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SOME SOCIOLINGUISTIC PHENOMENA IN SOME SELECTED FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN FICTIONS: A SOCIOCRITICAL REVIEW

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Abstract

*Every literary text is constructed with language. An author uses the potentials of language to negotiate meaning(s) for his text(s) in order to carry the local colour and culture of the targeted people. Sociolinguistic phenomena are some of the useful tool towards achieving this end. These sociolinguistic phenomena include, but not limited to, code-mixing, code-switching, linguistic borrowing and or use of African variety of French which recently became very rampant in some francophone African fictions. The Some of the Francophone African authors who have employed in their works the identified styles include Sembene Ousmane, author of *Guelwaar*, Mongo Beti, who wrote *Trop de soleil tue l'amour* and Ahmadou Kourouma, who authored *Allah n'est pas obligé*. This article, therefore, examines the incidence of some of these sociolinguistic phenomena in the three novels mentioned above using a socio-critical approach. We discovered that the rampancy of sociolinguistic phenomena in some francophone African fictions may not be unconnected with the desire of the authors to decolonize African language and to express solidarity with a particular social group. This shows that the use of some expressions associated with some real life settings authenticates the stories and compels belief. Yet the question that needs to be answered here is: Will the use of these sociolinguistic phenomena in their work lead to improvement or destruction of the French language?*

Key-words: Linguistic borrowing, Code-switching, Code-mixing, African variety of French, Implications

Introduction

Francophone African literature was dominated by the negritude movement during the colonial era. Although, some critics traced its beginnings to Rene Maran's publication of *Batouala* in 1921 (Chevrier 24). In the early 1930s, black students from the Caribbean and African French colonies rebelled against the assimilation policies of their education and vied to revalorize their common African cultural roots,