

PREDICAMENTS OF POLYPHONY: SEQUENCE, SELF AND STYLE IN WOLOF CONVERSATIONS

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Introduction

In his presidential address to the 1982 Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Erving Goffman made a strong case for “treating the interaction order as a substantive domain in its own right” (1983:2). Regardless of all epistemological problems concerning the micro-macro-linkage he discussed, Goffman’s core assumption was that the direct co-presence in situations of “body to body” or “face-to-face” interaction provides especially patent evidence for the study of social statuses and relationships, since the “link between relationships and the interaction order is close” (1983:13).

In the following analysis of the interaction order in polyphonic Wolof conversations, I will take up this point drawing methodologically on concepts developed by Conversation Analysis, as they allow for a detailed study of the phenomenon.

One fundamental postulation of Conversation Analysis (CA) is that in social interactions, there is “order at all points” (Sacks 1984:22), produced *in situ* by the participants. This “conversation order” has been analyzed by social scientists along various dimensions. In the present analysis I will mainly consider the one of *conversational turn-taking*. Concerning this matter, CA assumes that speaker turns are generally organized in a way that restricts overlaps to a minimum. Hearers engaged in a conversation are able to project the possible end of a turn through the syntactical and prosodical features employed (turn constructional units) and thus can anticipate the moments of possible turn transition (transition relevance places). They thus may grasp the turn in one of these moments. Since it

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is possible that the speaker continues his speaking or that another hearer may want to take over the turn, there is a risk of overlap, but these are short since usually the speakers stop when speaking at once and leave the room for but one of them. A situation with “less-than-one-speaker” is not less untypical than one with “more-than-one-speaker”. In other words, longer pauses are uncommon and uncomfortable for the people present. “Only one speaker at a time” (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974) is thus a default rule of conversational organization people orient to.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) have furtherly detailed the “one-speaker-at-a-time rule”: they have identified a hierarchically organized set of rules that apply in moments of turn taking:

1. Within one turn, the speaker may assign the next speaker, e.g. by asking a question;
2. If he doesn't do this, the next speaker may self-select through taking over the turn by anticipating the end of the preceding turn;
3. If no other speaker self-selects, the current speaker may continue speaking.

These conventions, or rules, lead to a situation that verbal interaction is running in an ordered way.

Furthermore, the interaction order becomes also visible through the speech styles used (including rhetorical, syntactical, prosodical and semantic devices speakers employ). Both, the style as well as the conversational sequencing demonstrate the constraints put upon the acting self by the conversational situation of the village square.

Conversations on the Wolof village square

The village square (Wolof: *pénc m-*) is a quadrangular square in the middle of most Wolof villages, housing the local mosque as well as, sometimes, storage sheds, municipal water taps, and improvised sales booths. This is also the case in the villages where we have done field research.¹ These

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villages are situated between the towns Louga and Touba. The inhabitants, who speak and consider themselves Wolof in opposition to neighboring Fulani, mainly live of the cultivation of millet, sorghum, beans, and groundnuts, of livestock, petty trade and to a vast extent of money transfer from relatives living abroad. The ethnographic literature about the Wolof describes them as a hierarchical society featuring a system of matrilineal castes including nobles, craft workers and bards (griots), and servants (Irvine 1973, 1990; Diop 1981). In the villages where we have conducted fieldwork, the classification into castes does not play an important role since there are only nobles living. More important is the classification into virilocal patrilineal clans. The villages consist of compounds where sometimes several lineages of one clan live together. As a consequence of endogamous marriages, few matrilineal relatives live in the villages, too, as well as some members of other clans and ethnic groups (Fulani, Serer) who have settled there. Apart from the degree of patrilineal affinity, age is the prominent resource for legitimating hierarchy (Meyer 2007).

After their noon, afternoon, evening and night prayers in the mosque,² many of the elder men usually extend mats under one of the shadier trees of the square and settle down in order to take a rest, chat, and drink a strong green tea with mint that is made on the spot by one of the younger men present. Some have brought tools to repair, others doze off, still others just pass by to have a word with a friend, indecisive whether to stay or to leave, and still others lie down and listen to *qasa'id* (mourid religious) chants emitted from small battery driven radios. The Wolof word for the village square, *pénc*, is also used to designate the conversations conducted on it. They sometimes deal with serious issues, conflicts, or decisions to be made, but mostly consist in casual and unformal chats between the people present. Thus they sometimes involve joking, but also debates of more important issues such as politics or religious morale. Issues of general importance are always discussed on the village square. The vil-

Foundation, co-director: Dr. Anna M. Diagne. For the research three types of persuasive discourse were selected: political meetings on the village square or in local communal centers, debates and speeches in socio-political organizations, and everyday communication. It is based on ca. one year of fieldwork.

² Noon: *tisbaar* (Wolof), ca. 2 p.m.; afternoon: *takkusaan*, c.a. 5 p.m.; evening: *timis*, between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m.; night: *geewe*, between 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. These obligatory prayers (*farad*) are usually prayed between lunch (*añ*) and dinner (*rêer*).

lage chief would then also come and preside. These discussions have a completely different interaction order that cannot be explored here. In what follows, I will analyse two of the rather informal, though meaningful conversations in regard to style and turn-taking, and to what they admit to say about the Wolof self in society.

Turntaking: Shifting Centers of Interaction

Conversations on the village square are held in smaller groups of two, three or four persons so that on the mats constantly several conversations are going on at once. The conversations generally don't have predefined topics. Sometimes, the debates converge, when an issue is of interest to all people present. Or a debate splits off into two or more threads debating different issues of the subject. They arise when one of the participants expresses an idea that motivates other participants to react or to make a strong claim. Even though there are nearly always several simultaneous threads of discourse running, they are often interconnected, when the topic of the debate is judged important. After a while, the threads re-converge and separate again or speakers leave one thread in order to participate in another. All this entails that there are always several people speaking at once. However, this mutual interruption and speaking at once is not random, anarchic, or chaotic (as Reisman 1974 would have it), but on the contrary, it is well organized.

At first sight however, a somehow chaotic impression may be produced by the many dialogical properties of Wolof village square conversations. Speakers rarely pronounce complete utterances in regard to grammatical completeness and argumentative coherence. Rather, all participants in a debate constantly interrupt each other with contributions or comments. In that sense, we may call such kind of conversations polyphonic or multivocal.

Thus, each contribution is accompanied not only by simultaneous comments but also by responsive reactions, be they consenting or renunciative. First, there are many dialogical devices of the speakers themselves such as "Dénga?/Dégg nga?" (Understand? Do you follow me?), "Xam nga" (You know), "Déglu ma" (Listen), "Séenal ma wax la rekk" (Just listen to

what I tell you), “War nga xam” (You must know), or “Dama ne la” (I tell you). They certainly serve for turn keeping as well.

Recipient reactions (continuers, hearer signals) include interjections and discourse markers such as “Dëgg la” (It is the truth), “Wax na dëgg dé” (He really says the truth) or “Wax nga dëgg dé” (You really say the truth), “Deed waay” (Oh really?), “Xoolal sax” (Don’t say!), “A?” (Isn’t it?), “Mu ngoogu” (That’s it), “Ah” (No, but...), “Waay” (Truly, my friend), “Hehéee” (Hey, but no!), “La illaha il’Allah” (Oh, my God ...), Ciipatu (tongue clicking as expression of disapproval). Sometimes some of the hearers exhort others to listen by using expressions such as “Dégluléen lu Omar wax” (Listen to what Omar says).

Louder or in one way or another more attractive speakers or topics slowly gain the attention of the majority of the group so that their topic may become a common topic of all people present. This strong dialogicality is a general feature of a more or less egalitarian social configuration as it is the case on the village square where older men who pertain to the same lineage meet. When the village chief is present, talk is better organized but not completely monological. Another property of conversations at the village square is the ubiquity of joking and teasing, and of mockery, derision, sarcasm and irony. Critique is often disguised in these forms of speaking.

