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# **Primary education in Senegal in the age of multilingualism: issues, challenges and prospects**

Jean Christophe FAYE, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal)

E-mail: [jeanbbchrist@gmail.com](mailto:jeanbbchrist@gmail.com)

## **Abstract**

The work is devoted to the issues, challenges and prospects of teaching in Senegalese primary schools. In other words, it deals with the language policy of the State of Senegal on teaching in national languages and/or foreign languages in a context dominated by the implementation of numerous projects and the realization of programs aiming at improving the quality of education. Senegal is a West African country in which several languages, some of which Seereer, Wolof, Pular, Joola etc. that belong to the West Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family are spoken. Beside these languages, there are foreign ones some of which French, that is the official language and English which has started being promoted. However, these languages are always in contact, mainly in schools and universities where they are spoken. In so doing, the languages which are taught or in which subjects are taught at schools, mainly at primary schools are in the scope of the study. Thus, the objective of this work is to highlight this linguistic policy and to see the different categories of the language policy in this educational cycle and the challenges of teaching in national languages in the Senegalese educational system. To collect, process and analyze data, we tried to do research related to the teaching in national languages or of national languages and the educational system. Field surveys, interviews and questionnaires were carried out with state and educational actors. The present research has shown that there are some issues, challenges and prospects due to the decisions of the government to implement some local languages and English language teaching in public primary school. Through the contact of these languages, some interference, transfer, code switching, etc. have been noticed. Local languages intervene at the grammatical, morphological, syntactic, phonological levels, etc.

**Keywords:** challenge, education, language policy, prospects, teaching.

## **L'enseignement primaire au Sénégal à l'ère du multilinguisme : enjeux, défis et perspectives**

## **Résumé**

Cet ouvrage est consacré aux enjeux, défis et perspectives de l'enseignement dans les écoles primaires sénégalaises. En d'autres termes, il traite de la politique linguistique de l'État sénégalais en matière d'enseignement dans les langues nationales et/ou étrangères, dans un contexte marqué par la mise en œuvre de nombreux projets et la réalisation de programmes visant à améliorer la qualité de l'éducation. Le Sénégal est un pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest où sont parlées plusieurs langues, dont le seereer, le wolof, le pular, le joola, etc., qui appartiennent à la branche ouest-atlantique de la famille des langues nigéro-congolaises. Outre ces langues, il existe des langues étrangères, dont le français, qui est la langue officielle, et l'anglais, qui a commencé à être promu. Cependant, ces langues sont toujours en contact, principalement dans les écoles et les universités où elles sont parlées. Ce faisant, les langues qui sont enseignées ou dans lesquelles les matières sont enseignées dans les écoles, principalement dans les écoles primaires, font l'objet de l'étude. Ainsi, l'objectif de ce travail est de mettre en évidence cette politique linguistique et d'examiner les différentes catégories de la politique linguistique dans ce cycle éducatif, ainsi que les défis liés à l'enseignement dans les langues nationales au sein

du système éducatif sénégalais. Afin de collecter, traiter et analyser les données, nous avons mené des recherches sur l'enseignement dans les langues nationales ou des langues nationales et sur le système éducatif. Des enquêtes de terrain, des entretiens et des questionnaires ont été réalisés auprès d'acteurs étatiques et éducatifs. La présente recherche a montré qu'il existe certains problèmes, défis et perspectives liés aux décisions du gouvernement de mettre en œuvre l'enseignement de certaines langues locales et de l'anglais dans les écoles primaires publiques. Le contact entre ces langues a donné lieu à certaines interférences, transferts, changements de code, etc. Les langues locales interviennent aux niveaux grammatical, morphologique, syntaxique, phonologique, etc.

**Mots clés :** défi, éducation, politique linguistique, perspectives, enseignement.

## Introduction

The article deals with the issues, challenges and prospects of teaching language in Senegalese primary schools. Senegal is a West African country in which several languages are spoken. Among these languages, there are Seereer, Wolof, Pular, Joola etc. Beside these languages, there are foreign ones some of which French, that is the official language and English which has started being promoted. However, these languages are always in contact, mainly in schools and universities; where they are spoken. This pushed the Senegalese government to implement a system aiming at updating the language policy on the teaching in national languages and/or foreign languages in a context dominated by the implementation of numerous projects and the realization of programs aiming at improving the quality of education.

