

Sada Niang

Linguistic Deviation in African Literature

Even though they were first introduced in the African continent with the slave trade, French, English and Portuguese, in their standard varieties, did not become established in Africa before the abolition of slavery in the 19th century, the introduction of colonial institutions in the early 20th century and the subsequent era of independences some sixty years later. The slave-trader with his army of suppliers and interpreters, ironically referred to as linguists, placed very little value on institutional recognition and permanence of settlement. His was a "hit and run" type of activity, even though slaves were sometimes "stored" in slave factories such as Gorée or Ouida for up to a year.

The slave trade in the 17th and 18th centuries created what linguists refer to as a contact situation. It was relatively brief, was characterized by a power structure in which the European trader was the dominant, determined succinctly the terms, the medium of communication and sought mainly to effect a transfer of goods, of "marchandises pures contre les nègres" as the *Code Noir*¹ refers to it. Sociolinguists such as Spencer² and students of Creole languages such as Loretto Todd,³ have extensively argued that out of this contact situation there developed a linguistically and semantically restricted language, whose focus originally did not go beyond the semiotics of the trade contact situation and is referred to as pidgin.⁴ This pidgin, limited and restricted as it might have been, Todd argues, managed to acquire a new lease on its life by espousing areas of experience outside the trade situation through the process of indigenization.

According to Ferdinand Saussure,⁵ language is a social convention created for the purpose of transmitting messages between members of a socially cohesive group. The expansion of pidgin in Nigeria, the Cameroons and Sierra Leone was exclusively an initiative of the local populations. No government body or foreign agency sought to engi-

neer it. Through its use in homes, markets, hospitals, pidgin expanded not only its semantic⁶ components, refined its word collocations but also systematized its syntax and morphology thereby strengthening its status as a code. Such an expansion, the uniformalization of its grammatical categories, and its use by a great proportion of the multi-ethnic and multilingual populations of these countries succinctly details the different stages of the creation of a language.⁷

That English for pidgin English or Portuguese for Crioulo have played a part in the development of these languages does not in any way dilute or alter their status as languages. French would not be the language it is today without its vulgar Latin stock, as well as the numerous structural and lexical calques and borrowings added to it with every European war.⁸ The same argument could be made about English in regard to German, Scandinavian languages and languages of the territories of the former British colonial empire.⁹

In countries where they are spoken in Africa, pidgin English and Crioulo are non-institutional facts which were made social facts through extensive everyday use. English, French and Portuguese on the other hand are institutional facts tenuously striving to become social facts. Pidgin in Nigeria and the Cameroons, and crioulo in Sierra Leone, have not only developed syntactic stable structures and recognizable phonological patterns but are also being used in homes as a factor of socialization for children. Spencer¹⁰ has indicated that in Nigerian families where both parents come from different ethnic backgrounds without the benefit of bilingualism in each other's language, pidgin is used as a common linguistic medium. French in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, English in the Cameroons, the Gambia, and Portuguese in Guinea Bissau, on the other hand seldom become the language of the home for the local families at the middle to lower end of the social scale. These languages are associated with formal schooling, formal social gatherings and the state apparatus. Indeed, the francophone summit held last year in Québec in which an attempt was made to reemphasize the importance of the French language to former colonies of France some thirty years after most African countries gained their independence and some three hundred years after the first slave arrived in the new world testifies to a persistent exteriority as far as this language is concerned.

For historical and economic¹¹ reasons, written African literary creation has on the whole adopted French, English and Portuguese as its medium. In African literature today there are three different approaches to the use of European languages as a medium of creation:

mythical, semantic realism or translation at different levels of the linguistic code and finally rejection and adoption of non-linguistic codes.

The first approach is important not so much because of the number of its practitioners or of its linguistic significance, but mainly because of the international status of its main proponent. As one of the first products of French colonial education and French colonial policy of assimilation, Léopold Senghor was also the first African to acquire the French *aggregation*. Though he was at the head of the Senegalese state from 1960 to 1979, he resigned his position as president so as "to allow the younger generation to take over the reign of power" and finally has recently been promoted as the first African *officier* of the prestigious *Académie Française*. Indeed, Senghor's career as an intellectual came full circle as he gained access to this regulatory body of the evolution of the French language.¹²

The cornerstone of Senghor's linguistic thought lies in a distinction between the concrete and the abstract where the latter enjoys a higher status in a hierarchical system of values. For Senghor, African languages are better suited to poetry. The texts they realize display a great amount of paratactic structures where French would substitute hypotactic ones. Parataxis¹³ is most frequent in everyday conversational, and oral spontaneous discourse where the expressive function¹⁴ is most prevalent and usually submerges the "objective" message. From a systemic¹⁵ perspective, parataxis is a set of potential grammatical realizations in a situation where strong emotions are being exchanged between participants. It is an intrinsic feature of language. By elevating it into a distinct characteristic of African languages, Senghor greatly reduces the life experiences of African peoples to a perpetual spewing out of emotions. Following the logic of his argument, Senghor concludes that African languages are more apt to expression than explication, more adequate for the various registers of modality such as poetry than to discursive and argumentative registers of scientific texts.

For Senghor, while French and other European languages organize their lexes around denotation and sustain abstract registers, the lexis of African languages is structured around connotation.¹⁶

Les mots [des langues africaines] presque toujours concrets sont encheints d'images.¹⁷

This thesis does not hold in the light of recent findings in the field of semantics. The meaning of any lexical item which is not a function

word in any given language is comprised of a meaning and a sense. Meaning is the conceptual image of a lexical item which has been the subject of "an express agreement" between the members of the communicating community, sense is the sets of usual extra linguistic circumstances to which a lexical item is usually associated and which this item ends up suggesting. Modern linguistics, drawing from the writings of J. Stuart Mill,¹⁸ distinguishes between denotative and connotative meaning. Kerbrat-Orecchioni defines denotative meaning as

l'ensemble des informations que véhicule une unité linguistique et qui lui permettent d'entrer en relation avec un objet extra-linguistique, au cours des processus onomasiologiques (denomination) et sémasiologiques (extraction).¹⁹

Denotative meaning, then, refers to the set of distinctive features which, fit together, constitute the conceptual conventional image of an extra-linguistic object (of a referent). These features in their combined pairing provide a linguistic representation of the referent as adopted by a particular speech community.

The connotative meaning of a lexical item refers to any additional semantic feature added onto the denotative meaning by virtue of its habitual textual environment or collocation. Kerbrat-Orecchioni gives the example, "pomme de terre/patates." Each of these items denotes the same referent, "plante des régions chaudes, cultivée pour ses grosses tubercules comestibles à chair douceâtre,"²⁰ but "patates" has the connotative meaning "colloquial" added to it. Such a feature does not enter into the distinctive set of features (denotation) which actualize the referent at the linguistic level, but is equally important for the information it conveys about the communication situation as well as the speaker.²¹ However as Kerbrat-Orecchioni, Palmer²² and Mounin²³ suggest, in the case of connotation the concept actualized is only suggested and cannot in any way be ascertained. The meaning of a connotative feature is arbitrary and may change from speaker to speaker and from situation to situation, and therefore cannot be a wager for any effective communication such as one would seek to achieve in scientific registers.