To give an example of the subjects discussed in one of the two conversations that I have analysed in detail for this paper,³ the topics debated in conversation A are as follows:

Thread #	1 Working Morale of the villagers	5 Horses and Sowing
	2 Rain	6 Muddy grounds
	3a Laziness 1	7 Blessing
	3b Laziness 2	8 The right moment of
	4 NjJw’s account	sowing and field clearance

³ The two conversations that I will analyse here are by far too long to be fully presented. A is 24 minutes long with 11-12 persons participating; B is 34 minutes long with 16 persons involved.

Fig. 1: Topical threads and participants in conversation A

T.	Sp.	Thr. #	Participation	Nr. of participants in thr. #															
				1	2	3a	3b	4	5	6	7	8							
004	BL	1	opens #1	1															
005	IJb	1	joins in #1	2															
011	DJw	2	opens #2																
012	YJl	2	joins in #2																
013	IJb	2	joins in #2																
025	NjJw	1	joins in #1																
035	YJl	1	joins in #1																
038	IJb	1	joins in #1																
040	AJw	1	joins in #1																
070	AJw	3a	schisming; introduces #3a																
071	IJb	3b	schisming; introduces #3b																
075	NjJw	4	opens #4																
077	BL	3b	joins in #3b																
084	IJb	4	joins in 4																
087	MjJw	3a?	joins in #3a																
094	MtJw	3a?	joins in #3a																
102	DJw	3a	joins in #3a																
138	Gnd	3a	joins in #3a																
156	MbJñ	4	joins in #4																
161	BL?	4	joins in #4																
167	MtJw	4	joins in #4																
171	IJw?	4	joins in #4																
180	NjJw	5	introduces #5																
181	PX	3a?	joins in #3a																
182	MtJw	5	follows in #5																
187	Gnd	5	joins in #5																
190	BL	6	schisming; introduces #6																
191	IJb	6	follows in #6																
194	NjJw	6	follows in #6																
196	Gnd	3a	returns to #3a																
200	YJl	6	joins in #6																
213	BL	7	schisming to #7																
214	IJb	7	joins in #7																
215	MtJw	7	joins in #7																
217	BL	1	re-introduces #1!																
218	IJb	1	joins in #1																
224	DJw?	1	joins in #1																
228	MjJw	1a	joins in #1 giving it new direction 1a																
240	Gnd	1a	joins in #1a																
275	BL	8	opens #8 drawing on former issues 3																
282	MtJw	8	joins in #8																
283	AJw	8	joins in #8																
288	AJw	1	joins in #1a																
291	MtJw	1	joins in #1a																
300	IJb	1b	attempts at closing through 1b																
301	YJl	1	joins in #1a																
303	BL	1b	reacts to #1b, then joins in #1a																
305	DJw	8	re-opens #8																
312	MtJw	8	joins in #8																
341	Gnd	8	joins in #8																
380	MjJw	8	joins in #8																

The number of participants in a debate consequently varies according to their interest in the subject. People do not shift to another issue at once, but rather one after one turn over to another group of people debating an issue. Interestingly, people individually move between the threads more often than the thread itself changes. Whereas the topical threads seem to procede linearilly and the points made build on top of each other, individual participation moves all the time to and fro between the different threads.

Fig. 2: Topical relations between threads in conversation A

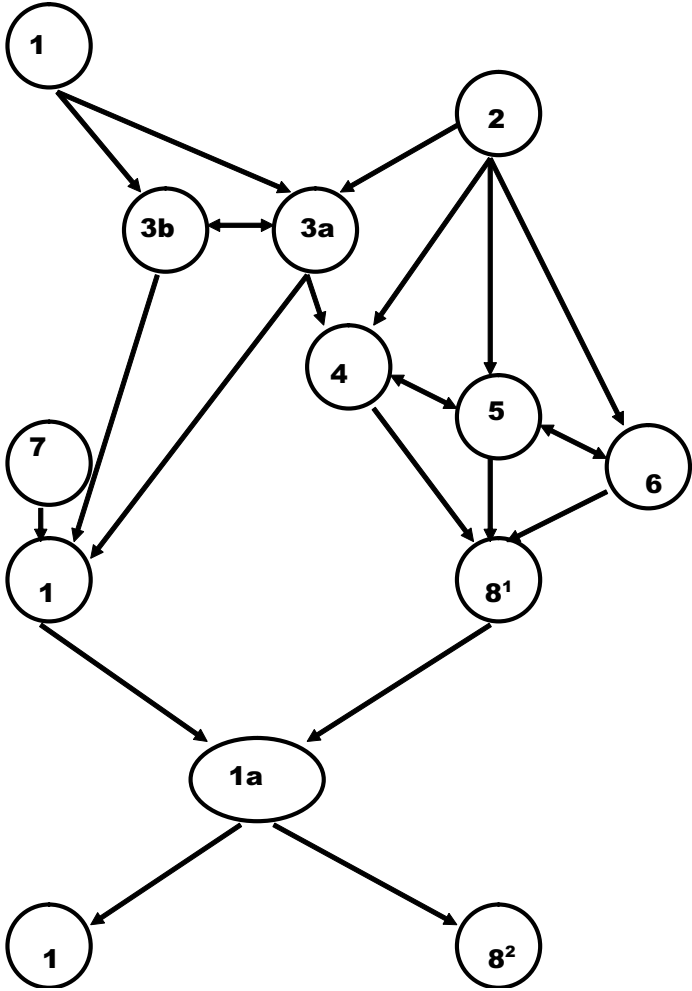
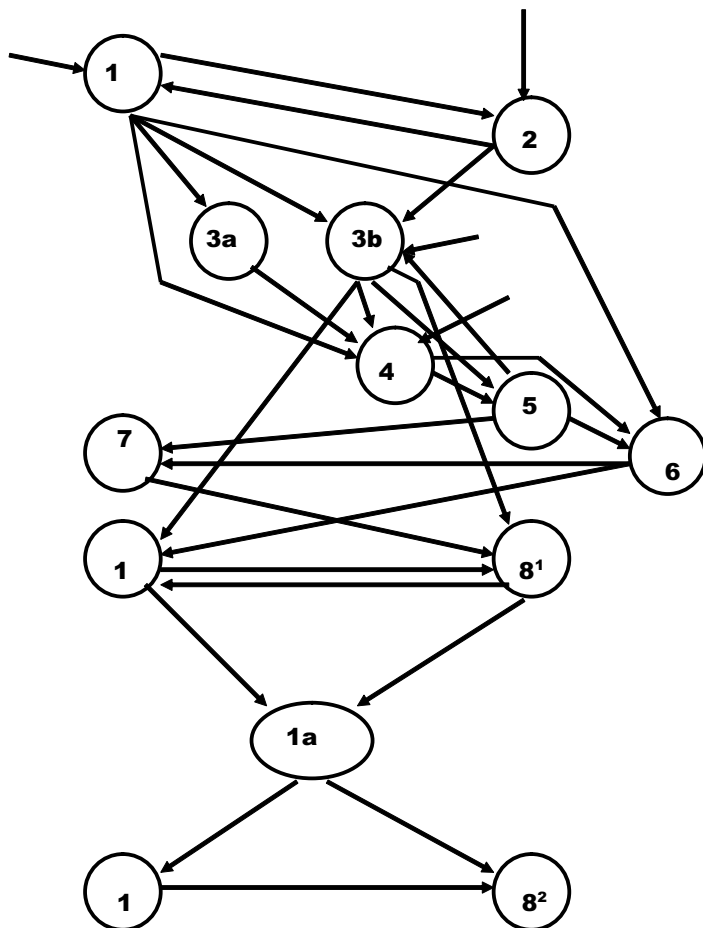


Fig. 3: Process of individual participation in conversation A



Participation thus shifts from thread to thread while the topics of the thread continue with varying participation. What is especially striking is the fact that the different threads seem to take up issues from other threads that are going on simultaneously. This would mean that people participate in several threads and listen to more than one speaker at once. The next table exemplarily lists the points made and debated in conversation B. It becomes visible that some issues are discussed in more detail in

a new thread, yet points made in other threads are sometimes taken over and integrated. Particularly interesting is the fact that the debate returns at the end to some points made at the very beginning.

