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THE ROLE OF ETHNIC STEREOTYPES IN SHAPING LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES (A FRANCO-AFRICAN FICTION CASE STUDY)

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Abstract. The relevance of the study can be attributed to the need to deconstruct colonial narratives in the era of globalization, in which linguistic practices continue to reproduce historical hierarchies. Analysis of the Franco-African literary context allows the authors to identify the mechanisms of preserving and overcoming cultural inequality, which is significant for sociolinguistics, critical theory, and intercultural communication studies. The problem lies in the dual role of language: on the one hand, it serves as a tool for symbolic violence and the reinforcement of ethnic stereotypes; while on the other hand, it becomes a means of decolonization and formation of a new cultural identity. The study employs the method of critical discourse analysis to identify repressive and subversive linguistic strategies, as well as a comparative analysis of texts by the key Franco-African authors (A. Mabanckou, L. S. Senghor, F. Diome, A. Kourouma). The results demonstrate that Franco-African authors use specific strategies of linguistic resistance: hybridization (blending French with African languages), re-semanticization of colonial concepts, and parodic estrangement from the Eurocentric discourse. These strategies make it possible to transform language from an instrument of oppression into a platform for constructing authentic identity and creating new semiotic spaces. The research confirms that the linguistic strategies employed in Franco-African literature serve a dual function, acting simultaneously as a marker of colonial legacy and as an effective tool for cultural resistance. The findings are important for understanding the dynamics of language ideology and practices of overcoming social inequality in the modern multicultural world.

Keywords: Franco-African literature; Franco-African writers; literary creative activity; literary genres; ethnic stereotypes; linguistic expressions; postcolonial discourse; colonial legacy; language ideology; critical discourse analysis; construction of identity; linguistic strategies

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РОЛЬ ЭТНИЧЕСКИХ СТЕРЕОТИПОВ В ФОРМИРОВАНИИ ЯЗЫКОВЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЙ ФРАНКО-АФРИКАНСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ)

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Аннотация. Актуальность исследования обусловлена необходимостью деконструкции колониальных нарративов в эпоху глобализации, когда языковые практики продолжают воспроизводить исторические иерархии. Анализ франко-африканского литературного контекста позволяет выявить механизмы сохранения и преодоления культурного неравенства, что значимо для социолингвистики, критической теории и исследований межкультурной коммуникации. Проблема заключается в двойственной роли языка, который, с одной стороны, служит инструментом символического насилия и закрепления этнических стереотипов, а с другой – становится средством деколонизации и формирования новой культурной идентичности. Методология включает критический анализ дискурса для выявления репрессивных и субверсивных языковых стратегий, а также сравнительный анализ текстов ключевых авторов франко-африканской литературы (А. Мабанку, Л. С. Сенгора, Ф. Диом, А. Курумы). Результаты демонстрируют, что франко-африканские авторы используют специфические стратегии языкового сопротивления: гибридизацию (смешение французского с африканскими языками), ресематизацию колониальных концептов и пародийное отстранение от евроцентричного дискурса. Эти стратегии позволяют трансформировать язык из инструмента подавления в платформу для конструирования аутентичной идентичности и создания новых семиотических пространств. Исследование подтверждает, что языковые стратегии во франко-африканской литературе выполняют двойственную функцию, выступая одновременно как маркер колониального наследия и как действенный инструмент культурного сопротивления. Полученные данные важны для понимания динамики языковой идеологии и практик преодоления социального неравенства в современном мультикультурном мире.

Ключевые слова: франко-африканская литература; франко-африканские писатели; литературное творчество; литературные жанры; этнические стереотипы; языковые выражения; постколониальный дискурс; колониальное наследие; языковая идеология; критический дискурс-анализ; конструирование идентичности; языковые стратегии

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Introduction

Language functions not only as a tool for transmitting information but also as an instrument for constructing social reality, shaping social hierarchies, power relations, and collective identity [Karasik 2004: 45]. In Franco-African literature, language practices become a site of struggle for cultural autonomy: the French language, imposed during the colonial period through the education system and administration, still maintains its status as the “*language of power*” and remains a marker of cultural hierarchy, while simultaneously becoming a platform for decolonization in West and Central African countries [Fairclough 1989: 23]. For instance, in Senegal, French dominates the official sphere, whereas local languages are marginalized, reflecting the enduring influence of colonial structures [Diop 1954: 17].

