MEANINGFUL LEARNING IN THE SENEGALESE EDUCATION SYSTEM:

Problems of Language, Culture and Colonization

By

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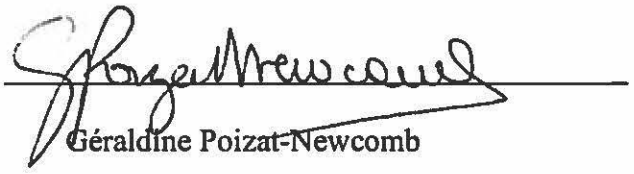
Approved: 
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Institutionalized education in Senegal is largely inherited from the French system established during the colonial period. The provision of education exclusively in a foreign language and based on foreign cultural standards causes a barrier to meaningful learning for Senegalese students. Meaningful learning involves the integration of new knowledge into existing schemata, and a lack of meaningful learning can impact students' intellectual identity development and have negative consequences regarding students' motivation and success in academia. Top-down control of educational policy by a powerful centralized government slows proposed reforms, and many other factors including the influence of French funding restrict the implementation of policy reform. This thesis sought to answer the question of how, or if, teachers in Senegal use teaching practices that increase students' opportunities for meaningful learning on a classroom level across the linguistic and content barriers posed by the French education system. Classroom observations and interviews were used as the basis for a qualitative analysis of whether or not these bottom-up strategies were present or effective enough to combat the difficulties students, and teachers, face.

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Introduction

From August to December 2015, I worked at two secondary schools in Dakar and Gorée, Senegal[1]. I went to conduct a series of classroom observations and interviews with teachers to find out the methods or practices they use to try and give students opportunities for meaningful learning in the classroom. Meaningful learning is a principle set in opposition to rote learning or memorization, and is characterized by the integration of new information into existing schemata. Offering opportunities for meaningful learning is particularly difficult within the confines of the Senegalese education system, which was implemented by the French during the colonial period and has been conserved with few changes since Senegal's independence in 1960. Education is conducted entirely in French, following only slightly modified versions of French curriculum. Because the institutional culture, language, and content of education is incongruent with students' lives and experiences outside of school, it can be difficult for them to make the associations necessary for meaningful learning to occur.

When meaningful learning does not occur in school, students suffer on a number of levels. A lack of meaningful learning can have a negative impact on students' success and motivation in school, because it alienates intellectual identity from the rest of students' identity development. If students do not have the opportunity for adequate intellectual identity development, and the means by which to integrate it with the rest of their identity, they may not see themselves as an intellectual or as capable of success in

[1] It should be noted that Mariama Bâ, the school at which I worked in Gorée, was consistently called the best school in the country. Small classes of top-scoring girls are chosen from across the country to attend the school, which is entirely government-funded. The school has smaller class sizes and devoted teachers, and therefore the content of observations conducted at this school should be regarded in this light, and not as a perfect representation of average schools in Senegal.

academia. Additionally, their success is being measured by the standards of a foreign cultural institution. This puts students at a disadvantage, since they are faced with drastically different demands and challenges inside school than they are outside school, within their families and communities, and are measured by different standards for success.

In part because of these problems, Senegal has a low completion rate for basic education. Students overall have poor French language proficiency, and are thus face significant challenges in all materials and, critically, on the baccalaureate exam they must pass to graduate. Curriculum reform is nearly impossible without modifications to the examination system, since teachers currently must gear all their classroom time and effort into preparing students for testing. Additionally, because the educational policy is dictated by the Senegalese government, reform has been slow to be passed and even when approved, often unimplemented. Since the colonial structures preserved in Senegal make mastery of French and success in formal education a prerequisite for participation in governmental jobs and much of the public sector, the education system is the basis for the status and authority of all those with the power to modify it. This, among other factors, means that the education system is unlikely to change through top-down policy reform. With that in mind, I sought to look at what teachers were doing on a classroom level to make learning more meaningful for students from the bottom up.

In Dakar and Gorée, I conducted a series of classroom observations and interviews with teachers to answer my primary research question: how do teachers in Senegal make learning meaningful for students across the linguistic and cultural barriers posed by the French education system? In interviews, I asked that question explicitly

and exclusively. Though the question presupposes the existence of problems, it left teachers the option to refute the premise, and deny the existence of any problems. In this thesis I use those responses, along with the methods and practices I observed in classroom observations with 22 different teachers to answer that question, and to analyze whether or not those practices have the potential to be effective enough to overcome the barrier to meaningful learning caused by the near-total preservation of the colonial French education system in Senegal.

Chapter 1: History of Language in Senegalese Education and National Policy

I. History of Institutionalized Education in Senegal

As early as 1847, Jean Dard, who established the first Western school in Senegal, brought up the question of what language should be used in Senegal's education system. He opted to use native languages, but these first schools faced heavy competition from Islamic and missionary schools in the later half of the 19th century (Vandewiele 507-8). During this period, three types of schools were in operation: Trading-post schools, opened by Governor General Faidherbe and conducted in Arabic; Missionary schools, some of which were conducted in native languages; and the School of Hostages, an elitist secular school for the sons of high-ranking Africans in St. Louis, also established by Faidherbe.

In 1899, early French missionary schools, which had been established by the Ploërmel Brothers, had been aligned with French curriculum, and by 1900 most students in St. Louis, Rufisque, Gorée, and Dakar, the "Four Communes" that formed the centers of French influence in the country, were educated in French language and

culture. 1909 marked a turning point in the structure of Senegalese education with the establishment of village, regional, and urban primary schools, all of which were run in French (Vandewiele 508-10). After this 1909 expansion in access to education, schools were inspected regularly, more teachers were trained, and more students became enrolled at least through primary education. Secondary education, in the form of French Lycées, began with the establishment of Faidherbe Lycée in 1860. Further Lycées were not established until much later, between 1925 and 1948. Higher education began in 1918 with the establishment of a medical school, though this school offered education below the standards of French schools in the metropolis. This school was not expanded into the current Dakar University until 1958 (Vandewiele 510). Nearly all of the education offered after the turn of the 20th century was given in French and based on French curricular models, a legacy that continues until the present.

In the first half of the 20th century, under the French colonial policy of assimilation, this policy of French education was widely supported among those in power. Assimilation policy was a particular strategy of French colonialism intended to institute durable cultural hegemony within colonized populations, rooted in their belief that French civilization was synonymous with civilization itself and that French was the "language of culture," something that Africans lacked entirely (Sané 182-3; Vaillant). However, this perspective is no longer as prevalent, and the continued use of French in Senegalese education is considered by some contemporary commentators to be an outdated policy that does not reflect Senegal's current reality or needs. Nonetheless, few reforms have been implemented, in part due to the Senegalese government's bureaucratic approach to "evolutionary" education reform and the continued support

from many officials for French education, a system by which those officials, like the Senegalese colonial elite, have greatly benefitted (Evans 224-6).

II. Léopold Sedar Senghor- Proposing Active Assimilation as a Response to Colonial Assimilation policy

Léopold Sedar Senghor was one of the most influential figures in Senegal in the 20th century, and a pivotal figure when considering Senegal's education system. Though he was a native of Senegal, he rose through the ranks of education and status to become a member of the "African elite," someone with "the energy and will to live at the crossroads between two cultures" (Vaillant 683). From his place of influence, Senghor publicly identified, from an African perspective and for a French audience, the power of language and education in constructing a unified cultural identity based on Senegal's contemporary cultural reality, something he saw as critical to successful development within the global community. Though his policies, specifically his preservation of French as the language of education, remain controversial, he brought language, education, and identity to the table as primary issues of discussion for considering the future of Senegal, and indeed for the whole of French West Africa. For this reason, the policies he outlined at his first public speech in 1937 are a key point of analysis, and inform both his future policy decisions and much of the subsequent debate on the issues of language, education, and identity in post-colonial Senegal.

Before he was elected President upon Senegal's independence in 1960, Léopold Sédar Senghor was already a prominent intellectual, a man who was the perfect example of French colonial ideals of assimilation. These ideals were based on the enlightenment conception of equality of all mankind. However, this equality was not

unconditional. It manifested itself in the demand that Africans assimilate fully into French culture; their status, both social and political, depended on the degree to which they could complete a French education, master the French language, and conduct themselves within French culture as would any Frenchman (Vaillant 683). Senghor, who completed his university studies in France and became the first African to receive an agrégé from the French ministry of education, was a model of "successful" assimilation, "living proof that such African dreams of equality and Frenchness could be realized" (Vaillant 684).

Upon his return to Senegal 1937, after completing his studies in France, he was chosen to give a speech to an audience of French and African elite on the subject of education in French West Africa. His speech, "Le problème culturel en A.O.F.,"- was given in perfect French, demonstrating Senghor's mastery of the language which had garnered him so much respect in the French intellectual establishment. However, instead of praising the virtues of French education to which, in the eyes of his French spectators, he owed his high status and success, he advocated for an active assimilation of French values on the part of the West African population. The French culture he had witnessed and experienced as a student in Paris turned out to be far less uniform and immutable than the version of French culture presented to Africans, and he used these disillusioned reflections, as well as the status he had attained through education, to "deconstruct French discourse about Africa from within French culture itself" (Vaillant 689). It was Senghor's knowledge of French culture, and especially of the French language, that allowed him to so successfully analyze the coexisting cultural systems in Senegal, present suggestions for reform that accommodated French presence, and do so

in a way that was comprehensible to an elite and powerful audience with closely held beliefs of French cultural hegemony.

Senghor's notion of active assimilation ("assimiler, pas être assimilés") involved selectively borrowing aspects of French culture that were valuable to West Africa's process of development into an active, effective, and independent contributor to the global community, which was quickly becoming more and more globalized and interdependent, while preserving aspects of local African tradition and culture. He saw cultural borrowing as a positive phenomenon, beneficial to both communities involved. However, as long as France persisted in devaluing or outright denying African language and culture, West Africa would not be able to realize this goal of establishing an independent Afro-French cultural identity (Vaillant 687-91). A key purpose for Senghor in developing a unified sense of cultural identity was establishing an education system appropriate to that identity. In his speech he developed an "argument about what is desirable and possible as a cultural identity for West Africa." He argued, "once that identity has been chosen and defined, what type of education is suitable will become clear" (Vaillant 687).

III. Establishing a Unified Cultural Identity Derived from Senegal's "Triple Heritage"- An Appeal to the Senegalese Intellectual Elite

Establishing a unified sense of and definition for Senegalese cultural identity was not a straightforward process, and has by no means been achieved. Senghor, who did not push for radical reform or complete overhaul of the colonial system but sought to work within it towards a more culturally balanced future for Senegal, based his analysis of cultural identity on "the specific reality of French West Africa which both

limits and permits cultural choice" (Vaillant 687). Limits, in that French language and culture dominated, and still dominate to a large extent, Senegalese education and political systems, acting as a cultural and linguistic barrier to high levels of status and influence for many Senegalese people. Permits, in that the "triple heritage" of West Africa, comprised of local traditions, Islamic influence, and the "imprint of European modernity," allows for selectivity in reconstructing a historical discourse for the country that acknowledges the multifaceted nature of Senegalese cultural reality. (Babacar Fall 55)

The active assimilation for which Senghor advocated works within the measure of choice and selectivity that this "triple heritage" permits, actively using the identity established through the reconstruction of identity and historical discourse as a basis for appropriately reforming policy, in education and elsewhere (Vaillant 683-7). However, the power dynamic that acts as a limiting factor in cultural choice presents difficulties in reforming policy, as the historically unbalanced cultural forces present in the country have created a legacy of prestige, social status, and opportunity related to the acquisition of French language and culture, a legacy that persists into the present.

In 1937, when Senghor gave his speech to an audience of Frenchmen and Africans who had gained prestige through French education and cultural assimilation, this power dynamic was in full force. In addressing this audience, Senghor was addressing the enforcers of cultural policy that persisted in the belief that "Africans had no culture or civilization worthy of the name, and that the best an African could hope for was to become as much like a Frenchman as possible" (Vaillant 683). To do this he needed to carefully acknowledge the importance of both French and African culture,

and present a moderated argument that placed value in French culture while simultaneously raising African culture onto equal footing. Placing equal value in these two coexisting systems, and developing both elements of Senegalese culture through education was, in Senghor's mind, the key to giving Senegalese people the power to actively participate in cultural borrowing based on their own needs and desires for the future (Vaillant 687). To reestablish the legitimacy of African language and culture as the equal of French language and culture, Senghor emphasized the role of education, proposing several avenues for reform and specifically enlisting the help of educated African elites as integral contributors to this process. His primary proposal was to reform the historical curriculum in Senegalese schools, a foundational element of his attempt to redefine West African cultural identity.

Education is the means by which young people are socialized into a system of cultural beliefs and ideas about their collective history, the foundation of a cultural identity. To establish a cultural identity that takes into account the multiple cultural heritages of West Africa, a historical discourse must be constructed that addresses those multiple heritages, combatting the popular notion that African societies lack their own histories (Babacar Fall 55). Historical curriculum should thus, to this end, offer a comprehensive view of their interaction and interrelation, a reform Senghor advocated for in 1937. Secular French universalist beliefs in the "equality" of mankind that led colonialists to deny the existence of African culture at all, and that formed the basis for the French's aggressive policies of assimilation and education exclusively in French language and culture were, however, challenged in some ways by the alternative approach to culture offered by contemporary anthropological perspectives, though these

alternatives did not offer an approach in line with Senghor's philosophy. Instead, they provided yet another means to legitimize, in the eyes of Europeans, the exploitation of Africa and its inhabitants (Vaillant 685).

Anthropological perspectives at the time were centered on the "otherness" of non-European societies, and though anthropologists offered an alternative to fully denying the existence of African culture, it was an alternative that fully separated European culture and development from that of non-European nations. This perspective refused to address the "unthinkable assumption" that Europe was "one culture among many," and that non-European cultures could engage in processes of development that paralleled those that Europe had gone through (Vaillant 685). Anthropological work fixated on the "primitive mentality" of non-European peoples, and solidified itself in the subsequent conviction that these populations, specifically black populations, were intellectually inferior and inherently different from white people. These beliefs of racial inferiority, so deeply engrained in French culture at the time that they constituted the definition of "nègre" in the 1905 French Larousse Dictionary, simultaneously justified colonization, by asserting the superiority of European culture, and challenged the idea that assimilation was possible, since according to these beliefs Africans did not possess the potential to become the equal of the French, in language, culture, or intelligence (Vaillant 685-7).

Senghor advocated for a historical curriculum in schools that taught both French and African history, in both local languages and in French. However, the French history Senghor wished to implement into the curriculum was a full history of France's process of development, not of the country as an ideal model of civilization separated from that

process (Vaillant 687). He wanted to teach students not only the history of French heroes and present ideals of civilization, but the history of France "through times of progress and set backs, to acquire prosperity and the ideals of light and liberty" (Senghor 1945: 50; cited in Vaillant 687). This focus on the process of French society's development both complimented the French by extoling their ideals and achievements, and challenged the anthropological belief that European and non-European processes of development were fundamentally different and incomparable (Vaillant 687). Senghor asserted that the human qualities that contributed to France's development were not uniquely European, and that by learning about France's developmental process Africans would be able to understand the process of development and modernization, adapting the French example to their own context and desires for the future (Vaillant 687).

To enact this reform, Senghor appealed to the African intellectuals in his audience to be "intermediaries of culture" (Vaillant 687). He expressed his belief that the way for them to be of value to their society and to effectively use the competencies they had gained through education, namely French education, was to know their own culture and people as well. By integrating their knowledge of both coexisting cultures, they could acquire the power to restore the value of their heritage from within the existing systems of power and prestige that sought to devalue that heritage (Vaillant 687).

Senghor also called on African intellectuals to use their creativity to develop written literature in native languages and "realize the potential of local languages as literary languages" (Vaillant 687). However, Senghor remained non-committal at this time on the subject of which language to use in the intellectual and educational

development of Senegal, as he stated that African intellectuals could develop Senegalese literature in French as well as in local languages, as he himself did (Vaillant 687; Sané 183).

Despite his early commitment to redefining a Senegalese identity that could inform educational policy, Senghor evidently believed that the education system was an aspect of French culture worth borrowing. When looking at issues of meaningful learning, it is important to note in considering this decision that Senghor "deeply identified with the culture and history of the French-speaking world," a proclivity that surely helped him to achieve such a high level of education in the French system (Sané 181). He was an elected poet to the French Academy, demonstrating the degree of mastery he had of the French language, a mastery dependent on his understanding of French culture and necessary to capture the connotations and nuances of language integral to meaningful learning. He stated in 1957, three years before becoming president, that "On the question of language, the choice is between the virtues of each language, the educational virtues" (Senghor 1964, qtd. in Sané 183). By choosing to keep French, he seemingly espoused the European opinion that French had more merit as a language of education than local languages. Geared toward a goal of generating national unity, he used this policy for essentially the same reason as the French had as part of their assimilation policy: to socialize students into a specific culture and national identity. This reveals his affinity for the French language, as well as the significance he ascribed to language policy as a powerful and unifying tool for constructing identity. Perhaps for these reasons, though he promoted the use of local languages early in his career as part of his policy of selective and active assimilation, he effectively rescinded

his support by maintaining colonial language policy.

This French language policy remained unchanged until 1971, when Senegal issued a decree that aimed to introduce native languages to the school system. However, this decree was not widely influential and did not lead to implementation of new educational policies, as Senghor himself acknowledged in 1983 when he said that "the replacement of French as the official national language and the language of instruction was neither desirable nor possible" (Senghor 1983, qtd. in Cissé 111-112; Sané 183). Current trends in educational policy are still strongly tied to this legacy of French language hegemony. Only in 2001 were 6 local languages classified as "official national languages" (Sané 184). Wolof continues to grow in influence, used nearly everywhere outside of written or institutional contexts, and has generally lowered students' proficiency level in French, especially in rural areas. For this reason, some teachers have noted that, despite the maintenance of French language policy, the use of Wolof in Senegalese classrooms is common, since the language allows them to connect with students on a level impossible in French, both for linguistic and cultural reasons (Sané 184-5).

IV. Why Keep the French System?

The French system in Senegal does have some benefits that have consistently been cited as reasons for its preservation. The French language, literacy rates, and women's education are factors to consider when positing critiques of the system and in considering reasons for its longevity.

