

Language and spatiality in urban Mozambique: Ex-colonial language spread “from below”

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Abstract

Theoretically positioned within critical sociolinguistics this study combines census data from a forty years period, linguistic diaries and ethnographies of 24 young Mozambicans to probe into the dynamics invigorated by ex-colonial language spread in postcolonial times. The study foregrounds language and spatiality. Showcasing Mozambique, the paper uses these multilevel data to describe the changes to the linguistic ecology of Mozambicans living in urban spaces in and around Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique. These urban spaces have seen growing disparities between the wealthier and the poorer, alongside infrastructure development and gentrification as part of a growing and increasingly globalizing economy. The study shows how Portuguese does not replace African languages but broadens the repertoires and how the former colonial language has not remained a static entity but has acquired new social functions and has become endogenized in a radically different ecology of monolingual and fluid multilingual practices. Despite its new social functions, the former colonial language nonetheless retains its symbolic power and inculcates self-censorship which leave Mozambican youth in urban spaces with a perceived shrinking space for the expression of African sociocultural practices even in the most intimate spaces of social life.

Key words: Mozambique, ex-colonial language spread, repertoires, lived experience, self-censorship, spatiality, multilingual practices.

1. Introduction

This study explores the dynamics invigorated by ex-colonial language spread in postcolonial times. The setting is the multicultural and multilingual matrix of Mozambique and urban spaces in and around the capital city Maputo. The study is multilevel and gives an account of ex-colonial language spread “from below” looking at the linguistic repertoires and adopting a multilingual lens. The study combines three perspectives. First, it draws on population census data from 1980–2017 and combines these with linguistic diaries and diary-based interviews to investigate whether there is evidence of a language spread and shift to Portuguese. The most recent census data published by the National Statistics Institute (INE) (2019) and the ethnographies combined challenge the official account that so far has been dominant, namely that

Portuguese is replacing African languages as the most predominant home language. Secondly, the study investigates the linguistic practices across places and interlocutors and probes into the dynamics between Portuguese and the African languages and observed patterns of deployment of linguistic resources. Thirdly, it looks at the lived experience of language of 24 young Mozambicans, emphasizing the spatial dimensions of the linguistic repertoires, where spatiality points not only to the deployment of linguistic resources in situated discourses, but also to the perceived, conceived and lived space (Lefebvre 1991; Busch 2017) associated with the linguistic resources. This third perspectives foregrounds the social spaces of intimacy often associated with informality and sharedness, which, in some settings, take place in the social spaces of our dwellings.

Portugal’s imperialistic project in relation to what today is known as Mozambique started in the late 15th century. However, it was not until the early twentieth century that the colonial institutions and the Portuguese language became more present in social space. At the time of independence Portuguese had a very limited role beyond the state institutions such as the judiciary, the public administration and education. Mozambique, and particularly the southernmost provinces have seen a rapid spread of the ex-colonial language bringing a new dynamic into this multilingual and multicultural society where more than 21 African languages are used alongside Portuguese and other exogenous languages. At a national level the census data show that most spoken languages are Emakhuwa, followed by Portuguese and Xichangana.¹ In urban spaces, however, the census shows that Portuguese is the most spoken language² (INE 2019). Around independence in 1975 less than one out of one hundred citizens reported Portuguese as their main home language. The most recent census data show that this ratio has risen to nearly one out of five (INE 2000, 2009, 2019). In the capital city of Maputo, Portuguese as home language increased dramatically in the first thirty years after independence. Interestingly, the most recent census data reveal sociodemographic and sociolinguistic changes in the city of Maputo and show dramatically declining shares of Portuguese as reported home language. This can be explained by several factors such as gentrification, a stronger presence of expatriates, changes in data collection methodologies and ideological shifts. However, one important explanatory factor is that the inner-city residential areas have been replaced by office buildings, restaurants and shops. Many inner-city dwellers, who were predominantly Portuguese speaking, have relocated. In fact, the population in the inner city has declined.³ In contrast, new residential areas have

¹ The 2017 census published in 2019 shows that Emakhuva has become the most spoken language in Mozambique. Emakhuva is widely spoken in the northernmost provinces, mainly in the Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula provinces.

² 2,9 million out of a total urban population of 7,7 million inhabitants (table 22).

³ Own calculations based on publicly available census data on population in the district Kampfumu in Maputo city from 2007 and 2017 censuses (www.ine.gov.mz, accessed December 7, 2019). The population of Kampfumu was 9,9% of the total population of Maputo city, 112.286 inhabitants in 2007 and 7% of total population of Maputo city, 76157 inhabitants, in 2017.

emerged in the surrounding municipalities and districts in the Maputo province where the population has more than doubled during the last decade and has given rise to new urban centres, such as Matola, the location of the ethnographies of this study (INE 2019).

