The vitality and diversity of multilingual repertoires:

Commentary on Mufwene

Pierpaolo Di Carlo, Jeff Good

The vitality and diversity of multilingual repertoires: Commentary on Mufwene

PIERPAOLO DI CARLO   JEFF GOOD

University at Buffalo   *University at Buffalo*

In this commentary, we argue that examining the topic of language endangerment and loss requires close attention to culturally specific local factors that influence patterns of language choice and that shifting the emphasis of investigation from language endangerment to language vitality can yield significant research insights. Drawing largely on lessons from the investigation of patterns of multilingualism in rural Africa, we also suggest that examination of language ideologies and the use of ethnographic methods in language documentation can play an important role in understanding global patterns of language vitality.

Keywords: language endangerment, language maintenance, language shift, multilingualism, Africa, language ideologies, polyglossia

1. INTRODUCTION. Mufwene (2017) addresses a number of concerns that have been of significant interest to us in our own recent work, and we are grateful for the opportunity that his provocative analysis provides for further consideration of the ways that LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT AND LOSS (LEL) has been examined in the field. Our comments here are informed by our work in the Lower Fungom region of Cameroon (see Di Carlo 2011, Good et al. 2011), a rural area of West Africa characterized by extraordinary language diversity and high degrees of individual multilingualism.

When looked at from the point of view of global patterns of language shift, Lower Fungom is remarkable for the vitality of its languages. The region is about half the size of the city of Chicago and is associated with around eight languages (with the precise number dependent on where one draws the line between languages and dialects). The average adult speaks five or six languages (Esene Agwara 2013:93), including languages associated with places outside of Lower Fungom and Cameroonian Pidgin, the local lingua franca (see Menang 2004). A number of its languages are associated with a single village, and speaker populations range from a few hundred to a few thousand.

What factors have allowed Lower Fungom's languages to remain vital? At least one of these is relatively familiar: it is a rural region that remains relatively economically isolated, and its languages are therefore not subject to many of the pressures associated with globalizing urban environments. Like Mufwene, however, we have found totalistic accounts of language endangerment that link it to large-scale socioeconomic forces to be largely unsatisfactory when applied to Lower Fungom, and we believe that the field needs to pay much closer attention to local factors that promote language vitality. In particular, we have found patterns of multilingualism to be a key locus for investigation due to the way they reveal the diversity of relationships that individuals and communities can have with respect to the languages used around them.

In the rest of this commentary, we first outline our understanding of key points of Mufwene's article that we focus on here. We then examine the following three topics, drawing primarily on our investigations of the language dynamics of Lower Fungom, as well as on other sub-Saharan African examples: (i) the relationship between languages, cultures, and 'ethnic' identities in multilingual settings, (ii) social structures that promote language vitality, and (iii) the interplay of distinctive language ideologies within a community. We conclude with a brief remark on the methods one might employ to help advance the research agenda that Mufwene has laid out.

2. CULTURAL SPECIFICITY, LANGUAGE VITALITY, AND SPEAKER AGENCY. Given the breadth of Mufwene's contribution, our own commentary is necessarily selective in the themes that it focuses on, and we emphasize three here: (i) the importance of culturally specific, local factors for understanding LEL, (ii) a shift in emphasis from language EN-DANGERMENT to language VITALITY, even in contexts where local languages may clearly be endangered, and (iii) the role of speaker agency in language endangerment (and vitality) as opposed to macrosociological factors. In examining these topics, our intention is not to discount the significance of work that looks at endangerment from a global perspective but rather to suggest, like Mufwene, that certain changes in perspective are likely to lead to important improvements in our understanding of language maintenance, spread, and loss. We offer remarks on each of these themes below as a way of providing context for the rest of this commentary.

With respect to the importance of considering local factors, Mufwene writes that 'the factors that roll the dice on the vitality of particular languages lie in the local interactional dynamics enabled by the relevant population structures' (p. e217). This characterization underscores the ways in which modern forces of globalization have had quite distinct impacts on the linguistic situations of many parts of the world. He contrasts, for instance, the trajectories of African languages and Native American languages, where African languages, on the whole, have not been subject to the wide-scale patterns of endangerment and extinction seen within North America. A more striking contrast, in our view, not discussed by Mufwene, is one between many parts of Africa and Papua New Guinea. In a region like Lower Fungom, an English-based contact language, Cameroonian Pidgin, has come to serve as a lingua franca but has not (yet, at least) displaced local languages. By contrast, in parts of Papua New Guinea where Tok Pisin, another English-based contact language, has become widely used, this has quickly led to rapid language shift away from local languages (see e.g. Dobrin 2014). Given their superficial similarity, why have the linguistic outcomes been so different in these parts of the world? We come back to this topic below in our consideration of factors promoting language vitality in Lower Fungom's multilingual context (§4), which are intimately connected to the ways that languages are locally assigned a 'market value' (Wolff 2016:208).