Ethnic stereotypes, embedded in language and serving as an instrument of symbolic violence, not only marginalize local cultures and reproduce social inequality [Anchabadze 2018: 112; Boldyrev 1996: 45; Fairclough 2001: 67] but also continue to shape the global perception of Africa through a “*lens of catastrophe*” [Chabal 2012: 56] (wars, poverty, corruption, epidemics) in media outlets (Le Monde, UNESCO). This ignores Africa’s cultural and intellectual heritage, thereby reproducing the colonial logic of the “*civilizing mission*” [Said 1978: 3]. Language practices reflect a duality: from the reproduction of colonial clichés in the media (“*civilized West*” vs. “*backward Africa*”) [Ashcroft 2002: 4] to the rethinking of identity through literature [Mbembe 2001: 12]. This duality has material consequences: in international politics, Africa is perceived as an object of aid (“*Third World*”, “*Global South*”) [Bhabha 2004: 7], while in the educational curricula of Francophone countries, its history is presented as peripheral to European history [Chrétien 2022: 89]. Research into the mechanisms of linguistic stereotypes is crucial for overcoming historical traumas, fostering dialogue in the era of globalization [Sternin 2016: 78], decolonizing discourse, and forming a polycentric worldview in which African voices gain agency [Said 1978: 3].

Language practices become a field of struggle [Tarasov 2019]: they reproduce historical hierarchies while simultaneously serving as a tool for “*identity revision*” and “*cultural revival*” [Maslova 2019: 156], shaping new semiotic codes in postcolonial society.

Research Objective – to examine the dual role of ethnic stereotypes in shaping the language practices of Franco-African literature. This involves:

- Identifying repressive patterns (the reproduction of colonial clichés in media, education, and political discourse) and subversive strategies (the deconstruction of stereotypes through literature, pop culture, and activism).

- Assessing the double-edged role of language as both an instrument of symbolic violence and a means of resistance, which forms new semiotic spaces in postcolonial society.

- Determining the interrelation between language ideology, social inequality, and the dynamics of intercultural communication in the context of globalization [Prokhorov 2017: 34].

The study aims to reveal how linguistic strategies:

- preserve historical hierarchies;
- transform identity through the hybridization of language;

- influence the perception of Africa in international discourse.

The hypothesis proposes that language performs a dual function:

1. Repressive Function:

- Media and political discourse preserve colonial clichés; for example, using the term “*tribe*” to describe modern African communities, which erases their political and social complexity by reducing them to archaic stereotypes (e.g., articles in Le Monde referring to African regions as “*tribal zones*”).

- The educational system reinforces French as the “*language of success*”, marginalizing local languages. For instance, in Ivorian schools, the use of Baoulé and Dyula dialects is prohibited, exacerbating social stratification and cultural assimilation [Chrétien 2022: 89].

2. Subversive Function:

- Literature deconstructs stereotypes through linguistic hybridization. Novels by Alain Mabanckou (*Broken Glass*) and the poetry of Léopold Sédar Senghor employ French to critique neocolonialism by incorporating neologisms (e.g., blending French with Wolof: “*teranga*” hospitality) and parodying colonial rhetoric [Senghor 1964: 89; Mabanckou 2006: 112].

- Pop culture transforms language through creative practices: the musical genre *coupé-décalé* in Côte d’Ivoire mixes French with street slang and dialects, creating a new aesthetic that challenges Eurocentric norms (e.g., lyrics by the group Magic System).

