Taking an interactional approach to multilingualism: insights from the Vaupés

Kristine Stenzel

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Nicholas Williams

University of Potsdam

Panel: **Indigenous Multilingualism in Lowland South America**

Session 1. Ideology and Practice: Vaupés and Xingu

SALSA 2021

10:00am to 12:00pm Friday, June 25, 2021

Today's talk

- **The region in focus**
  - The Vaupés as a "small scale" multilingual system
    (Lüpke 2016; Di Carlo 2018; Singer & Vaughan 2018; Pakendorf et al. 2021)
  - Ideolog(ies) and assumptions
  - Our questions

- **Our project & corpus**
  - Typology of data
  - Methodologies: sociolinguistic, language documentation, collaborative

Toward an interactional approach to multilingualism: Ideologies and practices in the northwest Amazon. *Language and Communication*.
(Stenzel & Williams 2021)

Today's talk

- **The region in focus**
  - The Vaupés as a "small scale" multilingual system
    (Lüpke 2016; Di Carlo 2018; Singer & Vaughan 2018; Pakendorf et al. 2021)
  - Ideolog(ies) and assumptions
  - Our questions
- **Our project & corpus**
  - Typology of data
  - Methodologies: sociolinguistic, language documentation, collaborative
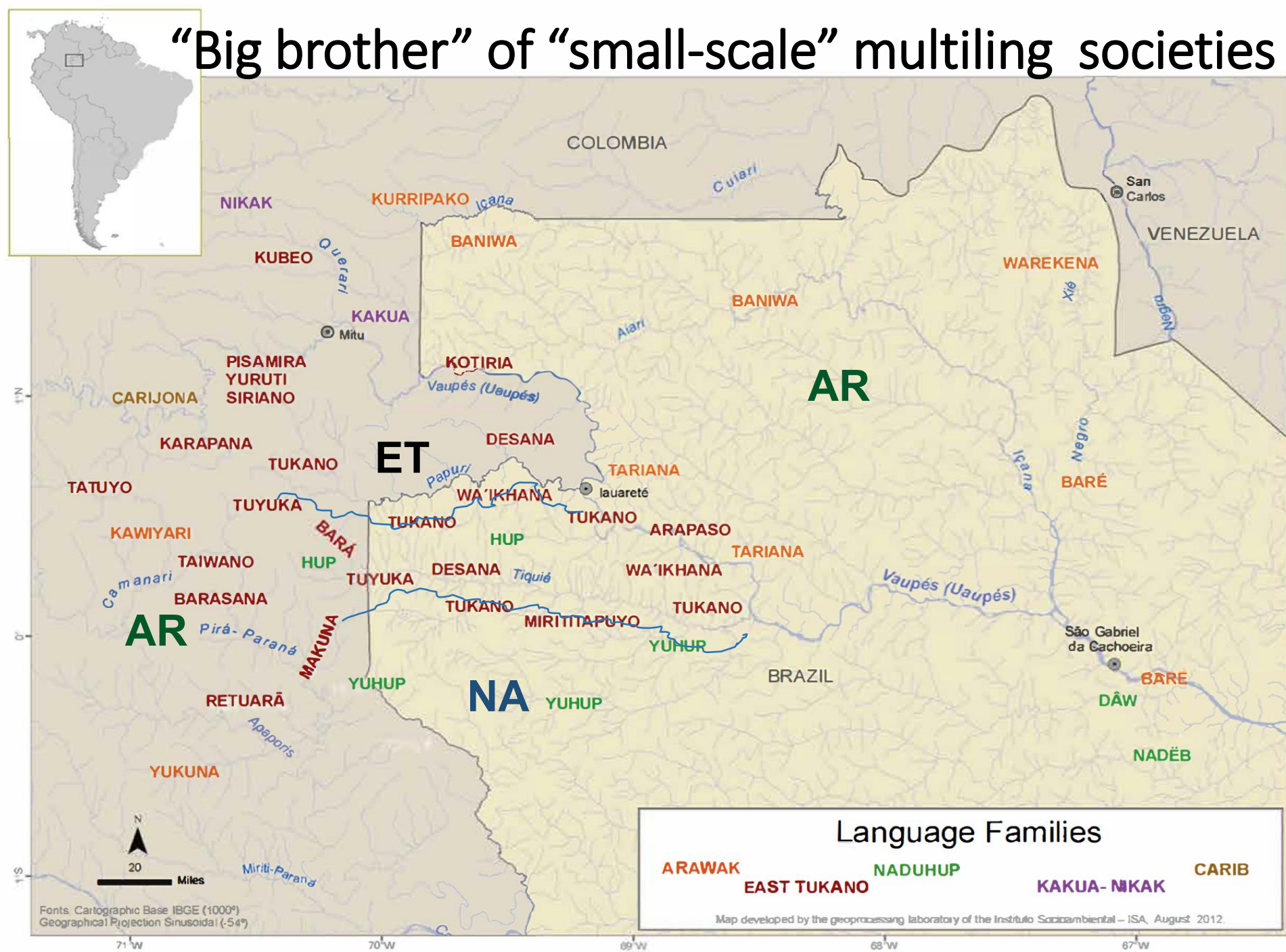- **Findings**
  - *Explicit* ideology at work: excerpts from **sociolinguistic interviews**
  - *Implicit* ideology at work: practices in **everyday interaction**
    Not exactly what we expected . . .
- **Implications, questions for further research**