As the history of this system serves to show, the use of French is not an entirely negative aspect of Senegalese education. French assimilation policy used the language

to socialize Senegalese students into a version of what they considered citizens, capable of dialogue with France and therefore the rest of the world. It is due to the French language and the opportunities that came with its mastery that Senghor was able to gain audience and guide Senegal through the process of emancipating itself from French control. Senghor decided to preserve French as the language of education in part to keep channels of communication between Senegal and the rest of the world as open as possible. French is undeniably a more advantageous language for international communication than Wolof would be, both due to its ubiquity and its standardized written form. For some Senegalese students, French education gives them the opportunity to complete University or other higher education abroad, which would not be an option if their education took place in local languages. Because there is only one very overpopulated university in Senegal, this access to education internationally has often been cited as a reason to preserve the French language and curriculum in Senegal. Politically, Senegal must work within a system dominated by powerful countries and languages that would make a switch to Wolof an impediment to what is already a difficult development process. French is also spoken throughout West Africa, and the utility of a shared regional language shouldn't be underestimated.

Literacy has always been a goal of institutionalized education in Senegal, and is tied to the use of French for two reasons. The most immediate is the long history of standardized written French, the stability of which local languages lack in written form. Several types of written Wolof exist, the most widely used employing Latin orthography adopted and set by the Senegalese government after first being codified by the French. The use of Latin orthography to write Wolof means that many people who

learn to read, write, and speak French can in theory apply those skills to language used outside of French contexts. Of course, this is perhaps too optimistic an assessment given students' strikingly low language proficiency[2] and the problems associated with first becoming literate in a second language, as I hope to show later in this thesis (Vadwa & Patrinos 1; Sané 185). French's history as a written language also provides a wealth of literature for use in schools, as well as textbooks and other pedagogical resources. The second, and perhaps less obvious reason, is that due to the implementation of French in Senegal most local literature is written in French. This means that even as curriculum is modified to include local and regional authors alongside French literature, French remains and likely will remain the language of formal literature in schools. Senghor himself wrote extensively in French, and encouraged others in an effort to develop local literature. Though literacy levels are still very low, teaching in a language other than French could make them even lower because so little is written in Wolof, or any other local language.

A final benefit of enormous significance to Senegal is women's access to education. Traditional education, often religious and still present to varying degrees throughout Senegal, restricts the opportunities offered to girls and women. Though

[2] Scores in French on the SNERS exam (from a 2009 USAID review), showing low literacy levels:

Level	Average Score	% of students below minimum level	% of students at minimum level	% of students at desired level
CP	57.3	40%	60%	31%
CE2 (LN)	31.8	61%	39%	10%
CE2	51.4	47%	53%	17%
CM2	56.1	40%	60%	20%

(Destefano, Lynd, & Thornton 23)

women still face serious difficulties, many of which are due to family and religious obligations, they are still allowed much greater access to educational opportunities than ever before. In fact, since 2000 the gender gap in school enrollment has been reversed, and there are now more girls enrolled in primary school than boys (Destefano, Lynd, & Thornton 3) Mariama Ba, one of the schools at which I did the research for this thesis, was an all-girls school and considered to be the best school in the country. Each year girls from all over Senegal are selected on the basis of academic merit to attend the boarding school on Gorée, which is entirely funded by the government. They participate in school government and are given a rigorous class schedule. After gaining entrance to such a prestigious school, the students are under enormous pressure from their families, teachers, and likely themselves to succeed in their studies. Teachers routinely remind them of the importance of education and their responsibility to learn the skills that will allow them to become the effective leaders Senegal needs for development and future prosperity. The women graduating from Mariama Ba will be of immeasurable importance to Senegal's future, and so it is necessary to keep in mind the means by which they have been allowed to participate in an intellectual world formerly restricted to men. Only two of the teachers I worked with throughout this project were women, a ratio likely to change radically in next few decades.

Chapter 2: How The Senegalese Education System Inhibits Meaningful Learning

Concrete giants lined with narrow strips of sand finally settle. It is dark in Dakar. Finally the breeze washes away the sun and a breeze rolls in the wake of the rainy season. In this brief hiatus from the mad heat of several million people swirling around Africa's westernmost peninsula the buildings that form the bulk of the city sigh upward, and I, in the heart of it, sigh too. I'm standing on a rooftop with my host brother, who promptly addresses the improbability of the situation. "Why are you here?" I flounder for an answer, picked something I could be reasonably sure was true. I mentioned the research I hoped to do, and my interest in education. He lit another cigarette and turned to me for a long moment. "I can tell you about that." I learned that he works as a bricklayer in the city, but only out of need after turning away from what was once a promising education. He dropped out of Dakar University several years earlier because of frustration with ongoing strikes that made the price of education seem like a waste. Discouraged from continuing his own education, his concern for the education system intensified. I leaned in with curiosity, aware that he was one of the few people I would talk to with no reason to hide his opinion. He said first that a good teacher makes all the difference, that he can speak French so well because his teacher explained to him that he must think in French, that you cannot think in Wolof and translate to French. He says that you study 11 subjects in High School and that it would be easier to have the French system as it exists in France, where you choose a focus instead of trying to do everything. He says many students drop out for this reason, and that someone at the bottom of the class in Dakar can rise to the top in France, not only because of the focused subject matter but because of learning the mechanics of French explicitly, whereas French students tend to have poor levels of even their own language. I ask why they keep the French system, if it makes things so much harder. He doesn't understand the question. I repeat it five or six times before I receive an answer, mostly consisting of a shrug that seems to say "isn't it obvious?" and a quick "they speak French in the offices, they speak it everywhere." He returns to our previous topic abruptly and lists the subjects, and stops at History. He says what I had already read time and time again in my research, but it sounds different in this street, this mosquito-filled night where the

thick tropical air seems even to change the quality of sound, in this voice, speaking from experience. He says with some frustration that they only learn the history of France, of the United States, the Cold War and Russia, the first war, the second. His tone changes to one of resignation as he says some people know the story of others in these places better than they know the story of themselves and their own country. I mention identity, how he thinks this impacts people. "The impact, you can feel it. Tu peux le sentir. If someone has studied in French, you can feel it. If someone has studied in Arabic, you can feel it. If someone has not studied, you can feel it. It changes who you are."

I. Introduction

Using French as the language of education in Senegal, despite its potential benefits to literacy and its global utility, can also pose significant problems for students. On the most basic and visible level, it demands that students learn an entirely new language in order to gain access to formal education. While being bilingual has demonstrably positive effects, in this case the history of French hegemony and the consequent exclusion of local languages as academic or scholarly languages has downplayed the positive effects and presents instead a barrier to meaningful learning. Meaningful learning has to do with the integration of new knowledge into existing knowledge, or schemata, integration which can be interrupted or made substantially more difficult when that schemata exists in one language and culture and the new academic information in another. When meaningful learning does not take place, students suffer on multiple levels. They are less able to retain information because they haven't made enough connections and associations to render the information relevant or comprehensible, associations which are necessary for the integration of new knowledge into existing schemata, and are thus less successful in school. Students also suffer on a

psychological level, which has long term effects on their motivation and intellectual identity development. We form our identities out of our body of existing knowledge and experience, and when intellectual or academic knowledge is not integrated with the rest of our identity, intellectual identity will be isolated and underdeveloped. In other words, students won't see themselves as academics, as intellectuals in a formal or institutional setting, and therefore may not see themselves as capable of achievement in those areas.

In this section, I will begin by presenting a more detailed definition of meaningful learning. I will then define culture and identity and offer analyses of their relationship to the French education system in Senegal, including historical examples to show how these relationships originated and evolved, to show both how the Senegalese education system presents a barrier to meaningful learning and the consequences that barrier has for students. In doing so, I will present the basis for my initial research question, which informed the interviews and observations I carried out with teachers in Dakar. I hope to show in this section that significant problems exist in the Senegalese education system with regard to meaningful learning, and then in the following two sections to support that claim with teachers' responses, or lack of responses, to those problems. I will also be able to support this claim with evidence from classroom observations carried out with 22 different teachers in Dakar, which were guided by a rubric outlining teaching practices that would, according to existing research, encourage instances of meaningful learning. Using that observation tool allowed me to see more clearly if and when teachers attempted to facilitate students' processes of knowledge integration, helping them overcome the barriers posed by both the language and content of their class curriculum.

II. Defining Meaningful Learning

Meaningful learning is a teaching principle set in opposition to rote learning. Meaningful learning is a process in which a student "subsumes new information into existing structures and memory systems, and the resulting associative links create stronger retention" (Brown 65). Meaningful learning is most successful when learners can make new knowledge relevant, and associate personal experience or significance with the material they are learning. The entirety of this existing knowledge and experience is called schemata, and is directly related to identity; "Individuals develop schemata associated with their identity and are likely to be more engaged with topics and experiences that resonate with that schema" (Faircloth 186).

The historical construction of the Senegalese education system valued French identity over any and all others, so the curriculum has largely catered to and attempted to connect with an identity different from those of Senegalese students. In addition to issues of academic content, a large part of the disadvantage Senegalese students face in making learning meaningful is the language in which education is offered. Education in a foreign language fundamentally hinders students' ability to incorporate new knowledge into existing schemata, since the two are part of entirely separate systems of communication. In other words, students' schemata, consisting of a lifetime of experience and non-academic education, have been entirely acquired in one language, a system of communication representative of the culture in which that learning took place. When academic information is presented in a different language, students can have difficulty taking that information and connecting it with schemata that exist in the first language.

There are currently many suggestions and proposals for how to make learning more meaningful for Senegalese students, including bottom-up initiative for changes in the language and content of curriculum. As mentioned above, these fall into two broad pedagogical categories: curriculum content and language support, both of which can help promote meaningful learning for students even within a foreign language education system. These practices all concern facilitating students' processes of associating and integrating new information with existing schemata. This can be done either by directly proposing those associations by drawing on common experiences or shared cultural knowledge, or by offering links that allow students to more easily make the associations themselves, such as translating terms or concepts into Wolof (or another local language). I will explore these teaching practices more fully, and show why they are insufficient to solve the problem due to teachers' limitations in employing them, later in this thesis. First, I will define culture to show how an education system with institutional culture incongruent with culture outside the institution poses a barrier to meaningful learning, and then define the process of identity formation to show another level of this barrier and its consequences. I will use both historical evidence and pedagogical research to help explain these two definitions and analyses. Though they overlap to a degree, separating the two can better isolate specific historical processes and ongoing effects, and will ultimately inform a look at teachers' limitations in dealing with these problems.

III. Defining Culture

Culture is a concept that is very intimate to each of us and may thus appear subjective, especially when considering the difference between how we use and

conceptualize it when referring to our own culture and when referring to another culture that is foreign to us. When speaking of our own culture, whose nuances and contradictions are familiar, we can separate ourselves out as individuals. When speaking of another culture, however, the word becomes impersonal. The use of culture as a sweeping generalization to personally describe a group of individuals with whom we are not familiar can have major consequences. It can be used to excuse, explain, or dismiss differences on a range of scales, which is often the idea behind the approach of "cultural relativism" that is widely proselytized in academia. It can be used to reduce groups to a homogenous characterization that eliminates the individual, with the effect of dehumanizing the group in question. There are countless historical and current examples of this, whether the goal is to demonize a group, as the U.S. for example has done to the Islamic world, or to establish the inferiority of a group, as French colonists, like the rest of their colonial neighbors, did to the non-European groups they encountered across the world. It is clear that this homogenization can have disastrous consequences, but the necessity of culture as a means of characterization persists.

In their article *Culture as Disability*, McDermott and Varenne propose a definition of culture that reconciles the failure of the notion of culture to describe without stereotyping the individuals present within a given culture, and the necessity to have some unifying term with which to group individuals as well as to denote our personal visions of our own culture. This is the definition I will use to explain the role of culture in the problems faced by students in the Senegalese education system, as well as to defend the possible repercussions of these problems on a global level. This definition suggests that culture does not suppose uniformity across individuals but

instead is constituted by the shared demands each of these individuals face daily in a given society (McDermott & Varenne, 325). In short, it is not who we are as individuals but what we routinely do and face together that defines our culture.

To show how this definition functions, I will apply it to an example familiar from an American perspective. American culture is criticized for, and often characterized by, overconsumption and exorbitant waste. This is a true generalization, whether or not you protest that you or your small pocket of American life are environmentally conscious, grow your own food, or forgo unnecessary purchases. This characterization of American culture is true because the capitalist system operative in America, whose consequences proliferate globally, makes it so that the majority of the American population is faced with wage-labor jobs which they must work at the expense of time spent on domestic activities, as a result of which they must purchase the relatively cheap consumer goods and processed food that are the cause of much of America's wastefulness. This cycle is familiar to all Americans, whether or not we are caught it in at any given moment. It is also important to note that this system disproportionately affects the poor, many of whom would, if given the chance, choose another system for subsistence but cannot due to the number of hours they must work at minimum wage jobs to make enough to afford even the cheapest, and often most wasteful, products. In sum, this system is not a direct reflection of the desires, character, or morals of many if not most Americans, and yet it does constitute American culture in that it reflects the range of challenges and tasks that most Americans face on a day-to-day basis. If you are an insider to American culture, this characterization of Americans may not affect you but for a twinge of regret at our wastefulness, or at least regret that

we are seen in that light by the rest of the world. You know that is not how *you* are. Applied elsewhere, however, specifically to groups of people who have little power or voice in global society, the use of the term culture to describe how or what individuals act, think, or believe on a personal level can be much more destructive.

Applied to the subject of this thesis, this definition of culture can show how the imposition of French education on Senegalese students sets them up for ongoing and very visible failures with regard to the demands of a foreign cultural institution: the French education system. Furthermore, this definition can help explain why the western world continues to misunderstand the root of these visible failures, and maintains much of the same power imbalance and systems of exploitation that have been in place since the colonial period, using these perceived failures as part of its justification.

I have already stated that culture can be defined as the set of challenges a societal group faces on a daily basis. Whether someone is seen as successful or unsuccessful within a society depends on the degree to which they can meet the demands of their society. It is by this standard that we measure intelligence, skill, prosperity, and disability, among other categories of "success." Within one's own culture, the problems associated with this are limited because the demands one faces are familiar, even if they are not ideal or favorable to everyone. But what happens when there is drastic change in culture, in what is demanded of a group of people? Here we can see clearly "the powers of a culture to disable" (McDermott & Varenne 327). This need not happen in every aspect of a society, but this same definition of culture can also be applied on a smaller scale, to a specific cultural institution, especially when that cultural institution sits in a place of power and is accorded a high degree of importance.

When France put an education system in place in Senegal that reflected French culture, or the needs, values, and standards of people living in French society, Senegalese students were put at an immediate disadvantage, what McDermott and Varenne would call a disability. They were being judged based on the standards of a cultural institution that was not their own, and thus could not meet the demands as well as someone subject to the same standards both inside and outside of school. In this definition, people are disabled by the demands of an outside system in comparison with those who are enabled by the system. The "development of disability as an institution" puts the focus on the institution that either enables or disables, either advantages or disadvantages, a person based on how well they meet the demands of that institution (McDermott & Varenne 329-332). If culture is defined as the set of demands a group of people face on a daily basis, then in the context of the French education system in Senegal, those who are able to meet the demands of educational institutions are those who assimilate into French culture, and those who do not are labeled as less able. In this way students were set up for failure; their existing skills and knowledge were considered useless, or even destructive, because they were incongruent with the demands of the system by which their ability or success was determined.

When turning once again to the history of this system's implementation in Senegal, these effects were intentional and served the colonial agenda. By imposing disability on a group of people through the implementation of culturally incongruous standards, they were able to both incapacitate a group and thus ensure dominance and to rationalize that dominance morally and rationally from a European perspective. Keeping much of the Senegalese population from being able to meet the demands they

were faced with under colonial assimilation policy, specifically by narrowing pathways to "success" through institutionalized education, was a tool to ensure their dependence on France and thus to prolong France's opportunities to exploit their subject population. Keeping people "uneducated" by the operative definition in this context keeps labor unskilled and suppresses the peoples' ability to resist the government subjugating them.

Perhaps even more importantly when considering the modern implications of this, however, it often has the effect of making these failures visible and establishing them as truths from the perspective of outsiders advantaged by the system. The rationalist doctrine typical of European or western education accepts the notion of ability and the standards by which it is judged. Thus, when non-European groups fail according to these standards, it is more often seen as a fault of the individuals than of the system, even when the reasons for their failure are explained by circumstances of "developing" countries and often accompanied by a privileged and ignorant version of sympathy. This is why we see so many Western development and aid programs that have the goal of helping individuals in "underdeveloped" countries "rise" to the demands of Western systems. In most westerners' minds, the system is rational and reflects reality because it does reflect and represent the master narrative of dominant western culture. Because the standards of this system are established as true, the degrees of ability and success measured by those standards are also seen as true. In other words, the visibility of these failures, because they occur in a public educational or institutional setting, magnifies their consequences in the context of "a public assumption that, although society can care for those who lag behind, they are out of the running for the rewards that come with full cultural competence" (McDermott & Varenne 334).

Although our language has changed considerably, the narrative surrounding western aid and development projects often relies on this same rationalization, and preserves the perception that non-Europeans are somehow less capable, less abled, than Europeans or white Americans. Instead, with knowledge of the origins of these institutions and their global implementation, we might flip this assessment and say that "disability may be a better display board for the weaknesses of a cultural system than it is an account of real persons" (McDermott & Varenne 327).

IV. Defining Identity in Context

Identity can be seen as both an individual mental process and a process of negotiation within contexts and communities. Largely, this mental process has been defined as "exploring, identifying, and integrating seemingly disparate aspects of the self to arrive at a sense of personal continuity across time and context" (Faircloth, 186). However, this individual process is dependent on the contexts in which it takes place. These contexts include our families, cultures, communities, and societies, as well as institutions such as governments, economies, and, importantly, schools. The way we come to understand ourselves, alone and in relation to others, is negotiated by the possibilities of the contexts in which we find ourselves, as well as our choices, practices, and struggles within these contexts[3] **(**Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006; Wortham

[3] "If we wish to know about a man, we ask 'what is his story—his real, inmost story? — for each of us is a biography, a story. Each of us is a singular narrative, which is constructed, continually, unconsciously, by, through, and in us—through our perceptions, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions; and, not least, our discourse, our spoken narrations. Biologically, physiologically, we are not so different from each other; historically, as narratives--we are each of us unique."

"To be ourselves we must have ourselves – possess, if need be re-possess, our life-stories. We must "recollect" ourselves, recollect the inner drama, the narrative, of

2006, cited in Faircloth 2012, p.187). It is also important to note that contexts are not neutral environments, and that the aspects of identity that are valued, devalued, expected, or prohibited, institutionally or culturally, will influence the identity of the individual in the context.

History and the shared cultural understandings derived from shared histories are also crucial to identity. Thus, the language through which this culture and history is transmitted is critical to identity formation. In an increasingly globalized world, where identities are subject to many more influences than at previous times in history, language and cultural identity are increasingly important as a point of choice in differentiating or affiliating ourselves with specific groups. Individuals "provide their lives with coherence and purpose by constructing evolving narratives of the self (i.e. life stories)" (Faircloth, 187). In sum, identity is personal, social, and unfixed, and is influenced by any and all contextual factors surrounding an individual.