Fig. 4: Points made and debated in conversation B

Thread 1	Thread 2	Thread 3
1, 3, 2, 3, 1, 4, 3		
4	1	
2, 5, 2, 3		
4	7	
6		
4	7	
2		
4	4	
3	7	1
3		
5, 2, 8	4, 7, 8	
3, 6, 8		
3, 6	3	
8, 3		
8	4	
	3	
9	4	
	9	
10, 11	10	
12, 13, 12, 13		
12, 11, 12, 10	4, 8, 4, 8	
12, 14, 11		
13	11	
11, 12, 13, 9, 4, 14, 11, 15, 9, 15, 13, 6, 15, 4, 9, 4, 9, 4, 8, 6		
4	4	
	7	
9	4	
	8, 4, 6	
2	6	
2, 16, 17		
2, 17, 1	4, 9, 2	
13, 9, 2, 17, 4, 14, 15, 19, 9, 15, 2, 17, 2, 9, 8, 9, 1, 2		

Stratagems of conversational management under conditions of polyphony

Opening a conversation

I now come to speak of conversational ways of managing this polyphonic situation. The first problem is how to open up a new thread. In conversation A, BL opens up a new thread (#1) after the greeting of a newcomer that had interrupted the preceding conversation about the beginning of the rainy season. IJb instantly joins in with continuers and ratifying dialogical responses in a fairly long dialogical overlap.

004	BL	malekum salaam waaye fi mu ne' ni (0.8) woor na yalla ak yonent bi (0.7) man de gennuma waaye xam naa ne dëkk yi NI ÑIY ligeeye, sunu [dëkk bi ligeeyu ko	<i>Good afternoon. As it is (0.8) and it is certain to God and the prophet (0.7) as to me I did not migrate but I know that the villages as they work, our [village does not work like this</i>
005	IJb	[sunu dëkk ligeeyu ko (0.8)	<i>[our village does not work like this (0.8)</i>
006	BL	dëkk yi NI ÑIY ligeeye=	<i>these villages how they work!</i>
007	IJb	=DEEDET! kook[u moom lu leer la	<i>Noooo! This is for sure!</i>
008	BL	[sunu dëkk bi	<i>[our village does not</i>
		ligeeyu [ko	<i>work [like this</i>
009	IJb	[sunu dëkk moom ligeeyu ko	<i>[our village does not work like this</i>

Taking the short pause that emerged after IJb's ratifying response 009 as a transition relevance place, DJw opens up in 010 a second conversation (drawing on the issue debated before the greeting) and IJb instantly crosses over to him, probably with the idea that BL's issue has been ended. BL however continues speaking, trying to make an issue out of his newly introduced topic (014, 017, 019, 024), first by talking alone, thus overlapping with conversation thread #2. Consider IJb's "hitches and perturbations" (Schegloff 2000:11-15) in 016: They might have been inspired by either the overlap with YJl (015) or by BL's continued speaking (014/017). Only in 018 IJb considers BL as talking to other addressees, thus returning to unperturbed speech. Finally, in 025, the first participant (NjJw) joins in the issue raised and maintained by BL.

010	BL	(0.7) leer na ma leer yal[la	(0.7) It is plain to me heaven
			[knows
011	DJw	[mb eng mii: ak bunaama ture mi- ñi demoon kaolax demb (0.5) nee foofu tooy:ut (0.7)	[mbeng and bunaama ture who went to kaolack yesterday (0.5) said that there was no rain (0.7)
012	YJl	laaa[y!	oh de[ar!
013	IJb	[ki neena ñoom- ñoom demb ñu ngi doon ji: (0.3)	[thingy said that they- they were sowing yesterday (0.3)
014	BL	ndax wax dëgg ya[lla	for be[gad
015	YJl	[a' [de:- de: ! tey [kay!	[oh [no- no- today [really!
016	IJb	[mbay ñaan mi- ne- ne- nee na	[mbaay ñaan sai- sai- said
017	BL	[nit ko xam ne ki	[Someone who
018	IJb	nee na li ko dese baxaw xaw ma ab 50 kilo [la te kumaase wu ko neena	said that what he has left over of his seeds is I don't know, 50 kg [and he didn't yet begin it he said
019	BL	([nit ko xam ne ki [ya- ya- nga am- ruuj nga ba sori [ruuj nga ba sori, faraasu nga ba sori (cresc))	[Someone that [you you are having- you have cleared fields wi[dely you have cleared fields widely, you have disseminated widely
020	IJb	[daa dugg sonjaan ma bayyi [mu metti ci (suuf si)	[he entered the fallow to cultivate there [since the ground was heavy
021	DJw	[am na ñu ji tey am na ñu ji: tey de	[there are some who sowed today!
022	IJb	neenab 50 kilo ko [dese	he said some 50 kg were [left over
023	YJl	[tey kay- tey kay bi ma dem njaañ (xxx)	[today really- today really when I went to ndiagne (xxx)
024	BL	[waay bu tawe da nga mana jekk waay!	[gee, when rain comes, how you will be well
025	NjJw	[éhé:, waaw!	[ahaa yes!

Though overlapping before (030/031), YJl in 035, IJb in 038, and AJw in 040 who previously participated in conversation thread #2 now join in #1, first by dealing with the same subject in overlap, i.e. in a “third” or “convergence oriented conversation,” (035, 038, 041), but then (049ff; following BL’s dialogical reaction in 048) as fully integrated in the turn order of conversation #1.

026	YJ1	[yoonu- yoonu kër ma ndumbe [bee	[the path- the path around kër ma ndum[be
027	IJb	[aaw!	[yes
028	BL	[(nit bu ruujul,	[[someone who doesn't clear fields
029	NjJw	[day- waaw	[he'll- yes
030	BL	[faraasuwl bu tawe na ngay jekke? (f)	[and who doesn't sow will he be well when rain comes? (f)]
031	YJ1	[(ña ma fa seen ñép gis naa leen ñuy xxx)	[everybody I saw there was xxx
032	NjJw	moom boo faraaso rekk!	sure, if you only disseminate
033	BL	a' !	hah!
034	NjJw	moom bo fara[asoo rekk bu tawe nga	sure, if you only dis[seminate when rain comes,
035	YJ1?	[fi de Yibba- ay buura fi dëkk de	[here, iba, only kings live here
036	BL	[a' !	[pah!
037	NjJw	[jekk ndax bu ta[we areen (xxx) waaye faraasuwo ruujo	[will you be well? for when it ra[ins groundnuts (xxx) but if you don't sow and clear fields
038	IJb	[fi ay buur lay-[ay buur lañ de (ciipatu)	[here, kings are- [they are kings ((clicks his tongue as expression of disapproval))
039	YJ1	[(xxx) [gis nga- gis nga nag fi moom	[(xxx) [you see? you see now here really
040	AJw	[bu doon yow nag- sanc wi de faraasu [wu ñu sax nag	[if it was- hey you- and the village has[n't even sowed
041	YJ1	[fi moom wax dëgg yalla	[but really, here
042	NjJw	[ndax sax ruujo faraasuwo	[I mean you didn't clear fields and sow
043	YJ1	[ay-ay beykat [dëkku fi	[the- there are no farmers [living here
044	IJb	[li ñu bëgg- [li ñu bëgg aka- aka-aka-ak- xam nga manaam	[what they want- [what they want and and- and- and- you know it's like that
045	NjJw	[ruujo faraasuwo xawma tey nga bëgga ruuj bëg[ga faraasu	[clear fields and sow I don't know today you wanna clear fiel[ds and sow
046	IJb	[kategori	[the categories
048	BL?	yi aaa!	hah
049	IJb	kategori y dëkk bi (0.3)	the categories of the village (0.3)
050	BL	è:'	yes?
051	IJb	dafa bari ay kategure↓ [ñi nga xamne yow	there are many categories! [those who aren't
052	YJ1	[reew mi! (0.4) [ay b-	[this country! (0.4) [f-
053	IJw	[[ciipatu)	[[tongue clicking))
054	YJ1	[garki gi ay beykat dëkku fi	[in this garki there are no farmers living
055	IJb	[(dara dara dara dara DARA da leena warut (f))	[[committed to any- any- any- any- ANYTHING! (f))
056	?	aaw kay	true!
057	YJ1	((coughs))	((coughs))
058	IJb	deno xëy toog ci kër gi rekk	they sit in their houses all the morning
059	AJw	da bari [gone ng- nda- nda- gon- gone yu xonq cuy	there are many [children y- th- th- chil- glaring red children
060	IJb	[nga- gone yu ndaw yo xonq coy yu tollu ci- ci-	[you- small and glaring red children who are in- in-
061	YJ1	[ci wara ligeey	[the age of working obligations
062	IJb	[ci- ci wara ligeey	[the- the age of working obligations
063	BL	aawaw!	right!
064	IJb	di di- dir [leen mbagg	wh- who [who support them

As we have seen, in Wolof village conversations, threads may be opened parallelly without being “competitive” in the sense of Schegloff (2000), i.e. without becoming a problem for the turn organization of the other threads that are running.