Mufwene's terminological shift away from language endangerment and toward language vitality is also quite relevant to points that we make below. We believe that it offers a useful reframing by focusing attention on the community-internal factors that support continued use of a given language. In our own case, we think it is accurate to consider all of the languages of Lower Fungom to be endangered due to their small speaker populations and the limited socioeconomic resources controlled by its communities. However, focusing our research on questions of language maintenance over language endangerment has yielded significant insights. In particular, this has led to a finding that, in the region, independent political units must always be associated with a distinct linguistic variety and that speaking a linguistic variety greatly facilitates access to the resources associated with a given political entity. This encourages individual multilingualism: the more languages that one speaks, the greater the range of resources one has access to. This, in turn, enhances language vitality by giving individuals a positive reason to speak the region's languages. Moreover, widespread shift to a lingua franca like Cameroonian Pidgin in any one village would undermine its claims to political independence, providing a further buttress against language loss (see e.g. Di Carlo & Good 2014, Di Carlo 2018). In Mufwene's terms, we believe that these research results would fall under the heading of language vitality, even if the languages being studied happen to be endangered.

The final theme of Mufwene's article that we would like to highlight here is the role of speaker agency in processes of endangerment and loss—that is, the importance of looking at how these processes result from individual-level usage rather than seeing them primarily through the lens of population-level patterns. In highly multilingual environments, anecdotal observations suggest that this is an area that is poorly understood and in need of much more extensive investigation. Consider, for instance, an interaction reported in Connell 2009:139, which looked at language use in a village in the Adamawa Region of Cameroon:

> Two conversations also took place with people identified as being Tikar, in one of which Tikar was used by both speakers. In the other, however, Tikar was not used at all: SM began in Ba while the Tikar man replied in Fulfulde. When SM then used Fulfulde, the Tikar speaker switched to Vute![1]

While global forces clearly play an important role in understanding processes of language endangerment on a worldwide scale, they do not predetermine the specific linguistic choices that an individual will make in a given setting. In particular, an emphasis on regions like North America, where the overarching pattern involves interactions between a largely monolingual, socioeconomically dominant society and minority groups speaking indigenous or heritage languages, obscures the complexities of the relationships that can hold between individual patterns of language choice and language vitality in multilingual contexts.

Before moving on, we believe that it is worth noting the parallels between two of the above themes and trends within variationist sociolinguistics, following the presentation by Eckert (2012). In particular, Mufwene's emphasis on local factors shows a clear link with second-wave variation studies in that both require consideration of ethnographic factors in understanding the observed sociolinguistic patterns, and consideration of speaker agency brings the study of LEL in line with third-wave variation studies that examine the ways in which speakers construct their social identities through specific linguistic choices. This suggests that further developing Mufwene's approach to language vitality has the potential to lead to a welcome convergence and cross-fertilization between work done on LEL and work within variationist sociolinguistics (cf. e.g. Smakman & Heinrich 2015).

3. LANGUAGES, IDENTITIES, AND MULTILINGUALISM. Mufwene critiques the notion that there is an inextricable link between language and other aspects of identity, in particular arguing 'against the position that losing one's language is tantamount to losing one's cultural singularity' (p. e205). It is not clear to us how many linguists believe such a notion, at least in its strongest possible form, but it certainly pervades presentations of language endangerment aimed at popular audiences (see Hill 2002, Errington 2003, and Foley 2005 for relevant discussion).

In fact, we wonder whether Mufwene's arguments in this regard go far enough. Work on multilingualism in Africa indicates that the main concern is not merely about whether language and culture are closely linked, but rather the sheer variety of ways that they can be connected to each other. It has been said that 'multilingualism is the African lingua franca' (Fardon & Furniss 1994:4), for instance, which suggests that knowledge of multiple languages, and when and how to use them, can be an important part of linguistic identity in its own right and that there are cultures where monolingualism would be considered a kind of aberration. Connected to this, Lüpke and Storch

---

[1] Connell's (2009) study examined the language choices of a particular individual, identified as SM, in a market setting. The variety referred to as Ba in the quotation is a dialect of Mambila.