Previous research on the dynamics between the ex-colonial language, Portuguese, and African languages in Mozambique can largely be categorized in three different strands. The first is “the applied strand” that explores the language question in relation to education often promoting bilingual (or multilingual) approaches (see for example Chimbutane 2011, 2015). The second is what I call the “naturalization” strand, represented primarily by Firmino, who points to the risk of oversimplification associated with some postcolonial theorists who foreground a too critical and lopsided analysis in which ex-colonial languages are often seen as coming from outside, and because of this, are associated primarily with disruptive processes at the political, economic, social and cultural levels (Firmino 2011: 100). Firmino defies the position that African languages are alone in expressing the “authentic” voices (wa Thiong'o 1986: 4) and that ex-colonial languages only bring alienation and remain exogenous. In the same vein, Firmino refers to theorists such as Djité, who promote African languages to support a participatory national development (Djité 1991). Firmino suggests that Djité and other theorists are oversimplifying by presenting the language question as an issue of choosing either ex-colonial languages or African languages. Firmino (2011) defends that a peaceful coexistence is a viable option and underscores the importance of understanding the dynamics that govern the way languages are institutionalized in society, emphasizing that the ex-colonial languages in post-independence Mozambique expanded their social space and were endogenized both as symbolic artefacts and as communicative tools. Moreover, he emphasizes that African languages did not remain static entities; but also acquired new social functions, adapting themselves to the dynamics of postcolonial countries. In this study, I follow up on Firmino's call to pay attention to the new dynamics provoked by the co-existence between the ex-colonial language Portuguese, other exogenous languages such as English, and the African languages. I fully support Firmino's warning against the construction of “frozen” notions of languages, especially African languages, by portraying these as static constructs that belong to “pre-modernity” (see also Stroud & Guissemo 2017; Reite 2016, 2019). However, I consider that Firmino equally oversimplifies the linguistic question and its relation to power, and thereby runs the risk of neglecting the inequalities that ex-colonial languages can sustain. A third strand of research on multilingualism and the ex-colonial language Portuguese in Mozambique adopts more critical perspectives and locates language more profusely within the social. In so doing, studies in this third strand problematize the asymmetrical relations between ex-colonial and African languages and how these asymmetries relate to visibilities (Guissemo 2018), linguistic citizenship (Stroud 2007; Chimbutane 2018a, 2018b) and are reflected in the social positions, access to resources and mobilities across fields and markets (Reite 2019). Stroud (2007) adopts this broader perspective and foregrounds the social and socio-historical dimensions, and highlights that the transition from colonialism to post-colonialism has triggered a reconfiguration of the actors and the relationship between them, making them: state, market, civil society and citizens. At the same time, and as a result of the rivalries between institutions, groups and individuals, the social

construction of bilingualism has been reconfigured. Stroud (2007) emphasizes that the dynamics involves a competition between different notions of citizenship. Reite (2019) foregrounds the political economy perspective and how ideas and valuations can take linguistic form and find divisive expressions across dimensions and in material urban space. Moreover, Reite suggests that postcolonial languages, although “endogenized” and submersed in a radically different ecology of monolingual and fluid multilingual practices, nevertheless maintain—and exacerbate—local socio-economic stratification and reinstate conditions of coloniality in postcolonial times.

This study positions itself in the critical strand and shows how the question of multilingualism can fruitfully be explored through a combined study of the social (or societal) and the individual. I show that a combination of quantitative survey data and ethnography is a promising way forward, which has recently been promoted by theorists such as Blommaert (Blommaert 2018). The approach also draws inspiration from the foundational methodological works of sociolinguists such as Rampton (Rampton 2006) that build on interactional sociolinguistics and on Hymes and Gumperz’s ethnography of communication (Hymes & Gumperz 1972). This combined methodology is centred around the notion of linguistic repertoire as a lived experience of languages and enables an analysis that foregrounds an often-neglected emphasis on subjectivities as a crucial dimension to the understanding of the social and sociohistorical dynamic of the linguistic ecology of the “postcolony” (Mbembe 2001). The study places its locus of investigation beyond the educational system and the public places and explores the most intimate spaces of social life. The census data draw on the notion of the home as a dwelling and reflect a static, monolingual and sedentary notion of (home) languages. In contrast, the linguistic diaries, the diary-based interviews and the observations reflect a multilingual lens and a multi-layered notion of social space in line with the mobility paradigm of sociolinguistics. The ethnographies probe into the lived experiences of languages and spatiality. The three perspectives of the study combined aim at responding to research questions on whether there is evidence of a process of language spread and shift to Portuguese in the sense that Portuguese is replacing African languages as the most predominant home language, how patterns of spatial distribution of linguistic resources play out in dwellings and in intimate spaces and how the observed changes to the linguistic ecology impacts on the lived experience of languages and spatiality of young Mozambicans.

Following this introduction, the theoretical stance and the notions of the linguistic repertoire and lived experience of languages are discussed (Section 2), followed by the material and methods of the study (Section 3). Section 4 gives a brief introduction to the doctrines and discourses that have shaped the multilingual matrix of Mozambique. The results presentation starts with the census data on language spread and home languages in Mozambique (Section 5), followed by an account of the linguistic resources used with parents, siblings and in intimate relationships. Datasets from three different groups, one rural, one peri-urban and one urban group of Mozambican youth are presented (Section 6). Then, selected examples from the ethnographic study are provided to underpin the

analysis of the lived experience of language and spatiality (Section 7). Finally, in Section 8 the paper discusses the findings and presents the concluding remarks.

2. Theoretical stance and notions

The (neo)capitalism, propagated through globalization, has set off a reorientation of sociolinguistic theories turning the academic interest towards the study of interactional spaces and encounters triggered by greater inter-connectivity and the accelerated circulation of culture and ideas, people, capital and technologies of the globalized economy (Blommaert 2010; Heller 2011; Martin-Jones & Martin 2017). New epistemologies and ontologies have emerged within what is sometimes described as the paradigm of mobility or the sociolinguistics of globalization. Blommaert and Dong (2010) describe the view of the paradigm of mobility in sociolinguistics as a study of language in motion, “with several temporal space frames interacting with each other and where language patterns should be understood as organized patterns at different levels of scale” and which fit into broader social orders. This optic allows a more complex and disordered perception of reality, where each horizontal space is a stratified vertical space organized in layers (Blommaert & Dong 2010), full of ideologies or beliefs and their immanent systems of valuations and legitimation of resources, people and practices, giving prestige to some and denying it to others. The vertical space stratified in multiple layers, offers a perspective in which different temporalities and social orders coexist simultaneously. This perception of space gives way to contentious, conflicting and contradictory spaces. Blommaert describes the multiple layers as indexicality orders (Blommaert 2007). It fosters views of complexity, heterogeneity, mobility and fluidity, contrasting more finite, sedentary and homogeneous views of the structural and functional epistemic tradition of sociolinguistics.

Post-structural perspectives and critical orientations have instigated ethnographic approaches that in many ways echo Hymes and Gumperz (1972) “ethnography of communication”.