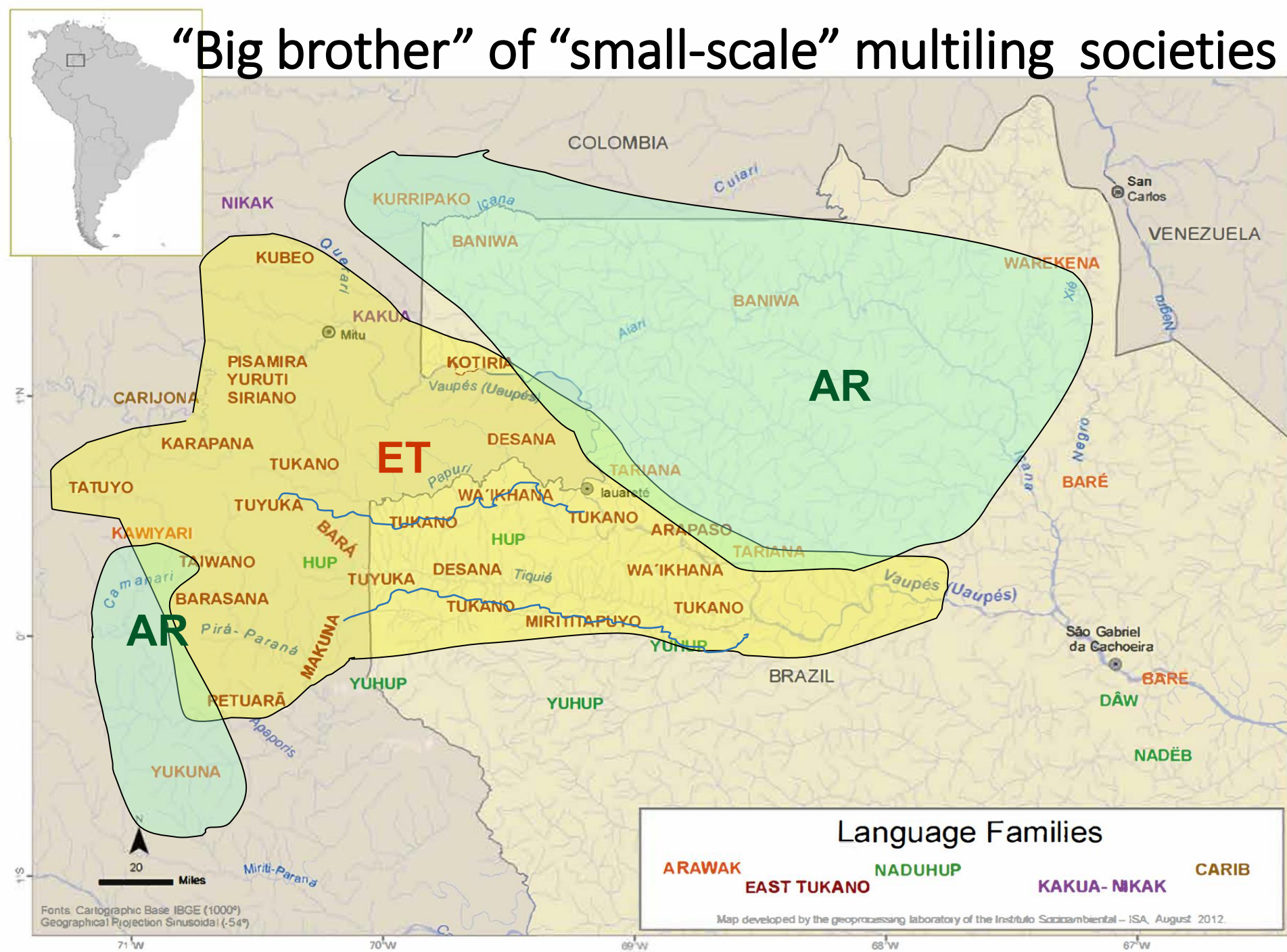"Big brother" of "small-scale" multiling societies

