occasionally even German (for Nouchi, cf. Ahua 2009; for Camfranglais, Nitsobe et al. 2008). In this context, borrowing is not (or not exclusively) from English as the colonial language, but rather from American English, sometimes even marked as African-American and associated with an entire complex of connotations related to “gangsta”, rap and hip-hop. Particularly the local media pick up on this popular culture in their productions, thus providing modes of representation for people’s identification with their African-American “brothers” and the latter’s culture (for Sheng, e.g., see Samper 2002, 2004). The same applies to the emergence of Tsotsitaal in the 1930s (Hurst 2009: 245); spawned by the reception of American movies, that language also features the African-American theme (which, moreover, helps to establish or at least bolster the myth of the speakers’ criminal inclinations). The presence of certain emblems in French-dominated Bamako – several pieces of graffiti I saw in February 2010 sporting the word “money” – likewise points to this African-American, or maybe just simply globalized, connection. With regard to “urban Wolof” and current trends in its development, McLaughlin argues in a similar vein:

There are youth varieties of urban Wolof that nowadays incorporate many English borrowings, especially since the frontiers of Wolof migration have moved beyond Europe to the United States and to other places where English is the *lingua franca*. Young people are also fascinated by American hip-hop culture and freely borrow English expressions from it, as they did earlier from reggae music (McLaughlin 2008b: 731).

The fact that borrowing occurs from all these languages indicates that the speakers attach relevance to their linguistic competence as a symbol of their competence as urban cosmopolitans, or rather as a symbol of their own perception of that competence and their wish to present themselves as global citizens.¹⁷ We can thus safely assume that these loans signify participation in the various Western and African, “modern” and “traditional” societies, cultures and economies connoted by the borrowings,

17 See, however, Makoni et al. (2007: 34): “The defining feature of urban vernaculars is not merely that they are mixed languages, but that their individual speakers may not necessarily be able to develop full competence in each of the languages that make up the amalgam.”

which are thus most aptly characterized as icons of urbanism and modernity. This does not imply any “simple” absorption of some globalized modernity, but rather the reception and transformation of global compendia of knowledge and modes of representation within the concrete, local horizon of experience of the actors – more precisely, the speakers of the urban or youth languages.

Peter Githinji (2006) refers to such icons of Nairobi’s local linguistic geography as “Shibboleths” serving the purpose of marking the speakers’ affiliation with particular quarters of the city. While he focuses – in line with sociolinguistic tradition – on the undoubtedly relevant aspects of dissociation and “in-group” identification, “Shibboleths” can actually be viewed as quite the opposite as well: as markers of participation in, and integration into, global society. It is probably the specific choice and elaboration of such emblems that makes for the distinction between urban and youth languages; no case studies or comparative research have yet been done on this issue. The media play a crucial part in this context – movies, television, music, popular magazines and, with regard to younger people, increasingly the Internet as well – as they facilitate and structure this linkage between the local and the global.

The inclusion of African languages for purposes of distinction – be it between Sheng and Swahili or between Nouchi, Camfranglais and French – indicates that people reflect in a complex manner on their own African ancestry on the one hand and colonial heritage on the other. As a matter of fact, this reflection is given explicit expression in local rap, thus allowing the young musicians to position themselves simultaneously in both spheres (Samper 2004). This double positioning also gives rise to the type of moments of freedom considered relevant for the emergence of an autonomous modernity:

Local rap, informed by a global black popular culture, is yet another way that young Kenyans are forcing open those moments and spaces of freedom that allow for the redefinition of the self. [...] Kenyan young people are also attracted to rap music because it can be both local and global simultaneously (Samper 2004: 41).

Both local, ethnic contexts and global “black culture” models are viewed as prerequisites for the emergence of a “new” modernity:

One of the issues that they [the rappers] give voice to is the role of traditional culture in the lives and identities of young people. Rappers argue that an authentic Kenyan identity must also include elements from traditional culture. When rappers use Kiswahili and ethnic languages, they are trying to make this point. They are articulating a sen-

timent many young people have expressed time and again in interviews and in casual conversation: They do not want to abandon their traditions, their ethnicity, and their past. Although young Kenyans may be increasingly detribalized, their ethnic consciousness is still very important to them. As Poxi Presha said, “People do not want to lose their tradition, they still want it but in a modern way. They don’t want to lose the old, but they still want new things” [Poxi Presha 2000, personal communication]. Rap does this, it embodies tradition and modernity because it is part of the global world and at the same time expresses and reflects traditional elements and philosophy (Samper 2004: 43).