Another example of an opening of a new conversation is NjJw’s introduction of conversation #4. In this case, the speaker chooses one person whom he addresses personally several times in order to draw his attention. Only after the fifth invocation, the addressee (IJb) reacts with a hearer signal (*huh?*, 084), thus providing the opportunity for NjJw to develop his issue (#4, starting from 093, which, in this case, is a rhetorically highly stylized story as we will see below). BL on his part enters in #3b (in 079) without gaining any hearer reactions. He repeats his issue two times (083, 089), and then (092) concludes, though nobody has shown any hearer reaction.

075	NjJw	xoolal- gisal-	<i>look, see</i>
080	NjJw	xoolal Yibbé!	<i>look Iba</i>
082	NjJw	yow Yibbé! Yibbé!	<i>you Iba! Iba!</i>
084	IJb	haa!	<i>huh?</i>
085	NjJw	Yibbé!	<i>Iba!</i>
086	IJb	haa!	<i>huh?</i>
088	NjJw	xoolal, man dama ne!	<i>look, I tell you!</i>
090	NjJw	degg nga Yibbé!	<i>do you listen, Iba?</i>
091	IJb	haa!	<i>yeah!</i>

Gaining and keeping turns

Already in the preceding section, we could witness several examples of turn gaining: in 016 IJb wins the turn against YJl and in 028 BL wins against NjJw. In both situations the preceding turns were completed, so that the new speaker was not yet determined. In 013, IJb makes a micro-pause; YJl tries to take over, but retreats when being overrun by IJb.

013	IJb	[ki neena ñoom- ñoom demb ñu ngi doon ji: (0.3)	<i>[thingy said that they- they were sowing yesterday (0.3)</i>
015	YJl	[a' [de:- de: ! tey [kay!	<i>[oh [no- no- today [really!</i>
016	IJb	[mbay ñaan mi- ne- ne- nee na	<i>[mbaay ñaan sai- sai- said</i>
018	IJb	nee na li ko dese baxaw xaw ma ab 50 kilo [la te kumaase wu ko neena	<i>said that what he has left over of his seeds is I don't know, 50 kg [and he didn't yet begin it he said</i>

In 029 NjJw tries to make a turn out of his continuer in 025, for BL's turn 024 was completed, but then withdraws as BL continues his contribution in 028 and 030.

024	BL	[waay bu tawe da nga mana jekk waay↑	<i>[gee, when rain comes, how you will be well</i>
025	NjJw	[ëhë:, waaw!	<i>[ahaa yes!</i>
028	BL	([nit bu ruujul,	<i>[someone who doesn't clear fields</i>
029	NjJw	[day- waaw	<i>[he'll- yes</i>
030	BL	[faraasuul bu tawe na ngay jekke? (f)	<i>[and who doesn't sow will he be well when rain comes? (f)]</i>

Of particular interest is line 044: it is here that IJb succeeds in making his and YJl's "convergence oriented conversation" (see above) a part of #1. Though uttering "hedges and perturbations" while in overlap with YJl and NjJw in 044-046, he eventually wins the turn and thus the lead in

thread #1 by talking through and maybe also by the use of the unfamiliar, attention drawing word “kategoru”.

042	NjJw	[ndax sax ruujo faraasuwo	<i>[I mean you didn't clear fields and sow</i>
043	YJl	[ay-ay beykat [dékku fi	<i>[the- there are no farmers [living here</i>
044	IJb	[li ñu bëgg- [li ñu bëgg aka- aka-aka-ak- xam nga manaam	<i>[what they want- [what they want and and- and- and- you know it's like that</i>
045	NjJw	[ruujo faraasuwo xawma tey nga bëgga ruuj bëg[ga faraasu	<i>[clear fields and sow I don't know today you wanna clear fiel[ds and sow</i>
046	IJb	[kategoru yi	<i>[the categories</i>
048	BL?	aaa↓	<i>hah</i>
049	IJb	kategoriy dëkk bi (0.3)	<i>the categories of the village (0.3)</i>
050	BL	ë:'	<i>yes?</i>
051	IJb	dafa bari ay kategure↓ [ñi nga xamne yow	<i>there are many categories! [those who aren't</i>

Finally, in 055 IJb wins against YJl by sheer volume, YJl retreats.

054	YJl	[garki gi ay beykat dëkku fi	<i>[in this garki there are no farmers living</i>
055	IJb	[(dara dara dara dara DARA da leena warut (f))	<i>[(committed to any- any- any- any- ANYTHING! (f))</i>
056	?	aaw kay	<i>true!</i>
057	YJl	((coughs))	<i>((coughs))</i>
058	IJb	deno xëy toog ci kër gi rekk	<i>they sit in their houses all the morning</i>

What follows is a conversation between AJw and IJb. Consider the dialogical assistance in word finding in 066 and the repetition in 067.

065	AJw	[lool mo tax dëkk	<i>[so that's why the village has a kind of a</i>
066	IJb	bi xawa- mo tax mu am problem	<i>that's why the village has a problem</i>
067	AJw	mu am problem	<i>has a problem</i>
068	?	aaa↑	<i>well</i>
069	IJb	mem- bo seete ay maggatti kese! (0.9) DARA WARATULEEN	<i>even- if you look only old people! (0.9) committed to anything!</i>

In spite of IJb's boisterous talking, AJw tries to take the turn.

070	AJw	gone gu [xonq coy ja [baram demagul fenn	<i>a glaring [red child. His [wife didn't arrive at the point of</i>
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183	MtJw	[nji mi waaye nag bo ko (jële) ruujle bu jiit	[the seeds early in the morning but if you begin with clearing the fields
184	NjJw	[yi doole fas yi nga xam ne wenni fas munu se yëkëtib tank	[weak horses these horses who can't even raise a hoof
185	PX	[xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
186		(0.15)	(0.15)

In 187-210 at least four (BL, IJb, NjJw, YJl) speakers engage in a conversation (#6) about the advantages and disadvantages of sowing in muddy ground, also interacting with a conversation about horses and sowing (#5, participants: MtJw, GNd, NjJw before he joins in #6 in 194) that is simultaneously running. They converge in the description of the easiness of pre-rain sowing (*faraasu*), uttering a whole bunch of ratifying continuers (198, 199, 200, 201, 202). Here, seemingly, the ambiguity of lengthy continuers (which are possible and common in Wolof) is exploited: contributions that can be interpreted as continuers by the participants are subsequently employed as turn taking devices when possible: 201 is expanded into a turn in 203 that overlaps with 204; 202 is expanded into 207, where the speaker re-introduces his issue that sowing is easier in wet ground. Thus, the contributions 198 to 202 are consisting of continuers of which, at the end, 201 and 202 develop into turns.