(2013:30–31) offer examples in African multilingual settings of individuals for whom the notion of 'mother tongue', at least as understood in Western contexts, is simply not applicable to their personal linguistic histories. Similarly, Tosco (1998:132–33) considers a number of East African cases of language shift and concludes that, while there is a link between language and a local notion of ethnicity, ethnic bonds themselves are weak, which can result in rapid shifts in language identity that are not connected to change in some more fundamental aspects of personal identity.

Lüpke's (2016) examination of the typology of what she terms SMALL-SCALE MULTILINGUALISM discusses other relevant examples across the world. Multilingualism of this kind is not associated with hierarchical relations among languages assumed within polyglossic approaches to multilingualism. These characterize situations where the use of different languages is such that 'one set of behaviors, attitudes, and values' is expressed in one language, while other sets of behaviors, attitudes, and values are expressed in other languages (Fishman 1967:29). Mufwene largely seems to assume that multilingualism can generally be characterized in polyglossic terms insofar as he frames language shift as being driven by socioeconomic concerns, remarking, for instance, on cases where 'shift can therefore be interpreted as an adaptive response to the changing socioeconomic ecology' (p. e205). Our own reading of the literature instead suggests that there are many kinds of multilingualism, each associated with a different kind of connection between language and identity. As is discussed in §4, some of these configurations appear to be more conducive to language vitality than others.

While we have referenced examples of multilingualism that are not likely to be familiar to most linguists, we believe that the link between language and identity is underexamined even in contexts like the contemporary United States. For instance, while monolingualism is understood to be a dominant feature of US society, this does not mean that other languages are simply absent in the popular culture. Even apparently monolingual white Americans will have an awareness of certain Spanish words, as evidenced by the existence of Mock Spanish in colloquial English usage (Hill 1998). This sort of practice is not usually treated under the heading of 'multilingualism', but it nevertheless demonstrates how even 'monolingual' societies exist in multilingual ecologies where nondominant languages may play an important role in structuring social relations (even if members of the dominant culture are not able to speak them fluently).

Given that Mufwene's starting point is a critique of the discourse surrounding LEL, it is completely sensible that he has focused on the way that the link between language and identity is treated in much work on that topic. We therefore do not mean our points here to be in contention with his arguments. Rather, if anything, we believe that they strengthen his case by underscoring how little we yet know about the ways in which linguistic choices in multilingual contexts reflect and construct social identities and, thereby, interact with language vitality.

4. LANGUAGE VITALITY OR LANGUAGE SHIFT? An especially valuable contribution of Mufwene's article in our view is its proposal to place research on LEL within a broader framework of examining language vitality. This is sensible not only from a scholarly perspective, to the extent that it helps identify underexplored research questions, but also from an applied one: if linguists believe it is important to support the continued use of endangered languages, it is clearly valuable not only to be aware of factors that cause speakers to stop using particular languages but also to have a clear understanding of what factors are known to promote their continued use.

This issue does not appear to have received as much attention as the question of how to revitalize or maintain endangered or threatened languages. Thus, for instance, more

effort has been oriented toward how to develop writing systems for unwritten languages, on the assumption that these will play an important role in their maintenance, than developing an analysis of what speakers already value about the languages that they speak in the first place (see e.g. Grenoble & Whaley 2005:969–70).

Consistent with Mufwene's emphasis on local and culturally specific factors in understanding patterns of language vitality, we are not able to provide a list of 'universal' ingredients that cause individuals to continue to speak a given language. Instead, we outline here why we think the languages of Lower Fungom, the region that is the focus of our research (see §1), remain relatively vital despite their small speaker populations and the socioeconomic marginalization of their speakers. Two factors appear to be especially important: (i) an emphasis on the use of language to express affiliation with local sociopolitical units (Di Carlo & Good 2014:240–54), and (ii) a broad cultural pattern that encourages individuals to maintain multiple group affiliations as a means of achieving security (see e.g. Kopytoff 1987:24). Taken together, the result is that individuals have a strong incentive to cultivate multilingual repertoires in the region's languages.

At present, all adults in Lower Fungom use, in addition to local languages, at least one language of wider communication, Cameroonian Pidgin, and many also speak English. Both of these languages are associated with socioeconomic opportunity and are precisely the kinds of languages that replace local languages in many parts of the world. In the local linguistic space, however, the characteristic that makes these two languages most valuable in general terms—that is, the fact that they can be used to communicate with individuals throughout Cameroon (and beyond)—renders them worthless as markers of local identity.