As compared to the Senegal where urbanization and modernity assume the form of Wolofization, a very different context is found in Nairobi, in which colonial practices of ethnification, as means to produce governable “others”, were retained after independence and still persist today, as is apparent, for example, from the riots in the wake of the presidential elections in December 2007. Back then, undercurrents of ethnification certainly existed, even in a predominantly urban population, the majority being young men. These sentiments could be stirred up in no time, and in a manner so intense that the resulting conflicts appeared to be ethnic on the surface, and thus could be used very efficiently to safeguard the interests of the ruling corrupt elites. It is remarkable, and a little disquieting, that despite its inclusive potential, Sheng in Kenya could be subject to re-ethnification in the sense that one occasionally hears things like “[There is] too much Gikuyu vocabulary in Sheng” (Solomon Waliaula, personal communication, February 2011).

With regard to Harare, Makoni et al. (2007) show in a case study that a migrant from Malawi cannot only avail himself of various everyday-language or “mixed” repertoires, but also manipulates these: He is addressed in chiChewa, the ethnic language, yet indignantly gives a reply in chiHarare. That way, he eludes ascription of ethnic identity by his colleagues at work:

In doing so, he both refuses to accept a socially ascribed Malawian ethnic identity (the foreign other) and claims the status he covets – not that of an ethnic Shona, nor even a Zimbabwean national, but a cosmopolitan urbanite. ChiHarare, which as a mixture of English and chiShona is distinct from both, allows him to do so (Makoni et al. 2007: 37).

For Abidjan, Kube-Barth (2009) describes how youths, in speaking some form of *Français Populaire* (most commonly Nouchi), disassociate themselves from the French language. She gives the following quotes from her interviews (2009: 111f):

Le français, n'est pas une langue ivoirienne. Ce sont les colons qui ont envoyé le français ici.

Je voudrais une langue qui serait restreinte à la Côte d'Ivoire. Le français est parlé au Mali, au Sénégal, partout, partout.

These quotes indicate that the young people use not only the city as a frame of reference, but definitely also the state/nation. The following statements are in the same vein:

Les jeunes voulaient une langue après le français pour se sentir plus à l'aise.

Le nouchi, c'est pas comme le français, il n'y a pas de censure. On laisse libre cours à la parole (ibid.).

A similar attitude is alluded to by the title of the article by Kießling and Mous (2006): "Vous nous avez donné le français mais nous sommes pas obligés de l'utiliser comme vous le voulez."

In addition, reflection on these issues in African youth languages is carried on at the level of linguistic structure and intensified, the intensification being a typical feature of youth languages in general. As a matter of fact, the speakers of all these languages are said to be extremely creative and playful, as becomes apparent from the borrowing of puns and syllable games such as Pig Latin (Verlan) and "backward talk" from the local African languages for purposes of re-creating and changing existing lexical material.¹⁸ Even though the speakers feel that their language competence is dwindling (as is documented e.g. in Kube-Barth 2009), they make use of precisely that knowledge, a fact that is indicative of the continuity of specialized language practices beyond grammar or lexicon.¹⁹

18 This has been documented for Nouchi (talking as fast as possible), Camfranglais and Sheng (Pig Latin/Verlan and metatheses). For a detailed discussion, see the chapter on language play in *Lugha ya Mitaani* in Reuster-Jahn and Kießling (2007).

19 In the literature, the linguistic creativity of the speakers of youth languages in particular is frequently tied up with discussions on the volatility and ephemeral nature of such languages' lexicon. All over the world, youth languages are associated with the rapid changes of their vocabularies and, in connection with this, also with the intensification of existing tendencies of language change or language development (e.g. Androutsopoulos 1998). There is a persistent opinion among Africanist linguists that changes in African youth languages are so pervasive and rapid that it is (almost?) impossible to describe the languages. However, there is as yet no empirical evidence of this. While it is true that lexica and some other aspects, usually relating to nominal morphology, are undergoing rapid change (Beck 2008; McLaughlin 2009a: 8), this affects a substantial proportion of neither the lexica nor the morphology and syntax.

However, controversies about the social appraisal of these varieties prominently link up with ambivalences concerning modernity and authenticity in the urban context.²⁰ This marks the main difference between urban languages and youth languages: While attitudes towards urban languages are mostly concerned with a loss of cultural “integrity” for which extensive borrowing or “mixing” of lexicon is taken as “proof” thereof, the depreciation of youth languages can be seen primarily in the light of negative views about youths and their manners of speech in general (Eckert 2003) and of African youths and their languages in particular (Honwana and De Boeck 2005). The disassociating self-ascription by the speakers of youth languages can be understood as a reaction to the adult world, which, moreover, is often viewed as a failure by African urban youths. Distancing is expressed, for example, by the ephemeral character and “unintelligibility” of these languages, as described above by means of use of secret-language mechanisms, or by rapid lexical changes. In the eyes of the speakers themselves, however, this reaction actually reverses the depreciation of their speech patterns into the opposite (“covert prestige”). These tendencies of dissociation are viewed with suspicion by teachers and parents, as well as by guardians of education and language purists.