The debate on language policy in postcolonial Senegal is particularly acute since our country has still been facing the challenges of building a school that is sufficiently effective to develop the capacities of young people and the country's vital forces to meet the linguistic challenges that arise on a global scale. In this regard, the question of the language of instruction at school and the place of professions in education and training systems are major issues that cannot be ignored at the risk of compromising Senegal's development prospects. Thus, there is a contact of languages in the Senegalese educational system, mainly with the implementation of the program aiming to introduce the teaching and learning of some local languages (Seereer, Wolof and Pulaar) and of English in primary school. This program raises a lot of issues related to the language of instruction in this level of education. In which language (s) are subjects going to be taught and what will be the linguistic and grammatical consequences of the language transfer in primary school where there are only kids of less than fifteen years old?

Thus, the objective of the work is to highlight this linguistic policy and to see the different categories of the language policy in this educational cycle and the challenges of teaching in national languages in the Senegalese educational system. In addition, it aims at showing the advantages and drawbacks of teaching in national or foreign languages in Senegalese primary schools in a multilingual context.

However, this language policy of the State of Senegal raises a lot of issues, challenges and prospects. It also has some advantages in the educational system and in the development of the country. Through the study, we have also noticed that local languages interfere in the teaching and learning of English in the grammatical, morphological, phonological, syntactic etc. aspects. This interference is caused by lot of parameters and has several consequences in the teaching and learning of languages.

## **1. Research Methodology**

### **1.1. Data Collection**

- **Primary Sources**

The methodological framework of the work is composed of data collection, data processing and data presentation. For the collection of data, there are two types of sources: the primary sources and the secondary sources. The former involve direct interaction with the sources to gather new information. For this, a structured approach using questionnaires (twenty questions) was organized. This approach involves direct conversations with students, teachers and the other educational actors to gather in depth information, which is structured in the present work. Thus, it is important to mention that we used a quantitative methodology to collect data. Therefore, we used questionnaires to gather as much information as possible from the teachers and students. However, this didn't prevent us from using qualitative data methodology whenever we deemed it appropriate, especially to verify certain information.

In the questionnaires, we tried to take into account a certain number of factors but also external parameters that could arouse the motivation of the learners, consolidate it, stimulate it... Our interest was also focused on the methodological approaches of the teachers and their professionalism. The five teachers who were interviewed were selected from two Senegalese primary schools, in Kaolack region where French, English, and local languages are taught. They were given a questionnaire of twenty questions. After this questionnaire some of them were asked some direct questions regarding pupils' studies and the conversations were recorded.

- **Secondary Sources**

As for the secondary sources, they are composed of documents reviews consisting in analyzing existing documents, records, and reports to extract relevant information about the Senegalese educational system and the teaching and learning of foreign and local languages. Some data about the Senegalese language policy were also gathered from various sources such as government agencies and research institutions. In addition, some published research papers, books and articles were reviewed to gather information about language policy and education system in general.

### **1.2. Data processing**

After collecting data, two methods were carried out to process these data: the lemmatization which proceeds from a syntactic and, at the same time, paradigmatic approach and corresponds to technical constraints and the reduction which naturally fits within the framework of lemmatization, but it is not limited to it. It is possible, for example, to design a lexical analysis following a content analysis. After reading the corpus and reducing the texts to a set of mental representations, lexical analysis can be done. These sets of collected and processed data provide an overview of languages and language policy of the educational system in Senegal. The data are made up of sentences, paragraphs, speeches, etc. adapted, elaborated and analyzed in the current paper. Thus, after collecting and processing data, we have moved on to data analysis and ended up with the following results that are discussed in the following part.

## **2. Results and Discussions**

In assessing some primary school teachers and learners' perceptions on multilingualism in Senegalese primary schools, the findings show that Primary Education in Senegal in the Age of Multilingualism raises a lot issues, challenges and prospects. In general, Senegalese education system tends to be monolingual and focuses on teaching (in) French language and its affiliated literacy systems, whereas most of the learners speak their family languages which are mainly different from French.

## 2.1. Issues

Multilingualism is a key concept in applied linguistics that is defined by scholars in different ways and refers to the ability to understand, use, and communicate in more than one language by an individual "who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)" (Li, 2008, p. 4). This phenomenon has been investigated from a variety of perspectives and is increasingly being recognized as a social asset that brings a range of benefits to individuals and societies.