These contradictions create a semiotic field of struggle, forming new cultural codes under globalization.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on three key approaches relevant to analyzing language in a postcolonial context:

1. Critical Discourse Analysis: Norman Fairclough developed a methodology for analyzing language as a social practice, where lexical choices (e.g., “*land development*” instead of “*colonial seizure*”) legitimize power structures [Fairclough 1989]. Ruth Wodak introduced the concept of the “*discursive strategy of othering*”, analyzing how media construct an image of Africa through clichés of “*chaos*” and “*backwardness*”

[Wodak 2011: 68]. T. A. van Dijk [2015] examined the role of stereotypes in reproducing racism, focusing on media narratives about migration crises.

2. Postcolonial Studies: Frantz Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, revealed the psychological violence of the colonial language, where French becomes an instrument of cultural suppression [Fanon 2008]. The analysis of the gendered dimension of colonialism is supplemented by Gayatri Spivak’s concept of the “subaltern” as groups deprived of the right to speak in the global discourse, as presented in *Can the Subaltern Speak?* [Spivak 1988]. Achille Mbembe, in *The Politics of Enmity*, explores hybrid forms of African identity emerging from the clash between local languages and French [Mbembe 2016: 33]. Édouard Glissant’s (1997) theory of “creolization” and “antillanité” in *Poetics of Relation* is applicable to analyzing Franco-African literature, where language becomes a space of “métissage”. The works of Ivanova [2015: 50] also contribute to understanding postcolonial discourse in African literature.

3. Sociolinguistics and Decolonization: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, in *Decolonising the Mind*, argues for the necessity of rejecting European languages in creative work as an act of resistance, ideas which have influenced language policy in Rwanda [Ngũgĩ 1986: 15]. Makoni and Pennycook [2007], in *Disinventing and Reconstituting Languages*, critique the concept of “language” as a colonial construct, proposing the study of hybrid practices (e.g., “francafricain” – a blend of French and African languages). Ndhlovu [2020], in *Decolonising Sociolinguistics in Africa*, analyzes how local languages (Wolof, Swahili) become instruments of cultural revival.

Despite extensive work in postcolonial studies, the Franco-African context remains underexplored:

1. A lack of research on how Francophone authors recode the colonial language to create new semiotic codes (e.g., mixing French with Lingala in the novel *Broken Dawn*).

2. The role of digital spaces in language transformation is poorly covered. An exception is the work of L. A. Kasanga [2021], *Digital Resistance in Francophone Africa*, which studies memes as a form of decolonization.

3. Insufficient analysis of language policy in countries rejecting French (e.g., Algeria’s shift towards English; Rwanda’s promotion of Kinyarwanda) [Shmeleva 2020: 145].

The methodological framework of the study combines qualitative approaches aimed at analyzing the dual role of language in the Franco-African context. The analysis of text as an object of linguistic research is based on approaches proposed by Galperin [2007: 56].

To demonstrate the dual role of ethnic stereotypes in language practices, the following works of Franco-African literature have been selected:

1. Alain Mabanckou, *Verre cassé (Broken Glass)* (2006) – the novel is a vivid example of language hybridization, blending French with Lingala (a Congolese language) and street slang, emphasizing local identity and challenging Eurocentric norms. European characters use clichéd phrases like “civilizing mission”, exposing the hypocrisy of colonial discourse.

2. Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Chants d’ombre (Songs of Shadow)* (1945) – the poetry combines European forms with African rhythms and metaphors. Senghor, a founder of the Negritude movement, sought to reinterpret African identity through the French language. His poetry serves as a bridge between cultures, preserving African identity while rejecting colonial clichés about “primitiveness”.

3. Fatou Diome, *Le ventre de l’Atlantique (The Belly of the Atlantic)* (2003) – exposes Eurocentric narratives about “saving” Africa, showing how media language shapes the image of migrants as either “victims” or “threats”. The author uses French to describe the trauma of African migrants, reflecting contemporary aspects of linguistic inequality. The text contains examples of the stigmatization of African dialects in a European context, echoing the problem of social stratification.