Local languages in Lower Fungom are, thus, operating in a different value system from 'global' languages like Cameroonian Pidgin and English, and knowledge of one set of languages cannot replace knowledge of the other if one wants to fully participate in social life. The presence of this distinct valuing system for local languages is almost certainly a major factor in their vitality. Moore (2004) describes something similar in another part of Cameroon in comparing the ways that two groups in the Far North Region of the country respond to their multilingual environment. A linguistically diverse group living in the Mandara Mountains, referred to as the Montagnards, show a pattern of multilingualism broadly comparable to what is found in Lower Fungom. By contrast, the Wandala, a socioeconomically dominant Muslim group occupying the nearby plains, show more limited linguistic repertoires and less of a desire to learn local languages. It seems likely that the local Montagnard linguistic culture is similar to that of Lower Fungom, with an emphasis on languages as markers of local identity and the expression of multiple affiliations through language. The Wandala instead appear to arrange languages hierarchically, with their own language ranked above those of the Montagnards, but below languages like Arabic or French (Moore 2004:140). In this relatively small geographic area, we therefore see two linguistic cultures at work, a more egalitarian one among the Montagnards and a more stratified one among the Wandala, with the linguistic culture that holds among the Montagnards promoting local multilingualism and thereby language vitality (see §5 for further discussion).

As discussed in §3, our reading of Mufwene's article suggests a view where multilingualism is seen as generally characterizable in terms of polyglossic relations, where each language is assigned a particular social domain and languages can be ordered within a prestige hierarchy. It is just these kinds of situations where we might expect persistent patterns of language shift from lower-prestige languages to higher-prestige ones, making them significant for the study of LEL. By contrast, if we focus instead on

language vitality, further examination of situations like what is found in Lower Fungom or among the Montagnards of the Mandara Mountains would seem to be in order, since their nonhierarchical schemes for valuing languages encourage speakers not only to maintain languages that they already know but also to learn new ones. More broadly, we believe that looking at LEL from the more general perspective of language vitality, as suggested by Mufwene, will encourage further contrastive studies like that of Moore 2004 and improve our understanding of why some languages have become endangered much more quickly than others, even under superficially similar local conditions (see §2).

5. IDEOLOGICAL LAYERS AND LINGUISTIC CHOICES. Mufwene does not explicitly mention language ideologies in his article, though it is clear that they must play a central role in linking speaker agency to patterns of language vitality, given the role they play in structuring the adaptive choices that speakers make when choosing to use (or not use) a language. Understanding the role of local language ideologies in LEL, in turn, requires knowledge of local patterns of social organization so that the way that languages relate to local cultural units can be properly elucidated. This underscores the importance of adopting an ethnographic orientation in the investigation of this domain, a point to which we return in §6. In this section, we build on some of the facts introduced in §4 in order to exemplify the role that particular language ideologies can play with respect to language vitality and to illustrate how their investigation can usefully complement the general research approach proposed by Mufwene.

In Moore's (2004) work, discussed in §4 above, she describes two distinct schemes for valuing languages that hold among groups occupying the same geographic space. On the one hand, there are the Montagnards, whose linguistic culture encourages multilingualism in local languages. On the other hand, there are the Wandala, whose linguistic culture discourages multilingualism unless the additional languages being acquired are high in prestige. These two different attitudes appear to reflect distinct language ideologies held by each group. The Wandala's language attitudes almost certainly emanate from an innovative ideology that developed as a result of a process of Islamization that has been ongoing for centuries (MacEachern 2003 [1990]:85). The key change would have been a shift from a relatively 'egalitarian' language ideology, like the one presently held by the Montagnards and found within Lower Fungom (see §4), to a hierarchical one in which the Wandala language would have been ordered above other local languages but below languages associated with more powerful Muslim groups such as Fulfulde (Moore 2004: 140) and, of course, Arabic.

Something that is interesting about this case in the present context is that this ideological change does not appear to have affected the vitality of the Wandala language itself, at least in a narrow sense. Rather, it is the degree of individual multilingualism among the Wandala that would have changed, given that the Montagnard ideology appears to be the older one in the region (MacEachern 2003 [1990]:270–78). This ideological shift among the Wandala would have then indirectly reduced the vitality of the Montagnard languages by reducing the population of potential speakers. This tells us that, if we want to understand the vitality of both Wandala and the Montagnard languages, it is important to consider how particular ideological configurations lead to different patterns of linguistic knowledge and usage. The examination of ideologies, in this case, is also helpful insofar as it allows us to reconstruct relatively historically deep changes in a local language ecology to augment synchronically observable patterns of language use in a given community. It also gives us a window into the social space in

which speakers operate when shifting from one pattern of language usage to another, an important theme of Mufwene's discussion.