As mentioned, education is a major context of identity development. Both institutional and cultural factors are at play in this context, and it is also the primary location for social and intellectual development for adolescents, who are often highly concerned with identity development (Faircloth, 186). The interaction of students' identities outside of academic institutions with the parts of identity that are influenced by and developed in school are fundamental considerations when trying to optimize student success in academics. Intellectual development is part of identity development,

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ourselves. A man needs such a narrative, a continuous inner narrative, to maintain his identity, his self."

(Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales*)

especially in a world where formal education is increasingly valued and seen as reflective of individual capability and success, and is most successful when it is congruent with other aspects of student identity (Faircloth, 187). The Senegalese system, however, goes at times further than failing to address students' personal and cultural identities. A large affective contributor to students' attitudes toward school is the negation of their own culture and heritage, in favor of a historically dominant language and culture that is "largely alien and at times even discriminatory to Senegalese culture" (Vandewiele 512). In other words, not only do students often not see aspects of their non-academic identities reflected or valued in academic environments, they see them denigrated. The linguistic strategy employed by the French as part of their use of education as cultural indoctrination was particularly clear; parents would not receive child allowance from the government if their children did not attend colonial schools, and once children were in school they were punished for speaking local languages among one another (Khadi Fall).

Supression of Senegalese identities was a specific goal of the French colonial administration's assimilation policy, and many structures and systems imposed by the colonial administration remain even a half-century after Senegal's "independence". France implemented institutionalized education in Senegal to assimilate France's colonial subjects into French culture. The goal, the definition of "success" in the system, was to assimilate to the fullest extent possible. Socializing students by means of a fully French system, a system which disadvantaged students by measuring them against standards reflective of French culture, enforced French hegemony and ensured France's power over it's colonial territories and their inhabitants. Both in school and in

whatever professional, social, or other public pursuits a person engaged in afterwards, success and status were entirely defined by these imposed standards. The only way for an African person to succeed was to abide by the rules of the system, even if they had no basis in the realities of their life and even if they were not logical or rational according to a their own cultural or personal ideas of logic or reason. Clearly, the French colonial system was not built to benefit African "subjects" in the way the "subjects" themselves would have defined as beneficial or advantageous by their own standards outside of or before colonial rule. As such, there was no room for, or value in, criticizing or addressing problems in the system from the perspective of a colonial subject. The oppression and disadvantages were in all probability evident to Africans forced to operate within the colonial system, but due to the power dynamics in place the only way they could succeed in that system was to fully comply with the demands of that system anyway. It was the only route to power, both economic and social. Refuse, and you would suffer.

For a colonial subject, doing this meant that you had to leave behind aspects of your identity that did not conform to French demands, at least in the public sphere. Holding on to the identity that assimilation policy was trying to suppress would have been damaging to the goal at hand. Over time, both throughout the colonial period and still today, as much of the colonial system remains present in contemporary Senegal, devaluation of non-French identities has been necessarily internalized. The need for a student to subjugate parts of their non-academic identity in order to achieve success in education is still very much present. In school, success still means conforming to the demands of the system as closely as possible, demands which are frequently not

reflective of students' experiences, interests, lives, and values outside of school. This is perpetuated by those who have achieved success in the system, such as teachers, who often will not undermine the system that defines their success and will instead perpetuate and enforce it. If they didn't, they could lose their own status and security. This process creates a closed cycle where change is difficult if not impossible.

The result of this cycle can be lethal to many students' academic and intellectual lives. When academic and intellectual identity is separated from the rest of a person's identity, they are unlikely to be motivated to pursue their education. They simply won't see themselves as intellectuals, or believe that they can achieve anything in academia. The psychological effects of alienating students academic and intellectual identities smother the potential that many students could otherwise have, the potential that many of us who have access to education systems that are congruent with other aspects of our identities and experience do have. The consequences of this cannot be underestimated.

The difference between the culture, the standards and demands, of institutionalized education and culture outside of academic institutions causes the separation of intellectual identity or academic identity from other parts of students' identities and offers essentially two choices. Either students assimilate and conform to academic demands at the expense of other parts of their identities, which can negative consequences even if they are "successful" in school, or they do not (or can not) make that sacrifice, and as a consequence abandon success in school, or even the idea that academic success is possible. Either way, this separation is clear and the negative consequences of it are unavoidable.

The problems this barrier causes are not confined to the issue of language, though

it is impossible to isolate language from other aspects of Senegal's colonial heritage and thus from the collection of persistent problems in education. Nevertheless, I will do my best to first look at the non-linguistic components of this barrier before concentrating specifically on the issue of language. Both informed the rubric criteria I used in my observations to assess the possibilities, or lack thereof, teachers have to implement teaching practices that could overcome this barrier and offer increased possibilities for meaningful learning to occur. I looked at these concrete examples of teaching practices with the potential to address students' difficulties in order to make the large-scale problems, addressed generally above, observable, and I will outline these categories as well as justifications for their validity in principle in the remainder of this chapter. As we will see in the following chapter, however, in practice under the constraints teachers are faced with, they are not always possible to implement or sufficient to solve the problems at hand.

V. Rubric Criteria: Problems of Content

The ways in which teachers can attempt to help students make the associations necessary for the integration of new knowledge into existing knowledge, to give them increased opportunities for meaningful learning to occur, fall into two general categories. In the first, teachers can offer the associations directly, based on experiences or examples that are likely shared by the majority of students. In the second, teachers can offer students tools, such as the translation of a term or choices within a lesson, to discover and make the associations themselves. Both of these types of practices can fall into either linguistic or non-linguistic areas.

A primary example of the type of teaching practice that would fall into the first

category would be for a teacher to support a concept with an association, illustration, or example relevant to students' experiences, communities, or practices outside of school (Classroom Observation Rubric III). This is a very general category, deliberately so in the context of my observation rubric, but the effects are important. Providing even a small example of a concept that is immediately recognizable to students can not only give them an immediate point of reference, an entry point for knowledge integration, but has the potential to give them enough footing to make further associations for themselves. If you consider that students may be entering a lesson with the mindset that it will be entirely unfamiliar, because it may be entirely foreign on a surface level, showing the similarities between an unfamiliar topic and a familiar subject may make a substantial difference. Remembering the definition of culture as a series of challenges faced by a group of people on a daily basis, you can think of this as translating a concept from one culture to another. An economic topic for example may be presented in the context of a foreign government, or a commercial setting unfamiliar to students in Dakar. Offering an example of the same topic taking place in a familiar commercial setting, even if it is just the lady selling sandwiches outside the gate of the school, can mitigate the difficulty of new topics.

Similarly, teachers can provide possible associations for students by offering real-world applications of or uses for the content they are teaching (Classroom Observation Rubric VI). Offering these applications makes the skill relevant and potentially useful, situating the new knowledge into students' schemata and giving them a reason to retain it. If a piece of information isn't useful to us, it isn't worth remembering, and often "useful" needs to mean more than useful for passing a test. Creative applications of

information, or even of the problem-solving process underlying the new information, can still fall into this category.

Several types of practices related to content fall into the second category, where teachers don't necessarily offer explicit associations but instead provide students with more tools to do so themselves. Teachers can give assignments or class activities that give students some measure of choice in the topic, theme, or text they are working with (Classroom Observation Rubric VIII). This allows them to pick specifics of a lesson that are important or relevant to them. By the same principle, teachers can provide a student-guided activity or assignment, or a more interpretive activity that leaves room for choice and personal inquiry (Classroom Observation Rubric VII). In addition to students being able to choose subjects they are interested in, the level of agency students are given in this type of assignment may raise their level of intrinsic motivation to learn the material and complete the task. Use of authentic materials, which are defined as materials not meant for classroom use, can also help students achieve meaningful learning (Classroom Observation Rubric XI). Physical objects, documents, stories, or anything else taken from real-world contexts and applied to classroom learning can give students a point of reference for new information.

VI. Rubric Criteria: Problems of Language

The issue of language in education creates an additional barrier to meaningful learning for students because it intensifies the divide between academic knowledge and students' existing schemata, a divide already present for Senegalese students in the content of curriculum. The issue isn't as simple as translating content from one language to another. Like the academic contexts described above, language is not a

neutral entity. It is not a code that can be translated from one variation to another without consequence. Language is instead a dynamic, relational entity, a system of social representation evolved (and continuously evolving) within a community to meet that community's shared cultural needs, desires, and values. It can exist only within this collective social unit, as it is a social institution that represents the collective history, knowledge, and experience of a group of people, the building blocks of culture, and transmits this system of shared meaning and representation from generation to generation. In short, "language expresses and shapes the spirit of a people and the soul of a nation- in all that makes them specific" (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne 37-8). Language both represents and transmits culture; without it, the culture in question is disenfranchised of their heritage and shared ways of understanding, the whole of their "way of being in the world" (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne 39). I have shown how colonial assimilation policy led to the implementation of a system that was reflective of French identity and denigrated non-French identities, making meaningful learning difficult or impossible for Senegalese students and thus alienating students' academic or intellectual identities. Given the above definitions of language, the reasons colonial policy was so insistent on the use of French, especially in educational contexts where much of the assimilation process took place, becomes more clear. Repressing local culture means disenfranchising local languages; ensuring that opportunities to gain success and status were available exclusively in French secured French as the language of power, and helped legitimize the superiority of French culture from a colonial perspective.

Because language is a system of representation specific to the culture of the

speakers, education in French necessarily reflects French values, concerns, and ways of understanding. Thus, education given in French is fundamentally separate from the knowledge, experience, and perspective of Senegalese students. Think of schemata as a network which forms the scaffolding upon which all new knowledge is built. Within your own language and culture, new knowledge is made of the same material, and can be easily added to the existing structure. If you are in the place of these students, however, new knowledge does not fit into the existing scaffolding. You must build an entirely new scaffolding from scratch before new knowledge can find its place on a solid foundation. This means students have to learn to think in French, to follow French standards of logic and reason, in order to situate academic knowledge that exists in French. Speaking is not just a matter of translation. To be capable of a full range of intellectual expression in a language requires not only high language proficiency but an internal flexibility of identity and thought structure[4].

In 1967, Senghor posed the question of whether Africans could express themselves in French, a colonial language, and still remain faithful to their cultural identity (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne, 41-2). While this question remains a subject of debate, it remains true that in order for Senegalese students to be successful in school and meet the standards set by the baccalaureate exam, not only do they need to be able to speak French, they need to be able to think in French. Not only do they need to be

[4] "We speak not only to tell other people what we think, but to tell ourselves what we think. Speech is a part of thought."

"A human being is not mindless or mentally deficient without language, but he is severely restricted in the range of his thoughts, confined, in effect, to an immediate, small world."
(Oliver Sacks, *Seeing Voices*)

proficient in French vocabulary and grammar to express their knowledge of French curriculum, they need to internalize the scaffolding for thought and reason in which that curriculum originated. The need to function within a completely different cultural context of communication and understanding is what makes the issue of language in this system so central to students' difficulties when it comes to meaningful learning.

The ways in which teachers can encourage opportunities for meaningful learning across the linguistic barrier with which students are faced are based on the same principle as those focused on content. Students need to integrate new academic knowledge, which exists in one language and cultural context, and integrate it into existing schemata, which exist in a separate language and cultural context. Anything teachers can do to help students make the associations necessary for this integration to occur have to do not just with translating the language itself, but translating the material from one way of understanding to another. As the next chapter will make clear, this is not necessarily possible and even the most effective strategies are subject to severe limitations. However, the following strategies do in theory have potential to increase students' opportunities for meaningful learning.

Perhaps the most obvious way, at least at first glance, to deal with the French language barrier is simply to offer translations in Wolof, or another local language depending on location. Teachers could either translate a specific term or key words to help students understand a concept presented primarily in French (Classroom Observation Rubric II), or they could give an entire explanation of a concept in Wolof (or another local language) without repeating the explanation in French (Classroom Observation Rubric I). This would certainly augment students' abilities to understand

the content of the lesson, but the fact remains that unless they can communicate that content in French within the strict, formal structure of French exams, they will be given a failing grade. This is unlikely, given the low French proficiency levels of most Senegalese students, especially those in rural areas. Therefore, another way teachers could address this language barrier is by attempting to make the French more meaningful for students, which would require raising proficiency levels through practice and feedback. Teachers can give students explicit feedback or support related to the meaning, function, or pragmatics of language they are working with (Classroom Observation Rubric IV). Putting the focus on the meaning of language, of its purpose or function in context, can make unfamiliar language, language that has relatively little meaning in the context of students existing schemata, more meaningful. Teachers can also give students explicit feedback relating to the formal aspects of language, such as grammatical accuracy (Classroom Observation Rubric V). While this has less potential to make information immediately meaningful than the first type of feedback, over time increased mastery of French supported by this type of feedback has the potential to make students feel more comfortable producing and interpreting French, and thus more able to overcome the language barrier and achieve meaningful learning.

Chapter 3: Limitations

“There was something so reassuringly prosperous and respectable in their bearing that after a moment's hesitation Nunez stood forward as conspicuously as possible upon his rock, and gave vent to a mighty shout that echoed round the valley.

The three men stopped, and moved their heads as though they were looking about them. They turned their faces this way and that, and Nunez gesticulated with freedom. But they did not appear to see him for all his gestures, and after a time, directing themselves towards the mountains far away to the right, they shouted as if in answer. Nunez bawled again, and then once more, and as he gestured ineffectually the word "blind" came up to the top of his thoughts. ‘The fools must be blind,’ he said.

When at last, after much shouting and wrath, Nunez crossed the stream by a little bridge, came through a gate in the wall, and approached them, he was sure that they were blind. He was sure that this was the Country of the Blind of which the legends told. Conviction had sprung upon him, and a sense of great and rather enviable adventure. The three stood side by side, not looking at him, but with their ears directed towards him, judging him by his unfamiliar steps. They stood close together like men a little afraid, and he could see their eyelids closed and sunken, as though the very balls beneath had shrunk away. There was an expression near awe on their faces.

‘A man,’ one said, in hardly recognisable Spanish. ‘A man it is--a man or a spirit--coming down from the rocks.’

But Nunez advanced with the confident steps of a youth who enters upon life. All the old stories of the lost valley and the Country of the Blind had come back to his mind, and through his thoughts ran this old proverb, as if it were a refrain:--

‘In the Country of the Blind the One-Eyed Man is King.’

‘In the Country of the Blind the One-Eyed Man is King.’

…

“It seemed they knew nothing of sight.

Well, all in good time he would teach them.”

-*H.G. Wells,* The Country of the Blind

I. Introduction

Over the course of this study, I worked with 22 teachers at two schools, Mariama Ba on Gorée island off the coast of the Dakar peninsula and Les Pedagogues in the HLM Grand Yoff neighborhood of Dakar. I did at least two hours of classroom observations with each of the teachers and did longer interviews with ten of them afterward. All were conducted anonymously, but the grade levels and subject taught by each were recorded. A list of all the codes I will be using to reference these teachers (T1-T22) and interviewees (I1-I10) along with their subject and grade level is included at the end of this thesis. The classroom observations were conducted in order to observe teaching practices or methods that had the potential to encourage opportunities for meaningful learning. As described in the previous chapter, these were general categories of teaching methods that could help students integrate new academic knowledge into their existing schemata, either by offering explicit associations or examples based on experiences or cultural reference points likely shared by the majority of students, or by giving students more tools to make those associations themselves. The categories were constructed to be relatively open and general on purpose, to

encompass a wide variety of practices while still guiding the observations to target specific types of teaching practices.

The interview consisted of a single question, my primary research question: "how do teachers in Senegal make learning meaningful for students across the linguistic and content barriers posed by the French education system?" This question presupposes the existence of problems, a fair assessment considering the amount of public concern, originating in the 1960s from teachers, students, and unions and eventually acknowledged by the government of Senegal, over "the educational problems which Senegal has faced throughout its post-colonial history" (Evans, 205). By making this statement, asserting the existence of problems, in my question, I did not compel teachers to agree with me by any means, as the results of these interviews made very clear. Making this assertion by stating exactly the primary question I hoped to explore in this thesis was necessary in order to obtain the information necessary for a comprehensive analysis, but it also left room for people to deny the premise of the question and deny that problems existed. That a person who had experienced the education system both as a student and a teacher could deny problems seems at first improbable, but that was in fact how many teachers responded. I will address this set of responses in the next chapter. Many teachers did answer this question readily, some in great detail, and the answers I received fell consistently into several of the categories outlined in my observation rubric. During the observations as well, I saw many teaching practices that fell into these categories. In this chapter I will address both of these sets of results and include an analysis of the limitations teachers are faced with in implementing them, limitations which were often explicitly noted by teachers in

responding to the interview question. I will be referring to rubric categories by the roman numeral associated with them, listed in the previous chapter and in the full rubric copy attached (annex document).

II. T1: A Comprehensive Example

The teacher whose methods and explanation of the reasoning behind his methods fell most completely in line with a meaningful learning-oriented class was the first teacher I observed during summer classes at Les Pedagogues. His 4eme (8th grade) French class offered extensive examples of attempts to make learning meaningful for students, even such dry material as grammar exercises, which often require a large amount of memorization on the part of students. Walking into his classroom, a concrete room with windows barred and glassless, graffiti scrawled across otherwise empty walls, I found the atmosphere immediately different from classrooms I would later visit. The subject matter was reading comprehension. Students were studying text genre as the first step in writing a commentary on a text, a critical part of the baccalaureate exam. Instead of beginning by stating the genre categories and the criteria for identification as content to memorize for an exam, T1 began by introducing genre identification as an explicit reading strategy, and explained how students applied the skill routinely in their daily lives (VI). T1 both offered examples of instances in which students already applied this skill, such as reading a set of instructions, and explained how learning to identify the genre of a text would help them in various contexts in their lives (X). T1 then asked students to state different text genres they knew (VIII), such as poetry or essay, and wrote each on the board. He followed the same set of steps (explicitly introducing the content as a reading strategy, offering potential applications

and examples of when students already use the strategy, and asking for student-generated examples) when introducing the next topic, reading purpose. After listing students' examples on the board, T1 gave concrete examples of texts with different purposes, such as persuasive or informative texts.

By looking at the purpose of the text and focusing on concrete, familiar examples, T1 put the focus on the meaning of the text and its use in real life, both of which support meaningful learning by making the content relevant and potentially useful for students outside of the classroom (IX). If he had presented his own (or a textbook's) examples, listed criteria for identification, and required students to memorize the vocabulary for purpose/genre categories, students may not have been able to infer the reading strategies on their own, may not have seen the real-world processes of application as clearly, and may have simply seen the lesson as test preparation—another list of vocabulary words to memorize. At the end of this lesson, T1 gave students ten minutes to write a short account of something memorable that had happened to them at school over the previous year (VII). He asked for a volunteer to read theirs aloud, and then asked the class to identify the purpose and genre of the text that student had written. He used this exercise, which was not graded and was presented as a fun way to fill up the remainder of the class period, to review what they had learned in that day's lesson in a context that both allowed students to express themselves using meaningful language and practice writing and identifying technical aspects of that language in a relatively stress-free way.