The linguistic repertoire was a notion coined by Gumperz (1964) and was based on ethnography of communication carried out in the 1960s in Norway. Busch with her emphasis on the individual biographies or *Spracherleben* and the “lived experience of language” suggests that new epistemologies favour a shift of the locus of the linguistic repertoire from the community to the life trajectory of an individual (Busch 2015, 2017). Busch points out the possibility of establishing a link between the lived experience of language with spatial perspectives. This possibility gave rise to the notion of the spatial repertoire of Pennycook and Otsuji (2015: 166).

Epistemological and ontological discussions on translingual practice as spatial repertoires have recently been brought forward by Canagarajah (2018) who suggests taking the spatial orientation even further, underscoring the mutually constitutive socio-spatial dimension of repertoires, a view he suggests resonates with Soja (2005, 2011). This view on space ultimately refers to Lefebvre’s (1991) and his perspective of space as something constantly produced and reproduced based on his triad containing three perspectives: “practices located in space”, “discourses about space”, and the “subjective experience of space” (Busch 2017: 343).

Although Soja as a human geographer emphasizes the spatial dimension, he also relates it to the historical and social dimensions, and, in so doing, establishes a link between human geography and the French social theorists such as Henri Lefebvre (1991), Pierre Bourdieu ([1972] 1977), Foucault ([1975] 1977) and Deleuze and Guattari (1980) who apply a notion of space as a relative space which is intrinsically related to power. In this way, “these scholars are concerned with how physical space and spatial relations subjugate or liberate groups and individuals from the state and other sources of power and knowledge” and consider “spatial practices as an aspect of the social analysis of power and its deployment” (Low 2017: 17). It is in this sense that I refer to spatiality in this paper and relate to the spatial dimension of the linguistic repertoire (Busch 2017) and what she describes as “passing from one space to another.” Moreover, I relate to Canagarajah and his suggestions of translanguaging practice as spatial repertoire, pointing to the permeability between “text and context” and his call for notions that capture more “expansive and layered spatiotemporal contexts” that go beyond the face to face interactions as units of analyses (2018: 45). A pioneer among postcolonial theorists, Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), in his *Black skin, white masks* (1952) described the impact of French colonization of Martinique. Within postcolonial language studies his notion of the split self and the lived experience of the black man and language provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of the lived experience of language (and spatiality) in conditions of coloniality. In the text Fanon describes the interiorization of a sense of inferiority complex and relates this to the colonization of minds and bodies.

The “spatial repertoire”, as coined by Pennycook and Otsuji (2015: 83) describes an “assemblage” of practices that come together in one space and/or place. This study is multi-sited and describes the assemblages in spaces and/or places and focuses the attention on the dynamics of spatialization and what triggers the deployment of specific linguistic resources in a particular situated discourse on one hand and how these dynamics relate to spatiality as one of several dimensions of repertoires and the lived experience of language, on the other.

3. Material and method

The methodology combines analyses of primary data that consists of publicly available census data for the period 1980–2017 (INE 2000, 2009, 2019), linguistic diaries and diary-based interviews of 55 young Mozambicans pertaining to three groups: one rural, one peri-urban and one urban. In addition, the study builds on richer ethnographies of 24 young Mozambicans who all attended the National Teacher Training Institute located in the municipality Matola, neighboring of the city of Maputo. All 24 had shared their linguistic diaries and participated in the diary-based interviews.

The main field visits were carried out in March/April and October 2015. The methodology for the linguistic dairies draws from techniques applied by Lawson and Sachdev (2004). As such, the participants each kept a diary and made an inventory of the linguistic repertoire/linguistic practices they used. In the diaries, the adolescents account for a maximum of six entries per day over a four-day period. For each entry, they account for topic, interlocutor and place, the combination of which will hereafter be referred to as

a setting. To obtain information about the widest range of settings possible, the period covered both weekends and weekdays. The participants were requested to record information covering where they were during a given conversation (place), the topic, information about their interlocutor(s) (age, gender, relationship) and a description of the linguistic practices that were used. In their reporting, the participants emphasized which language(s) were used in the conversation, thus separating between monolingual and multilingual practices. The six entries represent various points throughout the day to capture as wide a range of interactions possible in a structured manner. All participants completed their diaries.

The research design and the approaches adopted for data collection followed an ethnographic approach. Collection of several data sets from the same group(s) of participants allowed for exploring synergies and triangulation.

Aware of the asymmetry in the relationship between researcher and participant, I applied three strategies to delimit these. First, I shared information about my research project and clarified the emic stance and co-participatory approach. This included an explanatory introduction to the importance of using their own perceptions of languages and language use, their own labels and meta descriptions of own linguistic practices. Secondly, I invited the participants to contribute with feedback on the analyses made and to discuss previous texts already published. These inputs are reflected in this paper. Thirdly, for those who volunteered, I showed how to make transcriptions and co-worked with participants on these. Moreover, I discussed the socio-semiotic and socio-pragmatic understandings of specific interactions with the same volunteers. In the following a sociohistorical introduction to doctrines and discourses that shape the multilingual matrices of Mozambique is provided.

4. Doctrines and discourses shaping the multilingual matrix of Mozambique

During the colonial period, the use of Portuguese in Mozambique was limited to institutional spaces such as the public administration, the courts and the educational system. At the time of independence, 90 percent of Mozambicans were illiterate, and among the 10 percent who had had access to schooling, only a small minority had a level of education equivalent to the first cycle of primary school (Newitt 1995). Inspired by the independence movements of other former Portuguese colonies, the Mozambican liberation front, *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* FRELIMO adopted Portuguese as a language of independence and national unity. The first president of an independent Mozambique, Samora Machel, launched an ambitious political program at the FRELIMO party congress in 1977, called the “New Man”. Important elements were education for all, eradication of illiteracy, emancipation of women, promotion of economic development based on Marxist-Leninist socialist ideology, national unity and decolonization. The “New Man” promoted the eradication of customary laws and traditional practices associated with what was described as a traditional feudal society characterized by tribalism and discrimination across social categories such as gender, clan, and ethnicity. The promotion of ethnic-cultural practices (including the use of African languages) became associated with dissent and opposition to the political project and considered reactionary. Samora’s “New Man” used the slogan: *A tribo deveria*