4. Ahmadou Kourouma, *Allah n’est pas obligé (Allah Is Not Obligated)* (2000) – incorporates elements of street slang into French, creating a hybrid style and demonstrating how language can serve as a tool for rewriting history, rejecting Eurocentric interpretations of African conflicts.

The selected works of Franco-African literature illustrate the dual role of language, namely, the reproduction of stereotypes and their deconstruction through semiotic resistance. As the comparative analysis of linguistic strategies demonstrates (see Table), all the authors under consideration employ diverse approaches to deconstructing colonial discourse, which aligns with Anchabadze’s [2018: 98] research on national stereotypes.

Table. Comparative Analysis of Linguistic Strategies for Deconstructing Ethnic Stereotypes in Franco-African Literature

Author	Literary Work	Key Linguistic Strategies	Repressive Function	Subversive Function
Alain Mabanckou	<i>Verre cassé (Broken Glass)</i>	Linguistic hybridization, parody, neologisms	Colonial clichés in media and education	Creation of new semiotic codes through the blending of French with Lingala
Léopold Sédar Senghor	<i>Chants d’ombre (Songs of Shadow)</i>	Cultural synthesis, resemanticization	Stereotypes of African culture’s “primitiveness”	Integration of African concepts (<i>teranga, sang noir</i>) into the French language
Fatou Diome	<i>Le ventre de l’Atlantique (The Belly of the Atlantic)</i>	Linguistic duality, hybrid practices	Stigmatization of migrants in European discourse	Resistance through the preservation of native language in everyday life
Ahmadou Kourouma	<i>Allah n’est pas obligé (Allah Is Not Obligated)</i>	Deconstruction through slang, irony	Eurocentric interpretation of African conflicts	Creation of counter-narratives through “broken” French

Results and Discussion

In Alain Mabanckou’s novel *Broken Glass*, the au-

thor’s linguistic strategy consistently demonstrates the dual nature of the colonial language. A characteristic

example is: «*Pour moi, la patrie, c'est 'mboka'. Pas ce mot creux que les Français nous ont collé comme une étiquette*» [Mbembe 2016: 91]. In this instance, the repressive function of language is manifested: the term “patrie” was imposed in the colonial context as a symbol of loyalty to France, systematically ignoring local cultural codes. Simultaneously, a subversive function is carried out: the use of “mboka” (from Lingala) restores an authentic identity, fundamentally redefining the concept of homeland through the African experience.

Another example from the same work: «*Les Blancs parlent de 'développement', mais nous, on appelle ça 'mbongo na bana' – l'argent mange les enfants*» [Mbembe 2016: 105]. Here, the repressive function is manifested in the way the word “développement” within a Eurocentric discourse serves to mask the actual exploitation of African resources. The subversive response lies in the use of the phrase “mbongo na bana” in Lingala, which exposes the hypocrisy of so-called “aid” by highlighting its destructive social consequences [Spivak 1988: 275]. Thus, Mabanckou does not merely translate a concept but creates a semiotic contrast that lays bare the hidden mechanisms of the neocolonial economy.

These linguistic examples vividly illustrate the realization of the research hypothesis regarding the dual function of language: the repressive function is evident in the imposed concepts of “patrie” and “développement”, while the subversive function is found in their semiotic substitution with the terms “mboka” and “mbongo na bana”. Consequently, hybridization serves not only aesthetic purposes but also acts as a key mechanism for the decolonization of consciousness, creating new semiotic spaces for affirming African subjectivity. This directly addresses the research objective of identifying repressive patterns and subversive strategies as described in works of critical discourse analysis [Fairclough 1989; Tarasov 2019: 90].