T1's practice of asking for student-generated examples continued throughout his next lesson, which focused on grammar. He did not provide example sentences himself,

and only provided two definitions throughout the entire class period. T1 asked students for example sentences to work with, and wrote them up on the board using different colors for each part of speech (VIII). This particular use of student-generated examples was very important, because T1 could ensure that students knew the meaning of the sample language they were working with before identifying parts of speech. If, for example, sentences were taken from a French textbook, students might not know the meaning of a sentence because it references things they have not seen or experienced. Without knowing the meaning of the sentence, they would be much less able to identify parts of speech, and even if they succeeded or the answers were provided, the language would not be meaningful without a point of reference. Once the sentences were written out and the parts of speech color-coded, T1 asked students to identify each part by its function or role in the sentence (IV). At this point, T1 had not yet given vocabulary such as "noun" or "verb," but asked questions such as "what does this express," or "what other words could play the same role in the sentence." T1 would then take the root of a word and ask how they could modify it to play another role, such as turning a description word (adjective) into an action word (verb). Only after much discussion about meaning and function, using exclusively student-generated examples and definitions, did T1 present the list of vocabulary denoting parts of speech. Students were instructed to write nothing down throughout the entirety of these two lessons until the very end, when T1 would dictate a few short summary notes for students to write.

The alternative to T1's lessons, something I witnessed in nearly all the other French classes I observed, is to begin by writing the list of vocabulary (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) on the board along with its definition, having students copy the list, and

then copy textbook exercises on the board for students to complete silently until the end of class when they would provide the answers and check their work. In these other cases, students would often be scolded for a wrong answer, and little discussion would occur about why it was wrong or how to find the correct answer. This is the final point at which T1 differed greatly from other teachers I observed, and the aspect of his teaching he most emphasized in my discussion with him afterward. He never gave negative feedback for a wrong answer, but would simply move on to another volunteer. He would give positive feedback for a correct answer, and often ask the student volunteer for more information on the subject. His first reason for doing so, which is precisely what pedagogical research concerning affective factors in a classroom predicts, was to give students confidence in what they already know and ease their stress level in the classroom. T1 also learned personal information about his students, such as the sports they play, and told me he tried to make them laugh at least once every 15 minutes. Additionally, T1 stated that he used this interrogative method to encourage and motivate students to figure an answer out on their own so that they retain the information better, and that by using students' own examples they would be more familiar with the material and therefore less intimidated, as well as able to see both future and current real-world applications. In short, T1 provided me with the definition of meaningful learning.

I offer this story as an example of a teacher who is doing a remarkable job of working within the constraints teachers are faced with to make learning meaningful for his students. The sheer number of volunteers T1 received for each question he asked was proof that students felt comfortable attempting to answer, and they were almost

always correct in their responses in part due to the way T1 formulated his meaning- and function-based questions. T1's attentiveness and clear explanations of his methods proved they were thoroughly considered, conscious efforts to respond to student needs. I hope to show in the rest of this chapter, however, T1 is the exception, not the rule, and even his success in implementing these methods is limited by factors relating to educational policy, budgetary constraints, and the heavily centralized government that makes reform slow and often ineffective.

III. Policy Without Practice: The Slow Evolution of Government-Regulated Curriculum

The content of Senegalese curriculum has been the subject of proposed reform, some implemented and some not, since the first decade of Senghor's presidency in the 1960s. The French system carried over into independence favored the new Senegalese elite, the governing class the education system was originally set up to create. Senghor, as shown, was a prime example. Because of its long relationship with France, and France's particular colonial goal of indoctrinating its colonial subjects into French culture, Senegal was much more intensely impacted by "francophonism" and by the heavily centralized and bureaucratic nature of its colonial government. It was clear to Senegalese people living under these intensive conditions that formal schooling was essential to acquiring positions in the colonial services, and that "the longer the schooling and more perfectly it reflected the French model, the more advantageous it was for their careers" (Evans, 206). Those who achieved success and acquired the government or other administrative posts the French system was designed to prepare them for naturally supported its perpetuation at the time of independence, when they

took charge of the highly-centralized government whose structure was by this time "imprinted" on the country (Evans 223). This has proven to be an enormous barrier to reform, since the government of Senegal, like its colonial predecessor, is responsible for approving, regulating, and implementing any changes in the education system. Those have control over these decisions are those who have profited by the French system, and thus their primary goal has remained to preserve its "existing francophone capacity within any reformed system" (205). Senegal was the "foundation" of the French colonial empire, more fully indoctrinated into French culture than any other colony, and thus maintained close ties with France even after independence (222-3). Because of the ongoing relationship between the French and Senegalese governments, Senegal has remained the beneficiary of large amounts of French funding geared towards education. In addition to the continued presence and support of the French military and trade subsidies after independence, in 1964 France contributed over 50% of the funding for secondary education and a substantial portion of the funding for other schools, including teacher training schools. This relationship has remained strong, putting further pressure on the Senegalese government to preserve the French system and adding an additional level to the difficulty of implementing any policy reform (211).

Nonetheless, student strikes erupted in 1968 at the University of Dakar, demanding more voice in policy decisions and a change in curriculum and administration. The result was not necessarily positive; due to changes made shortly after the strikes, degrees from the University of Dakar were no longer equivalent to degrees earned in France (212). Further student and teacher strikes in 1968-9 prompted Senghor to address the need for a "new school" that would cater to practical needs and

realities of students. However, “changes were not actually occurring in content or access nor in improving the internal and external efficiencies of the education system” (Evans, 215). In 1978, an “Etats Généraux” conference, modeled after the long-standing French institution made up of various representative, though non-elected, bodies, was called to address the issue of educational reform. Many groups participated, including teacher, parent, and student associations, but results were minimal. After more strikes at the tail end of the 1970s, pressure mounted enough that Senegal’s new president Diouf approved a second EG conference in 1981 (216-7). This conference procured substantially more results, but at a cost. Government representatives came to facilitate and help with conference logistics, causing the EG to lose much of the bottom-up, representative nature with which it had begun. With this loss of freedom came some hope for real change with the formation of the National Commission for the Reform in Education in Training (CNREF) following the EG conference. The CNREF was supposed to investigate and respond to the recommendations the EG had produced, but by this point any resulting policy change was once again completely in the hands of the government (217-8). The bureaucratic process to which any change would be subject drastically slowed the popular movement in which the substance of the proposed changes originated.

The policy reforms they chose to accept were those focused on efficiency with minimal budgetary impact, which meant teachers often had fewer resources and larger class sizes. This was a move away from the elitist orientation of formal education which had originally been preserved at independence, and had possible benefits in the expansion of access to primary school education for a wider range of people. However,

these choices were influenced by outside pressure in the context of IMF and World Bank involvement in the structural adjustment programs of the mid-1980s, which intensified the government's cost-cutting efforts, and caused that increased access to primary education to come with a decrease in quality (Evans 219-20). The government's attitude about educational reform, which maintained that decisions should be made by those recognized as the most qualified, functionally meaning those in positions of authority gained through achievement in the francophone system, was exemplified by a statement by the Minister of National Education in response to criticisms of the CNREF's final recommendations. Iba Der Thiam stated that the New School was not that of the EG or the CNREF, but "that which I am going to build" (Evans 220). Because he had a good relationship with teachers' unions, this was generally seen as an acceptable answer. Though some reform was slowly creeping into educational policy, exemplified most clearly by laws passed in 1991, the changes were once again mostly in the language of the law, which "demonstrates that there is a commitment to remain publicly loyal to the spirit of the reforms recommended by the EG," and not in the actual implementation of educational reform (Evans 221). A rapidly growing population and consistent reduction in funding per capita during Diouf's administration (1981-2000) means that funding still plays a major role in any policy change, meaning that the French government and other international donors maintain a "strangle-hold on the education system" (222). The amount of funding can also be used as an excuse by the government to deny responsibility for problems in education. Khadi Fall states that 40% of the national budget is invested in education, and that "the authorities never tire of speaking about that 40% as if this amount of money were itself

a guarantee that a solution will be found for the problems inherent in the fundamental orientation of the education system" (Khadi Fall). Current reports show Senegal's national expenditure on education hovering around 20% of total government expenditure; however Fall's accusation still holds water (Knoema).

In summary, as far as curriculum reform is concerned, the government of Senegal has control over any change and has so far responded just enough to popular demand to avoid confrontation. Funding, population growth, international pressure, and the long bureaucratic process slow or restrict any proposed changes, and often cause approved changes to go unimplemented. Despite all the attempts to change curriculum through policy changes and national reform, "the content of primary and secondary education is still largely copied from French models despite a few adjustments in history, geography, and natural sciences" (Vandewiele 512). These adjustments in historical content mean that Senegalese history and geography are taught in school, something which many teachers noted during my study. However, these "adjustments" are just that—relatively small and ultimately insufficient modifications that do nothing to remedy the fundamental problems with using French curriculum in Senegal. The inclusion of some version of Senegalese history is a bare minimum, and does not constitute a victory especially when that history will still be written in French. The inclusion Bottom-up change, small modifications by teachers in their practices or techniques, are also inhibited by the government's failure to enact reform. Several underlying and very concrete constraints imposed by Senegal's educational system make it easy to see how limited teachers are in their ability to work within the regulations of the system and make small changes on a classroom level.

First, French was established as the national language in Senegal's constitution at independence, which solidified the commitment to a French language curriculum and, consequently, the examination system. Preserving the baccalaureate as the national exam required for the completion of secondary school means that curriculum is necessarily dictated by the demands of the exam. What has become a common lament in the U.S. since the implementation of standardized testing rings painfully true for Senegalese teachers—they are required to "teach to the test." This decision to preserve the French language and examination system is the root of subsequent difficulties in curriculum modification, because the resulting situation is such that adding more locally relevant content would come at cost to the French content necessary to pass the exam. In short, there just aren't enough hours in the day. Exam failure rates are already so high that content directly oriented towards exam preparation cannot be reduced, and "when requirements related to developing a command of French language, culture, and civilization along with math and science are subtracted from the total number of subjects and hours, there is relatively little left for content more directly relevant to Senegal" (Evans 212). If curriculum reforms were made it would transform the objectives of the education system, which would need to be reflected in the exams students are required to pass. As long as the current objectives and resultant exams are preserved, the curriculum cannot be changed without depriving students of class time geared toward exam preparation.

Several final concerns are worth consideration. First, the geographical inequities between rural and urban educational settings are substantial—"the region of Dakar has nearly double the primary school enrollment than seven of the ten regions in Senegal"

(Evans 221). Both schools at which the observations and interviews included in this thesis took place were in urban environments, but teachers in interviews consistently brought up the issue of the quality discrepancy between rural and urban schools. The fact that the system was originally designed to educate an elite governing class, and that expansion of access to schooling for rural communities was only addressed much later with the efficiency-oriented programs of the 1980s is in large part the foundation of this issue. Curriculum content is even less relevant to more agriculturally or religiously oriented communities outside Dakar, and the practicality of formal education which does not prepare students in these communities for available jobs makes it questionable as a worthwhile pursuit. Additionally, French language competence is often much lower in rural communities, which greatly inhibits access to education for these students (Vandewiele 511).

Textbooks are also a concern. There were attempts beginning in the 1960s to "Africanize" or "Senegalize" textbooks, but these often contained only superficial changes that did nothing to meaningfully modify the colonial perspective, content, or language of the books (Evans 205). In fact, the concern was present from the turn of the 20th century, when Governor-General William Ponty's assistant, Georges Hardy, "introduced the study of the milieu as a new pedagogical device" and tried to revise textbooks based on the study of the milieu, the social environment of his students. Though both student attendance and the number of Senegalese teachers increased, Hardy was accused of cheapening the school and his efforts were defeated by the popular opinion that anything non-French would be inferior (Vandewiele 509-10). The surge of interest in education following independence meant that French editors had a

captive market. “Dans un contexte aussi favorable, la production de manuels scolaires en langue française, destinés à l’Afrique francophone, n’a cessé d’intéresser les éditeurs privés du Nord que ont pu trouver des marchés sans risque éditorial réel puisque les manuels se trouvaient et se trouvent encore financés par les prêts des grand bailleurs de fonds internationaux” (Leguéré 22). Thus, textbooks continue to be produced in French and reflect French curriculum, largely dictated by the demands of the baccalaureate. Producing local-language materials, even selectively for specific areas of study if local languages were to make their way into parts of the curriculum, is too high-cost to be a viable option unless French textbooks were done away with altogether (Vadwa & Patrinos 14-5). Especially when considering the budget constraints for academic resources and the role of French funding, production and distribution of local language materials are likely unrealistic suggestions. Because French printing and editing companies don’t want to lose the Senegalese market, at best they make deals with Senegalese companies to edit portions of French textbooks, in areas such as history. In effect, changing textbooks is a secondary concern because it is difficult enough to get *any* textbooks into the classroom. Currently, the government’s efforts to produce more textbooks and raise the textbook to student ratio have not been entirely successful: “les manuels commandés, qui ne sont pas toujours de bonne qualité, n’arrivent pas toujours dans le cartable de l’élève à cause de difficultés notées tout au long du circuit d’acquisition et de distribution. Cette situation fait dire à la grande majorité des observateurs que les manuels scolaires sont mal gérés dans toutes les étapes du processus” (République du Sénégal, Secteur Éducation-Formation 160) Not only does government-run textbook production slow curriculum reform and deprive local authors

and editors of the opportunity to develop Senegal-specific textbooks, the government has not always been transparent with regard to their finances, leading them to be accused of corruption (Leguéré 22-3, 39-40)

Setting these issues aside, one substantial problem with French textbooks, critically important to meaningful learning, remains to be addressed: the exercises and examples. This is one area where locally produced textbooks could improve even within the existing language and content constraints. French textbooks will often contain examples or exercises that reflect French experience when teaching subjects such as grammar, which can be very problematic for Senegalese students. For example, a textbook might offer a sample sentence and ask students to identify parts of speech or phrase segments. Imagine trying to work with a sentence about airplanes, or about metropolitan life, if you have never seen an airplane or lived in a city. If students do not know the meaning of the sample language because it describes something completely foreign to their experience, this technical work will be nearly impossible. If you can't tell what a sentence is saying, or in other words if the language is not meaningful to you, how are you supposed to identify its constituent parts, or see the relevance of the exercise other than preparation for an exam? I saw numerous examples of this throughout my observations, and it is one of the reasons the T1, described above, saw such a change in student success by using student-produced example sentences and why I chose to begin this chapter by highlighting this aspect of T1's teaching methodology. Though less visible perhaps than large issues of language and curriculum, small changes like this can have an enormous impact and exemplify the extent to which imported textbooks can affect students' quality of learning.

In the remainder of this chapter I will offer several sets of examples from the classroom observations and interviews conducted during this study that give evidence of how these policy regulations restrict teachers' abilities to offer chances of meaningful learning for students. Though some small efforts can be made by teachers on a classroom level, they are too limited by the curriculum and language requirements demanded by the baccalaureate exam, the paucity of funding and resources, and the slow bureaucratic process of the centralized government controlling these factors to be effective. Not only has top-down policy reform proven to be ineffective in implementing significant changes within the French system Senegal inherited at independence, it has restricted teachers' ability to enact bottom-up change on a classroom level. As the interviews make clear, even where teachers are aware of practices or methods that could encourage meaningful learning for students, they are powerless to change the system that inhibits their range of motion as educators.

IV. How Centralized Government Has Failed to Follow Through with Proposed Reform- an Example

The history of policy reform summarized above shows repeated examples of cases where proposals or recommendations for reform based on popular demand were subject to extensive review by government officials before implementation of formal policy change was even considered. The story told by one interviewee exemplified the failures of such government bodies in following through on this type of review. I7 recounted the case of two French administrators coming to his former school in Ziguelchor several years ago to try an experimental teaching program based on the "principle of interest." The idea was simple—teach required content, in this case writing and grammar, through

activities that students are interested in. The French administrators had come with the objective of financing projects oriented in the direction of making use of knowledge students already had so that they would "find themselves" in the material. They ended up putting together a unit on "rap poetique," using popular rap to teach writing and grammar skills normally taught through poetry or other more classic sources. During the unit, students did group work, wrote their own rap/poems, and learned vocabulary and grammar through popular songs. The unit culminated in a project where students had to apply what they had learned throughout the unit to an original piece of writing, a rap/poem piece written under the style constraints of Fou Malal Talla, a popular artist.

The unit had all the components necessary for a comprehensive French unit; grammar, vocabulary, style or genre structure, text interpretation, reading, writing, and even group work, which requires students to discuss all of these components together in order to collaborate on activities, were addressed through a medium that made the content and language meaningful to this group of students. I7 reported that the students were highly successful in meeting the formal objectives of this unit, objectives that would be identical in a conventional lesson structure that required students to develop all of these competencies through memorization and assignments based in more traditional texts. I7 also reported teachers' satisfaction with this style of teaching, and their hope that the program would continue. However, no level of teacher satisfaction or student success would suffice to implement this or other units based on the "principle of interest" if the administrators running the experimental program failed to return. Indeed, this is what happened. I7 reports that he and his colleagues waited several years hoping for the return of the administrators who controlled their curriculum, but that they

received neither follow-up correspondence on the results of the experiment nor a return visit.

Despite this disappointment, I7 was sincere as he reported how much he and his colleagues had learned throughout the process. He talked extensively about "teaching by doing," a principle whose importance is clear to anyone who has ever to learn a new skill. Writing is a physical skill that takes practice, and while students, especially in a Senegalese context, are unlikely to be able to write an original poem in the style of Baudelaire, they were enormously successful in writing in a genre that was familiar to them, and that they enjoyed on a regular basis outside of academic contexts. I7 noted particularly the difficulties of teaching French language competencies to non-French speakers whose knowledge isn't based in French, and stated that often he found it necessary to revert to shared cultural experience in order to be successful. He spoke of the difficulties of working in an educational environment "à cheval sur deux langues," in a state of instability with one foot rooted in the shared cultural ground of his outside life in Senegal and the other cemented into the French world of his role as an educator with a set of responsibilities to prepare his students for success in their examinations.