morror para que a nação pudesse nascer [The tribe should die so that the nation could be born] which also implied that the Portuguese language was considered the agglutinating force of Mozambican society (Muiane 2006). Samora’s stance later became criticized and categorized as ideological radicalism (see Mazula 1995: 214). In the introduction to *Multilingualism and Multiculturalism in Mozambique* edited by Perpetua Gonçalves and Feliciano Chimbutane (2015), Honwana comments on the question of culture in the colonial period and states that “The space of individual creation was extremely small” (Honwana 2015: 12) and goes on to describe the current situation. “Faced with the liberalizing tide, the safeguarding of identity elements assumes particular importance, and is advocated by some social segments” (Honwana, 2015: 19). In his speech at a colloquium published in the national press in 2011, the Mozambican writer Ba Ka Khosa criticizes the erasure of linguistic and cultural diversity and point to the possibly unintentional impacts of Frelimo’s ideologies:

“Mozambique did not find herself. I must say, although there are theories to the contrary, that the role of the state is fundamental in the liberation of initiatives that lead to full citizenship. And the first years of independence were central to defining the musical chart of our cultural symphony. We crushed all chords of diversity, silenced the voices that came from the darkness of time and, moved by ideological pretensions that we find difficult to sustain, we tried to erect a body, allow me lending a term: without DNA; uncharacteristic; bland; discoloured; monotonous; an uprooted voice; totally adrift. We lost, in the euphoria of liberation, the opportunity to liberate our memory and to draw, with complete freedom, our cultural destiny.” (Ba Ka Khosa 2011: 2, translated by author).

I propose, in line with Ba Ka Khosa (2011) and Honwana (2015) that the political doctrine of the “New Man” and the language ideologies it promoted, have served to spread the symbolic power of Portuguese and, as Ba Ka Khosa also alludes to, unintentionally contributed to sustain the suppression of existing sociocultural practices. I explore how this has intensified alongside the spread of Portuguese and its possible replacement of African languages, and, as we will see in the following, as Portuguese is declared as becoming more predominant as a home language. The next section shows the spread of Portuguese as a home language in the period 1980–2007 and also highlights the shares of the population that self-declare knowledge of Portuguese, nationally and per province.

5. How Portuguese has entered urban spaces and mainly in the southern part of Mozambique

Official census data of the 1980, 2007 and 2017 population censuses show the spread of Portuguese at a national level and by each of the 11 provinces. These data provide a description of change over time. At the time of independence in 1975 one in every hundred persons declared Portuguese to be the habitual language at home, and less than one person in four spoke Portuguese. Forty years later, nearly one person in every five at the national level (17%) (see blue column to the far left in Figure 1) and nearly half the

population of Maputo province (49%) (see green in second column from the right in Figure 1) declare Portuguese as their main home language. The census data show substantial differences across several dimension: between provinces, as shown in the Figure 1, between rural and urban areas, and according to gender, where women report lower levels of Portuguese literacy and use. There are also substantial variation in literacy rates, access to education, access to basic infrastructure etc. that all correlate, so that lesser spread of Portuguese overlap with lower access to education, lower literacy rates, poorer access to basic infrastructure, water and sanitation, electricity etc. (www.ine.co.mz). Figure 1, below, shows the percentage that declare Portuguese as home language in 1980 (in blue), in 2007 (in red) and in 2017 (in green). What is most striking are the substantial differences between the northern and central provinces of the country and the southern part of Mozambique. To support this overview of the geographical distribution Figure 2 shows a map of Mozambique with the eleven provinces.

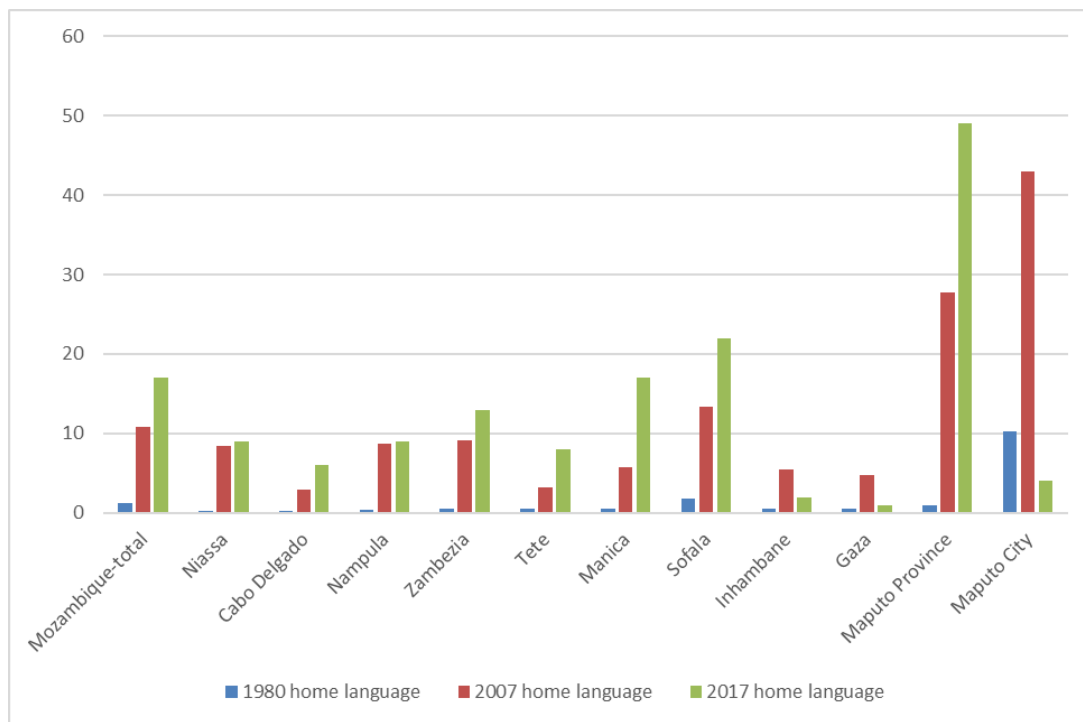


Figure 1. *Portuguese as home language 1980, 2007 and 2017*



Figure 2. Map of Mozambique ⁴

The map shows Mozambique located among the neighboring countries and with all eleven provinces: Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula to the North, Zambezia, Tete, Sofala and Manica in the Central region and Inhambane, Gaza, Maputo province and city of Maputo to the South.