The Upper Rio Negro

200,000 km^2
pop. 67,000

"Big brother" of "small-scale" multiling societies

Ling Exogamy (ET/AR group)s, virilocality, egalitarian relations

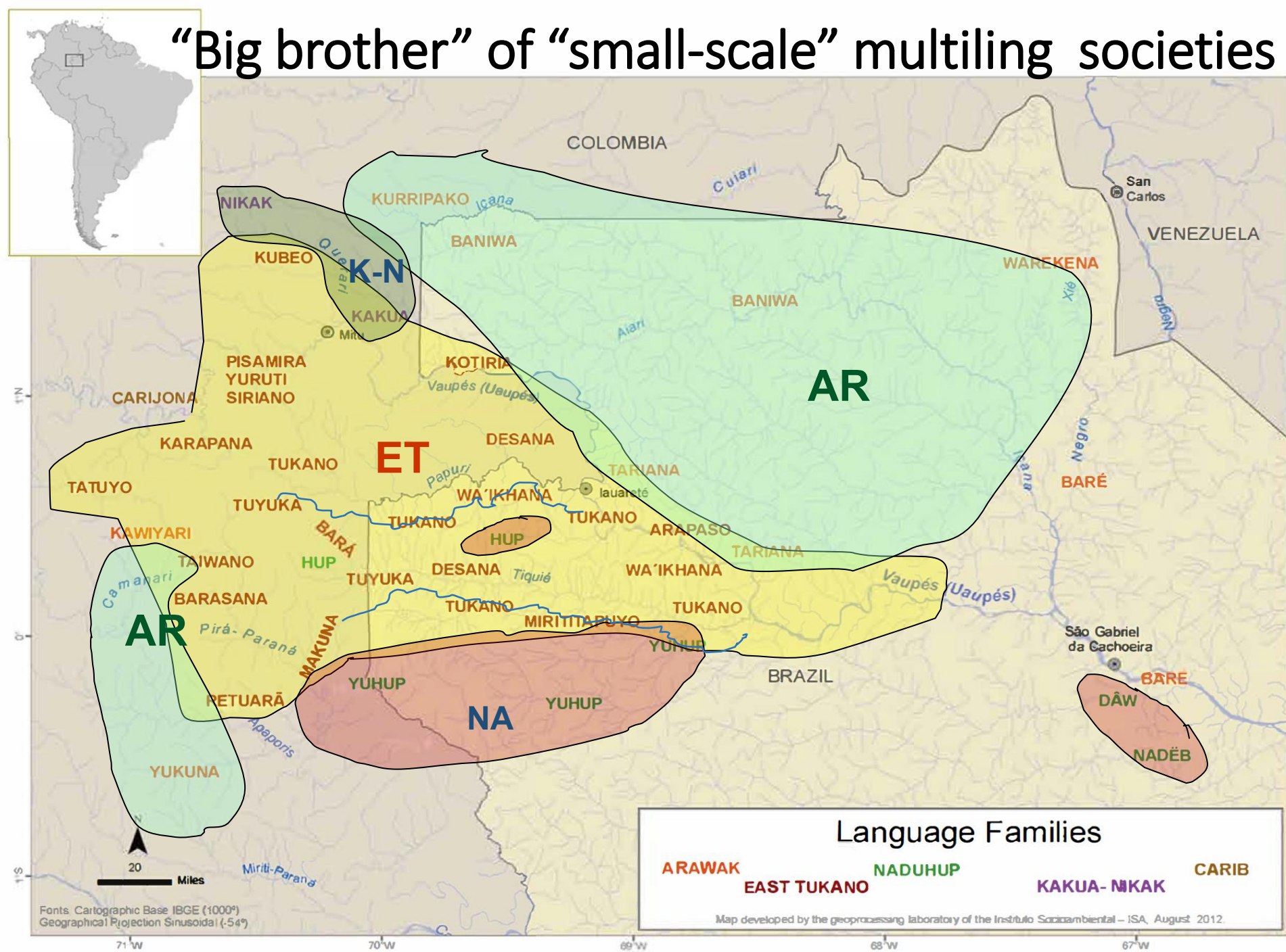"Big brother" of "small-scale" multiling societies

Ling Exogamy (ET/AR group)s, virilocality, egalitarian relations

Economic/ service Exchange riverene/forest, non-egalitarian
(Epps 2018)

Interaction w/ non-indigenous society: declining multiling, rising LFs, language shift & loss, polyglossic relations w/ natnl Ls

Vaupés language ideology

- **Essentialist, overt** (Gomez-Imbert 1999; Aikhenvald 2002; Chernela 1989, 2003, 2004, 2013)
  - Patrilect = social identity
  - Principle of "language loyalty"
  - Hierarchy: patrilect > matrilect & other lects
  - Language "etiquette" norms and practices:
    - Highly constrained code-switching, little lexical borrowing (excludes national languages)
    - Denial/downplaying of repertoires
    - Restrained accommodation to languages of others
    - "Receptive" multilingualism as expected practice

Case studies

- [Language] alternations observed in spontaneous and unguarded speech [can be] motivated by discourse-pragmatic considerations linked to previously unidentified connections between 'indexical ideology' and linguistic practice. (Stenzel & Khoo 2016)

- [In the] Desano community of this study [...] neither codeswitching nor code-mixing seem to be highly constrained or rigorously avoided [...] in contexts of everyday interaction [in which] speakers feel no need to police their speech to conform rigidly to expected norms of language use ... (Silva 2020)

Our questions and methodologies

- What does it mean to "be multilingual" in the Vaupés?
  - What *more* can we learn about language use in multilingual setting?
  - How do *ideologies* relate to actual multilingual *practices*?
    - What do people *say* about how they use languages?
    - How do speakers *use* their linguistic repertoires (in daily life)?

    → documentation and analysis of everyday interaction

- What methodologies can help us investigate *whether* and *how* communicative practices vary across various multilingual situations.