187	Gnd	[(fas wuy do[x laa wax de juroomi fann (xxxxxxxxxxxxx)	[a horse that [say runs for five days (xxxxxxxxxxxxx)
188	IJb	[ahaa	[yep
189	MtJw	[(fofu) nag [na la leer ne ab jiyug (xxx) ba lang ko mëna doxal kay da nga am fo koy jaarale	[so there [you should be aware that the seedings (xxx) before you may use it for your goals
190	BL	[kon nag lu mu neew neew doole faraasoo gëna sedd ci mom- njiyum baqq=	[so a horse however weak it is, sowing is easier for it mud seeding=
191	IJb	=baqq- baqq [baqq waa[waw	=mud mud [mud right
192	Gnd	[fas wo xamne si (bës bu nekk su ko neexe si) juroomi	[a horse that every day, if you want five days
193	PX	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx[x)	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx[x)
194	NjJw	[aa! baqq [kay moom maa;radaytaali	[tut! mud! [really! for heaven's sake
195	BL	[faraasu mo gëna sedd ci njiyum [baqq (xxx) (aha (laughs))	[sowing is more comfortable in mud see[ding (xxx) (aha (laughs))
196	Gnd	[fan [(xxx) fen. ah!	[days [(xxx) lie. Pah!
197	NjJw	[faraasu kay da ngay rédd ni di dem rekk	[oh, but sowing, you just draw a line and go off
198	BL	[aaawaw	[right
199	IJb	[faraasu [moom deel (seet) si suuf si rekk	[sowing, [you just put your eyes on the ground
200	YJl	[faraasu [rekk	[just sow[ing
201	MtJw	[faraasu du dara s-	[sowing is nothing
202	BL	faraasu moom	sowing, really
203	MtJw	[faraasu du dara s- di nga mëna xey faraasu bu dee baqq, mën nga ca am ñaari fann=2	[sowing is nothing you can begin early in the morning to sow when there is muddy ground, you can do it for two days=2
204	NjJw	[mu ngi mel ni nga yor sab- faraasu moom mu ngi mel ni nga yor sab gopp ni rekk rédd diy dem [noon rekk la mel=1	[it is like having your sowing is like having your plow and you just draw a line and go off [that's all=1
205	Gnd	[aa;a juroomi fanu faraasu yo ligeey waay yow!	[Pah! You did a five day sowing, did you really?
206	IJb	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
207	BL	[mo gëna sedd njiyum baqq [2=waa[waw	[it is more comfortable in muddy ground [2=r[ight
208	DJw?	[(xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx[xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx)	[(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
209	?	[1=aawaw	[1=right
210	Gnd	[afeer buñ munta fey amul (mbër)um fas nga yor ko, di-di xalaat lenn	[there is nothing you couldn't pay- a strong horse you have it and think of something else

Interruption

As we have seen, parallel, even though not competitive conversational threads are common. But also interruptions are frequent. In 212 YJl interrupts and corrects MtJw (211) who on his part integrates YJl's correction into his turn, but does not end it before completion. YJl also ends his correction phrase, though without grammatical completeness (merely using a nominal phrase and no verbal phrase). A blessing of BL eventually interrupts both. One might well interpret the blessing as another sub-conversation. But since it is religiously legitimated, a blessing constitutes a powerfully coercive first adjacency pair part, requiring a responsive reaction (and, after that, silence) of the others. Not to reply *amiin* would constitute an offense to the religious ideology as a whole. BL here seems to use it to end the inchoate conversation of before as he then re-introduces his issue of 004 (i.e., of conversation # 1).

211	MtJw	[menni xey mën nga [xey di faraasu- ñaari xey- [ñaari xey-, ñaari xeyub baqq la	[one dawn you can [rise to sow- two dawns two dawns [two muddy dawns that's it
212	YJl	[mennu xeyum faraasu kay [ñaari xey la- ñaari xey (yu tegle)	[one dawn of sowing, it's rather [two dawns two subsequent dawns
213	BL	[woor na yalla ne- yal na yalla def nawet bi yeg- yeggal fep [te jub=	[by god, it is certain- may god make the rainy season arrive everywhere! [and prosperous=
214	?	[amiin =amiin	[amen =amen
215	MtJw	[mmm	[mmm
216	?	[((chaplet rustles))	[((chaplet rustles))
217	BL	(waaye woor na ma woor ne bo deme fi bokki Celaaga yi tey ak [kote yi-	(but is is certain that if you were going to our relatives in celage today [over there
218	IJb	[mbaa- ma ne mbabba kay demb lool ma wax [(xxx) mbaaba maak bitiku séex xàddi	[mbaa- I say mbabba that's what he told me yesterday [(xxx) mbabba whom I met at seex xadi's shop
219	BL	[ñoõnu laa la wax man-	[those who I mean-
220	IJb	[ñoõnu bari na ñu ji	[a lot of them have sowed
221	BL	[ca- (xx) yu njékk ya la ñu nekk [de da ñuy kanku- da ñuy-	[at the first (xx) they already [they crow they
222	IJb	[waw ñi ngi- ña nga laxasaayu bu déggër	[yes they they are hard-working
223	BL	fajar la ñuy joŋg ganaar yi sab ganaar yi tédd la ñuy ñoŋw (high pitch)) (0.7)	they rise at the crack of dawn and when the chicken the chicken go to bed they come back (high pitch)) (0.7)
224	DJw?	wax na ñu dégg de	they do it right
225	BL	wallaay yalla [xam na ko	begad God is [my witness
226	DJw?	[wax na ñu dégg de	[they really do it right
227	BL	fajar la ñuy joŋg ganaar yi tédd la ñuy ñoŋw	at the crack of dawn they rise and when the chicken go to bed they come back!
228	MjJw	(heeee (laughs))	(heeee (laughs))

Joining in

Not only separating threads, but also joining in must be made visible through conversational signals. In 167 MtJw joins in a neighboring conversation first by laughing about a joke made in this thread, then by supporting the speaker's argument:

167	MtJw	[(mhemhemhemhem[hem) laughs)) li nga wax dégg la m[oom	[(mhemhemhemhem[hem) laughs)) What you said is really [true
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In 295 DJw joins in the conversation by a question:

- | | | | |
|-----|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 291 | MtJw | [fee lama romb waa ja di booleeg xapp [ak radu di taal ma ne ji waay de moom dëgg dëgg [dëgg dëgg dëgg dëgg= | <i>[over there I crossed a guy who used both his hutchet [and slash-and-burn I said this guy truly truly [truly truly truly truly=</i> |
| 292 | AJw | [waa kër | <i>[household</i> |
| 293 | MjJw | [(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxx) | <i>[(xxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxx)</i> |
| 294 | BL | [dëgg dëgg dey!
ruuj gu set keroog Kër
Saalum laa ko gise | <i>[truly truly a very well done field clearance did I see yesterday in Kër Saalum</i> |
| 295 | DJw | =kan ci Tafa? | <i>=who was that, Tafa?</i> |
| 296 | ? | [((coughs)) | <i>[((coughs))</i> |
| 297 | MtJw | [ma ne ba ñuy' keroog ba ñuy dem' kiyug seex jaw ba lanu romb waaju boole xapp ak radook taal ma ne ko yow da ngaa teel nag da ngaa waroon na xaar bam tédd | <i>[I said as we lately as we went to the thing of Cheikh Diaw when we passed by the guy who used both his hutchet and slash-and-burn I said to him you are too hurried you should wait until it lies down</i> |

In 224 and 226 supports the speaker's argument with "Right they are!"

- | | | | |
|-----|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 223 | BL | fajar la ñuy j0:g ganaar yi sab ganaar yi tédd la ñuy ño:w (high pitch)) (0.7) | <i>they rise at the crack of dawn and when the chicken the chicken go to bed they come back (high pitch)) (0.7)</i> |
| 224 | DJw? | wax na ñu dëgg de | <i>right they are</i> |
| 225 | BL | wallaay yalla [xam na ko | <i>begad god is [my witness</i> |
| 226 | DJw? | [wax na ñu dëgg de | <i>[really, right the are!</i> |

In 205 GNd uses the concept central in his neighbor conversation, maybe in order to join in (which didn't succeed).