Dans la connotation le sens est suggéré et son decodage est plus aléatoire. Les contenus connotatifs sont des valeurs floues, timides qui ne s'imposent que si elles sont redondantes, ou du moins non contradictoires, avec le contenu dénotatif.²⁴

Furthermore, Sapir in his writings on personality²⁵ has laid to rest the notion of a purely denotative as opposed to a purely connotative language. No sooner has a scientifically pure and exact language been created than emotions will be ascribed to it. Connotation is a universal feature of language and reflects the ability of humans to build communicative codes. It cannot, by itself be a distinctive feature of any one language since all languages integrate it in their lexis. Finally a lexis comprised mainly of connotative and devoid of any denotative features would negate the primary communicative function of language. It would negate the status of such a language as a convention. Here as in the previous case, building connotation into an overall contrastive feature of African languages betrays Senghor's Africanist projects of reducing the lives of the users of these languages into beings of emotions.

Finally for Senghor, French as an essentially hypotactic language establishes a rational hierarchy and imposes a logical order where African languages with their paratactic tendencies cannot but provide a list-like account of the outside world. The French language by virtue of its grammatical categories allows not only the decomposition of the extra-linguistic reality into its different components, but also reveals its organizing principle. French according to Senghor is an analytical language which extracts a synthesis where chaos used to reign.

*Langue d'analyse, le français n'en est pas moins langue de synthèse. On n'analyse pas sans synthétiser. On ne fait pas éclater la contradiction sans la dépasser...*²⁶

In contrast, the African languages with their predominant paratactic structures cannot rise above the concrete day to day and basic existence. They express the here and now in its stark material and emotional nakedness; the guiding principles behind it evade these mediums.

*A la syntaxe, de juxtaposition des langues africaines, s'oppose la syntaxe de subordination du français; à la syntaxe du concret vécu celle de l'abstrait pensé: pour tout dire, la syntaxe de la raison à celle de l'émotion.*²⁷

Two points should be made here. The ascription of a referential meaning to grammatical structures does not enjoy unanimous support among linguists. The "signifié" of grammatical structures is at best dubious and vague. Furthermore, what Senghor terms syntax is in fact not so much the ways in which French organizes words into larger

grammatical units such as phrases and sentences but the articulation of sentences into a text. The French language according to him, yields tighter textures for it has inherited from Latin and Greek "jointure words" (*des mots gonds*), "cornerstone words," "tightening words" which build the French text into an intellectually indivisible and muscular whole. The frequent practice among literate Africans of interspersing their oral discourse in their native languages with subordinating connecting words such as *qui, que, quoi, bien que, afin que* is proof enough that the African languages are deficient in this area and tend to borrow from French.

We will grant Senghor that research on discourse analysis in the African languages still remains to be undertaken on a larger scale, but with the comparative work of Cheikh Anta Diop²⁸ and since the publication of Pathé Diagne's formal grammar²⁹ on the Wolof language the argument of the lack of logical markers in the syntax of African languages has been laid to rest. In 1987 Njie³⁰ provided a transformational description of Wolof, and detailed the syntactic operations which allow a Wolof-speaker to embed a sentence into another through nominalization, subordination as well as passivize it.

As for the inclusion of logical markers in the discourse of African intellectuals, it is not a sign of the structural weaknesses of these languages but rather a function of the diglossia in which these Africans live. Indeed, one does not have to look beyond the variety of French spoken in the Maritime Provinces or Québec to realize the extent to which English structures have been integrated into the French language. In St. Lucia where a standard English usage co-exists with a French-based Créole. The Créole of the literate St. Lucians is also sprinkled with English words. In none of these cases do such practices affect negatively the status of these languages as *bona fide* codes.

The sociolinguistic³¹ evidence shows that whenever you have two languages one of which is more prestigious than the other in a particular situation speakers enjoying the slightest proficiency in the more prestigious language will likely produce a hybrid variety with lexical, morphological and even syntactic elements of both languages. From a systemic point of view, these hybrid registers reflect the not so heterogeneous components of the context of situation.

Senghor's attitude in regards to the French language amounts to myth-making. It seeks to establish the semiotic superiority of French by using fallacious linguistic arguments. Mounin,³² Prieto³³ all emphasize that semiotic superiority cannot be proved. Each language organizes the linguistic representation of reality differently.

Senghor's aim is to build the French language into a universal tool which by value of its syntax, its intrinsically conceptual lexis, and its ability to substitute order for chaos stands as the best medium for the African writer to express his world vision. In their search for a literary tool, African writers, he argues, could not have come upon a better, more appropriate one.

Que conclure de tout cela, sinon que nous, politiques, nous, écrivains noirs, nous sentons pour le moins aussi libres à l'intérieur du français que de nos langues maternelles. Plus libres, en vérité, puisque la liberté se mesure à la puissance de l'outil.³⁴

The French language then is a symbol of freedom. That this language was imposed on the Africans, thus becomes irrelevant. It is a gift from the heavens providing freedom of expression and an integration of man into the cosmos. It provides the writer from Africa not only with its intrinsic denotative features but also, as the result of the diligent and persistent deviation of 19th century romantic and 20th century surrealist poets, with a rich stock of connotative features. By virtue of this amalgamation, intrinsic French denotative and African concrete and connotative features, French combines the best of both worlds and paves the way for the African writer to merge himself into the universal.

Or il se trouve que le français est, contrairement à ce qu'on en a dit, une langue éminemment poétique. Non par sa clarté mais par sa richesse. Certes il fut, jusqu'au XIXe siècle une langue de moralistes, de juristes et de diplomates: "une langue de gentillesse et d'honnêteté." Mais c'est alors que Victor Hugo vint qui, bouleversant la noble et austère ordonnance de Malherbe, mit "...un bonnet rouge au vieux dictionnaire." Il libéra, du même coup, une foule de mots tabous: pêle mèle, mots concrets et mots abstraits, mots savants et mots techniques, mots populaires et mots exotiques. Puis vinrent, un siècle plus tard, les surréalistes qui ne se contentèrent pas de mettre à sac le jardin à la française du poème discours. Ils firent sauter tous les gonds pour nous livrer des poèmes nus, haletant du rythme même de l'âme. Ils avaient retrouvé la syntaxe nègre de la juxtaposition, où les mots télescopés jaillissent en flammes de métaphores: de symboles. Le terrain, comme on le voit, était préparé pour une poésie nègre de langue française.³⁵

For African writers, the adoption of French as a literary tool becomes a matter of artistic necessity, since the potential for totality of expression offered by this language is matched by none other.

on nous a reproché singulièrement du côté anglo saxon d'avoir choisi le français pour exprimer le nègre africain. Je répondrai que nous n'avons pas choisi et s'il nous avait fallu choisir, nous aurions choisi le français.

... S'il nous avait été donné de choisir nous aurions d'abord choisi le français, d'abord parce que c'est une langue qui porte loin.³⁶

African literature, according to Senghor, would not have reached the universal dimension it enjoys today had African writers not adopted French as their literary medium.