Our project

- ***Grammar and multilingual practices through the lens of everyday interaction in two endangered languages in the East Tukano family***
NSF-DEL BCS-1664348 2017-2020
(Stenzel, Williams, & Barbara Fox)

- Documentation of everyday language use in **Kotiria** and **Wa'ikhana** communities
(+speakers of other languages, primarily Tukano)
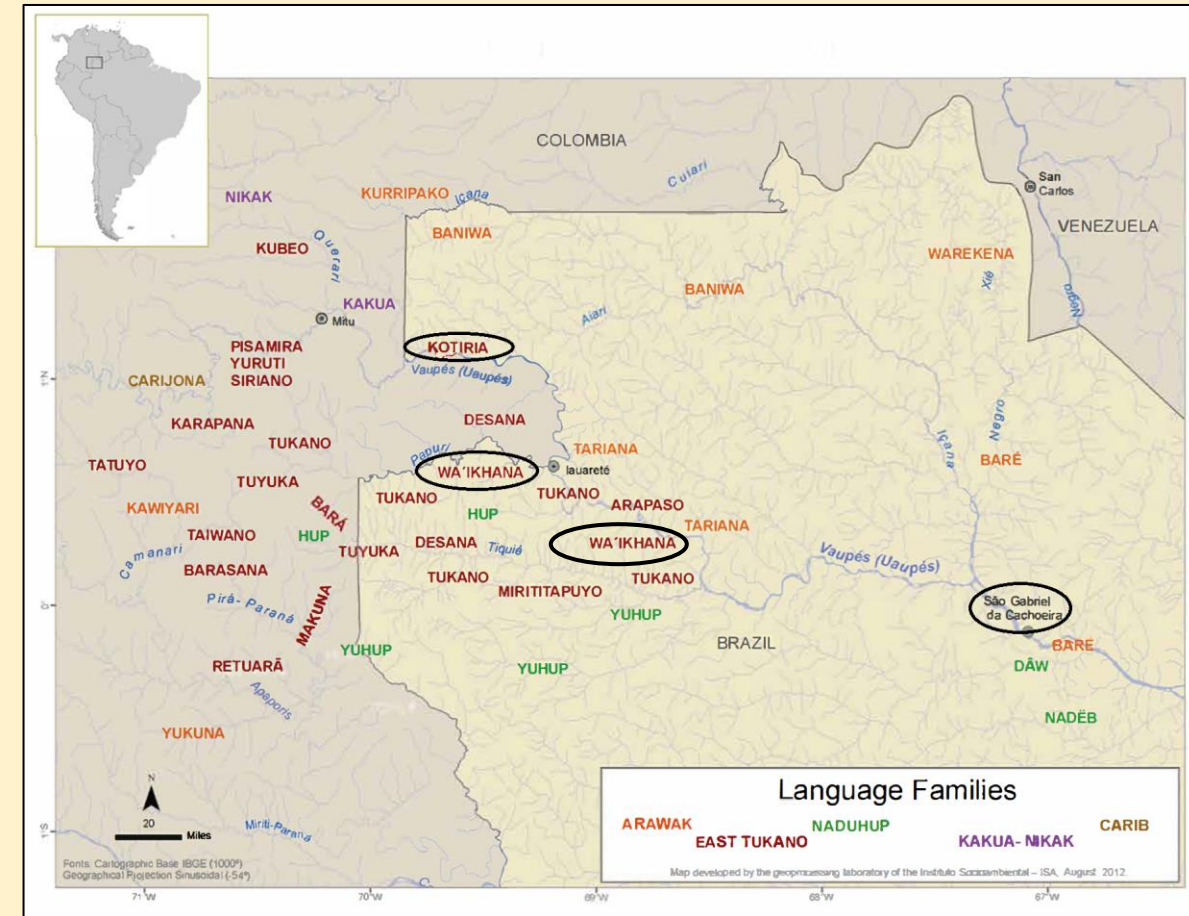
Corpus (ELAR) Collection/MPI1080602

Recordings:
Kris, Nick, Indigenous teams (5-12)
250 h raw data

20h

46 Sociolinguistic interviews

TRANSCRIBED / TRANSLATED
60 h

Types of interactional data

Conversation – spontaneous, informal "talk" in contexts of everyday life

Types of interactional data

- **Interactive tasks** – semi-structured, using stimuli, e.g. games, props, films

Types of interactional data

- **Sociolinguistic interviews** –with pairs or groups, conducted by indigenous team members in Kotiria or Wa'ikhana, providing extensive commentary on:
  - Multilingual acquisition
  - Personal experiences
  - Language use practices
  - Perspectives on change, etc.