- | | | | |
|-----|-----|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 205 | GNd | [aa↑a juroomi fanu faraasu yo ligeey waay yow! | <i>[Oh! You did a five day sowing, did you really?</i> |
|-----|-----|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|

Thus, the following strategies are often employed in order to join in a conversation:

1. Continuers, hearer signals, exclamations, or interjections that signal specific attitudes of the hearer as being in accordance with the speaker (in 005 and 007 we have a very dialogical joining by IJb in BL's issue; another one by YJl in 012 with an exclamation of surprise and dismay; in 025, NjJw utters a hearer signal: *uhun, yes*);

2. Paraphrases (or sometimes also repetitions) that express the understanding of and agreement with the specific viewpoint or attitude of the speaker (YJl, in 035/039/041, sustains the speaker's evaluation by making it explicit [though with a metaphor], also lJb in 218/220);

3. Questions that signal interest in the matter (an example is DJw in 295);

4. A direct protest against the speaker's claim (as Yjl in 212).

Style

Style in conversational organization

As we have seen, the turn-taking organization imposes a set of restrictions upon the speakers on the Wolof village square. A closer look at style reveals complementing information. Some of the seemingly dialogical contributions are to such an extent monological that they exhibit the same main features in regard to the parts of speech as monologues. An example of such a monologue in a dialogue is NjJw's account in text A, lines 093-162 (#4) where the speaker speaks in a very elaborate way. Cleansed of all dialogical elements NjJw's accounts (that he had so many difficulties to introduce) reads as follows:

093	Da ma ne yaari at yi-gis nga barkidemb rekk laa ko xam-	<i>I say, these two years, you see, only the day before yesterday did I know it</i>
096	Da ma ne yaari at yi	<i>I say, these two years</i>
100	Da ma doon xaru Da ma doon xaru te dee- te yalla reyuu ma	<i>I was committing suicide I was committing suicide but di- but God did not kill me</i>
104	Na la leer ne gis nga sama tool be	<i>To make it plain to you, you see, my field there</i>
107	Sama tool be laa ne gis nga gor gi ma ko gor	<i>My field there, I say, you see, the chopping as I have chopped it</i>
112	Ruuj bi ma ko ruuj ak rijji bi ma ko rijjiwoon	<i>The clearing as I have cleared it and the harrowing as I have harrowed it</i>
116	Da ma ne ruuj gi ma rujj ak tar yi ma-	<i>I say the clearing as I have cleared and the small crops of peanuts that I-</i>
118	yenu ko- s-	<i>carried it- at-</i>
122	ëndi ko- ëndi bi	<i>Bring it- the bringing as</i>
124	ma ko indi ak rijji bi ma ko rijjiwoon ba noppi door ko jii	<i>I have brought it and the harrowing as I have harrowed it through, then I sowed</i>
127	Xana gis nga- seetal sama tool gi daaw	<i>Did you see- look, my field, last year</i>
130	Fay na waw- and na maak waaaji j- doon kii fii, dekkoon gan gi	<i>I have payed, yes- I went together with the guy th- doing thingy here, lived here, the guest</i>
133	Ñeenti junne laa ko waxoon ne: bo ma ko ruujale	<i>I had spoken to four boys saying: "If you clear it for me"</i>
136	Muy sama tool bi	<i>I spoke of my field there</i>
140	Yaang may de ₁ gg. Ba ma waxe ne- bab- da ko wërawër bamu yagg-	<i>Do you listen? As I spoke- as he- he went around the field for a long time</i>
144	Naar lañ bamu yagg ñu nee ma: „baay Baay Njaga" ma ne „haa?"	<i>They were two, after a long time, they told me: "Baay Njaga" I said "Eh?"</i>
146	Ñu ne ma „bi tool bi munu ñu ko ruuj"	<i>They told me: "This field here, we won't be able to clear it"</i>
148	Ma daa di jënd saa	<i>So I bought my</i>
150	Kepp, jënd sama jaasi duggu ko duggu ko sama jgu ko ba lep ne ñay!	<i>ax, bought my cutlass, stepped into it, stepped into it, stepped into it till everything was nice.</i>
152	Ma daa di- gisal bi ma noppe jii sa- rijji bi ma ko rijji ba ñow ci-ci-	<i>Then I- See, when I was ready to sow my- the harrowing as I have harrowed coming to- to-</i>
155	Foofi mbooy (seen)- foofi mbooy (seen) fi lo ko kii. Ma xool bamu yagg ma ne daal „man daal da ma doon xaru rekk" Wante yow ya ngi degg! (0.5) Jambaara fi newut! (1.1) Ndax nun ni ñep bi mu tawe lañu tambali ruuj	<i>Where it lays fallow- where it lays fallow, where he did thingy. I looked for a long time and then I said: "Really, I was just about to commit suicide" But you, you listen! (0.5) There is no braver here! (1.1) For we all have only begun to clear fields when rain came</i>
157	Tambali ñag	<i>Begun to fence</i>
159	Tamb- tambali jii!	<i>Beg- begun to sow</i>
162	Nu muy sotte ₁ ?	<i>How can this succeed?</i>

The stylistic devices NjJw employes embrace polyptotons (also called figura etymologica, i.e., the repetition of etymologically related words in one phrase; in 107, 112, 116, 122, 124), hyperbole (100, 155), direct

speech (144, 146, 155), repetition (plocce, i.e. for emphasis; 150), onomatopoeia (150), anesis (i.e., an expression that diminishes the effect of what has been said previously; 155), anaphora (155, 157, 159), and rhetorical question (162). The “figura etymologica,” i.e. repetition of a word in different grammatical categories (“the chopping as I have chopped it, the clearing as I have cleared it, the bringing as I have brought it, the harrowing as I have harrowed it, then I sowed”) is a figure that amplifies tension. It is a good example of parallelism that has been called the “master trope” of Native American speech style (Sammons 2000:26) and is prominent in other parts of the world, too (cf. Fox 1988; Kratz 1990).

Besides sheer volume or the use of adjacency pairs (as we have seen above), style, as persuasive device, may also be deployed in order to introduce a topic. Consider how BL has elaborated his issue in style until the others joined in:

010	Leer na ma leer Yàlla	<i>It is plain to me, heaven knows</i>
014	Ndax wax dëgg yalla ...	<i>For begad ...</i>
017	Nit ko xam ne ki ...	<i>The man who</i>
019	Nit ko xam ne ki ya- ...	<i>The man that you</i>
024	Ya- nga am- ruuj nga ba sori. Ruujuj nga ba sori, faraasu nga ba sori	<i>You are having- you have cleared fields widely You have cleared fields widely, you have disseminated widely</i>
024	Waay bu tawe da nga mana jekk waay!	<i>Gee, when rain comes, how you will be well</i>
028	Nit bu ruujul,	<i>Someone who doesn't clear fields and</i>
030	faraasuwul bu tawe na ngay jekke?	<i>who does not disseminate Will he be well when rain comes?</i>

BL starts several times to speak but, even though he uses very emphatic expressions such as in line 010 (“Heaven knows ...”), he does not get replied as the others are engaged in a debate about rain clouds coming from the South of the country. Then when the others speak about the work of field clearing that the people in the region of Kaolack far in the South of the villages have already begun he sees a starting point for his issue of the working morale of the villagers. He takes up the issue of field clearance and, after a first attempt, asks in a rhetorical question “Someone who doesn’t clear fields and who does not disseminate will he be well when rain comes?” By this very dialogical form he finally gets his issue through, and the others enter into his debate.

Repetition

A recurrent pragmatic property of the village conversations is repetition. Repetition serves to amplify the effect that an utterance makes upon the hearer. It may be just one word to be repeated several times.

291	MtJ	ma ne ji waay de moom dëgg dëgg [dëgg dëgg dëgg dëgg=	<i>I said this guy truly truly [truly truly truly truly=</i>
294	BL	[dëgg dëgg dey! ruuj gu set	<i>[truly truly a very well done field clearance</i>

In example B1-3 a speech part is repeated three times by two different speakers.