Que la littérature africaine aille dans le sens de l'universel rien ne le prouve mieux que le fait qu'elle est écrite en français.³⁷

Senghor is one of the few writers in Africa who while involved in African literary creation look upon the use of the language of the former colonizer as a liberating force and a blessing. If anything writers from Nigeria, the Cameroons, Senegal, Ghana, Kenya, Black South Africa, when they have acknowledged the semiotic power of French or English as a literary medium have done so as a stepping-stone to devising of ways to control such a semiotic power and set its usage in Africa in a specific ideological framework.

Senghor's writing is filled with different types of arguments for a cultural melting pot whereby the French albeit European values will blend with the African ones so as to forge universal values of civilization; yet even this concept finds a better audience in the literary creation of a Wole Soyinka, an Amadou Kourouma or a Chinua Achebe than in the writings of Senghor himself.

An examination of Senghor's poetry shows that what he defines as "poésie nègre" is nothing but a contrived and systematic deviation from the habitual use of French. In the postface to his collection *Ethiopiennes*³⁸ Senghor articulates his poetics around two arguments. Negro poetry, he contends, signifies through repetition of the same words, category of words or other such-like linguistic elements. We will grant Senghor this point. However, such a practice cannot in any way guarantee the status of negro poetry as *negro* poetry. The analytic work of the Prague school of linguistics³⁹ has shown that such systematic deviations from everyday usage constitute the essence of poetic expression. Whereas we habitually use different linguistic signs (signifiant+signifié) organized into phrases, sentences and texts to convey our messages, poetic expression may make use of other linguistic categories such as phonology, morphology even in order to transmit its message. The elements of such categories become structured through alliterations, in order to build their own messages. Poetry much more than prose allows for the most divergent types of interpretation precisely because at the level of the phonology and the mor-

phology the conceptual image of a phoneme /p/, /k/, /l/ /o/, of the French morpheme /eur/ or English /er/ does not enjoy as great a degree of convention as do "table," "road," or even "love" or "despair." The repeated pairing of sounds such as the nasal ones may qualify a text as displaying a poetic quality. It will not serve as a warrant for its distinctive *negro-ness*. The criticism of Senghor's poetry that builds its argument around the built-in rhythm of his verses is therefore lacking.⁴⁰ The second argument used by Senghor to define Negro poetry is just as dubious. Negro poetry for him does not hesitate to collocate the most unlikely lexical terms. In his poem, "Lettre à un poète," he breaks away from everyday speech by modifying a noun suggesting the auditive sensation with an adjective actualizing the sensation of smell, "Bruits odorants." In another instance, he builds a contrast within the same noun phrase by negating the main semantic feature of the head noun with the main feature of the head of the prepositional phrase: "Ruche de silence." J. R. Firth⁴¹ has pointed out that, in poetic registers, meaningfulness is essentially a function of the unpredictability of simultaneous lexical occurrence. The more two lexical items are at risk in a particular context, the less meaningful these items will be. The occurrence of the lexical item "eye" with "lid" is so frequent in English that the expression "eyelid" in a poem would not retain the reader's attention. However, "footlid" or "pocket lid" by virtue of their lesser degree of probability of occurrence in everyday language would most likely arrest the reader's attention.

Such practices as we have mentioned before reflect the general practice in poetry. Here, as in his attempt to characterize African languages in opposition to European ones, Leopold Senghor mistakes the distinctive structural or generic feature for an essentially negro quality. Deviation as a figure of speech is a universal characteristic of poetry and therefore cannot act as a distinctive definitional feature of *negro* poetry.

In the wake of the negritude movement, other intellectuals and writers have followed along the lines of Senghor. We shall mention in passing the writings of the Mauritanian Oumar Bâ⁴² and to some extent the literary work of the Congolese writer Sony Lab'Ou Tansy. Lab'Ou Tansy does not indulge in building the French language into a myth, yet he is still caught, at least theoretically speaking, in the lure of universality and a false sense of the adequacy of the French language to the African context:

Je suis africain, je suis à l'aise dans ma peau d'africain où que je sois.
Cependant, j'ai des choses à dire et ces choses je veux les dire à ceux qui

ont choisi le français comme compagnon d'existence. Ma réalité congolaise se vit en français. L'école, la constitution, les discours sont en français. J'ai donc envie d'écrire pour ces gens. Il y a parfois un faux procès qui est fait à langue française. S'il y a des effets perfides il y a également des points positifs et parmi ceux-ci le fait de pouvoir communiquer directement avec un Burkinabé, un Ivoirien ou un Québécois.⁴³

Lab'Ou Tansi assumes the limitations of French in terms of situations and audiences and attempts to create his novels within these constraints. He is aware of, and content with, the limitations of the French language as a literary tool. However, the African reality which he claims to express with such a tool is limited. It refers only to the areas of everyday life in Africa where French applies. Yet, even though corruption among government officials is part of the plot of Lab'Ou Tansi's *La vie et demie*,⁴⁴ not all the actions and characters in this novel originate from within that section of the population "who have chosen French as their daily medium of expression."

Indeed, despite his claim to be "un citoyen de ce siècle" and to attach very little importance to his official citizenship, Lab'Ou Tansi's use of the French language does deviate from the mythical praxis of Senghor and Bâ. As the passage below illustrates, the narrative part of his novel incorporates at least one expression reflecting the everyday use of speakers functioning in both French and the local African language.

Son excellence doit partager son lit avec la fille de Martial pour chasser l'image du revenant. Mais son excellence doit absolument éviter de faire la chose-là. Pendant trois ans le guide présidentiel partagea ses nuits avec la fille de Martial sans faire la chose-là ni avec aucune autre femme. C'était l'époque où il parlait à tout le monde de ses trois ans d'eau dans la vessie.

The noun phrase "la chose-la" is structured according to the rules of standard French and functions as a device for irony. However the linking of such an expression with a referent connoting sexual activity suggests similar usages in African languages. The meaning of this expression here is contextually bound. It is supported and explicated by the denotation of a man and a woman sharing the same bed and the necessity to avoid sexual intercourse.

The Cameroonian born writer Mongo Beti, former ambassador of his country to France, and now exiled in that country has written at least ten novels⁴⁵ and numerous political articles using the French language. Like Senghor, Beti acknowledges the historical fact that French was first forced on the African peoples. However, whereas

Senghor looks upon such an introduction as an unpleasant experience with precious beneficial consequences for the present African writer, Beti conceives of it as an another way in which the "superior" and civilized colonizer brought "unity," a symbol of culture, "social order" and conventional existence to "divided" and warring groups.

*Aux peuples africains attardés, déchirés de surcroît par les divisions ethniques et l'atomisation linguistique la France offre généreusement sa belle langue comme facteur d'unité, voie royale d'accès aux valeurs universelles ainsi qu'aux techniques modernes, moyens de communication quotidienne entre individus de diverses origines.*⁴⁶

Beti's theoretical position on language reflects Achebe's in the sense that like this writer, he recognizes the unifying role it could play in countries where different peoples, different ethnic groups speak different languages. However, unlike Achebe, unlike Lab'ou Tansi and much unlike Senghor, he does not limit his analysis to the virtualities of the French language in the African context. After examining its status within the present political spectrum of the Cameroons, he is brought to the conclusion that this potential is being negated by the exclusive monopoly of French by local African governments and their allies. In the face of inadequate language policies, limited local institutional means of diffusion, the ability to express oneself in French as well as the opportunity to do so is a tightly controlled privilege nested in the hands of local governments and their allies. Undaunted opponents as well as large sections of the local African populations who do not share in the wealth of their nations are denied such an opportunity. French, rather than realizing its potential as a unifying factor allowing broader communication and effecting nation-building, acts as a factor of mystification for those who cannot have access to it. For those who have acquired it, it is a shining status symbol and a means through which this social status is converted into tenors of social domination.