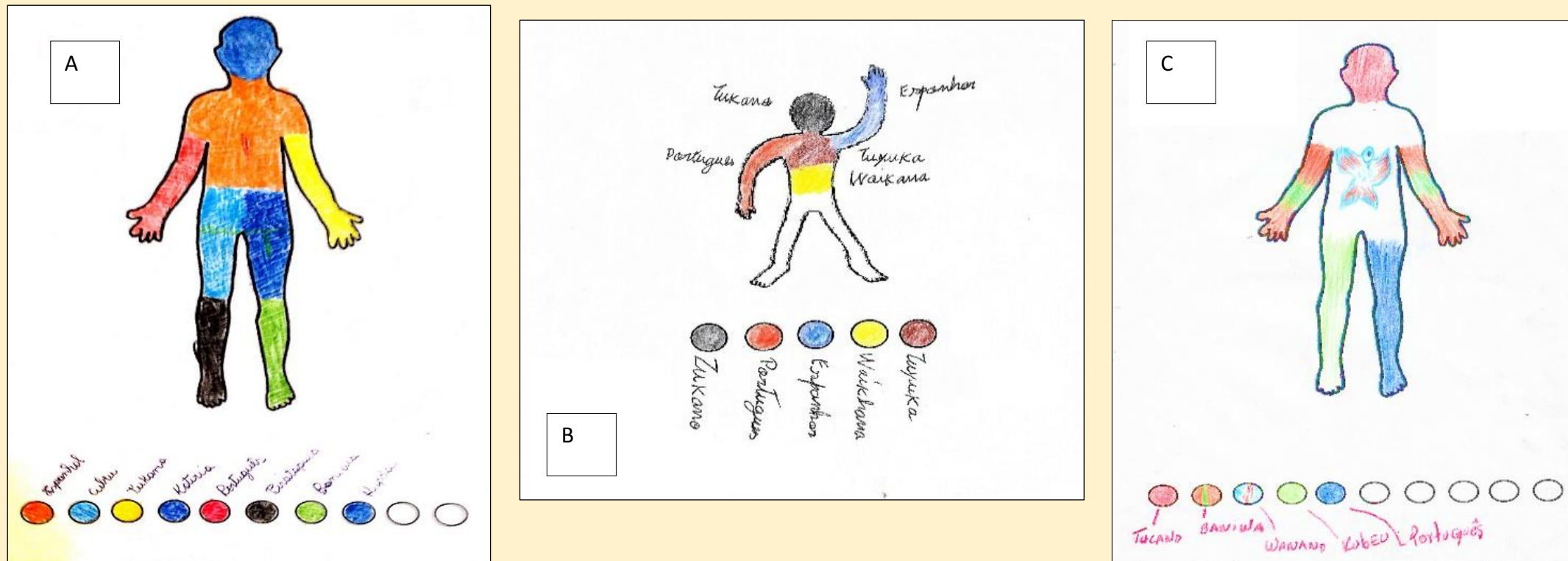# Language portraits (Busch 2010, 2012)

Figure 1. Language portraits produced by EG, a 67-year-old Kotiria man (A); AP, a 43-year-old Tariana woman (B); and DN, a 25-year-old Kotiria man (C).

Findings

- *Explicit* ideology at work: language=identity

Tipehepɨle tina: "Yɨ'ɨ dahsei ihiedayɨ. Yɨ'ɨ wai'khũ ihiaha yɨ." Nii, tii ya'uduhku dɨhka, ya'uhkukali ihiri ni ya'uduhku mɨhɨatɨ. […] Yɨ'ɨ to wai'khũ mahkũ ihia. Yɨ'ɨ wai'khana tii ya'uduhkuere. Koedaboali […] yɨ'ɨna yee ihika nimahato malĩye ihika nimahato [ᴡ ᴀ ɪ]

When I was young, everyone in my village would say: "I'm not Tukano. I'm Wa'ikhana." So, I grew up speaking my language.' […] I'm the son of a Wa'ikhana; I speak the language. I wouldn't want a different language […] for me, our language is who I am. [JV, WAI man in his 60's]

- *Explicit* ideology at work: language loss

*Bɨonidi malĩ dahseye ya'uduhkugɨ pe'na, bɨonidi, bɨolĩ, bɨolĩ . . . malĩ aã **"piri"** niali naha. **"Piri,** mɨ'ɨ a'tali mɨ'ɨ?" Malĩ dahseye ya'uduhkugɨ saaniali.'* [WAI]

We're ashamed when we speak Tukano, ashamed, ashamed, ashamed . . . other Wa'ikhana call us "**brother-in-law**!" "**Brother-in-law**, you've arrived!" That's what they say when we speak Tukano. [JN, WAI man 44]

- *Explicit* ideology at work: norm of receptive multilingualism

Pateretha tikorohũ, to ya me'ne, dahsea ya me'ne, o yɨ'ɨhũ, yɨ'ɨre to dahsea ya me'ne yɨ'ɨre to nichũna, dahsea ya me'ne yu'tii. Yo tikorose yɨ'ɨre yu'tiera tire. Õse kotiria ya me'ne yɨ nichũre hi'na, dahsea ya me'ne tikoro yu'tia. Thusɨtha yɨ pho'nakãtha. Tinakã phini duruhku phañohare tinakã hini. [кот]

Sometimes (my wife) uses her language, speaks Tukano and I do too, (but) when she speaks Tukano with me and I respond in Tukano, then she won't answer me! When I speak in Kotiria with her, she answers in Tukano. It's the same with the children. (That's why) they can speak both languages so well.' [JM, Kotiria man, 40]

- *Explicit* ideology at work: dealing with the consequences of social change

  *Ã yoa siro yɨ me'ne mahkariro me'ne hina, sã português duruhkuha niha**kɨrɨ** yɨ'ɨ. Patena tiro kotiria ya me'ne nitusɨre. Tiro kotiria yana thɨ'ophañohare nihakɨrɨ, õse to yana tiro duruhkuerare tiro. Tiro michãkãna õse khõa duruhkutariro hire niha**kɨrɨ** yɨ'ɨ hi'na [...] ti ñarana ya se're duruhkudua, a'ri kotiria, tua nimarero tihɨtha, a'ri kotiria, tua nimarero tihɨtha.* [ΚΟΤ]

'So, when I'm with my husband, we speak Portuguese, I admit.