B1	DJ	Yooye ñ- ñ- ño yor xulo ba	<i>They, th- th- they are the reason for the dispute</i>
B2	BJ	Ño yore xulo ba↑	<i>They definitely are the reason for the dispute</i>
B3	DJ	Ño yor xulo ba de	<i>They are the reason for the dispute, sure!</i>

This is what Du Bois (1998) has called “dialogic syntax,” i.e. speakers take over expressions or syntactical constructions from preceding speakers in conversations. In our example the speakers slightly change the construction they repeat. In line 2 the speaker adds on a perfective suffix *-e* to the verb *yor* (to possess) that emphasizes certainty (cf. Sall 2004), and he raises his voice at the end of the utterance. In line 3, the speaker adds on the discourse marker *de* that emphasizes the utterance as a whole (for a discussion of “dialogic syntax” also cf. Sakita 2006).

In example 4-5 the speaker repeats his own proposition in a more elaborate manner explicating the sentence objects (*ji lo, Jallo*) that in the first utterance was expressed by an object pronoun (*ko*) or was left out.

B4	DJ	Yib na ko coow ka↑t	<i>He has certainly caused him trouble</i>
B5	DJ	Ji lo- ji lo yib na Jallo coow ka↑t	<i>Make him seed make him seed has certainly caused Jallo trouble</i>

In both expressions the speaker uses the amplifying discourse marker *kat* intonated in raising pitch.

There are many more examples for repetitions in the village square conversations we have recorded. Yet, they may be based on different motivations:

First, repetition is a way for the speakers to deal with the dialogic situation that is characterized by many interruptions, by people speaking simultaneously, and by speakers who do not complete or end their utterances. This is why sometimes they take up again something they themselves or others have already said. In doing so, they do not only copy the content of the utterances, but also syntactic structures such as specific focalized conjugations. But sometimes they also add on subtle means in order to slightly modify the semantic content.

Second, they are also an emphatic device. Repetitions are able to amplify the effect of the content of an utterance. Repetition increases the forcefulness of a contribution to a conversation. In using mutual repetition, speakers often co-operate in establishing meaning in conversations. An example is B8-B11 where one person is openly supported by another one. BJ emphasizes and contextualizes what DJ says. DJ repeats his own words after BJ's support, and BJ repeats his own words again.

B8	DJ	Da ngaa déggut li ma wax	<i>You didn't understand what I said</i>
B9	BJ	Deed, yeen daal li leen Daur wax moom dafay baatub dégg	<i>No, so you, what Daur has told you, that, it is the truth</i>
B10	DJ	Da ngay deglu li ma wax	<i>Listen well to what I tell you</i>
B11	BJ	Day baatub dégg	<i>It is the truth</i>

In B6-B7 we can see that speakers are sometimes also cooperating in elaborating a point. Here, the first speaker makes an evaluating moral statement and the second speaker explains the circumstances of the first speaker's claim.

B6	DJ	Aaaaa' lool nag bu ko defe yow Majaw xam nga coow la	<i>Ooooooh, well that, when he does it, you Majaw, you know, this means trouble</i>
B7	MdJ	Moom kay xanaa fas wi ci ngoos la ci doon jii	<i>So that, truly, it seems that the horse was seeding there in the afternoon</i>

In 065-067 we witness a dialogic completion. The first speaker is searching for an expression, and the second speaker provides assistance in completing. In 067, the first speaker finally takes over the expression that the second speaker had proposed.

065	AJw	[lool mo tax dëkk	[So that's why the village
		bi xawa-	has a kind of a
066	IJb	mo tax mu am problem	That's why the village has a
			problem
067	AJw	mu am problem	has a problem

In 213 to 216 and again in 300 to 303 the first speaker speaks out a blessing that is dialogically responded by other participants in the conversation by saying “Amiin!”

213	BL	[woor na	[By God, it is
		yalla ne- yal na yalla def	certain- May God make the rainy
		nawet bi yeg- yeggal fep	season arrive everywhere!
		[te jub=	[And prosperous=
214	?	[amiin =amiin	[Amen =amen
215	MtJw	[mmm	[mmm
216	?	[((chaplet rustles))	[((chaplet rustles))
300	IJb	aa' [doy na [keman de! yal	okay, [that's scaring. [May God
		na ñu yalla jappale rekk	just help us
302	Gnd	a[aminamiin	A[men amen
303	BL	[aamin! moom daal yal na	[amen that's it May God give us
		yalla [jubal nawet bi kuy	[a plenty rainy season who
		ñaan na nga [ñaan rekk yalla	[recites should ask God to give us
		na ko yalla jubal	plenty

A blessing can thus also be viewed as a dialogical device to coerce people into communicative cooperation since refusing to say *Amiin* would be interpreted as treason of faith and ultimately of God.

Semantic devices

In order to involve hearers, speakers often use ideophones that through their very function call for dialogical responding of the hearers. They may also be considered adjacency pair first parts. Examples are B14-B16: *ne kepp* (to say “kepp” = to be exact), B69: *ne suyy* (to say “suyy” = to be top), B73: *ne nugg* (to say “nugg” = to be set).

14	BL	Da naa ko jii ba mu ne kepp†	So I would seed until it was okay
16	BL	Ba mu ne kepp laa la wax,	Until it was okay, I tell you, God
		Yalla xam na ko	knows it
69	MjJ	Buma neexee dugg ca biir ne	If I want to, I step in and say
		fa suyy	“it's a peach!”
73	BJ	Wax seeni wax bam ne nu:gg	Speak their things until ready

In 243 where IJ used two ideophones in a sentence (*tooc*: “swoop”; *xunn*: “to pong”), both emphasized by intonation.

243	IJb	[ma nga	[I say when they ask for milling
		nee. buñ ne (fukki ngooñ ji	then he takes off his [bloomer in
		ñow na) mu [summi caaya ji	one fell swoop, [and dresses the
		to:cc, [sol ko xesaw XU:NN	stinking one for work

Another dialogical feature is the acceptance and further use of spontaneously created expressions as in example 331 where the speaker repeats a metaphor created in 326 with an opposite opinion. The metaphor is subsequently employed.

326	BL	[waw ren nag de ño tekki seen ngemb [xamal ñoonu	<i>[yes, this year, they have unfastened their wrestling panties [you know, they- do- do you understand?</i>
329	MjJw	de- dengaa!	<i>those who have unfastened their wrestling panties are very numerous</i>
331	MjJw	ñi tekki seen ngemb bari na ñu de!	<i>[well yes, [but still [those who have unfastened their wrestling panties, the village is full of them</i>
333	BL	[aa' waw [waaye nag	
334	MjJw	[ñi tekki seen ngemb si dékk bi fees na de	<i>[I say [look, Majaw, someone who hopes for nothing else than for what he cultivates, Majaw, [he will never unfasten his wrestling panty</i>
336	BL	[ma ne [xoolal Majaw ka nga xamni yaakarul lenn lumuy mbey Majaw [du tekki ngembam muk	

A metaphor always transports a specific perspective on a topic. In the present case it is a critique that ridicules the people who leave cultivation in favour of other means of earning their living by a dishonourable image. At the same time, it compares cultivation to wrestling, the daily battle against nature in order to extract as much as one needs to survive. Furthermore, it is entertaining and funny.

Other metaphors used in the conversation is the comparison of the villagers with kings who refuse to work on the fields (035 and 038, see above), and the designation of youngsters as “glaring red,” i.e. not exposed to the sun and thus lazy.