Starting from the left of Figure 1, after the national level data column, the northern provinces Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula, show the lowest spread of Portuguese. The highest rate is reported in the South, in the Maputo province. Analyzing these data together with the sociodemographic data on population growth between 1980 and 2017 per province, it is clearly demonstrated that most Mozambicans rely predominantly on their African linguistic resources in daily life and socialization, a fact that is also attested by Firmino (2005) who relied on census data from 1980 and 1997. The data presented in this paper, however, have been updated (censuses 2007 and 2017) and show that, forty years after independence, this situation still prevails (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2019).

⁴ Source: https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/mozambique_map.htm, Nations online project (December 7, 2019).

Figure 3 shows the share of population that declare to know how to speak Portuguese in 2007 and in 2017 at national level and per province. Around half the Mozambican population declare that they speak Portuguese. Starting on the left hand side with the Northern provinces and following the horizontal axis to the right, and towards the Central and Southern provinces it can be confirmed that, as expected, the shares that declare to speak Portuguese are lower in the Northern and Central provinces than in Maputo province and the city of Maputo where nearly the entire population report that they speak Portuguese.

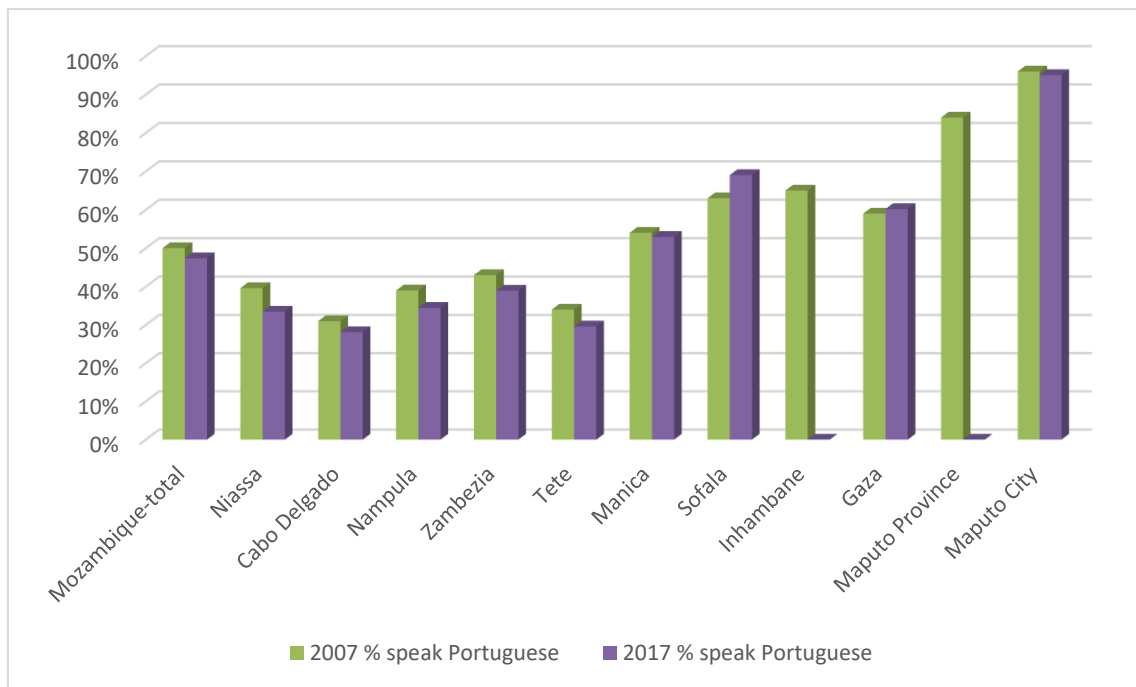


Figure 3. *Self-declared knowledge of Portuguese per province in 2007 and 2017*⁵

Commenting further on the breakdown per province it is striking to see that in five of the eleven provinces (Niassa, Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia and Tete) less than half the population declare any knowledge of Portuguese. The provinces of Nampula and Zambezia, with the largest population, are among the provinces with the lowest rates. This paper set out to explore whether there is evidence of a language spread and shift to Portuguese in the sense that Portuguese is replacing African languages as the most predominant home language. The Figures 1 and 3 draw on census data at national and provincial levels and taken together they clearly show that such a replacement is not taking place, except to some extent in the Maputo province and, according to the 2007 census, in the capital city of Maputo. The monolingual bias of census data risks erasing more pluralistic practices. The notion of home language in multilingual settings is also problematic. Moreover, there is a potential bias in self-reported data that could motivate an over-reporting of Portuguese due to the legitimacy and symbolic value of Portuguese,

⁵ Data on self-declared knowledge of Portuguese from Maputo and Inhambane provinces in 2017 are not available (last accessed December 7, 2019).

which could explain the dramatic increases in the city of Maputo in 2007 which now, ten years later, is reported to have declined. All these potential biases support the finding that Portuguese is not replacing African languages and point to this finding being even more robust. The spread of Portuguese has thus largely not replaced the African languages but has clearly led to a broadening of the repertoires. This broadening of the repertoires is further explored in the following section where linguistic diaries from three groups are compared to look into patterns of linguistic practices and the dynamics of deployment of linguistic resources. The three groups from rural, peri-urban and urban areas can be seen to represent different settings of spread of Portuguese in line with what is observed in the census data. The linguistic diaries focus on linguistic practices according to interlocutor and investigate practices in the most intimate relationships and spaces. Furthermore, these are related to their diary entries and their diary-based accounts of practices in their dwellings.