(And) sometimes he speaks a little Kotiria too. He understands everything in Kotiria, but he never speaks his own language. The little one is starting to talk [...] in Portuguese, I confess, and Kotiria, which is very strong (as the dominant village language). [MD] [crck_073 1:21:22-44]

Why 'interaction'?

While the nature of the system in the Vaupes lends itself to receptive practices and speakers understanding each others' languages, …

"(sometimes) speakers may have no choice but to speak one another's languages or a neutral, third language. The difference in representation and practice illustrates the contrast between the preferences and norms of linguistic loyalty and the realities of practice. **The latter are far more complex**." (Chernela 2013: 225)

(cf. also Stenzel & Khoo 2016, Silva 2020)

What have we found?

- *Implicit* ideology at work: wider range of practices than explicit ideology would predict

  - Lots of monolingualism

  - Less receptive multilingual conversation than expected

  - More accommodation than expected

  - Code-switching of various types

Monolingual talk

Interestingly, although Vaupés society is characterized as highly multilingual, a great deal of interaction in our corpus is actually conducted **entirely in one language.**

Receptive multilingualism

When participants each speak their 'own' language (patrilect), even in the rapid turn-taking of ordinary conversation

An expected norm, which does occur, but not nearly to the extent predicted, and attested more in couples where wife is Tukano speaker

DD, offscreen   MC   AP

1 AP:	a'to ma- maha ñeno me'ra ohati
TUK	a'to ma- maha ñemeno me'na oha-ti
	IMP.IND now language COM/INST write-INT
	'Now what language are we supposed to write here?'

2	(0.2)

3 MC:	yʉ'ʉ ya'uduhkue [ihidi tia
WAI	**yʉ'ʉ** ya'uduhku-ye ihi-di ti-a
	1SG language-PL COP.VIS.PFV.2/3 ANPH-PL
	'These are my languages.'

4 AP:	[wa'ikhana yee yʉ tʉ'o
TUK	wa'ikhana **yee** **yʉ'ʉ** **tʉ'o**-o
	wa'ikhana POSS 1SG hear/understand-VIS.PRS.1/2
	'I understand Wa'ikhana.'

5 DD:	=tʉ'o mahsia mʉ'ʉa
WAI	**tʉ'o** masi-a **mʉ'ʉ**-a
	hear/understand know-PL 2SG-EMPH
	'You understand everything'

6 AP: Ãa

7 DD:	so'õ [mehe ya'ure
WAI	**so'õ** mehe ya'u-de
	DEIC.DIST also speak-VIS.IPFV.2.3
	'and speak too.'

8 AP:	[tʉ'otha yʉ'ʉ pahko ko yee
TUK	**tʉ'o**-tha **yʉ'ʉ** pahko ko **yee**
	hear/understand-ADD 1SG mother 3SGF POSS
	'I also understand my mother's language'

9 MC:	Mm, mʉ'ʉ ya'uduhkuye
WAI	Mm **mʉ'ʉ** ya'uduhku-ye
	2SG language-PL
	'Mm, your languages'

Accommodation

Speaking one's patrilect is normatively expected and, due to marriage patterns, would result in 'receptive' interactions

However, we found many cases of accommodation in family settings

For example, a Kubeo mother (ET) speaking Kotiria with her Kotiria husband (CS) and family

```
[tcpk_094 00:25-38]
1 ET:    di'i maniari hira,
         di'i        mania-ri        hi-ra
KOT      meat/fiber  not.exist-NMLZ  COP-VIS.IPFV.2/3
         '(These stalks) have no fiber,'
2 ET:    naeraro kha'maka
         na-era-ro    kha'ma-ka
KOT      get-NEG-SG   need/want-IRR
         '(you/we) don't want to get (them, next time)'
3 AX:    ãha mama
         'Here mom'
4        (4.1)
5 JS:    chiu! Hoo
         INTJ:Ah!
6 CS:    a'riño õse
         a'ri-ño            õ-se'e
KOT      DEM.PROX-CLF:palm  DEIC.PROX-CONTR
         'This stalk here'
7 CS:    wɨho maniakureri hiratha
         wɨho    mania-kure-ri                 hi-ra-tha
KOT      fiber   not.exist-almost.not-NMLZ     COP-VIS.IPFV-ADD
         'doesn't have hardly any fiber either'
8 ET:    maniakure[re
         mania-kure-re
KOT      not.exist-almost.not-VIS.PFV.2/3
         'Almost nothing at all.'
9 SU:               [maniakure[re
                     mania-kure-re
KOT                  not.exist-almost.not-VIS.PFV.2/3
                     'Almost nothing at all.'
10 JS:                         [yɨ'ɨre kɨño
                                yɨ'ɨ-re  kɨ-ño
KOT                             1SG-OBJ  one-CLF:palm
                                '(Give) me one (a stalk)'
```