060	IJb	[nga- gone yu ndaw yo xonq coy yu tollu ci- ci-	<i>[you- small and glaring red children who are in- in-</i>
061	YJl	[ci wara ligeey	<i>[the age of working obligations</i>
062	IJb	[ci- ci wara ligeey	<i>[the- the age of working obligations</i>
063	BL	aawaw!	<i>Right!</i>
070	AJw	gone gu [xonq coy ja [baram demagul fenn	<i>A glaring [red child. His [wife didn't arrive at the point of</i>
263	AJw	[ehe gone gu xonq coy nga yor=	<i>[Yeah, you have a glaring red child=</i>
266	MjJw	=man gone gu xonq coyy laa	<i>=I am myself a glaring red child</i>
272	AJw	dama ne ñun ñi nga [xam ne gone gu xonq coy tey ne' fi	<i>I say we here [are all glaring red children living here</i>

Direct Speech

Another recurrent feature of Wolof village square conversations is direct speech. It is used for commenting on opinions of others, but also for a more entertaining design of speech (cf. Macaulay 1987). Moreover, as one knows from persuasion research, presenting counterarguments and refuting them is especially effective for an audience that is skeptical to ones own arguments (Hovland, Lumsdaine & Sheffield 1949; Kamins & Assael 1987; Weber & Hansen 1972). In lines 092 and 133 (see above) direct speech is used in order to emphasize a statement. In lines 144-146 (see above) it entertains through its dialogical performance. In 155 (see above) the speaker uses it to comment on his own action and to utter his thoughts. In the following lines 13 and 63 of text B it introduces a change of perspective in order to make the opinion of another person clear.

B13	SJ	Day dem ci moom ne ko a' xanaa li ma doon tere dang ko bayyiɓ.	<i>He'll go to him and say: "Oh, did you disregard what I had forbidden to you?"</i>
B63	YJ	Gis ngeen sama waa jooju leegi lim wax, suba teel ma jiyi samab tool	<i>Did you see my chap there as he said just now: "tomorrow morning I'll sow my field"?</i>

Finally, as also became evident in the last two examples, rhetorical questions are very common in the Wolof conversations and typically used to convey a decent critique. Also in line 030 (see above) the speaker utters a specific critique upon the working morale of the villagers who had only lately begun to clear fields before rain came.

Conclusion: The Self in Polyphonic Interaction

It has become evident that participants in the Wolof village square conversations are subject to a set of constraints regarding the potentials of their action. The chance of speaking monologically is small and the risk of being outdone by interesting contributions of other speakers is high, for the rule "one speaker at a time" does not apply. Several speakers may speak at once, as their contributions may be considered pertaining to several distinct conversations and not as overlapping turns of one. Speakers therefore employ several rhetorical strategies to keep their turns and, at the same time, to maintain the attention of listeners. These strategies may

consist in prosodic ones such as tempo, volume, or rhythm, or in stylistic ones, such as repetition, parallelism, metaphor, rhetorical questions, or direct speech. But the conversational order on the Wolof village square does not only restrict individual action, it does also facilitate it. Many dialogical features permit speakers to jointly develop their point, permanently integrating elements of other speakers into their speech. Many of the devices employed are thus clearly dialogical, such as ideophones, blessings, directives, and requests of listeners' attention, that are responded by hearer signals and continuers. Thus, speakers in a dialogue permanently dispose of building blocks for their contributions that have been provided by utterances of preceding speakers or by hearer signals. This is also reflected in the dialogical syntax, i.e. the repetition of entire phrases and clauses by succeeding speakers. Using language in dialogues is a joint enterprise, as Clark (1996) has put it, where speakers coordinate their contributions through responsive reactions on both sides, such as smiles, nods, laughing, looks of confusion, gestures and the constant mutual adaptation of the utterances (thus a constant "recipient designing" on all sides). In this way all persons involved become co-creators of all utterances expressed, and individual authorship is blurred.

Thus, the agents in these conversations always consist in an ensemble of participants and not in one only participant. Laura Graham (1993, 1995) has interpreted this way of co-producing utterances as an instrument of egalitarian societies securing that no participant acquires any prominence that would maybe subsequently be used in order to legitimate further rights (also cf. Myers & Brenneis 1984). Wolof society is not usually described as an egalitarian society. However, there are situations and even well-defined social spaces, such as the *pénc*, where egalitarian constellations are recurrent. I will come back to this point in more detail below.

Secondly, it has become evident, that with the Wolof village square conversations, we deal with an uncommon species of turn-organization, since overlaps even within one conversation are longer and more numerous and frequent than they should be according to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). The overlaps are not always short, since one of the speakers speaking in overlap does not swiftly withdraw, as Sacks, Schegloff

and Jefferson's model would predict. Nor are longer overlaps considered to be competitive, as Schegloff (2000) puts it. Even the usual hierarchy of rules applying for speaker turns seems to be inverted: self selection and current speaker continuing seem to override the "current speaker selects next speaker" rule. Actively passing over the turn to a selected next speaker by the current speaker is rare, as true questions are in general, too. Furthermore, the former two rules ("next speaker self selection" and "current speaker continues") are in permanent competition, thus leading to frequent schismings. In an interaction order in which it is never completely clear who participates in which sub-conversation and who listens to whom, strategies of taking and keeping the turn are much more present than strategies of giving it away. In conversation A, there are only three true (i.e., non-rhetorical) questions asked, and they all of them are attempts at joining in a running conversation through interposed questions signaling interest in the issue.

Several reasons may account for this "non-default situation", that is uncommon even for other communicative situations in Wolof society. First, as I have developed elsewhere (Meyer 2007) the social situation on the Wolof village square (*pénc*) is characterized by egalitarian, or peer, relationships between the people present. The *pénc* is the social space where prestige, self-assertion and associated moral and emotional categories such as honor and self-esteem are constantly negotiated. Secondly, the turn organization itself is influenced by the fact that people utter long continuers that at first are no competing turns, but may develop into such, when the conversation goes on, and eventually lead into a schisming or a competing overlap. Thirdly, the turn organization on the *pénc* is highly influenced by the organization of gaze: in Wolof society it is not necessary to signal participation by looking at each other directly while engaging in a conversation with each other. It is thus never completely clear whether there aren't some people listening to a speaker, even though nobody exactly gazes at him (contrary, thus, to Goodwin's [1979, 1980] classical analysis of gaze direction in US conversations). This ambiguity also facilitates the polyphonic situation on the Wolof village square.

The result is that strategies of turn keeping and the maintaining of listeners' attention are more important than strategies of involving hear-

ers as future speakers. Furthermore, as it seems, Wolof participants in conversations have a greater ability to listen to several threads simultaneously. As they do not select conversational focuses through gaze, they often listen to several threads at once.⁴ The figures presented above also show how there are often running several discursive threads at once that are mutually interacting. Especially interesting seems to be that topical threads are proceeding linearly whereas participation crisscrosses between them in zigzag. The participants hence always contribute to several threads. It is thus difficult to define “a conversation” on the Wolof village square, since it is impossible to determine whether it is one conversation or several sub-conversations one deals with. This contrast between topical progress and participation course is also interesting in regard to the question of how conversational structure emerges out of individual action: The participants seem to keep the topics in mind, thus keeping them alive while even participating in or committing to another thread. People shift from one thread to another, and the topics continue running.

By way of conclusion I might summarize that in the conversations on the Wolof village square, the participants create through their own speaking features constraining conditions that open up two alternatives: the chance to present oneself as an eloquent, likeable and attractive, hence prestigious individual and the constant risk of being disintegrated of precisely this individuality through the joint production of conversations within a polyphonic interaction order. The Wolof self in polyphonic interaction on the *pénc* is thus a self that is constantly competing for prestige and individuality under circumstances of constraints and sanctioning mechanisms of the group. This complements earlier findings about the person and self in African that had stressed its integration in social hierarchies and mythical concepts (cf., e.g., the essays in Dieterlen 1973 and Jackson & Karp 1990).

⁴ This seemingly odd assumption has been confirmed by many interviews and observations.

Conventions for the transcription

(1.15) pause (seconds)
(xxx) word or phrase not understood
(word) not well understood
((nonverbal context))
wo:rd vocal stretching
word[s ov]erlapping [wor]ds overlapping
words=words in direct succession
word- utterance broken off
↑ Pitch rise (not measured)
↓ Pitch Fall (not measured)
! Emphasis
CAP Stress
(f) loud
(ff) very loud
(cresc) growing louder

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