This vivid depiction of the sometimes impossible demands of his job spoke to his desire to appeal to the culture he shared with his students in order to help them learn the material and his inability to do so. He emphasized the importance of knowing both sides of students' lives, both inside and outside the classroom, in order to transfer knowledge. Only through this dual awareness, he said, could teachers be effective in transmitting information from one side, the academic side where the required knowledge originates, to the other, the side within the minds of students who otherwise exist in altogether

different language and experiential contexts. I7 also spoke to the varying degrees of difficulty this challenge presented depending on the context. He had worked in Diourbel, according to I7 the least educated region of Senegal, where much of children's education is entrusted to Marabouts, religious leaders. This religious education contains basic math, necessary for commerce, but otherwise does not follow the type of curriculum seen in most secular or western education systems. Here, I7 extended the difficulty of making academic content relevant to students to the issue of parents. Parents who see what is taught in school, and that it is taught in a foreign language, don't send their children to school because they do not see it as important. From their perspective, especially considering the even higher failure rates of institutionalized education and lack of employment opportunities for graduates in rural areas such as Diourbel, why would they? The problem of educated unemployment has been a concern with expanding access to education, especially in agricultural communities where graduates have few practical marketable skills. If there are no jobs to be found, formal education may not seem worthwhile compared to preparing for a trade or honing commercial skills (Evans 208-10).

I7 gave the only account I encountered throughout my discussions with teachers, both formally in interviews and casually in the many hours I spent in faculty rooms, of actual government representatives coming to test educational programs based popular recommendations, in this case reorienting curriculum to student interest. The result was predictable in the context of a half-century of similar proposals for radical change that first became evolutionary modifications subject to bureaucratic processes and ended as failed attempts, unimplemented regardless of success due to a lack of follow-up. I7 then

gave vivid descriptions of the balancing act his job entailed, and of his role in remaining aware of that delicate balance in order to effectively transmit knowledge to his students. A lament of his inability to do so to the full extent of his capabilities was the final point he made in this interview. He stated that his objective as a teacher according to the standards of the institution he works for is first and foremost to teach students how to communicate knowledge in French so they can pass their exams. He often could not use translations or alternative explanations he found were helpful for students because it was more important, as far as exam results were concerned, to be able to communicate ideas in French than it was to understand the ideas themselves. In other words, it did not matter how much he was able to teach students, it only mattered how much of what he taught them could be expressed in the academic language of French baccalaureate. Therefore, he said in final response to my question, it did not matter how much he was able to overcome the barriers presented by the French education system to make learning meaningful for students, because in the end the test did not measure how much meaningful learning had taken place.

V. Example Set 2: Local Language Use

I7 was not alone in his awareness of the limitations to which he was subject in drawing on aspects of the language and culture he shared with his students to better transmit the information in his lessons. This same assessment of the conflict between the role of the teacher as an educator, with the goal of helping students understand the information to the best of their abilities, and the role of a teacher as someone responsible for preparing students for the exam that will ultimately determine their formal success in the education system, and thus their opportunities after graduation,

was reiterated numerous times. The issue of language, of when and how or even if local languages should be used in the classroom, is a central concern of many teachers who know that, while sometimes absolutely necessary, the use of Wolof or other languages is ultimately not beneficial for students' success on exams.

Use of Wolof or other local languages in the classroom was separated into two categories in the rubric used for classroom observations. Overall, I saw just four instances of Wolof use in the classes I observed. This number is probably lower due to the urban locations of the two schools in which the observations took place, and would be higher in rural schools where students' level of French is generally lower. I3 summarized the inevitability of using local languages in the classroom: "l'enseignant parfois est obligé d'entrer dans la langue locale pour faire comprendre aux élèves qui vivent dans une autre langue, par exemple utiliser des termes d'une langue locale selon la locale ou vous êtes pour faire mieux comprendre aux élèves, parce-que autrement les élèves auront une difficulté réelle pour comprendre en réalité ce que vous dites." This obligation is sometimes unavoidable. T16, for example, in an SVT (earth and life science) lesson had to provide Wolof translations for several animal names, such as "scolopendre" and "huitre." This is a case where students' French vocabulary was simply lacking, since the words are relatively uncommon in the classroom settings where students acquire French. For some words, such as "iule," T16 was able to give colloquial names ("mille-pattes") that were more illustrative and could help students remember the vocabulary better, but for the most part students were left to memorize these new vocabulary words in order to complete their taxonomy assignment. T10 and T4 provided translations of individual words for similar reasons. I1, I4, and I5 both said

that they were sometimes forced to use Wolof to remedy missing vocabulary, and I4 stated that these Wolof translations or definitions were very effective in helping students to quickly understand math terminology, such as “groupe nominal.”

All of these examples are cases where individual words were translated into Wolof (II), but nowhere did I observe extended use of Wolof to explain or illustrate a concept, with or without repetition in French. This is because teaching in Wolof and expecting students to be able to reproduce the information in French for an exam, even if you repeat the information in French, is not realistic. The expression I3 uses, that students live in another language (vivent dans une autre langue), hits at the root of the dilemma. Students do not just speak another language at home, they live, organize, and interpret experiences and knowledge in another system of communication. Even if students had the vocabulary and general proficiency, the language cannot be translated directly, as I3 stated: “La problématique de la barrière linguistique se pose effectivement à l’école parce que des fois les élèves commencent à traduire leur langue maternelle en langue de travail. Ils prennent le Wolof par exemple et ils traduisent directement en français, ce qui pose effectivement un problème.”

Translation poses a problem because French curriculum is not only French language but French culture, as language is a “social institution” that constitutes “the conservation reserve and the depot for experience and knowledge of past generations, like the means of transmission of this same knowledge to future generations, which will thus receive all past experiences.” Said slightly differently, by using a language you submit to a culturally constructed and inherited way of thinking, as “a people speaks as it thinks and thinks as it speaks” (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne 38). If a teacher were

to teach material in Wolof, they would be drawing on a different depot of experience and knowledge to transmit the information than that contained within the French language in which the curriculum material exists. They would be speaking Wolof and thus students would be thinking in Wolof, understanding the material in a very different way.

This would be less of a problem if students' French language proficiency levels were high enough to be able to translate not only the language but the way in which content represented by that language is organized and understood, but that is very rarely the case. Various statistics on French language proficiency in Senegal can be found, but all are low. One study states that only between 1 and 5% of the population can speak French "correctly," and another more recent account puts French literacy at 30% (Vandewiele 511; Khadi Fall) As I2 stated, "l'enseignant sénégalais aujourd'hui est obligé de s'adapter par rapport à la réalité, parce-que… nous avons constaté que dans nos classes le niveau des élèves est assez faible… le niveau de langue est extrêmement faible et ensuite également les conditions d'acquisition du savoir."

The conditions of knowledge acquisition, as I2 expressed it, are subject to the limitations of students' language proficiency. The conditions I2 is talking about are, in effect, the scaffolding for thought and understanding of the French language. But, as I2 states, teachers must adapt to the reality of the situation, because this scaffolding upon which the curriculum, and thus the examinations, is built. Learning the material in French is necessary if students are going to be able to successfully reproduce not only the language but the system of thought tested by the exam. This is why, while sometimes absolutely necessary, and certainly conducive to meaningful learning if

testing wasn't an issue, using Wolof in the classroom can be more of a hindrance than a benefit to students' success by the standards to which they are held by the French system. I5 was the most blunt of anyone regarding this reality. Though he said that he used Wolof occasionally, which I witnessed in an observation, he said in regard to my interview question that French is the official language and the language of education so there is no problem with teaching in French. For I5 the cause, the government's language mandate, answered the question and eclipsed the relevance of any repercussions teaching in French would have for students. Nevertheless, "today, the situation in the country is largely universal: students at all levels do not master written or spoken French" (Sané 186).

VI. Language Proficiency: why it goes unchecked and problems associated with low proficiency

By now it is clear that French must be used in class because students need to learn to think in French. However, one more problem that occurs due to conventional French teaching methods used is that students' comprehension levels are often not checked until they are tested. In class, information is presented by the teacher and students copy notes by dictation. Because the notes are given word-for-word by the teacher, students to not need to be able to understand what they are copying down. They are required to copy these notes directly, so each student will have essentially an identical copy of the lesson that they use to prepare, often through memorization, for the tests that require them to reproduce the information exactly as it is given in the lesson. I8 noted this aspect of the lessons in particular in conjunction with students' struggle with the French language. He said that at the end of each class he gave them a preview of what they

would go over in the next class so that they could prepare for the content and know what they were about to see. I8 stated that this supported his primary strategy of allowing students to write their own notes throughout class, in addition to the dictation they were required to copy at the end. He stated that letting students use their own words to take notes forces them to try and understand the material more than dictation, because they need to produce language to interpret the information and develop their own takeaway from the lesson. I8's strategy surely has some benefits, but like the rest of the strategies teachers included in this study it isn't a solution to the underlying problems.

On the most basic level, students' proficiency levels in French may not be high enough for I8's strategy to benefit them. In order to listen to the language output coming from the teacher, process that language, and produce written language for original notes, all in real time, you need a fairly high level of language proficiency. Additionally, dictation notes are still required for students to prepare for the exam, because the exam requires too rigid a format to allow students to succeed with interpretive notes alone. This means that students can opt out of note taking during the lecture and wait until the end to copy the dictation. The requirements of the exam are, again, ultimately what create the vicious cycle at the root of problems relating to language proficiency. The cycle is approximately this: Students' language levels are poor because they do not have adequate opportunities to practice producing or interpreting language on their own; students therefore may not understand the lesson due to language comprehension problems; students take notes by dictation and thus comprehension is not assessed until the formal exam; dictation notes are necessary

because the exam requires students to reproduce information exactly as it was presented according to strict technical guidelines; students therefore do not receive adequate opportunities to improve their language skills by producing or interpreting language independently or creatively because those are not the primary skills being tested, language reproduction according to formal, prescribed structures is being tested.

I6 notes the diverse of levels of French proficiency across his group of students, which is often reflective of socio-economic background. First generation students, a large population, are unlikely to have any French spoken in their homes. These are often the children of laborers and other low-wage workers who have very little access to resources such as media or reading material, and may not be literate themselves. Students from more educated, or more wealthy, families have access to much more French language input. Though I6 said that he and his colleagues often regret that news and other media is almost exclusively in French, he recognized the effect of this language input on students' proficiency levels. He stated that one of teachers' current goals was to push for more integration of reading and writing, to have students practice receiving and producing language, to try and improve their language skills. Overall, however, he said that students' French language skills were regrettably poor and that writing in particular posed a difficulty. This is understandable when you look at the scarcity of actual writing produced by students, as noted above. Compared to the American system, the French education system devotes almost no time to original or creative writing, and even essays or commentaries are heavily regulated in their format and content. Students have almost no practice producing language, only reproducing language.

Though the heavily controlled nature of the language students are required to reproduce for exams, and the resulting lack of opportunities they get to practice language and raise their proficiency levels, is a problem that extends to all subjects, it is particularly noticeable in French classes. Unlike math (T3, T19), economy (T20), and some high level science (T12) classes, French language and literature classes are the primary space in which language practice would be expected to happen. The flexible nature of meaning-based literary interpretations, which by definition do not have the concrete "right" or "wrong" answers a math problem, for example, has, would appear to offer the most room for independent writing, and thus thinking, to take place. In many classrooms, this simply does not take place. The examples of T5 and T11 show how, once again, we run into the same underlying problems that produce the cycle that rendered I8's strategy ineffective. T5's lesson was typical in that it is designed to imitate the exact format of questions students will encounter in the baccalaureate. The lesson was on poem analysis. Students were given a poem by Verlaine, a French writer, and asked a series of questions. The questions, however, were almost exclusively technical, asking students to identify aspects of the text such as rhyme scheme and verse structure. Only one question referred to the "general meaning" of the poem. The fact that the baccalaureate asks primarily for non-meaning based textual analysis is why students preparing for the exam do not spend time on creative interpretations and original writing. The focus is on memorizing the formal structures of classic texts and the technical vocabulary needed to express them, and thus students do not get the type language practice needed to improve proficiency through test-based lessons.

The example of T11 shows how, in turn, this low proficiency prohibits students

from writing when writing is needed and creativity, while limited, is possible. While still modeled exactly on baccalaureate questions and thus subject to strict guidelines, the text commentary T11's students were supposed to write did allow more room for meaning-based interpretation than T5's poem analysis. The commentary was relatively short, only about a paragraph, and was based off a text by Ahmadou Kahtar Kbow on the solidarity of nations. T11 gave students the first hour of class to do this on their own, but it became very clear that almost no students were writing. T11 took personal phone calls while students essentially waited—they could not do the commentary because they did not understand the text. When T11 finally began to work through the commentary with students, the language comprehension problems became immediately visible. T11 spent the rest of the class period, which in total was two hours long, coaxing a 30-word summary out of his 1ere (11th grade) students, and eventually writing most of it himself. It was clear that this set of students did not have the language skills necessary to read and interpret a text, and couldn't therefore benefit from any associated writing activity, no matter how much space for creativity they were offered. This group, about to reach the end of their high school education, had never gotten the practice they needed to become proficient in French because the format and focus of their 11 years of lessons did not allow for it. This example also highlights one other substantial difficulty regarding students' literacy. Though the text used was written by a relatively recent West African author, and could thus be more accessible or meaningful students than a classical French text, the text was of course still written in French. In fact, almost all local literature is written in French, and "there is no decolonization in the works they publish" (Sané 185). This means students have access to their own country's authors

only through a foreign language. Understandably, people who are not literate in their first language have much more difficulty learning and becoming literate in a second (Vadwa & Patrinos 1). Written Wolof is a recent, colonial institution, codified in 1826 by Jean Dard, a French teacher, and literacy rates are very low. Most people cannot write in Wolof (Sané 185). Since there are so few opportunities for students to interact with literature in local languages, or even to achieve basic literacy in Wolof, students are put at an even greater disadvantage when faced with reading and writing in French.

T11 showed little to no response when faced with a classroom full of students who were clearly stuck, and spent the end of the lesson faulting students for their lack of knowledge and reminding them that if they did not learn quickly they would fail their impending exam. In fact, T11 spent most of the two hours on his cellphone, leaving the classroom intermittently, and only returned at the end to model the work in exasperation. Students had little opportunity to ask questions, and were rarely monitored. Some teachers do respond to their students' difficulties, but, as several final examples will show, the efficacy of their methods is still limited by the same cycle of language proficiency problems operating in the three examples (I8, T5, T11) above. T13 devoted particular attention to the meaning of the example sentences he was using to teach narrative structure. Though T13 didn't use a full example text to illustrate the "schéma narratif," he focused on the purpose or function of each of the short, basic story elements exemplified in each of the original sentences students were supposed to organize into a basic plot structure. He also made sure to define vocabulary words students were struggling with, not by using Wolof translations but with French definitions based on the context of the words in the story (IV). However, the students

were still required at the end of the exercise to copy a dictation of the terminology for the story elements, accompanied by formal definitions that did not include the same purpose- or function-based explanations used in the exercise. The test would require the formal definitions for each plot element, not the applied, interpretive explanations of narrative structure. These definitions appeared substantially more complicated, and included more difficult vocabulary, than the applied explanations given in conjunction with the example sentences.

T8 used an unusual example text to open a lesson on poetry commentary, "BLOG de Pénélope" pulled from the internet written by a young woman about the age of the students in the class (XI). The blog post was titled "Pourquoi écrire de la poésie?", in which she talked about the role of the poet, or of any artist, as a mediator to shed light on aspects of life that non-artists cannot see. She wrote in a conversational style, in a series of thoughts that showed her reasoning process of "petites réflexions." As a reader, she talked about the importance of not simply reading on a surface level but "diving into the ocean" to find what lies beneath the surface, to see the meanings hidden at first glance. This choice exemplified T8's focus on motivating students to read and interpret poetry independently, which was the most remarkable aspect of his lesson compared to all other French lessons I observed. T8 encouraged them to follow the example of the writer, one of their peers in age and background, by reading deeply into poems and forming their own opinion. After they read the poem they were using to practice their commentary, the first thing T8 did was to ask for students' opinions of the piece, and students were predictably surprised because this was not the type of question they were used to answering. Because this observation took place at Mariama Ba, one

of the top schools in the country, students had the exceptionally high levels of French needed to both read critically and express themselves clearly in response to this question, but they still hesitated. T8 had to reaffirm several times, while trying to solicit a volunteer, that they knew enough about poetry and had enough experience with reading and analysis in their education to form valuable opinions. This group of students who, unlike most groups in other schools, had the language capabilities to benefit from a creative and interpretive exercise still had difficulty responding because they were not used to being told that their opinions mattered. That was the purpose of showing them the blog post and encouraging them to follow the example of its author. However, it is easy to see how, after years of tests and lessons preparing for tests that do not measure success based on creative interpretation or personal opinions, students' ability to express these elements would seem as if it did not matter. Of course, even for these high level students the amount of time the teacher could spend on content not tested in the exam was limited. T8 had one more unique element of his lesson to integrate the motivational, confidence-building aspect of the blog exercise into the formal content, text analysis, students needed to work on. He had students divide into three groups and gave each an example text, including one by Senghor (IX). He had each group prepare a baccalaureate-style commentary together and present it to the class (VII). This allowed students to discuss the content and reaffirm their abilities by presenting their own work as an example to the rest of the class. However, it is important to note once again that the level of French language proficiency was almost uniquely high in this class, because students attending Mariama Ba are selected nationwide based on their high academic achievement. This strategy would likely fail

elsewhere, where language proficiency levels are too low for students to complete T8's creative activities.

VII. Illustrating Concepts with Examples Related to Students' Lives and Experience

Though students, as I1 stated, begin to learn French at the age of six and thus should have high enough proficiency levels to not see the language as a barrier, this isn't often the reality. Wolof use can be detrimental to students who need to learn to think in French, and the dictations required for students to prepare for the strict baccalaureate requirements contribute to the fact that comprehension often goes unchecked until formal exams. Teachers are stuck in a cycle where low proficiency often makes creative or interpretive activities, when possible, ineffective, and exam requirements make it so not enough time gets devoted to the language practice needed to augment proficiency. Noting these difficulties, a primary strategy teachers use to compensate for problems of comprehension is, as I2 stated, is "de partir de la vie des élèves, c'est à dire de ce qu'ils connaissent."