'Code-switching' with Portuguese

```
[crck_086 1:07-1:43]
1 MD:      SG sõ'o hiro mahkano,[(.)          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
           SG  sõ'o    hi-ro  maka-ro         │ Bold+Under.2x = Portuguese  │
                 DEIC.DIST COP-SG place-SG    └─────────────────────────────┘
           'SG, about what's happening later,
2 SG:                              [hɨ̃ɨ?
 3 MD:     do'se khũatinakari mari ba'rore? (.5) numerore
           do'se   khũatira-kari    mari    ba'ro-re  numero-re
           INT.how organize-INT.SPEC 1PL.INC later-OBJ number-OBJ
           'How are we going to organize that (musical)number later on?'
4         (1.5)
5 MD:     acolida mahkare
          acolida    mahka-re
          greeting  place-OBJ
          'the greeting (song)'
6         (1.7)
7 SG:     sã (.5) mari dɨhkachɨ noaharika?
          sã       mari    dɨhka-chɨ  noa-hari-ka
          1PL.EXC 1PL.INC begin-SWRF good-INT.IPFV-ASSERT.IPFV
          'wouldn't it be good if we, we (all) start (with that)?'
8 MD:     mari dɨhka ba'aro hi'na ãta?
          mari    dɨhka  ba'a-ro  hi'Na  ãta
          1PL.INC begin after-SG EMPH    PT.INT
          '(and) afterward we (teachers) start (introducing ourselves),
          right?'
9 SG:     mari dɨhka, ba'aro,
          mari    dɨhka  ba'a-ro
          1PL.INC begin  after-SG
          'we start, and afterward'
```

```
10 MD:    tina
          ti-na
          ANPH-PL
          'they'
11 SG:    tina ensino médio
          ti-na   ensino.médio
          ANPH-PL high.schoolers
          'the high schoolers'
12        (1.2)
13 SG:    e ba'ro
          e    ba'a-ro
          and  after-SG
          'and after that'
14        (0.9)
15 SG:    abertura hi'na(.)
          abertura  hi'na
          opening    EMPH
          'the (real) opening,'
16 SG:    aberturata wa'aa nire yo'o [wa'aroseto
          abertura-ta  wa'a-a  ni-re       yo'o  wa'a-ro-se-to
          opening-EMPH go-3PL PROG-VIS.PFV.2/3 EPIS go-SG-CONTR-LOC/EVNT.NMLZ
          'but maybe doing (all) that is (already) the event opening'
17 MD:                              [tota, ɨ̃
                                    to-tha  (hira)          ɨ̃
                                    DEF-EMPH COP-VIS.IPFV.2/3
                                    'right, ok'
18 SG:    ɨɨ̃
```

'Code-switching'

In some cases, a mix of receptive and accommodating practices occur

Might be even more pervasive than otherwise expected

01 EG: *no'pe centímetro ( ) noahari vinte será?*
           *no'ope   centímetro   **noa**-hari   vinte   será*
           INT:QUANT   centimeters   **good**-INT.IPFV   twenty   maybe
           'How many centimeters (long) will it be, maybe 20?'

KOT

02   (1.5)

03 ES: ⊕ *ũbani be'ro keo dehkeoti=*
           ũbani   be'ro   keo   dehke-o-ti=
           don't.know   later   measure   initiate-FEM-INTENT
           'I don't know, I'll measure it later, I'm getting started'

TUK

04 EG: *=tothika khĩ'ono centímetro*
           to-thi-ka   khĩ'o-no   centímetro
           DEF-true-ASSERT.IPFV   correct-SG   centemeters
           'that really is the right centimeter (length, the right size)'

KOT

05   (1.0)

06 EG: *no'puru mɨuano yoakoharita?*
           no'opuru   mɨua-ro   yoa-koha-ri=ta
           how.much   high-SG   make-build-INT=EMPH
           'how high will you make it?'

KOT

07   (1.6)

08 ES: *a'tiro p-pa'takã doaro wekã['a:::=*
           *a'tiro   pa'ta-akã   **noa**-ro   wee-kã-'a*
           like.this   shape-DIM   **good**-SG.INAN   make-ASSERT-VIS.PRS.1/2
           'I'm making it (the base) just this size (wide)'