The creation of new semantics, where local lexical units are transformed into symbols of resistance, finds vivid embodiment in the following example from Franco-African literature: «*Ici, on ne dit pas 'liberté', on dit 'libanga' – c'est notre façon de résister*» [Mbembe 2016: 102]. This statement demonstrates a conscious rejection of the colonial term “liberté”, which was historically used to justify French intervention under the pretext of “liberation from barbarism”. This process illustrates the repressive function of language, whereby key concepts are imposed by the dominant culture. In opposition to this, a subversive linguistic strategy is employed: the creation of the neologism “libanga”, formed by combining the French “libre” (free) and the word “nganga” (power / force / spirit) from the Lingala language. Such linguistic synthesis does not merely replace the colonial term but creates a fundamentally new concept, linking the idea of freedom with local spiritual power and thereby radically redefining the colonial narrative. This process of semantic shift transforms language into an effective tool of cultural and ideological resistance, aligning with research on the connection between language and ethnic identity [Tarasov 2019: 160; Fairclough 1989: 32].

An important aspect of linguistic resistance in Franco-African literature is the use of parody to expose

Eurocentric discourse and the rhetoric of superiority. A striking example is the phrase: «*Nous apportons la lumière de la civilisation dans vos jungles. Sans nous, vous seriez restés des sauvages*» [Mabanckou 2006: 89]. Here, the repressive function is manifested in the reproduction of the classic colonial narrative of the “civilizing mission”, which historically justified exploitation. However, the subversive potential is revealed through the author’s technique: Mabanckou deliberately places these words in the mouth of a negative colonialist character, thereby exposing the absurdity and hypocrisy of such clichés [Spivak 1988: 271].

Another example demonstrates a critique of the colonial education system: «*Quand tu dis 'école', moi j'entends 'mbwa' – le chien de la colonisation qui aboie encore*» [Mabanckou 2006: 105]. The repressive function here is linked to the forcible imposition of French as the “language of civilization”, which led to the erasure of local languages and cultures. The subversive response lies in a powerful metaphor where school is compared to “mbwa” (dog), which emphasizes its role as an instrument of control and represents an ironic rejection of colonial values [Ngũgĩ 1986: 20]. Such speech strategies of resistance are analyzed in detail in the works of Shmeleva [2020: 112].

A particularly illustrative dialogical example is: «*Ils appellent ça 'mission civilisatrice', nous on rit et on répond: 'Biso, tozali na culture ya kokata!'*» [Mabanckou 2006]. The cliché “mission civilisatrice” served a repressive function, masking colonial violence as “enlightenment”. The response in Lingala using the word “kokata” (to cut) becomes an act of symbolic resistance, where humor and cultural pride are transformed into an effective weapon against colonial rhetoric [Glissant 1997: 115]. This illustrates the dynamics of intercultural communication under conditions of conflict [Sternin 2016: 145].

The poetry of Léopold Sédar Senghor constitutes a systematic practice of semantic resistance, where the French language becomes an instrument for revising colonial stereotypes. In the poem *Femme Noire* (*Black Woman*), the author creates a powerful contrast between the repressive and subversive functions of language: «*Ta beauté me frappe comme l'éclair d'une sagaie / Sang noir qui inonde la clarté matinale*» [Senghor 1964: 30]. Whereas the 19th-century European literary tradition associated the image of “black blood” with barbarism, Senghor transforms it into a symbol of vital force, asserting the dominance of African aesthetics [Senghor 1964: 30].

A strategy of particular significance is the integration of African concepts into French poetic language. In *Prière aux Masques* (*Prayer to the Masks*), Senghor introduces the term “teranga”: «*Écoute le 'teranga' des ancêtres / Dans l'ombre féconde où germent les esprits*» [Senghor 1964: 49]. This linguistic device serves a dual function: it overcomes the limitations of colonial discourse and establishes a cultural synthesis where African hospitality becomes the foundation of a universal humanism [Diop 1954: 49].