6. Exploring the deployment of linguistic resources of repertoires

The rural group consists of 14 young Mozambicans from the northern provinces, mainly from Nampula province, with one participant from Cabo Delgado and another from the border district between Nampula and Zambezia provinces. This group represents the areas with the lowest declared shares of Portuguese as a home language and in terms of knowledge of Portuguese. The peri-urban group consists of 22 young Mozambicans that come from Maputo province, which represents an intermediary level of spread of Portuguese as a home language and in terms of knowledge of Portuguese. The urban group consists of 19 young Mozambicans from the city of Maputo with the highest shares of spread of Portuguese. The comparison of linguistic practices shows how the expansion of access to education and the spread of Portuguese influences the linguistic practices which participants engage in in their dwellings, with parents, siblings and extended family members. The latter include partners in sexual and or romantic relationships (Figure 4). The diary entries each represented a setting (a combination of place, interlocutor, topic and linguistic practices). Across the three groups, a total of 1,223 interactions were reported: the group of 19 participants from urban Maputo reported a total of 400 entries; the group of 14 participants in the rural group reported 327 entries; and the group of 22 participants in the peri-urban group reported 496 entries. The Figure 4 shows the share of total interactions with parents, siblings and extended family members that represents a subset of the linguistic diary data. The reported practices have, based on diary entries, been grouped in three categories i) monolingual interactions in Portuguese, hereinafter called Portuguese, ii) monolingual practices of Emakhuva, Xichangana, Xirhonga or another national African language, or iii) dynamic multilingual practices that include the fluid use of two or more languages of their repertoire in one specific interaction. All dynamic multilingual practices reported included Portuguese. No participant reported a repertoire of fewer than three languages, and no participants reported more than six.

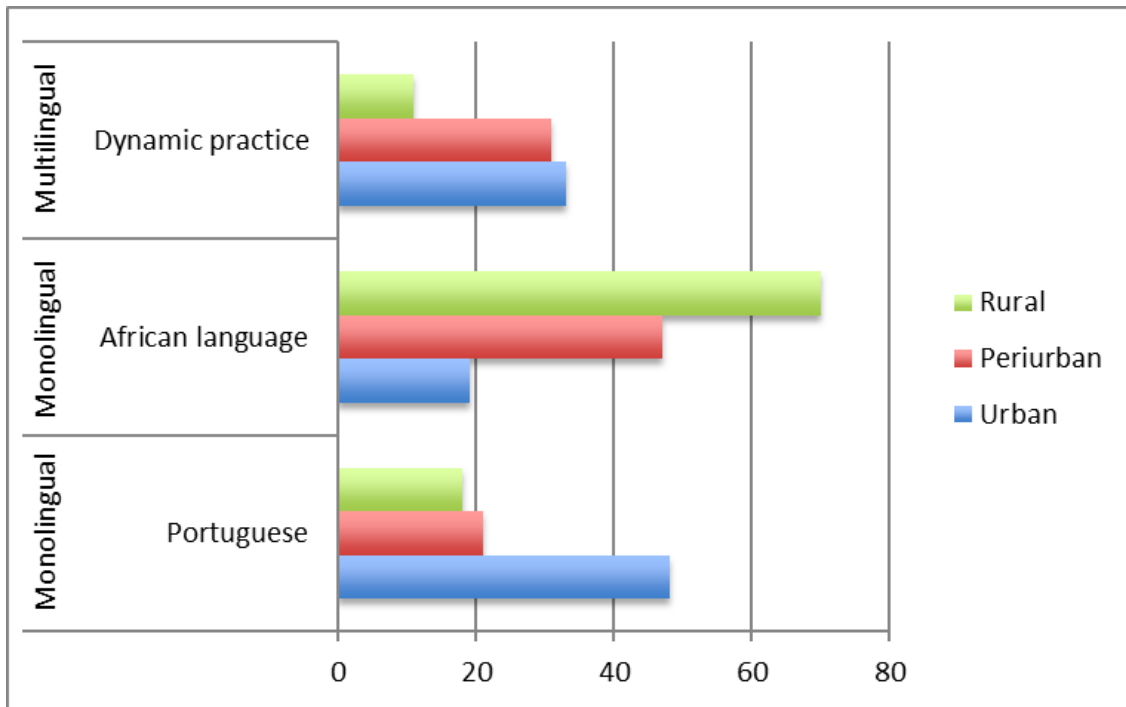


Figure 4. *Comparison of linguistic practices with parents, siblings and extended family members across the rural, peri-urban and urban groups*

The comparison across urban, peri-urban and rural groups demonstrates substantially lower shares of dynamic (or fluid) multilingual practices in interactions with parents, siblings and extended family members in the rural group (11%) compared to those of the peri-urban (31%) and urban (33%) groups. Similarly, the rural group reports substantially higher shares of monolingual practices of Emakhuva or in other national African languages. Across all their linguistic resources, the rural group reports predominantly monolingual practices (88%) and, consequently, clearer distinction between Portuguese resources one hand and African linguistic resources on the other. Linguistic borders between these resources are socio-spatially demarcated.

The peri-urban group shows high shares of dynamic multilingual practices (31%) and substantial shares of monolingual practices of Xichangana, Xirhonga or other national African language (47%) with relatively low shares of Portuguese (21%).

The urban group shows high shares of either dynamic multilingual practices (33%) or Portuguese (48%).

If we look at the monolingual interactions, the comparison reveals what would be expected in a language spread and language shift situation, with higher shares of Portuguese observed in urban compared to peri-urban and particularly rural areas. In this sense the three groups do serve as an approximation of different stages of expansion of education, language spread and, would lead us to conclude that there is an on-going replacement of African languages and a language shift to Portuguese. However, by assessing the entire repertoire across linguistic resources, these data give us other interesting insights into the dynamics between the ex-colonial language Portuguese and the African linguistic resources displaying far messier and complex (re)configurations.