In Senegalese primary school, the question of multilingualism has occupied a very important place in so far as almost all the pupils emanate from different families with different languages. We have pointed out that, in one of the schools under study, ten (10) pupils speak Seereer, five (05) speak Pulaar, fifteen (15) can speak Wolof, two (02) Bambara, three (03) Joola, three (03) Mandinka and two (02) Soninke. Thus, a lot of issues have been raised in different sides.

### ✓ *Teacher's voice*

The teacher's voice is one of the most striking issues of multilingualism in Senegalese primary school education. All the interviewed teachers (five) are from different families and speak, at least, one or two or several local languages. This, most of the time, causes a linguistic interference in the grammatical, morphological, phonological, semantic, syntactic, etc. levels, according to the conversations and interviews we organized with them.

**At the grammatical level**, after recording the conversation, we can say that the striking interference that has been noticed is in the noun and verb phrases. Studies conducted on local languages have shown that they (local languages) have noun classes. A noun class is essentially defined by a "noun prefix" inseparable from the noun constituent; a "pronominal class marker"; and the "nature of the initial base consonant," which varies from one class to another. The noun system and consonant alternation are the most important points in some of our local language grammars.

**At the morphological level**, we have also pointed out an interference of local languages in the teaching in primary schools. Senegalese local languages are agglutinative languages. Agglutination is a grammatical process in which words are composed of a sequence of morphemes (meaningful word elements), each of which represents no more than a single grammatical category. This term is traditionally used in the typological classification of languages. An agglutinative language is a language in which words are made up of a linear sequence of distinct morphemes, and each component of meaning is represented by its own morpheme. However, this leads some teachers to incorrectly form words in foreign languages such as French, English, etc.

As far as **the syntactic level** is concerned, during the interview, we have noticed that the structure of local languages interferes when some teachers are speaking French or English. However, it is important to note that classes have been being done in French since the colonial period. French is a language that uses the subject-verb-object (SVO) structure in both affirmative and negative sentences. Furthermore, in the noun phrase, the determiner always precedes the noun, which determines whether it is in indefinite or definite form. In local languages, the definite part always follows the noun.

- |                 |               |              |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| ➤ (a) O tew oxe | (b) jigeen ji | (c) la femme |
| c.m- woman- def | Woman-def     | def- woman   |
| "the woman"     | "the woman"   | "the woman"  |

The examples, we found through our research, show that there is a difference in the way local and foreign languages structure their words. In several Senegalese local languages, the definite form (definite determiner) is always placed after the determined noun, whereas in

French or English, it is always placed before the noun. This structure causes a lot of difficulties to some teachers. But the most striking issue related to the teacher's voice in primary education is at the phonological level.

**At the phonological level**, phonology is the branch of linguistics concerned with the study of speech sounds with reference to their distribution and patterning. It aims to discover the principles that govern the way sounds are organized in languages and to explain the variations that occur. The pronunciation of sounds is the most noticeable point of teachers' voice in teaching at primary schools. The sounds of local languages interfere when learning or teaching French or English or any other foreign language. There are some sounds in French that do not exist in local languages, which causes difficulties in their pronunciation. The conversations we recorded from some interviewed teachers show that they face these problems and tend to use the local pronunciation for these sounds. In other words, they pronounce /v/ sound /w/ and for /j /; /z/; /ʃ/, they often say / s/ ex: Zachary (Sakari); Charles (Sarlo); Joseph (Sosef).

Furthermore, the pronunciation of words composed of two or more than two consonants at the initial, mainly consonants such as **st**, **sp**, etc. causes a lot of difficulties to teachers and this mispronunciation of such words impacts on the pupils learning and speaking.

In addition, there are some letters that exist in local and foreign languages but whose pronunciations are different. It is the case of the letter "c", which is pronounced / s/ or /k/ or /tʃ/ in English or French, depending on the following letters. But in local languages, it is pronounced like /tʃ/ in all cases; in other words, whatever the following letters may be. The pronunciation of "s" in mid or final position also causes some confusion and misunderstanding, for it is pronounced /z/ when it is placed between two vowels (mid position) or when it is preceded by a voiced consonant sound or vowel sound (final position). When it is in initial position or between a consonant and a vowel or preceded by a voiceless sound, it is pronounced /s/. In most of local languages such as Seereer, Wolof, Pulaar, etc. it is pronounced /s/ whatever its position in the sentence may be. French language also uses double consonants such as "**ch**", "**th**", "**st**"; "**sp**", etc. in initial position, whereas Senegalese local languages do not use these double consonants in such position. However, teachers do not face any difficulty when pronouncing prenasals sounds such as /mb/; /nd/; /ng/; /nq/; /nj/, etc. in local languages.