I2 continued, "Ce qui est intéressant à dire pour faire comprendre aux élèves les enseignements c'est de partir d'abord de leur vécu, c'est à dire de ce qu'ils vivent, et à partir de là s'ils parviennent à comprendre c'est bien, mais s'ils ne comprennent pas ce qui serait intéressant c'est de multiplier les exemples, multiplier les exemples en s'appuyant sur le vécu quotidien, ce qu'ils sont en train de vivre, ce qui est en leur environnement immédiat… ou bien également qu'il s'agisse de ce qu'ils vivent à l'école, c'est à dire l'environnement scolaire ou bien l'environnement familial, ou tout simplement au niveau de leur localité, à partir de ces exemples-là ils peuvent bien

comprendre." Teachers can try to come up with examples or illustrations of the concepts they are teaching that are derived from students' common experiences or knowledge. Or, as I2 said, from the immediate classroom environment, as T9 did when he asked students to hypothesize the effects several natural disasters would have on their classroom in a lesson on humans' relationship with nature. The benefit this can have for students' integration of new knowledge into existing schemata is clear, and the strategy seems promising, but there are still difficulties. I2 notes that when an example fails to make students understand he just tries to multiply the examples, and that in the end "vous pouvez recueillir beaucoup d'information dans les documents mais la transmission de ces informations pose sérieusement un problème et maintenant, bon, on peut faire une gymnastique pour pouvoir s'en sortir." "Une gymnastique" is a good characterization of the main issue. When teachers are committed and attentive enough to try and find these kinds of examples, which isn't always the case, finding effective illustrations or examples that are clear enough to not confuse students further requires serious mental agility. The difficulties increase the further removed content is from students lives and experiences. I5 mentioned state curriculum reform aimed to put "the student at the heart of learning," but the reality, as noted above, remains that much of the content is not particularly relevant to students. I5 and I4 both stated that they consistently use this strategy, and I saw it occur more than any other category of teaching practice listed in the classroom observation rubric. As the following examples will show, this strategy is commonly used and can have some benefits, but the degree to which it can be employed is limited by curriculum content. Additionally, the difficulties presented by language proficiency and examination requirements discussed in the

previous section persist here as well as limiting factors.

I4 provided the type of example that is especially hard to come up with when explaining rhyme scheme in classic French poetry, a subject far removed from students' lives. When students were having difficulty identifying and labeling rhymes as similar when they appeared in different contexts, he likened it to meeting friends in different towns. Just as you wouldn't call a friend by a different name just because you saw them in a different place, he said, you should label rhymes as the same even when they appear in different places. T4 did a similar thing when he used cooking examples to help students understand scientific and technological developments in a history lesson. When you combine ingredients differently, he said, you get a different meal. Even if those ingredients are already commonly used, and the new meal is based of a traditional one, innovation is still possible. Traditional combinations can form the basis of new ones, just as new technology or scientific discoveries are often based on old, well-known principles. Finally, T14 used an extremely effective example to explain different types of communication in a lesson on identifying the purpose of texts, or in other words identifying what the text was intended to communicate. T14 said that students routinely interpret the purpose of certain types of communication, such as school bells, image-based signs in mosques, ambulance sirens, or the call to prayer. He had volunteers identify what each of these things were communicating, and the purpose of using them. He continued with the more complicated examples of the "language of flowers" and traditional tam-tam communication, where each type of flower or drum rhythm represents something different. T14 used this as a way to explain language as just one of many types of communication, based on the same principles of parts

recombined into repeated structures that each represent something different, and fulfill a different purpose. By identifying certain repeated structures, such as a text heading indicating a letter, or sequences of imperatives indicating informative or instructional content, students could find what a text was trying to communicate. By making language just one of many types of communication, T14 was able to generate a wealth of common examples that could illustrate difficult aspects of textual analysis. He was also able to show real-world applications for what students were learning, which made the information appear more useful than it would if it remained detached from reality (VI).

The limited number of these examples, which creatively relate material seemingly removed from everyday life with common experiences, is a testament to how difficult they are to produce. It is much easier to relate material that already has some concrete or visible relationship to students' lives, most of which appears in History/Geography classes (these two subjects are combined into one class). History curriculum has been a focus of proposed reform for decades because the curriculum included in the colonial education system negated local histories to enshrine French superiority, and thus contained little material related to Senegalese history (Babacar Fall, 59). Even material that was written about Senegal was rarely written by Senegalese people, which is problematic because "the way in which history is written, thought, interpreted, or read cannot be dissociated from the structures, forces, and conflicts of the society which made that history" (Wamba-dia-Wamba 1992; qtd. in Babacar Fall, 56). At this point, it is not clear what "senegalization" of history curriculum, which currently "relie[s] on uniform official history, codified in textbooks,"

would mean, and the indecision regarding how to integrate Senegal's "triple heritage" of African, Islamic, and European influences in any new curriculum has slowed reform (Evans 205; Babacar Fall 59). Nonetheless, more locally relevant material has been integrated into history and geography curriculum since the colonial period. As Dr. Babacar Falls summarizes, "The history curricula in contemporary Senegalese schools *claim* to be objective and scientific. Drawing on Senghorian concepts, they aim to anchor students in their culture while encouraging them to be open to the wider world [my italics]" (Babacar Fall 59).

While still far from "decolonized," current history curriculum offers teachers slightly more chances to discuss locally relevant material and draw on examples from students' lives. Out of the six History/Geography classes in which I conducted observations, only one (T18) was devoid of any local content or examples. T4 exemplified the "Senghorian" approach to history Babacar Fall spoke of when going through an overview of the content he would be presenting over the course of the semester. T4's class would be focused on the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries, and while he would be addressing the evolution of industry as a global phenomenon, he consistently returned to the effects of the industrial revolution in Africa. When delivering the dictation outlining the syllabus, he made sure that students knew the meaning of key words, such as "revolution," "imperial," and even "industry." T4 gave examples as he went of physical remnants of the industrial revolution present in Dakar to illustrate how much this period changed their city environment. T6 also had an immediately relevant topic in his lesson on Senegalese geography, or "science of explaining the surface of the earth," as T6 characterized the subject. After much

difficulty (I met T6 as he was searching through the staff room) T6 was able to find a map of Senegal and use it to show many different types of climate, drawing on students' wide range of hometowns to help explain the realities that the map's climate denotations represented. However, T6 made no mention of the fact, perhaps too obvious, that the map was European and contained the names and borders inherited from the colonial period. Likewise, T4's class focused largely on the beneficial effects of the industrial revolution on Senegal and the aspects they needed to improve and build up as a "developing" country. There was little to no mention of exploitation or any other severely negative consequences the European industrial revolution inflicted on Africa and its inhabitants. This colonial legacy inherent in this historical discourse is still clear, as Wamba-dia-Wamba's assessment of historiography, cited above, explains.

T4 and T6 both taught at Mariama Ba and thus their students shared a particular advantage, as T4 emphasized explicitly. T4, like many other teachers at Mariama Ba, reinforced the opportunities students were gaining by being at such a good school, and their responsibility to use this education to make a difference in their communities and country later in life. The students of Mariama Bâ, because of their high levels of academic achievement and the special government funding they receive at a school dedicated to Senegal's top-scoring students, certainly have more tools to do so than most any other group of students in the country. Though issues of content still exist, and classroom materials such as T6's map are still lacking, these students generally have a high enough level of language and general education to suffer fewer consequences from these difficulties. Three final examples, from Les Pédagogues in Dakar, offer a more representative example of problems occurring in History/Geography classes even after

reform and despite teachers' attempts to link content to students' lives and experiences.

T15 was giving a lesson on environmental law and policy, and like T4 he emphasized students' responsibilities for the future of their country and consequently the importance of learning the laws that govern their environment. Dakar suffers a large amount of pollution and poor waste management systems, so for students who walk daily through garbage-filled streets and who buy and sell bags of fresh water, these environmental issues would be immediately apparent[5]. T15 had a handout, a rarity, with a series of excerpts from laws relating to "la protection du patrimoine naturel." They began by reading silently, and then went over the text together. It was very clear, however, that most students were not able to understand the difficult legal language in the text. No matter how much T15 implicated students in the issue of environmental protection, or emphasized the immediate importance of the text, he could not compensate for the low level of language proficiency. The fact that a large number of citizens cannot read the laws governing them is a real problem, a consequence of the education system. The "illiterate majority" are not given voice in politics and cannot contribute to discussions on development; only those who speak French are considered

[5] Dakar has substantial pollution and waste management problems. Filtered water is usually sold in small bags either at corner stores or out of buckets on the side of the road, and the small bags litter the streets and make up a significant amount of the trash that cover's the peninsula's beaches. A trash truck will come through the narrow sand streets of some neighborhoods once or twice a week, blaring its horn so that people know to line up with their trash cans and coins to pay the workers. Much of the time, however, a horse drawn cart will come pick up the trash. It isn't seen as bad or unethical to just throw your trash on the ground, even into the water at the beach, and since for some a few coins is too much to pay the trash piles up quickly. It was striking to me to see this pollution and the witness students' inability to read their own laws firsthand. If you cannot read your own laws, passing and implementing regulations to address problems such as pollution will be almost impossible. Even if regulations passed, the challenges of enforcement could render the efforts futile.

a source of hope for the country and are given the power to make decisions. In other words, “the dominant system of formal education excludes the rebellious without attempting to arouse their interest in the fate of Senegal” (Khadi Fall). Some students did manage to answer T15’s questions, but most still struggled and few likely followed T15’s suggestion to read further into this set of laws; even if they could understand the language they would be unlikely to be able to access the laws, as media resources are so scarce.

T10 gave a lesson completely focused on the development problems faced by Senegal, with many more illustrations than T15 was able to give in the specific context of environmental law. He divided up these development issues into four categories: social, natural, political, and economic. Social problems, and related economic problems, offered particular space for examples, on which T10 spent an extended period of time. He drew on family life many times, with invoking such images as that of a woman carrying two children and leading two more, a common sight on the street, to illustrate the reality of exponential population growth. He explained how religious incentives push many people to marry early and have a large number of children, even if they can’t afford it. Again, images of routine poverty, of kids begging for change or selling water on the street with their mothers served to illustrate his point. You can’t walk two blocks in Dakar without witnessing these struggles. People receiving state aid can afford food but little else, certainly not much technology. Most industry is agricultural anyway, and the export economy offers few chances for diversification that would allow more industrial products to be produced locally and become accessible at lower price-points. Much of daily economic activities are unregulated and untaxed, and

therefore they experience substantial corruption in the informal sector. Illiteracy and low school enrollment rates keep labor largely "unskilled," allow more room for malgovernance, and slow change and innovation.

Each of these interrelated problems was easy to illustrate with examples from the immediate surroundings of the school in HLM Grand Yoff. One interesting aspect of this lecture, however, was the extended counter-example T10 offered of what he imagined family life was like in "developed" countries, which he depicted as the goal Senegal should aspire to achieve. In this illustration T10 emphasized work ethic, in that men in richer countries go to work early, come home late, and prioritize work over other aspects of their lives. He juxtaposed this with a statistic that put school enrollment in Senegal at 40%. He praised the virtues of higher education and prestigious employment, and credited hard work directly for the accumulation of wealth in a typical capitalist dialogue. However, this image did not include women in the workforce, and did not credit working mothers for lower birthrates and other aspects of social change we have seen over the past century in places such as the U.S. In addition, this illustration revealed nothing of the factors inherent in globalized capitalism that privilege a few at the cost of many, and that greatly disadvantage people both within and outside of "developed" nations. The fact that T10 carried over social and religious values from his context into what he imagined lifestyles to be in "developed" countries shows how difficult integration of two drastically different systems can be. More importantly, however, this monologue glorifying capitalism and instructing students to model themselves after lifestyles of people in more "developed" countries sounds remarkably similar to the colonial assimilationist discourse which encouraged

Senegalese men to be as much like French men as possible, and measured status and success by that standard.

Though T10 had a wealth of common examples to illustrate the development *problems* he was addressing, the *solutions* he proposed, and the model he gave when charging students with the responsibility of addressing these problems for the future of their country, were removed from their lives, a foreign ideal that glossed over numerous realities. This particular presentation is similar to the way in which the French presented an idealized version of their culture to their colonial subjects, which was only dispelled after people such as Senghor were able to visit France and see the realities and "contradictions" of French life. Senghor called for a "demystification" of French culture and presentation of French culture as just one of many societies, including Senegalese society, following a similar path of development. This way, Senegal could emulate the mechanisms and understand the difficulties of the development process (Vaillant 687-8). While that mentality was present in T10's monologue, it still implies that French (or in this case the largely Western culture of "developed" nations) is further along a single linear path, a goal to be reached. This was confirmed by T10's glorification of capitalist culture and western lifestyles, and also demonstrates a key aspect of colonial discourse, albeit modified by Senghor, that is still present in Senegalese historical curriculum. Additionally, the cycle of powerlessness identified by Khadi Fall was exemplified in this lecture. Mastery of French and success in education are prerequisites for leading the type of lifestyle T10 was suggesting. Most do not achieve this due in large part to the failures of the education system, and are thus denied the power to incite change that would change the standards by which that power is granted. "The fact that the use of

French as an instrument of power extended beyond the end of the colonial period is explicable in terms of the vested interests that have prevailed since Senghor, uniting French hegemony and ruling African elites. It is not only adults deprived of literacy who suffer from that, unable to help themselves in either the economic or the political sphere; so too do young Senegalese, no matter whether they go to school or study, whether they never attended school or broke off their schooling" (Khadi Fall).

T2, in a final example, was unique in the context of this study in directly addressing this colonial inheritance. Like T10, he was teaching a class focused on development. Unlike most teachers, he left behind much of the rigidity of conventional lessons and gave an unstructured and extremely animated lecture, often diverging into long tangents and even pounding on students' desks to drive home certain points[6]. When he did have to integrate the calculations the lesson seemed to focus on originally, he gave them as a means to an end, a tool to use to acquire real information about your surroundings. Throughout the lecture he emphasized the interconnectedness of our global system, with particular attention to the impact this process of globalization has had on Senegal throughout the age of colonization and European imperialism. This history, he stated, continues to have deep effects on Senegal's development process. T2 used examples that appeared to come straight from Senghor's discourse that put

[6] In one extreme case, this teacher was pounding on desks and yelling in three female students' faces about the laws stating women's inferiority to men, both religious and in national law until recently. He continued for a substantial amount of time, and repeated this statement of inferiority again and again with increasing violence. He asked me about the relationship between sexes in the U.S., and I gave a minimal answer stating that while we have made great strides towards equality, some problems remain. He was not satisfied and continued on this subject until the end of the lecture. While he may have been making a point by playing devil's advocate to incite a response from his female students, the tactic was nonetheless relatively extreme from an outside perspective and worthy of note.

education and language at the center of Senegal's orientation toward an independent future. For Senghor these were areas where decisions could be made according to what was "desirable and possible as a cultural identity for West Africa," which would guide their development process (Vaillant 687). T2 brought language and education to the forefront of his lecture on development, and even stated explicitly how these decisions continued to play out in the context of his classroom as he taught this lesson. By the end of the lesson, sweat was pouring from his face as he came to a theatrical conclusion. He ended by stating that history cannot be erased, and colonialism can never definitively end because of the imprint it has left on nearly every aspect of Senegalese life. In his estimation, those remnants will part of students' lives forever, and the very prestige accorded to an education that perpetuates the legacy of imperialism, of which this lecture was part, supports his claim. T2 accepted colonially inherited education as inevitable, and effectively told his students to resign themselves to that reality, that change was impossible. At that moment, students were undoubtedly offered an opportunity for meaningful learning, but in a moment of twisted irony, the message they were receiving is part of the reason that opportunity is so often denied.

Chapter 4: Denying the Problem

I. Introduction

Every teacher I worked with throughout this process has been through the post-independence education system in Senegal, and thus has direct experience both as a student and as a teacher. This is a critical factor in considering their responses, or lack thereof, to problems within the system. As I explained in the previous section, as a basis for interviewing teachers I presented an open question that suggested the presence of problems in order to ask teachers what their approaches, responses, or solutions to the problems they identified might be. By asserting in my question that problems existed, a position supported by extensive evidence presented in this thesis, teachers were also able to respond by refuting the basis of my question, by denying the existence of any problems. This section will deal with the set of responses falling into that category.

Some teachers may in fact believe that their education system does not have any problems, or at least that the benefits outweigh any flaws that it might have. Lingering feelings of inferiority from intensive assimilation that "rank[ed] everything French as the model of excellence and everything local as at best, a poor imitation" have contributed to the perspectives of those who, like Senghor, believe that merits of the French system justify the difficulties faced by students. Feelings that the French system is ultimately the best option can also be tied to the fear, for wealthier families, that Senegalese degrees won't be accepted internationally if they are modified from the French model that serves as the basis for their validity (Vandewiele 512). While these are certainly legitimate and common, at least in more elite perspectives, a full analysis of this set of responses requires that we consider other interpretations. It is difficult to

believe that teachers would not have any critiques of their education system, but it is not difficult to see why they might choose not to express those critiques, especially in the context of my study.

II. Status and Security: School as Preparation for the Elite

A primary reason teachers may deny problems in the school system is because their own success within that system is the basis for their status, authority, and relative financial success. Teaching is a relatively high-status job, one of the few available to college graduates, and also a very secure job, because unlike in the U.S. teachers in Senegal are appointed by the government to fill teaching positions and are thus less likely to face unemployment. Critiquing the system would undermine the standards by which their merit and success are judged, which could be detrimental on both a material and social level. Material, in that keeping their job, and thus their financial security, requires only that they fulfill their job description. In other words, they are only responsible for fulfilling the role of the teacher as they see it defined by the system, regardless of their opinions on its efficacy. Identifying any problems will not give them a raise or a better post, and may even put them in jeopardy. Social, in that teaching is a relatively high-status job due to both the material factors mentioned above and due to hierarchical factors stemming from the teacher's role as an authority figures who demands respect. Criticizing the system that allows them to command this respect and status would call into question its legitimacy, something most would not dream of doing, especially in a society where status, hierarchy, authority, and consequent respect are prominent concerns. Given the paucity of jobs available to graduates, the preservation of a good teaching job may not be worth the risk of speaking out. Since I

was asking the question as a foreign researcher, they are likely to have been somewhat skeptical of how I was using the information they provided, regardless of my explanations or the consent documents guaranteeing anonymity. Responses denying problems for reasons of status and security are not surprising considering the history of the French education system, in both its original conception as a way to produce elites and in the subsequent role of those elites in preserving the system after independence.

As already stated, the French education system during the colonial period was focused on the formation of an elite, ruling class. The French assimilation policy was based on France's belief that "building and sustaining their political and economic dominance required enlisting the cultural and social support of the colonized" (Vaillant, 684). Thus, they had to offer a way for a select few Senegalese people to rise through the ranks and become "part owners" of the system, maintaining French hegemony from within the Senegalese population and ensuring the perpetuation of Francophone superiority. Evans summarizes: "Senegal's francophone elite even before independence participated in education policy determinations, they knew how and why policy was made, enforced, and preserved. Senegalese independence was an acute change, but many Senegalese leaders, successful in that system because of their French education, moved to protect rather than change the system within their newly independent country" (Evans 210). Senghor was one such elite, and like many he believed that any modifications to the French system would compromise its quality. His deep belief in French superiority, representative of the government's perspective, could have disastrous results for teachers who challenged it. For example, when Professor Cheikh Anta Diop translated works on math and physics into Wolof, effectively demonstrating

the possibility for “self-reliant” education in local languages, Senghor banned him from teaching (Khadi Fall).