A substantial share of dynamic multilingual practices was registered in interactions with parents, siblings and extended family members for both the peri-urban and the urban groups. This shows that in contexts of rapid spread of Portuguese and urbanization Portuguese has not only entered daily family socialization as a monolingual practice but has also been taken up as part of multilingual practices that combine resources of Portuguese with fluid use of linguistic resources of mainly African languages, as part of a broadening repertoire. In fact, based on these datasets multilingual practices are equally prevalent in the peri-urban and the urban groups. Comparing the rural to the two other groups, the deployment of linguistic resources has become much more complex and fine-grained with the spread of Portuguese. What is observed linguistically is that practices that were previously socio-spatially and linguistically separate, namely Portuguese monolingual on the one hand and mono- or multilingual practices of African languages on the other, now have come together and become entangled, reconfigured and given rise to fluid multilingual practices.

Cross-group comparison of diary entries in their dwellings reveal that the place of dwelling as for the peri-urban and urban groups has become a more diverse space of monolingual and multilingual practices of Portuguese alongside monolingual and multilingual practices of Xichangana, Xirhonga and other African languages. In contrast, the place of dwelling in the rural group remains a space of predominantly monolingual practices of Emakhuva and/or other African languages with more limited use of Portuguese, mostly as a monolingual practice.

This changing linguistic ecology and the increasing diversity are examples of linguistic practices that emerge as part of social transformative processes associated with expansion of education, urbanization and accelerated flows of people, culture and capital. This claim is also supported by the most recent census data (2017), which reports that the highest rates of urbanization and internal immigration between 2007 and 2017 took place in the peri-urban zones surrounding Maputo. Additionally, Maputo province hosts several hubs located along the main transport corridor to and from South Africa and Swaziland. These hubs range among the economically most vibrant in terms of economic activity, commerce and exchanges. We have now seen how Portuguese has become endogenized as part of both monolingual and multilingual practices and, in urban spaces, has entered into the extended families and relationships that are fostered within and beyond dwellings. The next section looks into how these changes are reflected in the lived experience of language and spatiality and presents some examples from the ethnographies.

7. Moving into the intimate spaces

In previous sections we have seen how Portuguese has been brought into urban spaces and has been taken up as part of a broadened repertoire and become endogenized and submersed in a more diverse ecology of monolingual practices alongside fluid multilingual practices. In this section, four voices were chosen from the 24 participants of the ethnographies. These serve to give further insights into how these processes influence the lived experience of language and spatiality. We start out with a conversation

between a group of friends. In the example these four young men aged 19–23 are discussing their intimate and close relationships, and their strategic orientation to language and its deployment in courtship and more established relationships. All names in the examples are fictitious. The examples display the copresences of conflicting affinities and valuations of languages and contentious spaces of intimacy.

(1)

Alex: *Nós quando falamos com as nossas namoradas, não é, nós usamos a língua portuguesa.*

‘We, when we speak to our girlfriends, we use Portuguese.’

Bernardo: *É verdade.*

‘That’s true.’

E também há que salientar que pelo menos eu com a minha namorada raramente ou dificilmente vou falar Xichangana ou Xirhonga, por que, por causa de daquela colonização que praticamente posso dizer que já temos.

‘And, I need to say that at least I with my girlfriend I rarely or hardly find myself speaking Xichangana or Xirhonga because of...., because of that colonization that practically, how can I say this, we still have.’

Nos sentimos-nos verdadeiramente pessoas, né, falando português. Então já que ali estamos mesmo para mostrar toda a apresentação (apresentação) da parte boa sobre nós, nós falamos em português nós praticamente não falamos Xichangana.

‘We feel that to be real persons we need to speak Portuguese. And since we are there trying to show, or present ourselves with the good things about ourselves, we speak Portuguese and not Xichangana.’

The example (1) shows how the spread of Portuguese brings along the hegemony and the symbolic power of the former colonial language and, how valuations of languages, such as the superiority of Portuguese, are embodied and internalized and crowd out the sociocultural practices associated with African languages. Functional-structuralist accounts of language spread and shift often describe these processes as if “the community completely and pragmatically transforms its practices and allegiances” (Jaffe 2007; Bokhorst-Heng & Silver 2017), but, as this account from the Maputo province shows, the new linguistic ecology and these young Mozambicans’ broadened repertoire are associated with growing contentiousness in the spaces of intimacy and places of dwelling. The sense of having to speak Portuguese to “be real persons” echoes Fanon and the way he described the lived experience of language of the colonized subject. Fanon’s notions were developed prior to the post-structural orientations and the social turn in the social sciences and humanities. Moreover, his analyses were set in a context of linguistic segregation where the language of the colonizer was socio-spatially more contained, much in the same way as Mozambique was around independence and still remains in the

most remote rural areas, as the rural group data show. However, the self-censorship and sense of inferiority that Fanon describes clearly resonates with the lived experiences of these young Mozambicans. Comparison across rural, periurban and urban youth of this study support this and shows that the tensions and the sense of conflict are perceived as stronger when Portuguese and African languages socio-spatially co-exist and compete. The spread of Portuguese thus instigates symbolically more diverse and contentious intimate spaces and places of dwelling. In the notion of the *Spracherleben* and the lived experience of language, Busch (2017) foregrounds the bodily and emotional dimensions of intersubjective interaction. The example reveals how the internalization and embodiment of ideological tensions and competing valuation systems associated with Portuguese and African linguistic resource, are tangible in the negotiations and performances of these young Mozambicans. What is of particular interest here are the processes of self-censorship which construct a shrinking space for African sociocultural resources.