*Le français offre là-bas l'image d'un objet précieux et même inestimable, d'un monument fabuleux comme le Taj Mahal exposé, pour ainsi dire, sous vitrine que les africains dans leur quasi totalité sont tout au plus conviés à admirer jamais à toucher.*⁴⁷

As writers, Achebe and Okot P'bitek go further than Senghor and Lab'ou Tansi. They recognize that language is not a monolithic entity, that it is culturally bound, and that the linguistic choices we make acquire their full and total meaning only when applied to their original situations. The semantic features of a lexical item, whether denotative or connotative are not universal. They are determined by social and

historical factors prevailing in a particular cultural entity. The lexeme "family" of which so many African novels use the dramatic potentials is culturally bound, so is the notion of god, nature, etc...

Indeed, the early criticism of African literature has often dismissed works such as Camara Laye's *L'enfant noir* as anthropological and not truly literary. Chinua Achebe's novels are still the target of analyses seeking to expose the structure of the African family, the overriding importance of the notion of "chi," the meaning of proverbs and so on. The weight of anthropological information contained in African literary works has either fascinated or irritated the critics. Very few among them, with the exception of Osundare Niyi,⁴⁸ have sought to define the status of such information in these novels.

We suggest that such like information in an African novel, play or poem is not optional but necessary; that without this information, the work may not qualify as African. Indeed, while the Sapir and Whorf hypothesis⁴⁹ that a language carries with it the weight of the cultural experience of its creators has been widely disputed when it comes to scientific registers, in the artistic ones, speaking or writing in an undifferentiated register of a language also means assuming the cultural experience of its creators. African writers, to a greater extent than their Caribbean counterparts who enjoy the use of Creole languages, cannot assume an adequacy between their literary medium and the culturally different context of culture they use as a prop for their narratives. Theirs is a literary activity where the habitual semantic features of the medium at their disposal undergo a deliberate and constant deconstruction in order to accommodate the cultural and situational distinctiveness of the African material. Linguistic and semantic deviation in African literature is not a matter of artistic licence but one of cultural necessity. Indeed, we find the same practices of linguistic deviation in the writings of the aboriginal Australian-born writer Witi Ihimaera,⁵⁰ and the Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand.⁵¹ Habitual usage of French or English sets a path for an obliteration of the local features of the context of situation and culture.

Benjamin Lee Whorf argued for the existence of a class of languages labelled Standard Average European. Its membership would include French, German and Spanish. These languages, Whorf claims, by virtue of the fact that they were shaped in similar environments, quasi-similar historical experiences, display similar representations of reality at the linguistic level. Barring a few empty pockets in the respective lexes, the concepts they use to classify the extra-linguistic reality are equivalent. Outside the membership of this class, the fea-

tures of the context of culture and situation are less likely to enjoy direct relationships and the representation of reality at the linguistic level more subject to variation. Subsequently, George Mounin, has argued that the transference of meaning between two unrelated languages has to be methodical, requires great linguistic competence in both languages and should be done with great sensitivity.⁵² Thirty years later, Chinua Achebe has reached the same conclusion as regards the African writer, his literary medium and his local language. Competence, full mastery of the registerial range in both languages (native and literary) is, for Achebe, the only valid basis for a differentiated linguistic practice for African writers.

The intention of Achebe and Okara is to bring to an end the systematic depreciation of African cultural values that underlay the colonial enterprise. For these writers, language as the medium of expression for these values acquires a status that goes beyond its stark materiality. If English is a semiotic code, as 20th century linguistics suggests, it is far from being neutral. Language is not a waterproof, ziplocked plastic bag capable of carrying any material while still preserving the original nature of such material. Rather, concurrent with its primary function of transmitting messages, it imposes its own values, its vision of the world on any material it brings to our awareness. The issue therefore for Achebe and Okara, is one of finding the appropriate kind of deviational practice that would allow them to modify the habitual envelope of English so as to reduce the inevitable reshaping of their culturally different material.

Such a problematic is, in essence, a problematic of translation. It seeks to transfer a message from a source culture to a target culture while conserving the totality of the meanings expressed in culture one. The strategies adopted by Achebe and Okara incorporate features of literary creation as well as translation, and illustrate in a specific manner the nature of translation as an activity that seeks to exchange meanings. In an article written in 1975,⁵³ Achebe after making the case for the necessity for the African writer to be competent in all the registers of his mother tongue as well as in English, exemplifies his method of literary creation as follows. He provides us with two texts both of which have the same ideational⁵⁴ component but differ at the interpersonal and textual levels:

I am sending you as my representative among these peoples just to be on the safe side in case the new religion develops. One has to move with the times or else, one is left behind. I have a hunch that those who fail to come to terms with the white man may well regret their lack of foresight.

I want one my sons to join these peoples and be my eyes there. If there is nothing in it, you will come back. But if there is something there, you bring home my share. The world is like a mask, dancing. My spirits tell me that those who do not befriend the white man will be saying had we known tomorrow.

Oddly enough, if we apply the categories devised by Vinay and Darbelnet,⁵⁵ the second passage would seem more in tune with the movement of the English language than the first one. The main distinctive feature of this latter passage is that it systematically spells out all the components of the context of the situation. Whereas in the former, modality was only suggested in the first sentence, here it is realized by the archetype of volition "want." The concepts that had been expressed in a very abstract fashion in the first passage are redefined in the second in terms of the actual semantic features that constitute them.

representative (join, be my eyes)

safe (If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you bring home my share.)

regret (be saying had we known tomorrow)

The meaning of the expression "come to terms" which may be applied to various situations hostile as well as not so hostile ones is restricted to the not so hostile ones with the lexical item: "befriend." The impression of "erratic-ness" and arbitrariness created by the use of the lexical item "hunch" is made to acquire the weight of the context of culture by becoming a proverb "the world is like a mask, dancing..." The terms of the various metaphors change from one passage to the other and so do their connotative meanings. The semantic field covered by the expression "be my eyes there" and "be my representative" actualize different degrees of commitment between participants. The first one, by reducing the person sent to the other's physical ability to see, provides a continuation of the blood relations between father and son. In systemic terms, we will say that the first expression increases the interpersonal component of the text, whereas the semantic features of "representative," suggesting a notion of officialdom concurrent with a certain aloofness, freezes the normal interaction between father and son. The lexical term "spirit" suggests religiosity and conjures up the sanctity of the status of "father" inherent in traditional African societies. More than any long description of such a value, it actualizes the context of culture at the textual level.