Due to the intensity of French assimilationist policy and the opportunities afforded to those most fully indoctrinated, the feeling that anything non-French is inferior is widespread, especially among those who have benefitted by the system (Vandewiele 512). Since those who derive their status from the education system are those who make up the centralized government that controls educational policy, their endorsement and perpetuation of the system that has granted them privileges makes sense no matter what their personal criticisms may be. This presents a cycle that hinders the possibility of reform. In this cycle, those who the system favors are the only ones who are given the power to make any changes or voice any criticisms. If you have benefitted from the system, and if the system defines your success, you are much less likely to undermine its legitimacy. This is similar to the problem teachers face, although teachers, unlike government officials, do not have the power to enact reform. Nonetheless, they are still unlikely to criticize the system that legitimizes, and is the source of, their authority, and may thus be hesitant to speak out in favor of reform. They may also fear the repercussions of speaking out or identifying problems within the education system. Concern for keeping a job is more immediately important to them and to their families. Because they can’t change anything, it often seems their best option is self-preservation through endorsement of the system that establishes their success. The feeling of powerlessness is a second viable explanation for some teachers’ denial of problems within their education system.

III. Powerlessness

The problems teachers see and experience are extensive, and rooted in central issues over which they have no power, such as the language of education. As Khadi Fall explains, students "often have to be satisfied with a merely approximate understanding of the words and concepts used in the foreign language," a situation teachers are keenly aware of, as nearly all of the interviews in this study confirm. As we have seen, their ability to change the situation is extremely limited and even the methods of the most ambitious teachers can prove ineffective. "As time passes," Fall continues, "learners' lack of orientation is transformed into an ongoing blasé attitude with regard to unconcerned French or Senegalese teachers, who in turn view the situation almost as fated" (Khadi Fall). Faced with so many difficulties and so little power to compensate for them, teachers' resignation to students' low language proficiency is understandable. The failures of the system can indeed seem "fated".

As we have seen, the issue of language proficiency has repercussions on every subject taught. Vandewiele summarizes the issue already extensively covered in this thesis: "on intellectual and emotional levels, the discontinuity between the knowledge of the mother tongue and French can hinder integration of thought and expression. Therein lies one of the main reasons for the poor output of education in Africa" (Vandewiele 511-2). Poor output, in that only between 5-30% of the population can speak French, according to a range of sources, and that even as access to education expands, graduation rates are extremely low (Vandewiele 511; Khadi Fall). According to a USAID review, the "average drop out from year to year of 11% in elementary, the bottleneck between elementary and middle school, and drop out from middle school

lead to only the equivalent of 5% of those who enter first grade making it all the way to the end of basic education," an enrollment to achievement rate that puts Senegal far behind neighboring countries and on par with countries either far poorer or have experienced a far less stable post-independence period (DeStefano, Lynd, & Thornton 4). Teachers must resign themselves, at least somewhat, to this "poor output" either, like many teachers included in this study, because they are powerless to change the root causes or because they believe, like Senghor, that the French system is the best option and that the merits outweigh the difficulties. In either case, if we look at the resulting role of the teacher, the consequences are effectively similar. No matter their perspective, the teachers in Senegal are bound to the demands of their education system, which, as demonstrated, means most critically the demands of the baccalaureate exam. Because of this standardized test, the role of the teacher as a presenter of information is, in practice, standardized.

IV. How Standardized Tests Standardize the Role of the Teacher

Whether a teacher believes that the baccalaureate is critical because they believe in the standards of French education or because they understand the reality that students will, no matter how unjustly, be rewarded based on their success in formal exams, their function is the same. To best prepare students for the exam, teachers must act as presenters of information, reproducing knowledge for students to then reproduce on the text, in standardized form. If you recall Senghor's reasoning for preserving this standard, he maintained that it was a beneficial aspect of cultural borrowing based on "what was needed and what was practical" (Vaillant 683). With regard to its current preservation, along similar lines of thought, Evans surmises that "at issue is whether or

not this policy continues to benefit the Senegalese enough to warrant their continued support of this objective," the objective being the preservation of Francophonism (Evans 206). Because those with the power to answer that question with the force of governmental policy have benefitted the most from the system, in that like their French predecessors they derive their "right to rule through education," the operative response to Evans' question is that yes, the policy does warrant continued support (Vaillant 684). Because Senegal has experienced remarkable political stability compared to most post-colonial African countries, centralized government has remained powerful enough to preserve French culture, the colonial objective (Evans 205). Despite popular disagreements on many aspects of this policy, the stability of the Senegalese government may mitigate the amount of pressure the public exerts when pushing for reform. The alternatives presented in similar contexts are not persuasive, and "certainly the failures resulting from educational reform efforts in neighboring states has also reduced the pressures for reform within Senegal" (Evans 211). In other words, there hasn't been a push for radical reform of government or education systems because of how stable Senegal has remained politically and socially. People don't want to destabilize the country by calling for massive changes, especially when other countries have provided successful examples of what those changes could be. All things considered, the preservation of the baccalaureate as the national standardized test, and of its weight as a measure of success, seems inevitable, at least in the near future.

Thus, the role of the teacher, based on how they and their students will be most "successful", remains the same no matter what their opinions of the education system may be. The most engaged, ambitious, or concerned teachers who acknowledge

problems are, as many examples in this thesis show, ultimately resigned presenting standardized material to the best of their abilities. Those who genuinely believe in the system's superiority, or at least in its measure of their own success, are equally employed as presenters of information. The teacher's function is to present standardized information because that is what the test measures.

One teacher I both observed in class (T20) and interviewed (I9) is one of the most impassioned examples of a teacher denying the premise of my research question by denying the existence of problems in the system, and drew particular attention to what he believes to be the role of the teacher. I will first give a short description of his class to give context to his interview response. In his 1ere (11th grade) economy class, this teacher was presenting the Comptabilité Nationale chart, an authentic document taken from the National Treasury. He spent the two hours of class time drawing and filling in the chart on the chalkboard, occasionally asking students to provide a number to fill in a particular space. Students were for the most part not following along, and so he would often fill in a number himself when there was a lack of response. T20 made little attempt to explain what the numbers were, beyond the label designated by the column or row in the chart, and rarely gave reminders of the calculations that produced the different numbers. He never made an attempt to bring students' attention back to the lecture, and when the two hours were up he left the class without comment.

When I interviewed him, I9 (T20) responded that he did not understand my question and that he did not identify any problems. He was visibly unhappy with the interview, and asked me to rephrase part of my question to make sure he knew what "meaningful learning" was. I gave the definition again as it appears in my interview

document, and drew upon the lecture I had just seen, asking if he did anything to help students understand what the numbers they are working with mean, or what they are derived from as part of an authentic document. He responded that he got the chart from the Treasury, and that his job was to present to students how to fill in the chart. He kept asking for elaboration, his temper rising, but I did not respond with further suggestions so as to not influence his response. He then repeated many times the goal of the course, to fill in the chart, and his job, to present the chart and show students how to fill it in.

This teacher was very clear in identifying his role as a presenter of information, and in repeating that the goal of the course was for students to be able to reproduce this chart correctly as it was presented. This explains his classroom management, or lack thereof, because according to this job description it isn't part of his job to encourage students, keep them focused, make sure they understand, or give additional context or meaning to the information he is presenting. In this educational context, students are meant to memorize the chart and corresponding equations in order to receive a correct response on their test. The teacher secured his job by doing the same throughout his own education, and now fulfills his role as presenter of the information that is produced and reproduced in this closed cycle. The majority of his response had to do with *his* job, the requirements of which he wanted me to know he fully fulfilled. He did not get his job, his primary concern, by questioning the system, and his anger showed that he did not like that I was suggesting he do so. It is the role of the teacher, not the effect of that role on students, that was in question. Furthermore, T20's focus on his job, and how well he met its standards, was transferred to his perspective on students. T20 was

entirely focused on what students "should" be able to do, what their job and thus the standards for success were.

A final consideration when looking at reasons teachers may deny the existence of problems in the Senegalese education system is Senegal's ongoing struggle to provide adequate teacher training. The father of the first family I stayed with in Dakar was a teacher, and I was startled one morning to hear him boast of the fact that he had never gone to college. If teachers do not have proper training, they will not have the skills or knowledge base necessary to identify specific problems or devise alternative practices to address them. A teacher training college was first established in 1903 in Saint Louis, and the establishment of regional training schools was a focus of government efforts at independence (Vandewiele 509-11). Nonetheless, little to no teacher training is available in rural areas, and efforts to increase teacher training have had limited success (Evans 218-21). A 2009 USAID report found that

> "with only two exceptions, teachers and teacher trainers were unable to describe approaches to the teaching of reading and seemed on the whole unaware of more up-to-date approaches to the teaching of literacy. An examination of the teacher training curricula revealed a lack of attention to or consistency in approaches to the teaching of reading to children whose first language is not French […] Results of our research demonstrate low levels of reading in French both at elementary level and beyond, a lack of awareness of techniques for teaching early reading and little attention paid to the teaching of reading for comprehension or higher order reading skills. Large numbers of children are not learning to read or are not learning to read well. Since French is the vehicle

through which content is delivered, an inability to read means that, inevitably, mastery of any other aspect of the curriculum will be affected." (Destefano, Lynd, & Thornton 24-5)

V. The Lasting Result: Lack of Personal Intellectual Inquiry

What students "should do" or "should be able to do" became a familiar refrain throughout the course of this study. The first sentence of I1's interview response was that there was no barrier because students begin speaking French at a young age and thus *should* not see French as a barrier in education. I1 only identified difficulties after establishing that fact. I5's response was similar when he repeated that French is the official language of education so there is not a problem with speaking French at school. In the months I spent working at these schools, what students "should" know was repeated numerous times in faculty room discussions and numerous other informal discussions when the subject of the education system came up, as it often did when I said that it was the subject of my study. As we have seen, students' goal is to pass the test and teachers role is thus ultimately to present information in preparation for the test, so the removed focus on measurable standards implied by the formulation "should be able to" makes sense. What students "should" be able to do is the same formulation used on course objectives and outcome measurements across many education systems, including many classes at the University of Oregon. In the context of the multitude of problems in the Senegalese education system considered in this thesis, however, having teachers who are put into a standardized role focused entirely on those outcomes has extensive consequences. The most startling, and perhaps most concerning with regard the long term impact of this education system on the population of Senegal, is that this

cycle of knowledge production and reproduction eliminates personal intellectual inquiry from the classroom. This is a consequence that forces us to look at the root of this and other institutionalized education systems, at the *purpose* of education. In my estimation, this is the most important result of this study, the most significant takeaway from my work in Dakar.

In a place where teachers are functionally reduced to presenters of information, who reproduce information they learned in school so their students may do the same, asking the question "why" has no purpose. Certainly, personal intellectual inquiry had no place in the original colonial system. Subjects attempting to become members of the elite through education were not supposed to question anything. The purpose of education was not to create independent intellectuals, not to produce knowledge, but to indoctrinate people into an existing set of culturally constructed information. When Senghor decided to preserve the system, no matter his given reasons, he preserved the purpose, the intended objectives, of the colonial system because the system was designed to fulfill those objectives. Thus, no matter what the "purpose of education" is seen to be today after decades of shifts in philosophical, scientific, and moral perspectives, the system still fulfills the purposes intended at its implementation. Historically, questioning anything within this system would only have negative consequences, if any. Today, this attitude is implicitly conserved. Not only are students discouraged from asking questions or thinking creatively and independently, they could actively be punished for asking the question "why." I witnessed this firsthand, and present the following anecdote of one very telling experience with a teacher (T16) in a 6^{th} grade science class.

T16 was giving a lesson on taxonomy, and students were practicing classifying different types of animals into major categories, such as vertebrates and invertebrates. When they began to look at plants, T16 distributed a handout with a branching taxonomy of different plants. Under a category called “seedless plants,” several branches in, were mushrooms. Anyone who, like me, was educated in American public school would be quick to protest—mushrooms aren’t plants, they’re fungi. Fungi are a whole separate kingdom and the term “seedless plants” is contradictory according to the classification system I had learned. Naturally, when the students were occupied with an individual activity, I asked the teacher privately about this. I didn’t want to offend or question his authority, but I was curious, so I said simply that I had learned differently and was wondering about the mushrooms in his classification handout. I quickly realized that what I thought was an innocuous question was quite the opposite. The teacher was enraged. He made the question public to the whole class. The students sat in silence, and were obviously not about to engage in debate. Luckily for all of us, the class was nearly over. The teacher’s fit of anger, however, was not. My attempts to drop the issue were futile. He stormed into the faculty room and filled the rest of the teachers in on our “argument.” The echoes of his voice in the small concrete room were overtaken only by the other teachers’ laughter as he challenged me to look it up on the staff computer. I knew, of course, what I would find, but with all eyes turned to me I had no choice. With one google search I sealed the fate of this teacher, humiliated in front of his colleagues who sent him away in derision.

The issue of authority is clearly illustrated in this story. The other science teachers were almost certainly teaching the same material, despite their claims. Upon

reflection, there was no way I could have phrased my question without inciting that response. The teacher's conviction that he was right, after he chose to make my question a very public challenge, is further evidence of the need to establish and maintain authority in this context. It also gives credence to students' reluctance to ask questions in the classroom, even if only for clarification. With regard to the issue of personal intellectual inquiry in education, however, this story demonstrates something much more profound. This is an example of how the closed cycle of knowledge circulation, where information is presented by the teacher and reproduced by students, changes the function of knowledge and as a consequence eliminates the role of personal inquiry.

Personal inquiry results from the pursuit of knowledge, where questions are asked as a basis for investigation. In the closed cycle outlined above, knowledge is dissociated, and turned into a tool. Reproducing knowledge is a means to an end, a tool to use to get a good grade, to achieve the designation of "success". In this example, when knowledge is seen as a tool, it does not matter what the biological properties of a mushroom are. That a mushroom is a plant, not a fungus, is a piece of knowledge that has no relationship to a real mushroom, which do not even grow in the sandy heat of Dakar. The teacher used the reproduction of this piece of knowledge, among many, to get his baccalaureate and teaching degree; the students will now use it to pass their tests. Seen from this perspective, T16 was absolutely correct. Because classifying a mushroom as a plant will be graded as correct on a test, and because students, like their teacher, will be rewarded for reproducing that piece of knowledge, then by all the standards operating in this context a mushroom is indeed a plant. Even if students didn't

face the threat of punishment or ridicule for questioning the information presented by a teacher, why would they? There is no reward, no benefit, no purpose in this educational setting for personal inquiry. Just as teachers are ultimately "most successful" by teaching to the test, as shown above, students are most successful by reproducing information for the test and are thus conditioned to repress all inclination to ask "why."

Students' lack of personal intellectual inquiry is tied to meaningful learning because the two are largely caused by the same factors, a connection which can be partially explained in conjunction with meaningful learning's effects on identity development. When meaningful learning does not take place, intellectual identity is alienated from the rest of a student's identity, as academic information is not properly integrated into existing schemata. If intellectual identity is not properly developed, or developed in isolation, a student may not see themselves as an intellectual. The function of knowledge as a tool in a closed cycle of production and reproduction suffocates students' personal inquiry because of its impact on intellectual identity development in educational contexts.

The "situated nature of identity," in which identities are negotiated in and shaped by the various contexts in which we find ourselves, underscores the role of educational contexts in shaping a student's identity. At school, a context given weight by its social significance, students' developing intellectual or academic identities are "negotiated and co-constructed through what is made possible or necessary amid the daily practices, encounters, discourses, and struggles available to them within a particular context" (Faircloth 187). If those practices are the memorization and reproduction of information, if those encounters condition them not to question, if those

discourses remind them primarily of the importance of passing an exam, and if those struggles are largely ignored out of teachers' resignation or result-oriented practicality, students' intellectual identities will develop accordingly. Intellectual identity will not develop with an orientation toward questioning, investigating, or intrinsically motivated pursuits. It will develop with finite, rigid standards removed from reality, often under the threat of reprimand. With the role of the teacher standardized, "the African schooling system currently favors instruction instead of individual development, letting the student construct his or her true identity" (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne 47). In other words, "to learn in any community means to become a particular person with respect to the possibilities enabled by that community," and if the possibilities do not include personal inquiry or intellectual creativity, then those skills will not have the opportunity to develop as parts of a students' intellectual identities, a consequence with extensive repercussions both for individuals and for the population as a whole (Faircloth 187).

Like most if not all post-colonial states, Senegal is often preoccupied with development as a collective goal. Though defined differently depending on the source, it is a directional movement toward an end; in summary, "the current concept of development implies a finality of social and cultural order that includes the reduction of all forms of misery poverty, malnutrition, insecurity, injustice, and oppression" (Tchindjang, Bopda, & Ngamgne 44) This goal was repeated numerous times in the classrooms I observed, in the form of a charge from teachers to students. Teachers would remind students of their responsibility as the youth of their country to achieve an education that would give them the tools to become the future leaders Senegal needs.

Especially at Mariama Ba, because of its exclusivity for high-achieving students, the issue of development was a daily reiteration. However, if you look at the ways in which the education these students receive, the education intended to give students the tools to take charge of their country's development, stifles creativity and personal inquiry, I would argue that their toolbox is lacking. The change in popular perspective on the purpose of education from the colonial period can do little to change the actual outcome of education unless the system is restructured to produce a different outcome. Only one teacher, in his classroom discussion on development, addressed this issue, and I will end with his words.