(2)

José: *[...]. no início do namoro, tenho que mostrar todo gajo. Mas fui abrindo e aí de cá já ganhava o espaço que eu precisava e agora já não há problemas, posso falar normalmente [com ela]*

‘at the beginning of our courtship. I have to show them “the whole guy”, you know [so I speak Portuguese]. But then, gradually I opened up and gained the space that I needed and from then on, now, there are no problems. I can talk normally [with her]’

The example describes the gradual broadening of the repertoire and how, over time, the release of self-control allows him to “speak normally” with his girlfriend, using African linguistic resources, possibly with the fluid use of Portuguese resources. Such experiences of self-control were broadly shared among participants. The dynamic multilingual practices were often used to “test the waters” in relation to the interlocutor’s reaction to the use of African linguistic resources. Participants also reported using humor as a way of introducing Xichangana or Xirhonga resources into the conversations. Reite (2016) describes the emotional impact of releasing self-control and use a broader linguistic repertoire of African linguistic resources and how this brings a sense of euphoria and liberation among young Mozambicans. Busch (2017) describes the spatial dimension of the linguistic repertoire and the experience of suddenly finding yourself in a space where your resources do not fit. Busch describes this “passing from one space to another” and how “linguistic variation across spaces can construct belonging or difference” (Busch 2017: 342). Moreover, she draws on Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and refers to the “dialog of languages” (Bakhtin 1981: 294). Whereas Bakhtin (1981) and Busch (2017) refer to the movement between both horizontal and vertical spaces, in example (2) I show how these “separate spaces” are carried in the minds and bodies, internalized as layered vertical spaces with competing and conflicting orders of visibility in intimate social relationships. Diary-based discussions revealed similar experiences in

the places of their dwellings. The need to negotiate space to “speak normally” taken from the example was a theme that resonated among the participants of this study.

8. Discussion and concluding remarks

This paper has shown how a multilevel analysis can unravel the complex dynamics and (re)configurations instigated through ex-colonial language spread in the “postcolony”. In so doing it has shown how census data, despite its homogeneous, static and monolingual biases underpin a rich sociohistorical perspective to changes in the linguistic ecology which informs diversity across horizontal spaces. The combination of linguistic diaries and diary-based interviews as part of the ethnographies adds the vertical spaces to this dynamic focus on change but also demonstrates the importance of adopting the notion of repertoires to complement census data and include all linguistic resources in the analyses. Additionally, the study includes multiple sites, which enhances the understanding of heterogeneities and complexities in the linguistic ecology. Finally, the study combines the translocal notion of “spaces of intimacy” with the *in situ* notion of “places of dwellings” to explore the lived experience of language and spatiality. In so doing the study considers space as co-constructive and place as space ascribed with social meaning and shaping. The analyses of lived experience of language and spatiality thus include the cases where intimate spaces are not lived in the places of dwelling. Moreover, the study shows that the places of dwelling of young Mozambicans in peri-urban and urban spaces have become more linguistically diverse and thus more contentious spaces.

Traditional accounts of language spread often oversimplify by adopting homogeneous, static and monolingual biases and “frozen” notions of African or other endogenous languages. The multilevel approach demonstrates how a dual emphasis on both the social (the sociohistorical and societal) and the individual (the lived experience of language and subjectivities) can give new insights into the complexities of linguistic ecologies which add to our understandings of ex-colonial language spread “from below” and to the existing body of knowledge.

The study demonstrates the importance of adopting a sociohistorical perspective to the understanding of the contemporary “postcolony”. Building on reflections of pioneers among postcolonial theorists such as the Frantz Fanon, the historian Stoler (2013, 2016) points to the need to pay attention to the co-presence of different temporalities. Her notion of “ruination” points to the ongoing imperial processes, at societal and individual level and to the reproduction or perpetuation of these processes. This study shows how the sociohistorical perspective and the understanding of different temporalities are particularly relevant to the study of conditions of coloniality in postcolonial times. This co-presence of temporalities also resonates with the political economy perspectives of Heller and McElhinny (2017) who underscore that policies meant to be emancipatory sometimes unintentionally reproduce hegemonic positions and dominance. I believe, with inspiration from Ba Ka Khosa (2011) and Honwana (2015), that in the case of Mozambique, the political program the “New Man” and the language ideologies it promoted represents such an example. Although the intention was liberation and emancipation and to avoid internal conflict between ethnic groups and clans, the doctrine unintentionally contributed to sustain the suppression of sociocultural practices and to

construct an imaginary of modernity that was incompatible with African languages and sociocultural practices, thus “freezing” these in the past, so clearly expressed in the: “to be a person I speak Portuguese.”

The former colonial language although “endogenized” in a radically different linguistic ecology, maintains, its symbolic power. A central process here is the embodiment of these valuations and ideologies. The disruptive effects of the ex-colonial language spread are displayed through the self-control and suppression of sociocultural resources of these young Mozambicans as they face multiple conflicting orders of legitimation and valuation in their daily life and socialization. Against a backdrop of rapid expansion of education, spread of Portuguese and greater global interconnectedness over the past decades, I show in the examples how even the most intimate spaces and places of dwelling have become more contested spaces where conflicting language ideologies play out.

I have pointed to the methodological advantages of multilevel and multisite analyses. Theoretically, these findings support the importance of adopting spatial orientations to the lived experience of language and the repertoire, and foregrounds how geographies and separate spaces, each with their respective valuations systems, are internalized and embodied, thus bringing a new perspective into the discussion of the intersubjective dimension of the repertoire as discussed by Busch (2017). This resonates with some of the epistemological reflections presented by Canagarajah (2018) in his discussion of spatial repertoires but foregrounds the copresence of different temporalities as a crucial dimension to include as units of analyses in more expansive spatiotemporal contexts. As this study demonstrates such an orientation requires a sociohistorical perspective so crucial to the understanding of the imperial projects and its imprint on the social dynamics and the geographies of minds and bodies. What is striking in this study is the embodiment and internalization, so salient in the “postcolony” and described so eloquently seventy years ago by Frantz Fanon in *Black skin, white masks* (Fanon 1952) where he describes the lived experience of inferiority associated with the colonial system and with racialization. Fanon describes the state of self-censorship and suppression that these young Mozambicans experience as a “a state of not being” where their self-expressions of sociocultural African practices are contained in a liminal zone of immobility and invisibility. By bringing Fanon into sociolinguistics and the mobility paradigm, and rereading Fanon with a spatial lens, the dynamics of spatiotemporal co-presences across horizontal and vertical spaces can be enhanced. Moreover, the dual focus of this study allows the analyses to draw on the political, social and individual dimensions of his work.

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