

Language classification: Sereer dialects or « languages cangin »

Papa Oumar Fall

University of Dakar – Senegal

In Africa the language represents an important on which people project their identity threatened. And as pointed out so well Makhtar Diouf: It is the language that tends increasingly to be the most relevant of ethnic identification in Senegal. It is tempting to believe in such a sociolinguistic context that each ethnic group has its own language and which distinguishes it from other groups, namely that language is a sufficient criterion to classify ethnic groups.

If we consider the Sereer in the region of Thies (Saafeen, Ndut, Noon, Laala, Paloor-sili) are distinguished from those of Sine by their language. Based on this linguistic distinction, linguists such as PICHL, SAPIR, DONEUX opposed the dialects of Sereer Sine to what they call « cangin languages » (Thies 's Sereer). This is not without causing a real unease, particularly at the Sereer (intellectual!) community itself. Some voices in this community to challenge the refusal of membership of dialects known as « cangin » in the language Sereer. This encourages us to look at the different linguistic concepts related to Sereer.