The poem *Totem* demonstrates a re-evaluation of colonial terminology: «*Je dois cacher mon totem dans la chair de mes veines / Le totem de ma race, je le porte au plus*

profond» [Senghor 1964: 78]. Senghor transforms the concept of the “totem”, which in colonial discourse was associated with primitivism, into a symbol of spiritual connection with ancestors, emphasizing the inseparability of African identity [Mbembe 2016: 78]. The re-semanticization of images of darkness and light in the poem *Nuit de Sine (Night of Sine)* deserves special attention: «Étoile de sang sur la nuit de Sine / Le lait des ténèbres baigne nos âmes» [Senghor 1964: 42]. In contrast to the European tradition that associated darkness with evil, Senghor sanctifies the African night, presenting it as a source of wisdom and spiritual renewal [Senghor 1964: 42].

This analysis confirms that Senghor's strategy of integrating African concepts directly serves the goal of transforming identity. By reinterpreting concepts such as “totem” and “black blood”, he not only creates a cultural synthesis but also actively influences the perception of Africa in international discourse, offering an alternative to Eurocentric interpretations. Consequently, Senghor's linguistic practice vividly illustrates how language can preserve historical hierarchies (through established meanings) in order to radically redefine them later, a phenomenon that resonates with research in linguocultural studies [Maslova 2019: 201].

As Diop notes, «Senghor colonizes the French language from within, forcing it to serve the African imagination» [Diop 1954: 112]. This linguistic project not only deconstructs the hierarchies of colonial discourse but also affirms African identity as a central element of the modern cultural landscape. In Fatou Diome's novel *The Belly of the Atlantic* (2003), the problem of linguistic inequality is revealed through the lens of the experience of African migrants in France. The author demonstrates how language practices become a field of struggle for identity. A revealing episode is when the migrant protagonist hears from a French interlocutor: «Vous devriez être reconnaissantes qu'on vous donne une chance» [Diome 2003: 67]. This remark illustrates the repressive function of language, reproducing the colonial stereotype of Europe “saving” Africa. However, Diome contrasts this with a subversive strategy: the heroine engages in an internal monologue in a mixture of French and Wolof, which becomes an act of linguistic resistance [Ndhlovu 2020: 89]. This example demonstrates the operation of national socio-cultural stereotypes in verbal communication [Prokhorov 2017: 67].

Another significant example is found in a scene discussing African traditions: «Ils appellent ça 'coutumes barbares', mais nous on sait que c'est notre histoire» [Diome 2003: 124]. Here, the repressive function is manifested in the stigmatization of African culture through the label “barbaric customs”. The subversive response lies in affirming the value of local history, creating a contrast between external evaluation and the characters' internal self-perception.

In a dialogue about professional realization, a characteristic phrase is heard: «Même avec tes diplômes, tu restes une immigrée à leurs yeux» [Diome 2003: 98]. This example demonstrates how linguistic stereotypes reinforce social inequality. The repressive discourse denies the professional achievements of migrants, while the subversive reaction manifests itself in the awareness of this unjust attitude and subsequent re-

sistance through the assertion of one's own competence, reflecting problems of intercultural communication [Anchabadze 2018: 134].

Of particular note is the heroine's internal monologue: «Je parle leur langue, mais je rêve dans la mienne» [Diome 2003: 156]. This statement vividly illustrates the psychological duality of the migrant linguistic experience. The repressive function is manifested in the necessity of using the French language in daily life, while the subversive strategy is preserved through connection with the native language in the sphere of intimate experience and cultural memory.

These examples from Diome's work allow us to determine the interconnection between language ideology and social inequality. The repressive discourse (“You should be grateful”) reinforces the migrant's status as a “debtor”, leading to social stratification. Thus, hybrid linguistic practices (internal monologue in a mixture of languages) act not merely as a form of psychological compensation, but as an act of everyday resistance that forms new semiotic spaces in postcolonial society. This fully corresponds to the stated objectives of the work and confirms the thesis on identity construction through language [Boldyrev 1996: 88].