T2 told students how to become a learner, an intellectual, instead of just a student, a distinction that puts the emphasis on learner initiative and autonomy. You have to be like a Raven, he said, who sleeps well and wakes up early; like a dog, who scrupulously respects his assignments and orders; like a donkey, who carries all that is given to him to carry, you must carry all that is given to you by your professors; and like a pig, who consumes everything, even that which is discarded by others, you must be hungry for knowledge in whatever form it comes in, even if it is not attractive. He told students emphatically that this was necessary for development, because only by creating a generation of independent and motivated learners would Senegal be able to meet the challenges they face with the strength and skills to persevere.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have attempted to show how the Senegalese education system, instituted by the French during the colonial period and changed little in the post-independence period, causes a barrier to meaningful learning for students. I have attempted to demonstrate the role of top-down educational policy dictated by a select governing elite, and given a historical basis for the implementation and preservation of governmental and educational systems. This top-down, evolutionary approach to reform has resulted in few implemented changes to the education system over the past half-century, and thus I sought to look at the ways in which teachers implement practices on a classroom level to compensate for the problems caused by the system and encourage opportunities for meaningful learning. I also sought to find out exactly what problems teachers identified, or if they acknowledged problems at all, to see if their perspectives were congruent with existing research on the subject. Using examples from my own research in Dakar, I hope to have shown how teachers are limited in their efforts to make learning meaningful for students on a classroom level because they are forced to meet the demands of national educational policy, including the baccalaureate exam and exclusive use of the French language. In addition, they can do little to fix the primary issue of students' low language proficiency, which causes significant problems for students in all subjects and widens the divide between academic knowledge and students' existing schemata, rendering meaningful learning particularly difficult. Still, this attempt to show the network of factors inhibiting meaningful learning is deserving of consideration only because of the effects a lack of meaningful learning has on students. A lack of meaningful learning has substantial repercussions on students'

motivation and success in school. When meaningful learning does not occur, students' intellectual identity is alienated from the rest of their identity development, and without this integration students may not see themselves as intellectuals or as capable of success in academia. In addition, students are subject to an institutional culture with standards incongruent to those of the culture they are a part of outside of school. Not only is their success measured against foreign standards and in a foreign system of communication, the education system was created as a system of cultural indoctrination, with the explicit goal of negating or denigrating local language and culture. This legacy can also impact students' identity development as well as their achievement within an education system largely irrelevant to their lives outside school. The effects of an education system that inhibits meaningful learning and has overall poor achievement rates are pervasive. One of the most striking is students', and to a large extent teachers', lack of personal intellectual inquiry, a critical thinking skill that is the driving force for innovation and progress. In a country where development is a primary goal, addressing the problems with national education should be a primary concern. Education is part of the foundation of society, the site of development for entire generations at a time. We need, as a global community, to carefully consider the purpose of our public education systems, the practices we implement to serve that purpose, and the means and standards by which we judge students' achievement. Only by considering these factors will we be able to give the next generation the tools necessary to confront the significant problems we face as a global community. Public education concerns everyone.

Appendix

Classroom Observation Rubric

Name of Institution	
Class Grade Level	
Class Subject	
Number of Students	
Date of Observation	
Duration of Observation	

Teacher Behavior	Frequency	Details
1. Extended use of Wolof or other local language without repetition in French		
2. Concept presented in French supported by a translation of term/concept in Wolof or other local language		
3. Concept presented in French supported by association, illustration, or example relevant to Ss experiences, communities, practices outside of school		
4. Explicit French language support, feedback, or error correction given to students related to meaning, pragmatics, or function of language (Class subjects other than French language)		
5. Explicit French language		

support, feedback, or error correction given to students related to grammatical accuracy (Class subjects other than French language)		
6. Connection of content or skills being taught to real-world, relevant applications or uses in Ss own lives		
7. T provides Ss-guided/directed activity or assignment (individual or whole class); Open or interpretive activity or assignment involving student choice, personal inquiry		
8. T offers Ss some measure of choice in topic, theme, or text relating to class content		
9. Choice of content related or relevant to local practices, issues, concerns; i.e. historical, social, cultural, practical		
10. Explicit statement to Ss about the meaning or value of academic learning, or encouraging Ss to independently relate new knowledge to existing knowledge, experience		
11. Use of authentic materials		

Key for Teachers Included in Observations and Interviews

American Grade Level Equivalents:
Terminale- 12th Grade
1ere-11th Grade
2nd- 10th Grade
3eme- 9th Grade
4eme- 8th Grade
5eme- 7th Grade

I. Interviews

Code	Class Subject	Grade Level	Position
I1	History/Geography	6eme, 5eme, 4eme, 3eme	Teacher
I2	History/Geography	2nd, 1ere, Terminale	Teacher
I3	History/Geography	2nd, 1ere, Terminale	Teacher
I4	History/Geography	2nd, 1ere, Terminale	Teacher
I5	History/Geography	6eme, 5eme,4eme	Teacher
I6	French	6eme, 5eme	Teacher
I7	French	6eme, 5eme,4eme	Teacher
I8	History/Geography	2nd, 1ere, Terminale	Teacher
I9	Economy	1ere, Terminale	Teacher
I10	English	2nd, 1ere, Terminale	Teacher

II. Observations

Code	Class Subject	Grade Levels	School
T1	French (Cours de Vacances)	4^{eme}, 3^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T2	History/Geography (Cours de Vacances)	1^{ere} (L)	Les Pedagogues
T3	Math (Cours de Vacances)	2^{nde} (S),3^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T4	History/Geography	3^{eme}	Mariama Bâ
T5	French	Terminale	Les Pedagogues
T6	History/Geography	4^{eme}	Mariama Bâ
T7	Science	Terminale	Mariama Bâ
T8	French	Terminale	Mariama Bâ
T9	SVT (Earth/Life Science)	6^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T10	History/Geography	4^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T11	French	1^{ere}	Les Pedagogues
T12	Science (Biology)	1^{ere}	Mariama Bâ
T13	French	4^{eme}	Mariama Bâ
T14	French	6^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T15	History/Geography	3^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T16	SVT	6^{eme}	Les Pedagogues
T17	Philosophy	Terminale	
T18	History/Geography	Terminale	Les Pedagogues
T19	Math	5^{eme}, 2^{nde}	Les Pedagogues
T20	Economy	1^{ere}	Les Pedagogues
T21	Math	4^{eme}	Mariama Bâ
T22	English	Terminale	Les Pedagogues

Research Consent Documents

Groupe pour l'Etude et
l'Enseignement de la Population

Dakar, June 4, 2015

To Whom may be concerned

Re : **Permission to Recruit Research Participants**:

For the purposes of research for her undergraduate thesis, India Chilton has permission to go to the following schools to ask teachers and/or school administrators to participate in the classroom observations and/or interviews outlined in the attached research proposal, following proposed the methodology and informed consent procedures: Groupe Scolaire Les Pedagogues located at Grand YOFF, Dakar and CEM Fadilou Diop located at Pikine. Participation in this research is completely voluntary.

Professor Babacar Fall
Cordinator of Groupe pour l'Etude et l'Ensiegnement de la Population (GEEP)

Groupe pour Etude et
l Enseignement de la Population
(G.E.E.P)
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Faculté des Sciences et Technologies de l'Education et de la Formation (FASTEF) – Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
BP 5036-Dakar -Sénégal (221) 33 824 48 77 Fax: (221) 33 825 47 14 geepop@geep.org

Consent Document for Participants-

University of Oregon

INTL and Clark Honors College Undergraduate Thesis Research

Consent to Take Part in Research

"Language, Identity, and Meaningful Learning in the Senegalese Education System"

Primary Researcher: India Chilton

Introduction:

Meaningful Learning is the process by which new knowledge, such as information learned in school, is integrated into students' bodies of existing knowledge, called schemata. These schemata include cultural, experiential, and personal knowledge. Teachers can create opportunities for meaningful learning by attempting to connect new information with students' identities and experiences. This study is intended to look at ways teachers in the Senegalese education system, working within the challenges of a foreign education system, make learning meaningful for students.

Who will take part?

Teachers and school Administrators in Dakar, Senegal.

What am I being asked to do?

This study has two parts: classroom observations and interviews. You can choose to participate in one or both. If you are an administrator you will only be asked to participate in interviews.

Interviews:

- If you participate in the interview, you will be asked one primary question, and you may be asked to elaborate on certain points. There are no right or wrong answers.
- There is no time constraint on interviews. Interviews will be audio recorded, unless you do not consent to be recorded.

Classroom Observations:

- If you participate you will be asked to have the researcher observe at least 4 hours of your classes.
- You may limit or extend the duration of observations. Observations do not have to be done all at once, and can be split up over multiple days and times.
- No audio/visual recording will take place. All notes will be handwritten by the researcher so as not to disturb your class.
- No observation of students will take place. These observations will look only at teaching techniques that research shows can encourage meaningful learning.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your name will be recorded in this study. In classroom observations, only the grade level and name of school will be recorded. Interviews will only state whether you are a teacher or administrator. If you are a teacher then the grade level(s) you teach will be recorded. This study will be printed as a thesis project at the University of Oregon.

Risks and Benefits

There are no anticipated risks associated with your participation in this study. No identity or personal information will be included in this research. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. This study is for research purposes only, and information collected will be used only for this project and will not be shared for future projects. You may request a copy of the final research project.

Questions or Concerns

You should ask any questions or voice any concerns to the primary researcher. **You** can back out of the study at any time.

You may also contact University of Oregon research compliance services for questions and concerns at ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu

You may contact the faculty advisor for this project at dgalvan@uoregon.edu

Statement of Consent

- I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form
- I have been encouraged to ask questions, and my questions have been answered
- I consent to participate in this study
- I have been given (or will be given) a copy of this form

Participant Signature_____

Consent to Record (Interviews Only)

- I consent to having my interview audio recorded for this study
- I understand that this recording will be used only for research purposes for the study described above
- My name will not be recorded or associated with this interview

Participant Signature_____

Université d'Oregon

Thèse de Recherche pour la Licence INTL et le Clark Honors College

Formulaire de consentement pour participer aux recherches

« Langage, Identité, and Apprentissage Significatif dans le Système Educatif Sénégalais »

Chercheuse: India Chilton

Introduction :

L'apprentissage significatif est le processus par lequel de nouvelles connaissances, telles que les informations acquises à l'école, sont intégrées avec les connaissances existantes des étudiants, appelées schémas. Ces schémas comprennent les connaissances culturelles ainsi que les expériences et connaissances personnelles. Les enseignants permettent un apprentissage significatif en connectant les informations nouvelles avec les identités et expériences des élèves. Cette étude examine comment les enseignants, dans le système éducatif sénégalais, surmontent les défis d'un système d'éducation étranger afin de créer un apprentissage significatif chez leurs élèves.

Qui sont les participants ?

Enseignants et administrateurs d'écoles à Dakar (Sénégal).

Que me demande-t-on de faire ?

Cette étude a deux parties: les observations en classe et les interviews. Vous pouvez choisir de participer à l'une ou aux deux. Les administrateurs participeront seulement aux interviews.

Interviews :

- Si vous participez à l'entrevue, on vous posera une question principale, et on pourra vous demander d'élaborer sur certains points. Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses.
- Il n'y a pas de limite de temps pour les interviews. Les interviews seront enregistrées (audio), sauf si vous n'y consentez pas.

Observation de Classe :

- Si vous participez vous serez observés par la chercheuse pendant au moins 4 heures de classe.
- Vous pouvez choisir de limiter ou d'allonger la durée des observations. Les observations peuvent être réparties sur plusieurs jours.
- Rien ne sera enregistré. Toutes les notes seront écrites à la main par la chercheuse, afin de ne pas déranger la classe.
- Les élèves ne seront pas observés. Cette recherche observe seulement les techniques d'enseignement qui sont réputées aider l'apprentissage significatif.

Comment ma vie privée sera-t-elle protégée?

Votre participation à cette étude ne devrait comporter aucun risque. Aucun renseignement personnel pouvant vous identifier ne sera inclus dans cette recherche. Il n'y a pas d'avantages directs non plus pour participer à cette étude. Cette étude est à des fins de recherche uniquement; l'information recueillie sera utilisée uniquement pour ce projet et ne sera pas partagées pour de futurs projets. Vous pouvez demander une copie du projet de recherche final.

Risques et Avantages Potentiels

Il n'y a pas de risques prévus associés à la participation à cette étude. Les informations recueillies ne contiendront pas d'informations personnelles des participants. Il n'y a pas d'avantages directes associés à la participation à cette étude. Chaque participant peut demander une copie du projet final contenant les résultats de cette étude.

Questions ou Préoccupations

Vous pouvez poser des questions ou exprimer leurs préoccupations à la chercheuse. Vous pouvez abandonner l'étude quand vous le souhaitez.

Vous pouvez aussi contacter les services de recherche de l'Université d'Oregon en cas de questions ou préoccupations à cette adresse : ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu

Vous pouvez contacter le directeur de recherche à cette adresse dgalvan@uoregon.edu

Déclaration de Consentement

- J'ai lu (ou on m'a lu) le contenu de ce formulaire de consentement.
- On m'a encouragé à poser des questions, et on a répondu à mes questions.
- Je consens à participer à cette étude.
- On m'a donné (ou on va me donner) une copie de ce formulaire.

Nom du/ de la Participant-
(e)_____

Signature du/ de la Participant(e)_____

Consentement à l'Enregistrement (Seulement pour les entrevues)

• Je consens à ce que mon entrevue soit enregistrée à l'audio pour cette étude
• Je comprends que cet enregistrement sera utilisé uniquement pour la recherche dans le cadre de l'étude décrite ci-dessus
• Mon nom ne sera pas enregistré ou associé à cette entrevue

Nom du/de la Participant(e)_____

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

DATE: July 24, 2015 IRB Protocol Number: 06242015.034

TO: India Chilton, Principal Investigator
International Studies

RE: Protocol entitled, "Language, Identity, and Meaningful Learning in the Senegalese Education System"

Notice of IRB Review and Approval
Expedited Review as per Title 45 CFR Part 46 # 6, 7

The project identified above has been reviewed by the University of Oregon Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Research Compliance Services using an expedited review procedure. This is a minimal risk study. This approval is based on the assumption that the materials, including changes/clarifications that you submitted to the IRB contain a complete and accurate description of all the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research.

This approval is given with the following standard conditions:

1. You are approved to conduct this research only during the period of approval cited below;
2. You will conduct the research according to the plans and protocol submitted (approved copy enclosed);
3. You will immediately inform Research Compliance Services of any injuries or adverse research events involving subjects;
4. You will immediately request approval from the IRB of any proposed changes in your research, and you will not initiate any changes until they have been reviewed and approved by the IRB;
5. You will only use the approved informed consent document(s) (enclosed);
6. You will give each research subject a copy of the informed consent document;
7. If your research is anticipated to continue beyond the IRB approval dates, you must submit a Continuing Review Request to the IRB approximately 60 days prior to the IRB approval expiration date. Without continuing approval the Protocol will automatically expire on July 23, 2016.

Additional Conditions: *Any research personnel that have not completed CITI certificates should be removed from the project until they have completed the training. When they have completed the training, you must submit a Protocol Amendment Application Form to add their names to the protocol, along with a copy of their CITI certificates.*

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS • RESEARCH COMPLIANCE SERVICES
677 E. 12th Ave., Suite 500, 5237 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97401-5237
T 541-346-2510 F 541-346-5138 http://humansubjects.uoregon.edu

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Approval period: July 24, 2015 - July 23, 2016

The University of Oregon and Research Compliance Services appreciate your efforts to conduct research in compliance with University of Oregon Policy and federal regulations that have been established to ensure the protection of human subjects in research. Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB process.

Sincerely,

Christina Davis, J.D.
Research Compliance Administrator
Research Compliance Services
University of Oregon
677 East 12th Avenue, Suite 500
Eugene, OR 97403-5237
541-346-2510 (phone)
541-346-5138 (fax)

CC: Dennis Galvan, Faculty Advisor

GROUPE POUR L' ETUDE ET L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA POPULATION

GEEP

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Presented to

INDIA ELIOT CHILTON

For the succesful completion of an internship concerning the implementation of population education and studies in primary and secondary Scools in Dakar, Senegal from August to December 2015. .

Le Coordonnateur National

Babacar FALL

Groupe pour l'Etude et l'Enseignement de la Population (G.E.E.P) Ecole Normale Supérieure BP : 5036 Dakar Fann

Dakar, December 31, 2015

Groupe pour l'Etude et
l'Enseignement de la Population

Dakar, le 30 septembre 2015

A Madame le Proviseur de la Maison d'Education Mariama Ba

Gorée – Dakar

Objet : Demande d'accueil d'une stagiaire enseignante en langue anglaise

Madame Le Proviseur,

Dans le cadre du partenariat entre le GEEP et l'Université d'Orégon, USA, nous recevons en stage, durant la période du 10 octobre au 04 décembre 2015, Mademoiselle India E. Chilton, étudiante en année de licence d'enseignement de langue anglaise à la faculté d'éducation de l'Université d'Orégon. Mademoiselle India E. Chilton souhaiterait acquérir de l'expérience dans des établissements d'enseignement au Sénégal.

Par cette lettre, je sollicite votre établissement pour l'accueil de cette stagiaire qui pourrait sous l'encadrement d'un professeur d'anglais s'exercer au métier d'enseignante de l'anglais dans une ou deux de vos classes durant la période de son séjour au Sénégal. Je voudrais également porter à votre connaissance que l'accueil de cette stagiaire n'aura aucune implication financière de la part de votre établissement. Je vous serais seulement reconnaissant de lui faciliter l'accès au tarif réduit pour le transport à Gorée par la chaloupe.

Dans l'attente d'une suite favorable à cette demande, je vous prie d'agréer, Madame le Proviseur, l'expression de ma considération distinguée.

Professeur Babacar Fall
Coordonnateur du GEEP
FASTEF-UCAD – Dakar
Tél : 77 143 88 17

Maison d'Education Mariama BA Gorée Le Proviseur

Catherine SARR

Faculté des Sciences et Technologies de l'Education et de la Formation (FASTEF) – Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
BP 5036-Dakar -Sénégal (221) 33 824 48 77 Fax: (221) 33 825 47 14 geepop@geep.org

GROUPE SCOLAIRE LES PEDAGOGUES
HLM GRAND YOFF. BP : 26 159 DAKAR
Tel : 33 827 41 39 / 33 827 88 27.
Le Directeur des Etudes

ANNEE SCOLAIRE 2015-2016

AUTORISATION D'ACCES

Je soussigné Bara **NDIAYE**, Directeur des Etudes du Groupe Scolaire Les Pédagogues,

Autorise Madame ... **India CHILTON** étudiante en LICENCE en Etudes Internationales

A l'Université d'OREGON (USA) à assister à des séances d'enseignement-apprentissage dans différentes classes de l'établissement.

En foi de quoi, cette autorisation lui est délivrée pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.

Dakar le 14 Octobre 2015

Le Directeur des Etudes

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T2 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. September 2, 2015.

T3 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. September 4, 2015; September 11, 2015; September 13, 2015.

T4 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 13, 2015; October 24, 2015.

T5 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 20, 2015.

T6 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 21, 2015.

T7 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 21, 2015.

T8 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 22, 2015.

T9 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 23, 2015.

T10 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 27, 2015.

T11 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 27, 2015.

T12 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 28, 2015.

T13 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. October 30, 2015.

T14 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 3, 2015.

T15 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 3, 2015.

T16 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 6, 2015.

T17 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 9, 2015.

T18 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 11, 2015.

T19 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 11, 2015.

T20 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 13, 2015.

T21 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 16, 2015; November 17, 2015.

T22 (Anonymous). Classroom Observation. November 23, 2015.

Interviews:

I1 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. September 2, 2015.

I2 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. September 4, 2015.

I3 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. September 11, 2015.

I4 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. October 20, 2015.

I5 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. October 27, 2015.

I6 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. November 3, 2015.

I7 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. November 3, 2015.

I8 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. November 11, 2015.

I9 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. November 13, 2015.

I10 (Anonymous). Personal Interview. November 23, 2015.