Thus, some languages such as Wolof can use double consonants in final position. Ex: *jàmm* (peace), *lakk* (burn). But other languages such as Seereer do not use double consonants at all. In other words, Seereer language uses double consonants neither in initial position nor in mid nor in final positions. So, the fact that most of Senegalese local languages do not use such double consonants in initial position causes a lot of pronunciation difficulties when learning or teaching in the foreign languages.

Apart from the issues related to the grammatical, morphological, syntactic and phonological levels, the teacher's voice has an impact on the learning and behavior of pupils. Teachers have their own cultures and belong to communities which might be different from learners' and that, most of the time, impact on pupils' ways of speaking in so far, in Senegal, several teachers' communities are identified by the way these teachers speak. Some communities are identified by their heavy voice, others by their low voice, and others by their tone language. So, there are some learners who imitate the teacher's voice and others who face difficulties understanding the teacher's explanations due to their voice or their way of speaking or pronouncing words.

### ✓ **Classroom management**

Hanke Korpershoek & al (2016) define classroom management as the fact of creating, inviting and appealing environments for student learning. They say that classroom management strategies (CMS) are tools that the teachers can use to help create such an environment, ranging

from activities to improve teacher–student relationships to rules to regulate student behavior. Only when the efforts of management fail should teachers have to resort to reactive, controlling strategies. Evertson and Weinstein (2006) referred in their definition of classroom management to the actions teachers take to create a supportive environment for the academic and social-emotional learning of students.

Thus, the classroom management in the era of multilingualism is not an easy task in the Senegalese primary school education. Pupils emanate from different families with different languages. In one of the visited classrooms in Kaolack region, we have pointed out that ten (10) pupils speak Seereer, five (05) speak Pulaar, fifteen (15) can speak Wolof, two (02) Bambara, three (03) Joola, three (03) Mandinka and two (02) Soninke. In addition, almost all of them cannot speak French, the language in which they are supposed to be taught and their teacher can only speak Joola and French. So, according to the teacher, the linguistic management of this classroom is not easy at all.

Teachers, sometimes, resort to other means of communication such as *language in situation*, which is the language that accompanies action, “here and now”. It is often accompanied by gestures, mimicry, signs, which reinforce and complete the spoken words. It is a language that is used a lot in primary school education. So, according to the persons we interviewed, when teachers want to talk to some pupils, they often use their languages accompanied by actions. Others would often use gestures or mimicries to be understood. In addition, some learners would resort to gestures to discuss or exchange one other or when they want to go out to satisfy a need.

However, the leading problem that the classroom teachers encounter in classroom management is students’ talking without permission (Şanlı 2019: 289). It is also indicated the readiness levels of pupils in Senegalese primary school education are being low and students do not listen to the teacher during the lessons. They do not focus their attention on the lesson and are always complaining about one another all the time. Their being allowed to go to the bathroom too many times constitute one of the behaviors which affect classroom management in a bad way. In this cycle of education, it takes a long time for several pupils to learn their responsibilities towards the class and school, the classroom rules, and being able to live together. Senegalese primary school children need the guidance of their teachers to protect the order in the classroom and fulfil the responsibilities of their own for ensuring the teacher or administration order or recommendation.

The codeswitching, which can be defined as the practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation or context, is also one of the most striking phenomena in Senegalese primary school education in the era of multilingualism.

### ✓ *Teaching strategies*

Several strategies are used in teaching pupils in Senegalese primary schools with multicultural classrooms. Some teachers are aware of the different communication rules, behaviors, verbal and non- verbal codes that may belong to the various cultures represented in their classrooms. They explicit them in order to avoid misunderstandings and communication problems. One of the interviewed teachers said that, at the beginning of classes they explain the cultural differences present in the classroom to all pupils in order to avoid conflicts and if there is any, they will professionally mediate and try to manage it.