Throughout these two passages, Achebe's deviational practices have been staged at the semantic level. All the linguistic categories of the Igbo language such as phonology, morphology and syntax have been duly replaced by their English counterparts. These categories have received full translation from one language to another. What has been modified is the semantic structure of the sentences so as to stage the features of the context of situation relevant to the context of culture and to the development of the story.

Achebe's novels up to the last one, *Anthills of the Savannah*⁵⁶ always stage a systematic deviation at the semantic level while abiding by the obligations of the English standard morphology and syntax. Achebe's prose in English is grammatical but a-idiomatic. It seeks to break away from a century-long habitual usage of English so as to reflect the African context of culture in which his stories take place. By so doing, he merges the two worlds together; whereas English provides the form, the content as much as possible, is provided by the African situation. Today, this novel way of using English has become the standard in African literary creation in English and, as we will see later, in French. That this practice has been initiated by writers from the former British colonies follows logically from the linguistic history of their countries. As we mentioned earlier in this paper, these colonies underwent the phenomenon of language contact from as early as the 15th century. Throughout the slave trade, a pidgin English was used on the west coast of Africa. Besides, it has now become common knowledge that British colonial rule, unlike its French counterpart, purposefully chose not to knock "civilization" and "proper" linguistic usage into its subjects. Thus the pidgin as a language was allowed to develop by integrating not only formal features from the African languages but by drawing from the native language of its speakers to establish the semantic features of its lexical items. Achebe, it might be said, grew out of a tradition of contextualizing English so as to build a meaningful tool of communication. His systematic deviation from standard English is therefore novel but not as daring as the growing deviation of African writers using French.

Likewise, Gabriel Okara's novel *The Voice*,⁵⁷ combined with a series of statements on his methodology as a writer,⁵⁸ earned him a reputation as a writer who, in an extreme effort to reflect the semantic features of his Ijo-speaking characters, does not hesitate to install the Ijo language within the English form by way of systematic literal translation. Emmanuel Obiechina⁵⁹ characterizes his style as hardly English while some other critics take the exact opposite position. A

close examination of Okara's style finds justification for the term "deviant" applied to it, but such deviation, as in the case of the Jamaican writer Victor Stafford Reid in his novel *New Day*,⁶⁰ is comfortably nested within the literary and linguistic history of the English language.

Okara, it is claimed, disrupts the semantic structure of the English language and produces English texts that are structural calques of their Ijo equivalents. For one thing it would seem very unlikely that any publisher would accept any calqued text from any language under the guise of literature. Here is a sample of Okara's text:

The engine man Okolo's said-things heard and started the engine and the canoe once more, like an old man up a slope walking moved slowly forward until making-people-handsome day appeared. Then the sun went down the tree tops and night from the river rose and shrouded the river sides and then the tree tops in shadows, and closed the eye of the sky. In this darkness, the canoe moved, groping, moved with Okolo in his inside turning thoughts over and over.⁶¹

English and French, unlike Latin, are two "progressive" languages, i.e., the subject in the English and French non-emphatic declarative sentence always precedes the verb which may in turn be followed by an objective complement or a prepositional phrase governed by the verb.⁶² In this passage there are seven finite verbs, heads of a verb phrase, within a sentence. All of them are duly preceded by their respective subject noun phrases. As well there are six objective noun phrases only one of which is preposed to its governing finite verb, "The engine man Okolo's *said-things* heard." Furthermore, of the six prepositional phrases included here, only one has been pre-posed to its habitual position, "...night from the river rose." Yet, even such a positioning is perfectly accepted in English for it is a distinctive syntactic feature of a prepositional phrase to be able to occupy different positions within a declarative sentence in English. The morphology of the text is of the standard usage variety. All the noun phrases in the plural are duly inflected, including the complex ones such as "tree tops" and "river sides." The transposition or, to use a more widespread term, the conversion of an adverb into a noun (his insides) is unusual but not un-English. One already knows of the adverb "aside" used as a noun.

Here as in Vic Reid's *New Day*, we will contend that Okara's text is very much within the canon of standard English usage. It does not deal any meaningful violence to syntactic structure. When it deviates from it, it does so within the range of expressive licence allowed by it. If it is

true that Okara's text is a calque from the Ijo language, then the writer must have chosen a register of Ijo containing syntactic structures convergent with those of standard English. At the semantic level, the word collocations in our passage do not deviate greatly from standard usage in English. What gives this passage its air of deviation is neither its grammar, nor its textual organization. Okara's text like the Achebe example that we examined earlier deviates from standard English by outdoing English in its tendency to reflect features of the context of the situation. Okolo's words are not words but "said things," i.e. things that have been given life through speech, the break of dawn does not bring a new day but a "handsome-day" for "waking-people." As in the Achebe text, the interpersonal and the ideational components of the context of situation are brought to the foreground, where standard English would be content with a mere suggestion.

The praxis of Achebe and Okara as writers illustrates the fact that in African literature deviation from the standard variety of European languages bears mostly on the semantic component of the language.

"Francophone" Africa, unlike its "British" counterpart did not enjoy the tradition of linguistic deviation provided by a long usage of a pidgin. The pidginization of the French language in the former French colonies was fiercely fought by the colonial administration through a vigorous policy of literacy in the urban centres. Any deviation from standard French that sought to incorporate features of the local context of culture was frowned upon and ridiculed. The hybrid variety which emerged out of the contact between French on the one hand, and Wolof, Mandingo, Malinké, Sarakholé on the other is usually negatively referred to as "le petit nègre" or "français tirailléur." In the 1960s the Senegalese army had a very popular weekly radio program in which the syntactic and structural calques of a character referred to as Bakary acted as the medium as well as the message of a register of comedy. Indeed, as Hountondji⁶³ has found out, the use of French by the upper middle-class students and professionals in former French colonies places great emphasis on close obedience to the grammatical rules of the standard variety. Ascribing the inappropriate gender to a lexical item, not paying attention to the rules governing agreement between past participle and its corresponding noun (especially as it relates to gender), or not recognizing that a particular verb requires an irregular past participle will most likely elicit exclamations such as "mon frère! tu as cassé l'os!" or "Victor Hugo est en train de se remuer dans sa tombe!.." At the primary and high school level, the practice of the "symbole"⁶⁴ is not infrequent.

As a consequence, the use of French in Senegal and Ivory Coast is not only standard but seeks to be as idiomatic as possible. In the literature that has emerged out of these countries, there is a closer correlation between the genre of the novel and the use of the standard variety of French. The Tutuola phenomenon did not happen here. Even the self made writer Ousmane Sembène had to master a certain level of language competence before any of his novels or short stories could be published. Indeed, among the group of writers who have emerged in Senegal, Sembène stands out as the only one who is not a trained academic. Senghor is an academic, and so are C. Hamidou Kane, C. Ndao, Birago Diop, Abdoulaye Sadjì to mention just a few. The creation of Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines had, for a moment, raised the hopes that such a pattern would be broken with the publication of authors such as Mariama Bâ, who worked as a nurse. However recent surveys of Senegalese literature in the 1980s⁶⁵ indicate that the intellectual background of published writers follows the same background.