TUK

09 EG: [*mhm*

```
05            (1.0)
06 EG:    no'puru muɨano yoakoharita?
          no'opuru  muɨa-ro   yoa-koha-ri=
  [KOT]   how.much high-SG  make-build-IN
          'how high will you make it?'
```

```
11 ES:    =be'ro:: we[muɨhaoti (.)              ]
  [TUK]    be'ro  wee-muɨha-o-ti
          after  make-MOV.up-FEM-INTENT
          'Then I will build up (the sides)'
12 EG:              [wemahami kemoro-(kaña hã)]
  [TUK]              wee-maha-mi      kemorokaña    hã
          make-MOV.around-FRUS  build.up-NEG.IMP  PT.INT
          'then won't you go building up the sides, huh?'
13 ES:    mo'ano
  [TUK]   mõ'a-ro
          cover-SG.INAN
          '(and) lid'
14            (0.4)
15 ES:    ãaa
16            (.)
17 EG:    be'ropɨ weyata mo'anopere
  [TUK]   be'ro-pɨ    wee-ya-ta     mõ'a-ro-pe'e-re
          after-LOC  make-IMP-EMPH  cover-SG.INAN-CONTR-OBJ
          'make the lid later'
18 EG:    [to ti kharo]  di'akhɨ̃=
  [TUK]    to  ti-aka-ro      di'akɨ̃hɨ
          DEF  ANPH-box-SG.INAN  only
          'now only make the box'
19 ES:    [be'ro wa'rosa]
  [TUK]    be'ro  wa'a-ro-sa
          after  go-SG.INAN-FUT
          '(the lid) will go (be made) later'
20 ES:    mMm=
21 EG:    =õse pha'ta yoaka( ):::: thɨ̃amaharemɨo::
  [KOT]    õ-se         pha'ta   yoa-ka           thɨ̃a-mahare-mɨa-o
          DEIC.PROX-CONTR  CLF:flat  make-ASSERT.IPFV  wrap-MOV.around-high-CAUS
          'make the base (and then) wrapping around and around building up
          the sides)'
22 EG:    wa'a mɨawaga hã
  [KOT]   wa'a  mɨa-wa'a-ga  hã
          go    high-go-IMP  PT.INT
          '(and) keep increasing, right?'
23 ES:    °mMm°
```

Conclusions

- Beginning to document the 'greater complexity' of the 'realities of practice' in a small-scale multilingual society

- Ideologies of 'linguistic loyalty' *are* reflected in normative interactional and communicative practice

- But departures from this norm *do* occur, including language alternation (by individual speakers)

- Language choice is a resource for speakers and must be implicated in constructing social action in interaction

Further questions and implications

- Do speakers of East Tukano languages orient to the multiple languages as distinct 'codes' in everyday interaction? (cf. Gafaranga and Torras 2002 on Kinyarwanda and French)

- How does what we have documented here compare to interaction in other 'small-scale' systems? How about 'polyglossic' systems?

Our thanks to

References

Aikhenvald, A. Y., 2002. Language Contact in Amazonia. OUP

Busch, B., 2010. School language profiles: Valorizing linguistic resources in heteroglossic situations in South Africa. Language and Education 24, 283-294.

Busch, B., 2012. The linguistic repertoire revisited. Applied linguistics 33, 503-523.

Chernela, J. M., 1989. Marriage, language, and history among Eastern Tukanoan speaking peoples of the Northwest Amazon. Latin American Anthropology Review 1, 36-41.

Chernela, J. M., 2003. Language ideology and women's speech: talking community in the Northwest Amazon. American Anthropologist 105 (4), 794-806.

Chernela, J. M., 2004. The politics of language acquisition: language learning as social modeling in the Northwest Amazon. Women and Language 27, 13-21.

Chernela, J. M., 2013. Toward an East Tukano ethnolinguistics: metadiscursive practices, identity, and sustained linguistic diversity in the Vaupés basin of Brazil and Colombia. In: Epps, P., Stenzel, K. (Eds.), Upper Rio Negro: Cultural and Linguistic Interaction in Northwestern Amazonia. Museu Nacional/Museu do Índio-FUNAI, Rio de Janeiro, pp. 197-244.

Di Carlo, P., 2018 Towards an understanding of African endogenous multilingualism: ethnography, language ideologies, and the supernatural. International Journal of the Sociology of Language 254, 139–163.

Epps, P., 2018. Contrasting linguistic ecologies: Indigenous and colonially mediated language contact in northwest Amazonia. Language & Communication 62, 156-169.

Gafaranga and Torras 2002

Gomez-Imbert, E., 1999. Variations tonales sur fond d'exogamie linguistique. In: Durand, J. (Ed.), Phonologie: théorie et variation. Cahiers de Grammaire 24. Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, Toulouse, pp. 67-94.

Lüpke, F., 2016. Uncovering small-scale multilingualism. Critical Multilingualism Studies 4.2, 35-74.

Pakendorf, Brigitte, Nina Dobrushina, Olesya Khanina. Forthcoming. A typology of small-scale multilingualism. International Journal of Bilingualism (special issue on "Typology of Small-Scale Multilingualism", edited by Nina Dobrushina, Olesya Khanina, and Brigitte Pakendorf).

Silva, W. L., 2020. Multilingual interactions and code-mixing in northwest Amazonia. International Journal of American Linguistics 86 (1), 133-154.

Singer, R., Vaughan, J., (Eds.) 2018. Indigenous Multilingualisms. Language & Communication 62, part B.

Stenzel, K., Khoo, V., 2016. Linguistic hybridity: A case study in the Kotiria community. Critical Multilingualism Studies 4 (2), 75-110.

Stenzel, K., Williams, N., Toward an interactional approach to multilingualism: Ideologies and practices in the northwest Amazon. *Language and Communication*