Lower Fungom provides another relevant example, and we base our discussion here on both previously published work and our own observations. The linguistic diversity of the region is partly due to the arrival of refugee groups to the area during the nineteenth century (Di Carlo 2011:91–92), but what has most likely kept its highly localized speech varieties vital (with speaker populations at times below 200 individuals) is a language ideology that stresses the need for each of its communities to make use of a distinctive lexicogrammatical code (see §4). This can hardly be considered a bottom-up process, given that individuals maintain active kinship ties across linguistic boundaries (see e.g. Di Carlo & Good 2014:245), and it is most likely a strategy adopted by the ruling elite, who view language loyalty and internal linguistic homogeneity as an effective way to monitor and validate group membership. In such a context, multilingualism can be seen as an adaptation on the part of the commoners to circumvent the constraints imposed by the elite (a 'tactic' in the sense of de Certeau 1984). We can oppose the ideologies driving this dynamic, which foster both linguistic diversity and individual multilingualism, against the local understanding of Cameroonian Pidgin. This language is associated with modernization, globalization, and urban migrations, and its use can be seen as (among other things) a way for commoners to declare their independence from the elite's strategy entirely. To this point, the spread of Cameroonian Pidgin, along with its associated ideology, in Lower Fungom has not yet presented a direct threat to the vitality of individual languages. Instead, its primary impact has been on the region's linguistic ecology by introducing an exogenous ideology alongside endogenous ones (see Di Carlo 2017).

We believe that cases like these make clear the extent to which explorations of language vitality can be strengthened by the inclusion of a significant ethnographic component in the analysis, with language ideologies playing an especially prominent role in providing a bridge between cultural constraints and linguistic choices. While an interdisciplinary approach of this kind will inevitably complicate research in this domain to some degree, we believe that it can provide an effective means to account for the local factors that Mufwene rightfully brings into focus in studies of language endangerment and change.

6. TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR EXPLORING VITALITY. We would like to conclude our commentary by briefly considering how the points raised here, as well as by Mufwene, could lead to a concrete change in linguistic research agendas. At the most general level, we believe that they suggest the need for greater integration of interdisciplinary methods into work on LEL, with ethnographic methods playing a particularly important role, as discussed in §5. There already are good examples of the kind of work that we envision (see e.g. Kulick 1992 for a prominent one). However, the use of interdisciplinary methods is not yet standard in investigations of this area, and proposals for greater integration of ethnographic methods into research on language shift, such as Sommer 1997, have not had a clear impact on endangered language research, in particular in the area of language documentation, the paradigm in which most work on endangered languages takes place today.

If we want to be able to understand how global trends are playing out within specific speaker communities, it is clear that we need to understand the ways in which their cultures interact with such large-scale forces. We hope that Mufwene's call for a new research paradigm centering around the exploration of language vitality will cause

linguists to consider more carefully the ways in which advances in this area can be facilitated by the thoughtful integration of interdisciplinary methods and data into their work.

REFERENCES

Austin, Peter K., and Julia Sallabank (eds.) 2014. *Endangered languages: Beliefs and ideologies in language documentation and revitalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Connell, Bruce. 2009. Language diversity and language choice: A view from a Cameroon market. *Anthropological Linguistics* 51.130–50. DOI: 10.1353/anl.0.0012.

de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The practice of everyday life*. Trans. by Steven F. Rendall. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Di Carlo, Pierpaolo. 2011. Lower Fungom linguistic diversity and its historical development: Proposals from a multidisciplinary perspective. *Africana Linguistica* 17.53–100. DOI: 10.2143/AL.17.0.2146551.

Di Carlo, Pierpaolo. 2018. Towards an understanding of African endogenous multilingualism: Ethnography, language ideologies, and the supernatural. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2018(254), to appear.

Di Carlo, Pierpaolo, and Jeff Good. 2014. What are we trying to preserve? Diversity, change, and ideology at the edge of the Cameroonian Grassfields. In Austin & Sallabank, 229–62.