Aminata Sow Fall, who has been publishing novels since the 1970s is an accomplished scholar whose intellectual background seeps through her style. Whether it is *Le revenant* or *L'appel des arènes*, or even in her last novel *L'ex père de la nation*, the narrator is a classical one producing a text reminiscent of 19th century French creative prose. The first page of *L'ex père de la nation* reads like a compact recapitulation of the major themes of the French romantic period. Human frailty and fleeting existence are contrasted with the splendour and permanence of nature. The tropical sun which in *Le cahier d'un retour au pays natal* generates death and putrefaction is referred to here as "l'astre du jour." Its destructive powers are directed against dark clouds and the haze of the morning fog. To man and earth it brings light, life and energy.

At the textual level, the variety of language used in the narrative parts by Sow Fall is syntactically and semantically standard. However, unlike the early Ngugi, she does not provide a total translation of the dialogues of her characters and does not even hesitate to "borrow" a few lexical items from Wolof for expressive purposes. Only a few of these are translated, albeit a reduction of their semantic field, but all of them are modulated. In *L'appel des arènes*, despite an inadequate translation of the term "Kassag," denotative as well as connotative meaning of this word is split into the different actions, agents and other elements of its context of situation.

Pour moi, il n'y a pas eu de case de l'homme. Je voulais bien, mais cela ne s'est pas passé pour moi comme pour les autres garçons...J'avais toujours espéré que moi aussi, je danserais mon courage chaque nuit, durant des semaines, pendant que la terre tremblerait sous l'ivresse délirante des tambours de "kasag" et que crépiteraient de mille étincelles l'immense feu de bois dressé sur la place publique...⁶⁶

The anguished remorse of the speaker, as actualized by an unfulfilled volition indicates a deep disappointment; the suggestion of the advantageous posture of "les autres garçons" suggests a tenor characterized by a failed opportunity to acquire the same status in the social power structure; the term "courage" coheres lexically with the semantic feature "male" of the young boys and suggests an ordeal to be undergone as a rite of passage. One may read in the time-frame of the scene "night," an attempt to conjure up mysteries, some kind of religiosity or simply the moment at which the events described take place. The correlation of a verb suggesting harmonious movement of the body to the tune of music with another one signifying noises usually associated with a festive-like atmosphere and a last one denoting lights jumping in the air constitute a lexical set which actualizes the joy and celebration inherent in the event. The remorseful modality which we mentioned at the beginning of our analysis is further emphasized by the "hypothetical" mood of these verbs as realized by the conditional. Indeed, at the grammatical level, the passage establishes a contrast between verbs of volition inflected in the past tense (voulais, j'avais espéré) and unrealized dreams in the conditional (tremblerait, crépiterait).

Ousmane Sembène in his novel *Les bouts de bois de dieu* uses the same types of linguistic circumvention in order to reflect the context of situation in which his main characters evolve. Whenever a Wolof word is "borrowed" into the otherwise French text, it is fully modulated by its textual environment. At page 93 of *BBD*, he inserts three Wolof lexical terms in his narrative: "mbatou," "ndappe" and "bassi." Whereas the first two have been translated, the last has not. Its denotative meaning therefore, has to be gleaned from its textual environment as in the previous case. Sembène collocates the lexical term "bassi" with a lexical chain denoting grocery and spice shopping, "marché, condiments, épices," food that has been cooking for a long time, "journée, préparer, faire cuire," and finally with an adjective denoting exquisite taste as its most immediate modifier, "le succulent bassi."

The attention these two writers devote to the lexical cohesion of their texts in these two cases has already been noted in the case of

Achebe. It is not a matter of artistic licence but rather a necessary correlation from the nature of the literary medium they have adopted.

The third tendency in the use of European languages in African literature is best illustrated by the recent positions of the Kenyan Ngugi Wa Thiong'o⁶⁷ and the Senegalese Ousmane Sembene. Both these writers, after having published novels, short stories, plays for over a decade, rejected the use of French and English as adequate literary tools and opted respectively for drama production in Kikuyu, and movie production in Jola and Wolof. Ngugi and Sembene are both avowed committed writers who perceive their role as one of fostering social change through raising the awareness of their local audiences. Literary creation for them, is deeply embedded in the everyday social, cultural and political life of the communities which feed their inspiration. However, as we saw earlier with Bédi, not only is the acquisition of French very restricted as far as the local African populations are concerned but those who enjoy a proficiency in this language very often turn out to be the ones with the least stake in any social change. Thus, what was initially meant as an agent for social change was not accessible to its potential actors and was very often appreciated for its "exotic" value by the outside world and derided as reprehensibly pretentiousness by the local governments. The solution therefore for Ngugi and Sembene lay in the use of African languages, in oral or pictorial registers, so as to deliver the social and political message to the mass of the Senegalese and Kenyans. The reactions of the respective African governments was swift. Within a month or so of the representation of a play in Kikuyu by illiterate peasants in the Kenyan countryside, Ngugi was arrested and jailed. Sembene's movie *Ceddo* was banned in Senegal on the grounds that it contravened the legislation on spelling of Wolof (*Ceddo* instead of *Cedo*).

A similar ideological and political itinerary has prompted most critics to classify Sembene and Ngugi in the same category as far as their attitude towards language is concerned. We would like to differ by arguing that whereas Ngugi shifted very late in his career from an idiomatic standard usage of English to a contextualized one and eventually a rejection of this medium, Ousmane Sembene has always deviated from standard French usage in order to reflect the context of situation and culture of his characters.

Ngugi in his early novels systematically provides a full and total translation of the dialogues of his Kikuyu-speaking characters. Not only are the syntax and the morphology of their discourse substituted for their English equivalent but semantic and word collocations are

exchanged as well. In the passage below, Muthoni runs away from the all-Christian house of her father to willingly undergo incision and become a Kikuyu woman in the full sense of the word:

I say I am a Christian and my father and my mother have followed the new faith. I have not run away from that. But I also want to be initiated into the ways of the tribe. How can I possibly remain as I am now? I knew that my father would not let me, so I came.⁶⁸

Muthoni's father is a pastor of the new faith and therefore enjoys close contacts with the European missionaries and their diluted middle class values. The English language is one of these, but Joshua is not portrayed as the self-hating-alienated type of character that we find in Ousmane Sembène's *God's Bits of Wood*. Joshua and his family speak Kikuyu at home and so does his daughter Muthoni. In his emotionally charged passage, the syntax and the word collocation of the standard English variety are never blurred by the first language of the speaker. One may argue that Ngugi was justified in retaining all such features at the linguistic level since the deep expression of religious belief and faith are two registers common to English and Kikuyu. *Weep not, Child* and *The River Between* include numerous passages in which the characters, caught in a dilemma, turn into an introspective mood. In the writings of Ousmane Sembène and Aminata Sow Fall, these situations, along with those with a strong interpersonal component, produce a register of French incorporating features of the native language of the characters at different levels of the linguistic code. The more distraught the characters, the more angry, the further removed from standard French their discourse becomes. We find the same tendency to move away from the features of standard English variety in Caribbean literature as the casual conversations of the characters turn into dialogues⁶⁹ and eventually physical fights.⁷⁰ Ngugi, or more precisely the Ngugi of the two novels we mentioned earlier, seems to be an exception to this generalized practice among writers of the Third World. The streams of consciousness of his characters are delivered in standard syntactic and collocational varieties of English. Cultural realism at the linguistic level only became an overwhelming feature of Ngugi's work in *Petals of Blood*.⁷¹ In the early novels, Ngugi's characters, irrespective of their social status, use a standard variety of English untarnished by their linguistic background:

'Tell Nyambura I see Jesus.' She always remembered these words and she clung to them. She was grateful to Waiyaki for bringing them to her. She wondered about him. She could never understand him. He was

educated at the Mission yet he was leading the elements who had broken away from Siriana.... she often longed to discuss Muthoni's death with somebody who would understand. Waiyaki was the only person who had been close to her sister, and Nyambura could never think of Muthoni without Waiyaki coming into the picture. Sometimes she wished he had been on their side...⁷²

The lexical item "cling" collocated with "words" is an English cliché which suggests strong attachment to the form and content of a message. The Kikuyu language would use a different word collocation and a different imagery. The semantic features of the word "long" which we would gloss as "desire + strong" would be different in Kikuyu, so would the word "discuss." "To come into the picture" is an English idiomatic expression using the register of photography to signify the overriding importance of this element; Kikuyu culture, not enjoying the benefit of this technology to any great length, would use a different semantic feature. If we take for granted Ngugi's description of the harmony existing between the two groups before the introduction of the new faith, the expression "to be on one's side" if it exists in Kikuyu would be a neologism.

As far as language is concerned, the early Ngugi is a classical English writer with a strong political commitment to the extra linguistic setting of his novels. Ngugi, unlike Achebe or Kourouma, does not seek to bend the structure and the semantic features of the English language in order to reflect the values of a culturally differentiated context of culture. His concern is not so much with the cultural specificity of the African situation as it is with creating the political conditions that will eradicate the colonial and neo-colonial system of exploitation. In Ngugi's novels, the "been-to" is a political rather than a cultural problematic. Culture in Ngugi's novels acts as a grounding and a stepping-stone for political action. It consolidates and strengthens the political struggle but does not constitute its entirety:

A meaningful culture is the one born out of the present hopes and especially the hopes of an impoverished peasantry, and that of the growing body of urban workers.⁷³

The early Ousmane Sembene on the other hand translated literally the dialogues of his characters. In his novel *O Pays, mon beau peuple*, the Wolof idiomatic expressions included in the dialogues of the characters are deliberately reproduced word for word in the French text:

- ...le monde va en voyage...(le monde s'effondre)
 (in standard English: the world is coming to an end)
 ...le chemin de dieu (la volonté de dieu)
 (in standard English: God's ways)
 ...Je te coupe ton cou (permets-moi de t'interrompre)
 (in standard English: may I say something)⁷⁴

All of these sentences and phrases are Wolof idiomatic expressions which have been duly translated at the morphological and syntactic level but not at the semantic level. The sentence "Adina tukina" would be immediately ascribed a metaphorical meaning in Wolof whereas its French equivalent at the linguistic levels fails to convey this meaning; the noun phrase "le chemin de dieu" (yoonu yalla) is a calque from the Koranic expression "fee sabeel allah"⁷⁵ and literally means "in god's right way," its equivalent in the text even though fully actualizing the linguistic levels fails also to adequately portray its semantic component; finally the sentence "si je te coupe le cou..." is a Wolof idiomatic expression (daguma sa baat dé, wayé..) used whenever in a conversation the initial speaker is interrupted by another, its French linguistic equivalent being at best dubious, seeming to suggest total annihilation of the speaker.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's rejection of the English language grew out of a strong disillusionment with its effectiveness as an adequate tool for communicating messages of change to a population which is largely illiterate. Ousmane Sembene's rejection of French stems from the realization that politically as well as from a literary point of view, the variety of French used by African writers, differentiated though it may be, allows the writer closeness to neither his peoples nor to his context of culture. On the other hand, the cinema, as an immediate form of expression establishes a direct adequateness between writer, audience and situation.

Nevertheless, literary creation in French or English in Africa, shows very few signs of disappearing. The issue therefore of which variety of French to use, and what attitude to adopt in front of these languages remains as actual as it was for Achebe, Okara, Senghor, Sembene and Ngugi.

Today French or English or Portuguese in their idiomatic, standard metropolitan varieties have no future as literary mediums in African literature. The variety of French used for example by Senghor is perceived by most writers as doubly external. On the one hand as a variety of French, it is not Wolof or Bambara or Malinké; on the other hand, it incorporates few if any of the features of the local context of

situation or culture. Due to different contexts of situation and culture, deviation is a must. Such deviation will most likely be applied at the semantic level of the European languages while preserving the integrity of the linguistic (syntax and morphology) ones.

NOTES

1. *Le Code Noir ou recueil des règlements rendus jusqu'à présent concernant l'administration de la justice, la police, la discipline et le commerce des nègres dans les colonies françaises* (Paris, Prault Imprimeur-librairie, reproduction Basse Terre, Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe & Fort de France, Société d'histoire de la Martinique, 1980), 66-67.
2. J. Spencer, "West Africa and the English Language," in Spencer, *The English Language in West Africa* (London: Longman, 1971), 1-34.
3. L. Todd, *Pidgins and Creoles*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.
4. In systemic linguistics, the context of situation is characterized in terms of the degree of familiarity between participants (tenor), the medium used (oral/written, written to be spoken, written to be read, written to be performed, etc...), and finally the field of discourse or topic of communication. The configuration of these elements as they select potential structures at the grammatical level is what is referred to as the semiotics of the context of situation.
5. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale* (Paris: Payot, 1916), 16.
6. In accordance with systemic linguistics, the semantic component of a language refers to the different registers a language may incorporate. The adoption of pidgin in situations different from the one that originated it fostered the development of new linguistic signs to articulate new referents, as well as the expansion of modality to articulate new tenors. See M.A.K. Halliday, *Explorations in the functions of Language* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973).
7. S. Niang, "Creole features in the works of three West Indian writers: V. Reid, R. Mais and D. Walcott: A functional approach." (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, York University, 1986), 1-69.
8. H. Mitterand, *Les mots français*, 6e édition (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1981), 16-24.
9. See Niang, Ph.D. dissertation.
10. See note 2.
11. On the one hand, all the newly created African states adopted the language of their ex-colonizer as their official language, on the other hand, publishing houses in Europe remained the only avenues for a writer to have his/her work published twenty years ago. Today, the creation of the Nouvelles Editions Africaines has somewhat alleviated the situation but recent information shows that this valuable institution has been experiencing financial difficulties.
12. Leopold Senghor, along with Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, René Depestre, Jean Price Mars in Haiti and several others, was also one of the proponents of the Negritude movement which developed in France after the Second World War.
13. Paratactic structures would include structures such as coordination, juxtaposition or the use of numerous independent clauses unconnected to each other by logical markers. See Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976); W. Gutwinski, *Cohesion in literary texts* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976).
14. R. Jakobson, *Essais de linguistique générale*, trad. et préfacé par N. Ruwet (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964); P. Léon, "Modèles et fonctions pour l'analyse de l'énonciation" in *Les français dans le monde*, no. 145, 54-69.
15. J.R. Firth, *Papers in Linguistics*, (London: Oxford UP (1957), 1964); M. Gregory, and S. Carroll, *Language and Situation: Language Varieties and their Social Contexts* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978); M.A.K. Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic:*