Furthermore, a lot of teachers use strategies of cooperative learning that foster collaboration and exchange among pupils and they mainly highlight the value of the contribution of every single pupil in the classroom. They help them relate what they know about themselves and their own culture to the new knowledge they are acquiring in the multicultural classroom. As we said above, some teachers use a language which is often accompanied by gestures, mimicry, signs, that reinforce and complete the spoken words. They can also make

extensive use of non-verbal language, particularly useful in cases where verbal communication is difficult or impossible.

As for other teachers, they resort to foster activities aiming to deconstruct the ethnocentric attitude of pupils. They also use “differentiated instruction”, which is, according to Ravindra Shukla & al (2025, p.54), one of the most critical strategies for addressing the needs of students with varying levels of language proficiency in multilingual classrooms. Some teachers use simplified texts for beginner language learners while offering more advanced tasks to pupils with higher proficiency. Teachers also provide alternative assessments, such as visual projects or oral presentations, which allow pupils to demonstrate understanding even if their writing skills in the target language are limited.

Other strategies such as dividing pupils into multicultural groups or peer-tutoring when doing activities like problem-solving are also used in Senegalese primary education to practice language skills in meaningful multilingual contexts. One interviewed teacher said that they sometimes let some pupils resort to a practice where they fluidly switch between their native and target languages to maximize comprehension and communication between them.

Primary education in Senegal in the era of multilingualism raises a lot of issues and we have pointed out, through our research, that the most striking ones are related to the teacher’s voice, the classroom management and the teaching strategies. Besides these issues, a lot of challenges have been noticed.

## **2.2. Challenges**

Senegalese primary education system has typically been centralized and has imposed standard forms of national curriculum and language education choices on learners. This system of education faces a lot of challenges in the multilingualism era.

### **✓ Cultural adaptation and learning styles**

French has been the language of instruction in post-colonial Senegalese schools for years. In other words, Senegalese education system is generally monolingual and focuses on teaching French and in French language and its affiliated literacy systems, whereas the most disadvantaged learners speak local languages and their cultures are identified with different languages. However, almost all the pupils at primary school cannot speak French, mainly those who have just started learning. They are from different cultures with local languages as their mother tongues.

Furthermore, one of the most striking challenges of Senegalese primary education in multilingualism era related to cultural adaptation is that minority languages are often stigmatized by majority community speakers, and speakers of these languages sometimes internalize external prejudices against their languages. There is also a high correlation between poverty, remoteness, indigeneity, and ethnic languages.

A scholar said that, for minority populations, schooling involves many hurdles and difficult transitions, far greater than majority language learners are required to negotiate. These include a requirement to master, gain literacy in, and acquire academic content typically not in their mother tongues or home languages, as it should have been done, but through French, the official language, and to then acquire this Indo-European language. The mother tongue is often neglected or treated superficially in Senegalese primary education, and has started being stigmatized in some communities. French, the official language, is required and given dominant status; and as a foreign language, it is imposed as a formal requirement and benefits from prestige associations of various kinds, usually its links to economic mobility and higher education.

Yet, it is generally stated that children learn to read best in a new language if they have a strong literacy foundation in their mother tongue or in their first language. The key basis of this is essentially that of conceptual transfer, meaning the non-linguistic transfer of skills and

knowledge acquired in one language to another. The non-applying of this principle causes the failure of some education systems, and as a result, thousands of the neediest children give up schooling because of inappropriate language of instruction practices.

For hundreds of children, the languages of their cultural worlds are stratified and hierarchically organized. So, a neglected and often stigmatized mother tongue or first language can negatively impact on their primary education, mainly in the proficiency of French, the language (in which) they are taught.

### ✓ *Language proficiency*

Language proficiency has become a great challenge in the Senegalese primary education system. Most of Senegalese communities are often speakers of local languages and demand the bridge to French or English proficiency be offered early in schooling. Yet, for some indigenous and other minority language children, this press for early French or English has often a deeply negative effect of restricting the curriculum space allocated to mother tongue development.

Thus, the research we have conducted in primary education has also shown that in Senegal, almost all the pupils attend schools where their home or community language is never taught, with deleterious consequences for their persistence in learning, their attainment of literacy ability and for their general academic achievements, provoking educational failure, school dropout, social conflict, etc. In addition, this fact can cause several problems in the language acquisition and can more precisely impact on the language proficiency.