We cannot rule out the possibility that some of the youth languages known today have their origins in the “criminal milieu”. This has been described for Sheng (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997) and Tsotsitaal (Hurst 2009: 248) but not, for example, for Camfranglais. However, evidence is not convincing, and we can thus assume that the ascription of social deviance and of the danger for society posed by the potential breach of norms is at least in line with society’s overall negative view of young people. In Swahili, for example, the term *mbuni* (pl. *wabuni*) is applied both to criminals and “young rowdies” or unemployed young men. As far as Southern Africa is concerned, the concept of “criminality” as used in Apartheid legislation has given rise to a sweeping criminalization of Africans; we must thus not be misled to apply this concept to the emergence of counterculture and autonomy in a context of oppression. Of course, unemployment and skin colour are not to be equated with criminality. However, this image is “cultivated”

20 It is possible that there are often implicit interferences with concerns about the boundedness and “purity” of African cultures; such concerns do exist in research design and in the relevant methodology of sociolinguistic studies. The scope and importance of the local echoes regarding this topic in the tradition of colonialism are unclear. I was approached about this issue in a discussion with students at a seminar on development cooperation and HIV/AIDS prevention (with a special reference to media production) held at the University of Windhoek, Namibia, in September 2007.

through the specific reception on the part of popular media, which provide fuel for the identification with and orientation toward the subcultures of (African) America – that is, countercultures to the established First World. From an insider's perspective, however, youth languages are often also about showing oneself off as a “real man” and as part of a community:

Like, people who speak Tsotsitaal, I'll say what kind of people are they? Maybe it's that thing of telling yourself, “Yes, I'm a guy”. And as a guy you meet and you mix with [other] guys. Then you find that, yes, correct, as you are mixing with guys you are a person who speaks this way. You take that and you understand that it must be... “OK...”. Again you hear someone speaking that way, you take that thing [what he said] and understand that, “OK...”. And Tsotsitaal, I mean what can I say?, it's something that can join together guys, I can say that – it's specific to guys. Cause when I speak that way, you understand/know “Eish, no, this guy is a guy; he's a lova, a gulova this one, sure! My dog,” you see. Just like that (Hurst 2009: 251).

It is thus no coincidence that Hurst calls Tsotsitaal a “stylect”, a term that encompasses not only language and language use but also the styles of clothing and moving, media preferences, and consumption habits associated with “Tsotsis”.

An ambivalence that can be interpreted as being representative of the ambivalence inherent in African societies' attitudes toward urbanity, and thus modernity, is also inherent in urban languages that have not emerged indirectly via youth languages. With regard to “urban Wolof”, McLaughlin comments:

For many speakers of urban Wolof, negative and positive attitudes toward the language can be held simultaneously. There is a general respect for *olof piir* and admiration for those who master it, but at the same time the covert prestige associated with speaking urban Wolof makes it highly appropriate as the language of the city and *olof piir* highly inappropriate in the same context (2009b: 74).

She reports that in 2005 the younger interviewees of her research in Dakar (under 30 years of age) were quite indifferent toward “urban Wolof” and not concerned about issues of cultural uprooting and lack of authenticity. Those between 45 and 70 years old even held a positive view of that variety, and stressed the fact that this was the language they had spoken all their lives (ibid.:75). In contrast, it was those aged 30 to 45 – that is, the group that came of age in the era of independence – who were most critical of “urban Wolof”; their objection “consisted of regret and loss of a coherent and authentic way of speaking that involved no French borrowings” (ibid.).

Last but not least, the ambivalence addressed in the present context is expressed in the discussion about the interrelationship between identity, ethnicity and urbanity. It is difficult to tell to what extent this discussion reflects either the speakers' own discourse or "classical" themes of sociolinguistics. Interestingly, Kube-Barth (2009) notes that multilingual contexts, due to the everyday experience of difference, are conducive to conversations about language, and foster a sophisticated awareness of language. On the one hand, the individual names given to urban language varieties signal their distinctness as compared to other languages; on the other, the scope of a unit of meaning – that is, a specific city – becomes defined and imbued with significance by them. In sociolinguistic terms, this is the actual "function" and *raison d'être* of urban languages: They are able to overcome the ethnifying difference with an urbanizing discourse that attributes a unifying effect to the use of a common language which is neither the colonial language nor the language of the postcolonial elites or a particular ethnic group. After all, experience has taught people in the cities that the persistent credo – that skills in a colonial language are an indispensable (though not sufficient) precondition for economic, social and cultural change – has long lost its validity (McLaughlin 2009a: 4). In such modernity, it is the city that is the point of reference, and not the nation-state, the country, or ethnic affiliation; however, people are at a loss for some vocabulary suited to express this.²¹

However, there is evidence of new developments in this respect. As has already been apparent in the case of Wolof in Senegal for some time, the urban languages are spreading beyond their cities of origin. Kube-Barth quotes young people who demand that Nouchi be given the status of a national language, as it can be associated with national awareness and national characteristics:

Moi, je pense qu'on doit se battre pour que le nouchi devienne la langue nationale parce qu'on a trop tendance à copier sur les occidentaux (Kube-Barth 2009: 110f).