- The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1978).
16. Roland Barthes defines connotation as an additional meaning which has developed from an initial or first one in "Avertissement," *Degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, (1953), 1964).
 17. L.S. Senghor, "Le français, langue de culture," in *Esprit* (Paris), Nov. 1962, no. 311.
 18. See G. Mounin, *Problèmes théoriques de la traduction* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), 144-145.
 19. C. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *La connotation* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1977), 15.
 20. *Ibid.*, 15.
 21. See also P. Léon, "Éléments phonostylistiques du texte littéraire" in P. Léon, H. Mittérand, P. Nesselroth, et P. Robert, *Problèmes de l'analyse textuelle* (Paris: Didier, 1971).
 22. F. Palmer, *Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981).
 23. *Problèmes théoriques*.
 24. *La connotation*, 17-18.
 25. E. Sapir, *Culture, Language and Personality: Selected Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949).
 26. "Le français, langue de culture."
 27. *Ibid.*
 28. C.A. Diop, *Nations nègres et culture*, I & II (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1954).
 29. P. Diagne, *Grammaire de wolof moderne* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1971).
 30. C.M. Njie, *Description syntaxique du wolof de Gambie* (Dakar: Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1982).
 31. M. Alleyne, "Acculturation and the cultural matrix of creolization" in D. Hymes, *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1971); K. Whinnom, "Linguistic Hybridization and the special case of Pidgins and Creoles," in *Pidginization*, 91-116; D. Craig, "Creole language and primary education," in Valdman, *Creole Linguistics*, 313-332; D. Craig, "Education and Creole English in the West Indies: some sociolinguistic factors," in *Pidginization*, 371-392; M. Dalphinis, *Caribbean and African Languages: Social History, Language and Education* (London: Karia Press, 1985).
 32. See note 24.
 33. L. Prieto, *Pertinence et pratique: essai de sémiologie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1975).
 34. "Langue de culture."
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. L.S. Senghor, *Liberté III: negritude et civilisation de l'universel* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), 18-19.
 37. *Liberté III*, 18.
 38. L.S. Senghor, *Ethiopiennes* (Paris: Seuil, 1954), 103-123.
 39. P. Garvin, *A Prague School Reader on Aesthetics, Literary Structure and Style* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 1964).
 40. See, e.g., J. Spleth, *Léopold Sédar Senghor* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985).
 41. J.R. Firth, *Papers in Linguistics* (London: Oxford UP, (1957), 1964).
 42. O. Bâ, *La langue française après la décolonisation* (Paris: Pensée Universelle, 1980).
 43. "Un citoyen de ce siècle," in *Equateur* (Paris, 1986), no.1, 14.
 44. S. Lab'Ou Tansi, *La vie et demie* (Paris: Seuil, 1979).
 45. M. Béli, *Mission terminée* (Paris: Buchet Chastel, 1957); *Le pauvre christ de Bomba* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1976); *Perpétue* (Paris: Buchet Chastel, 1974); *Le roi miraculé* (Paris: Buchet Chastel, 1958); *Remember Reuben* (UGE, 1974); Eza Boto, *Ville Cruelle* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1971); Ferdinand Oyono, *Une vie de boy* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1971); *Le vieux nègre et la médaille* (Paris: Julliard, 1972); René Philombe, *Un sorcier blanc à Zangali* (Yaoundé: CLE, 1970); Etienne Yanou, *L'homme-dieu de Bisso* (Yaoundé: CLE, 1974).
 46. M. Béli, "La langue française survivra t-elle à Senghor?" in *Komparatistische Hefte*, Heft 1, 1980.
 47. *Ibid.*
 48. N. Osundare, *Bilingual and Bicultural Aspects of Nigerian Prose Fiction* (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, York University, 1979).
 49. E. Sapir, *Language* (New York: Brace Harcourt, 1921); B.L. Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1956).
 50. W.T. Ihimaera, *Pounamou, Pounamou* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1972).
 51. M.R. Anand, *Between Tears and Laughter* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1973).
 52. See note 24.

53. C. Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 101.
54. The term "ideational" refers to the "topic" whereas "interpersonal" refers to the "degree of familiarity among participants."
55. J.P. Vinay et J. Darbelnet, *Stylistique comparée de l'anglais et du français: méthode de traduction* (Montréal: Beauchemin, (1958) 1977).
56. C. Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (London: Heinemann, 1987).
57. G. Okara, *The Voice* (London: Heineman, 1974).
58. "As a writer who believes in the utilization of African ideas and African folklore, and African imagery to the fullest extent possible, I am of the opinion that the only way to use them is to translate them almost literally from the African language native of the writer into whatever European language he is using as his medium of expression. I have endeavoured in my work to keep as close as possible to the vernacular expression." G. Okara, "African speech...English words" (*Transition*, vol. III, No. 10, 1963), 15.
59. See E. Obiechina, E., "The problem of language in African writing: the example of the novel" (*The Conch*, Vol V., Nos 1 & 2, 1973), 11-28.
60. V.S. Reid, *New Day* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1973).
61. G. Okara, *The Voice*, (London: Heineman, 1970), 70.
62. L. Bloomfield, *Le langage*, traduit par J. Caziot (Paris: Payot, 1970).
63. P. Hountondji, "Psychologie du langage chez les intellectuels colonisés," in *Présence Africaine* (Paris), 1^e trimestre 1967, No. 61, 11-31.
64. The "symbole" is a small placard reading "je suis un âna bâté" (I am a pack mule) which any student caught to speak a language other than French is made to hang around his neck. At recess, this victim is always seen lurking around groups of other students in the hope of catching somebody else in the act. At the end of the day the last bearer of the "symbole" is punished in front of his classmates.
65. M. Kane, "La littérature sénégalaise d'expression française" in G. Bonn, *Le Sénégal* (Verlag: Horst Erdmann; Dakar: Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1983).
66. *L'appel des arènes*, 76.
67. W.T. Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: Heinemann, 1986).
68. W.T. Ngugi, *The River Between* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 50-1.
69. A dialogue, as opposed to a conversation, is a register in which the topic as well as the tenor of discourse is tightly controlled. Whereas in a conversation the topic of discourse may change at random, a dialogue would select another topic only when its initial one has been resolved. See Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse*.
70. R. Mais, *The Hills Were Joyful Together* (London: Heinemann, 19), 34.
71. W.T. Ngugi, *Petals of Blood* (London: Heinemann, 1977).
72. *The River Between*, 75.
73. W.T. Ngugi, *Homecoming* (London: Heinemann, (1972) 1975), 12.
74. O. Sembene, *O pays, mon beau peuple!* (Paris: Le Livre Contemporain, 1957), 18.
75. See F.I. Case, "Le discours islamique dans les romans d'Aminata Sow fall," in K.E. Baird, and J.F. Gounard, *Commentaries on a Creative Encounter: Proceedings of a Conference on the Culture and Literature of Francophone Africa* (Albany: N.Y. African American Institute, 1988), 17-32.