Disparity also constitutes one of the most significant challenges of language proficiency. Jim Cummins said that students who do not achieve sufficient proficiency in both their native and target languages may struggle academically and socially (Cummins, 2000, p.120). As for Ravindra & al (2025, p.54), multilingual classrooms also face socio-political challenges. In many countries, monolingual education policies dominate, leaving little room for recognizing or incorporating the linguistic and cultural diversity of students. However, the most leading aspects of language proficiency in Senegalese primary school education are: *Vocabulary knowledge*; *Morphosyntactic knowledge*; *grammar knowledge* and *Oral text comprehension*.

- **Vocabulary Knowledge**

Vocabulary knowledge is defined as the depth of vocabulary that brings up to the extent to which the word is understood by speakers. Vocabulary knowledge also means students learn the words with deep meaning, including pronunciation, meaning, spelling, frequency, sound structure, syntax and collocation according to context (Qian, 2002).

It is one of the most striking challenges of language proficiency in Senegalese primary school education. Pupils have been being taught in French language, which is not their mother tongue or first language, since the colonial period. Beside the French language, the English language has also started being taught at school. So, the linguistic diversity causes a vocabulary knowledge problem in so far as learners mix words or resort to code switching to express themselves. Some teachers use pictures to teach vocabulary. The teacher can utter a word and show a picture corresponding to the word. This method of teaching facilitates the learners understanding. Other teachers, sometimes, resort to language translation or interpretation. They can utter a French or English word and afterwards translate or interpret it into one of the local languages, depending on the place where the school is located.

- **Morphosyntactic knowledge**

Morphosyntactics studies grammatical categories and linguistic units that have both morphological and syntactic properties. In its proscriptive form, morphosyntactics describes the set of rules that govern linguistic units whose properties are definable by both morphological and syntactic paradigms. Thus, morphosyntactics establishes a common framework for oral and written language that guides the process of externally encoding ideas produced in the mind.

Speech is an important vehicle for exchanging thoughts, and phonetics also has a significant influence on oral communication (De Luise, 2012, p.167).

Thus, this morphosyntactics plays a crucial role in language proficiency, which requires a mastering of the formation and structure of words. But this French morphosyntactics is often influenced by the morphological and syntactic properties of local languages most of which are agglutinative. An agglutinative language, as we said above, is a language in which words are made up of a linear sequence of distinct morphemes, and each component of meaning is represented by its own morpheme. However, this leads learners to incorrectly form words in foreign languages such as French and English. Furthermore, the pronunciation of words composed of two or more than two consonants at the initial, mainly consonants such as **st**, **sp**, etc. causes a lot of difficulties to learners and the mispronunciation of such words impacts on the pupils learning and speaking.

➤ Ex: **stade**, they pronounce it “**estade**”, **sport**, they say “**esport**”

We have also noticed that the structure of local languages interferes when pupils are speaking French or English. However, it is important to note that classes have been being done in French since the colonial period. French is a language that uses the subject-verb-object (SVO) structure in both affirmative and negative sentences. Furthermore, in the noun phrase, the determiner always precedes the noun, which determines whether it is in indefinite or definite form. In local languages, the definite part always follows the noun. Pupils also make grammatical errors which go against the rules, but do not hinder understanding the information. They include sentence fragments, run-on sentences, confused words, homophones, and erroneous punctuation. Grammar is the main issue in non-native writing, with errors in adjectives, adverbs, articles, nouns, possession, pronouns, prepositions, verbs, spelling, capitalization and punctuation affecting the content.

### 3. Prospects

In spite the issues and challenges of Senegalese primary education in the age of multilingualism, there are several prospects that can be highlighted.

#### ✓ **Teachers**

The role of the teacher is of fundamental importance in achieving the goal in the multilingual and multicultural classroom context. They should be aware of the different communication rules, behaviors, verbal and non-verbal codes that may belong to the various cultures represented in the classroom. In addition, he/she should explicit them in order to avoid misunderstandings and communication problems and explain the cultural differences present in the classroom to all pupils in order to avoid conflicts.

Teachers also can integrate the teaching of vocabulary and reading practice in the context of writing. Since the writing process can provide a space for learners to think about the words that correspond to convey their ideas. This is in contrast to the speech that requires immediate reaction to convey ideas. Thus, teachers can combine exercise in a receptive and productive to improve the mastery of words that have been taught in their writings. Learning vocabulary directly by setting the number of target words to be learned can be an advantage and increase learner's focus on learning a foreign language.