Dobrin, Lise M. 2014. Language shift in an 'importing culture': The cultural logic of Arapesh roads. In Austin & Sallabank, 125–48.

Eckert, Penelope. 2012. Three waves of variation study: The emergence of meaning in the study of sociolinguistic variation. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41.87–100. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-anthro-092611-145828.

Errington, Joseph. 2003. Getting language rights: The rhetorics of language endangerment and loss. *American Anthropologist* 105.723–32. DOI: 10.1525/aa.2003.105.4.723.

Esene Agwara, Angiachi Demetris. 2013. Multilingualism in Lower Fungom: Analyses from an ethnographically-oriented sociolinguistic survey. Buea, Cameroon: University of Buea master's thesis.

Fardon, Richard, and Graham Furniss. 1994. Introduction: Frontiers and boundaries—African languages as political environment. *African languages, development and the state*, ed. by Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss, 1–29. London: Routledge.

Fishman, Joshua A. 1967. Bilingualism with and without diglossia: Diglossia with and without bilingualism. *Journal of Social Issues* 23.29–38. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1967.tb00573.x.

Foley, William A. 2005. Personhood and linguistic identity, purism and variation. *Language documentation and description*, vol. 3, ed. by Peter K. Austin, 157–80. London: Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project.

Good, Jeff; Jesse Lovegren; Jean Patrick Mve; Nganguep Carine Tchiemouo; Rebecca Voll; and Pierpaolo Di Carlo. 2011. The languages of the Lower Fungom region of Cameroon: Grammatical overview. *Africana Linguistica* 17.101–64. DOI: 10.2143/AL.17.0.2146552.

Grenoble, Lenore A., and Lindsay J. Whaley. 2005. Review of *Language endangerment and language maintenance*, ed. by David Bradley and Maya Bradley, and *Language death and language maintenance*, ed. by Mark Janse and Sijmen Tol. *Language* 81.965–74. DOI: 10.1353/lan.2005.0174.

Hill, Jane H. 1998. Language, race, and white public space. *American Anthropologist* 100.680–89. DOI: 10.1525/aa.1998.100.3.680.

Hill, Jane H. 2002. 'Expert rhetorics' in advocacy for endangered languages: Who is listening, and what do they hear? *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12.119–33. DOI: 10.1525/jlin.2002.12.2.119.

Kopytoff, Igor. 1987. The internal African frontier: The making of African political culture. *The African frontier: The reproduction of traditional African societies*, ed. by Igor Kopytoff, 3–84. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kulick, Don. 1992. *Language shift and cultural reproduction: Socialization, self, and syncretism in a Papua New Guinean village*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lüpke, Friederike. 2016. Uncovering small-scale multilingualism. *Critical Multilingualism Studies* 4.35–74. Online: http://cms.arizona.edu/index.php/multilingual/article/view/100.

Lüpke, Friederike, and Anne Storch. 2013. *Repertoires and choices in African languages*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

MacEachern, Scott. 2003 [1990]. *Du kunde: Processes of Montagnard ethnogenesis in the northern Mandara mountains of Cameroon*. London: Mandaras.

Menang, Thaddeus. 2004. Cameroon Pidgin English (Kamtok): Phonology. *Handbook of varieties of English, vol. 1: Phonology*, ed. by Edgar W. Schneider, Kate Burridge, Bernd Kortmann, Rajend Mesthrie, and Clive Upton, 902–17. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Moore, Leslie C. 2004. Multilingualism and second language acquisition in the northern Mandara Mountains. *Africa meets Europe: Language contact in West Africa*, ed. by George Echu and Samuel Gyasi Obeng, 131–48. New York: Nova Science.

Mufwene, Salikoko S. 2017. Language vitality: The weak theoretical underpinnings of what can be an exciting research area. *Language* 93(4).e202–e223.

Smakman, Dick, and Patrick Heinrich (eds.) 2015. *Globalising sociolinguistics: Challenging and expanding theory*. London: Routledge.

Sommer, Gabriele. 1997. Towards an ethnography of language shift: Goals and methods. *Language choices: Conditions, constraints, and consequences*, ed. by Martin Pütz, 55–76. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tosco, Mauro. 1998. 'People who shift are not the language they speak': On language shift without language decay in East Africa. *Endangered languages in Africa*, ed. by Matthias Brenzinger, 119–42. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe.

Wolff, Ekkehard. 2016. *Language and development in Africa: Perceptions, ideologies and challenges*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[pierpaolodicarlo@gmail.com]
[jcgood@buffalo.edu]