There are similar calls with regard to Camfranglais, where that position is mainly actively promoted by a large diaspora on the Internet (Stein-Kanjora 2010). It is also notable that a Luo man who worked in Kisumu said he does not speak Swahili as a matter of principle, while talking Sheng is, of course, no problem (personal communication, Leipzig, May 2008). With this, he alluded to the "traditional" objection to Swahili among Luo people – a persistent reaction to the postcolonial language policy pursued immediately after independence, a policy that was in turn related to tribalist tendencies of

21 See also fn. 15.

the then-ruling Kenyatta government and the systematic marginalization of the Luo due to Gikuyu favouritism. Future research will have to show to what extent the concepts of modernity that have emerged in cities are being, or already have been, transferred onto state and nation, and what new definitions of statehood and nationality come along with that process.

Conclusions

In summary, it can be said that processes of urbanization extend even to language structures. Urbanization includes and produces structuration processes autonomously; at the same time, this includes autonomous language practices which are reflected as sediments of everyday knowledge in language and thus create the instruments needed for facilitating and generalizing such urbanization and the resulting urbanity of its speakers.

In this conceptual context, two large phases of urbanization can be distinguished in Africa. The first phase is related to trade networks and cultural *métissage* of small groups of middlemen. The second phase, characterized by efforts to deal with Africa's colonial history and to catch up with "the world", presses ahead with the development of an autonomous, authentic modernity. With regard to language structure, the absorption of large amounts of loans into a basic language can be observed in both cases. Looked at in detail, the local contexts and conditions of urbanization densify and emerge as intrinsically logical paths of development. Older urban languages such as Swahili (along the East African coast) and so-called "urban Wolof" (Saint-Louis) are products, sometimes a millennium old, of trade relationships with the Indian Ocean or Europe. More recent developments, so-called "urban vernaculars", are mostly found in Southern Africa – documented are Town Bemba (Lusaka) and chiHarare (Harare). Besides these, urban languages such as Sheng (Nairobi), Tsotsitaal (Cape Town), Iscamtho (Johannesburg), Indoubil (Kinshasa, Lubumbashi), Nouchi (Abidjan) and Camfranglais (Douala, Yaoundé) can be viewed as generalizations of youth languages, which themselves are evidence of the tremendous social and cultural importance of this age group as observable in the sediment of speech.

The reconstruction of the development undergone by more recent and older urban languages raises further questions about the urbanization paths taken and their meaning in both a national and global context. With regard to the hypothesis on language as a sediment and instrument of processes of structuration, the question arises as to the connotations of urbanization and modernization in contemporary Africa: on the one hand, dissociation from colonial legacies as well as from the postcolonial political elites, impotent

administrations, and tribalist instrumentalizations of language and language policies; on the other, quite the reverse – the creation of autonomous African modernities that include the city (and the state), brought about by the interplay of both local dynamics and global flows.

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Stadtsprachen in Afrika

Zusammenfassung: Vor dem Hintergrund aktueller Stadtforschung sowie der Konzeption von Sprache/Sprechen als Wissenssediment und Praxis wird davon ausgegangen, dass Stadtsprachen als Ressourcen und Resultate der Vergesellschaftung des urbanen Raumes anzusehen sind. In diesem konzeptuellen Rahmen können für Afrika zwei große Phasen der Urbanisierung unterschieden werden: Eine, die – noch präkolonial – mit Handelsnetzwerken und kultureller *métissage* in Verbindung zu bringen ist, und eine,

die sich an der kolonialen Geschichte Afrikas und dem Anschluss an “die Welt” abarbeitet und die Entwicklung einer eigenständigen, authentischen Moderne vorantreibt. Die Rekonstruktion der Entwicklungswege insbesondere neuerer Stadtsprachen wirft Fragen hinsichtlich der Konnotationen auf, die mit Urbanisierung und Modernisierung im zeitgenössischen Afrika einhergehen: der Abgrenzung von kolonialen Erbschaften wie der postkolonialen politischen Eliten, ohnmächtigen Verwaltungen, tribalistischen Instrumentalisierungen von Sprache, aber umgekehrt auch der Produktion eigenständiger, Stadt (und Staat) einbeziehender afrikanischer Modernitäten in der Auseinandersetzung mit der eigenen Geschichte wie auch globaler ökonomischer, politischer, kultureller und sozialer Strömungen.

Schlagwörter: Afrika, Afrikanische Sprachen, Sprachenentwicklung, Großstadt