They can also use strategies of cooperative learning that foster collaboration, exchange among students and highlight the value of the contribution of every single student in the classroom and help students relate what they know about themselves and their own culture to the new knowledge they will acquire in the multicultural classroom. They work with the class on elements of cultural backgrounds that may present differences: concept of time and space, the relationship between body and space, meaning of gestures.

Teaching and learning that focused on the target words will be able to improve learners' mastery of vocabulary effectively. Teachers support also serve as a catalyst to encourage learners to use new words in their writing without fear or shame. Factors such as motivation, desire and environmental support should also be given attention to ensure successful use of productive vocabulary knowledge. In addition, knowledge in productive vocabulary knowledge aspects also provides information and guidelines for teachers in developing appropriate instruments to measure the level of knowledge of students about words, its form and use.

### ✓ **Government**

The State leaders constitute some of the most important actors that cannot be ignored at the risk of compromising Senegal's primary school education prospects in the era of multilingualism. The Senegalese Government have implemented a program aiming at introducing the teaching and learning of some local languages (Seereer, Wolof and Pulaar) and of English in primary school education.

This program will help face the issues of education in multilingual and multicultural contexts. That is, French and English are compulsory for all the pupils whereas, for local languages, the choice of the language depends on the area in which the school is implemented. In some areas, beside French and English, Seereer will be used as a language of instruction and in others, Wolof or Pulaar. However, as Wolof is the most spoken language in Senegal, it is implemented in several areas.

The Government should invest in teacher training, which is crucial for equipping educators with the skills needed to manage multilingual and multicultural classrooms. Professional development programs should focus on strategies like differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and the integration of cultural and linguistic diversity into teaching.

The Government should also make use of a project that will aim at improving the learning and teaching conditions in primary schools. In addition, they should revise the syllabi, implement strategies of cooperative learning that foster collaboration and exchange among students. Furthermore, the Government should create a program that promotes the contact and relations between languages and cultures and try to strengthen the teaching and learning strategies.

Governments and educational institutions should prioritize the creation and distribution of multilingual teaching materials. These resources could include textbooks in multiple languages, digital learning tools, and culturally relevant content that reflect the linguistic diversity of the classroom. Educational policies must be reformed to support multilingual education. This, as a scholar said, includes recognizing the value of minority and indigenous languages in formal education and developing policies that encourage multilingualism as a standard rather than an exception. Schools should engage with parents to explain the benefits of multilingualism, showing how it enhances cognitive development, academic performance, and global competitiveness.

### **Conclusion**

The question of the place of local and foreign languages in Senegalese primary school education constitutes one of the major issues that cannot be left stranded at the risk of undermining the real development in Senegal. A constant has appeared in the linguistic policy carried out in our country since the dawn of independence. Senegal has always been considered and continues to be considered to be a French -speaking country. However, teaching local and English languages in primary schools, in the era of multilingualism has become a necessity in Senegal for years.

That is, several issues, challenges and prospects have been noticed. Primary education in Senegal in the era of multilingualism raises a lot of issues and we have pointed out, through our research, that the most striking ones are related to the teacher's voice, the classroom

management and the teaching and learning strategies. Besides these issues, a lot of challenges have been noticed. For the challenges, we have pointed out that some of the most striking challenges of Senegalese primary education in multilingualism era is related to cultural adaptation which impacts on minority languages often stigmatized by majority community speakers, and speakers of these languages sometimes internalize external prejudices against their languages.

The research we have conducted has also shown that in Senegal, almost all the pupils attend schools where their home or community language is never taught, with deleterious consequences for their persistence in learning, their attainment of literacy ability and for their general academic achievements, provoking educational failure, school dropout, social conflict, etc. In addition, this fact can cause several problems in the language acquisition and can more precisely impact on the language proficiency. Beside the issues and challenges of multilingualism, several prospects related to the teacher strategies, government decisions, parent involvement, educational policies, etc. have also been dealt with in the current study.

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[www.lakisa.larsced.cg](http://www.lakisa.larsced.cg)

[revue.lakisa@larsced.cg](mailto:revue.lakisa@larsced.cg)

[revue.lakisa@umng.cg](mailto:revue.lakisa@umng.cg)

BP : 237, Brazzaville-Congo