In Ahmadou Kourouma's novel *Allah Is Not Obligated* (2000), linguistic strategies become a powerful tool for deconstructing neocolonial narratives. The author consciously uses a hybrid language, combining French with street slang and African elements, to convey the experience of a child soldier. A characteristic example is: «La guerre est un jeu où les Blancs font les règles, et nous sommes leurs pions» [Kourouma 2000: 78]. This statement reveals the repressive function of media discourse, which often presents African conflicts as “chaotic” and “inexplicable”. Kourouma's subversive strategy is manifested in the use of the term “pions” (pawns), which exposes the structural violence of neocolonialism [Makoni, Pennycook 2007: 55].

Another indicative example: «Ils disent 'crise humanitaire', nous on dit 'business comme d'hab'» [Kourouma 2000: 112]. Here, the repressive discourse of humanitarian rhetoric masks economic interests. Kourouma contrasts this with folk wisdom expressed through colloquial French, which becomes a form of semiotic resistance, as analyzed within the framework of critical discourse analysis [Wodak 2011: 81]. In a scene describing international aid, an ironic remark is made: «Les organisations nous donnent du riz avec une main et prennent notre pétrole avec l'autre» [Kourouma 2000: 145]. This example demonstrates how simple yet metaphorical language reveals the duality of international intervention. The repressive function of humanitarian discourse is exposed through the contrast between declared aid and real exploitation.

Particularly significant is the protagonist's monologue: «Mon français est cassé comme nos vies, mais il dit la vérité» [Kourouma 2000: 93]. Kourouma consciously uses “broken” French as an aesthetic device, transforming linguistic marginality into an instrument of authentic testimony. This approach challenges the monopoly of “correct” language as the only way to represent reality. Through these linguistic strategies, Kourouma not only describes tragic experience but also

creates a counter-narrative that challenges Eurocentric interpretations of African conflicts. His language becomes a form of historical testimony, restoring the subjectivity of those who are usually deprived of a voice, echoing ideas outlined in Ivanova's [2015: 60] work on postcolonial discourse.

Conclusion

The analysis of linguistic strategies in the works of Senghor, Mabanckou, Diome, and Kourouma reveals both common patterns and specific emphases in the deconstruction of ethnic stereotypes. All the authors examined employ the French language not as a passive tool, but as a field for active semiotic resistance, thereby confirming the study's central hypothesis regarding its dual function.

– Léopold Sédar Senghor and Alain Mabanckou emphasize offensive strategies: Senghor through cultural synthesis and the elevated re-semanticization of key concepts (*teranga, sang noir*); Mabanckou through linguistic hybridization and the parodic exposure of colonial rhetoric. Both authors actively forge a new language to describe the African experience.

– In contrast, Fatou Diome and Ahmadou Kourouma demonstrate defensive and adaptive strategies. Diome explores linguistic duality and resistance through the preservation of native language in the context of migration. Kourouma utilizes “broken” French and vernacular speech as instruments of authentic testimony, challenging the monopoly on “correct” representation.

Common to all authors is the strategy of *reappropriating language*: whether by infusing old forms with new meaning (Senghor), creating hybrid forms (Mabanckou), preserving an internal linguistic space (Diome), or employing marginal slang as a symbol of

truth (Kourouma). This comparative analysis clearly demonstrates that Franco-African literature constitutes a unified yet diverse field of struggle. The specific linguistic strategies identified – hybridization, re-semanticization, and the use of “broken” French – are not merely formal devices. These strategies function both as markers of symbolic violence inherited from the colonial past and as powerful instruments of resistance, enabling the construction of new, authentic narratives of African identity in the modern multicultural world [Anchabadze 2018: 205; Boldyrev 1996: 176; Prokhorov 2017: 155].

The reception of the analyzed works in African and European criticism reveals a polarity of assessments. While European literary scholars [Hanne 2021] emphasize formal innovations, African researchers [Ndhlovu 2020] highlight the political significance of the linguistic strategies. The novels of Mabanckou and Kourouma have gained wide recognition in Francophone circles; however, criticism notes their marginality within academic discourse. Senghor's poetry, in contrast, is canonized but often interpreted without consideration of its decolonial potential.

These strategies allow the authors not only to critique the legacy of colonialism but also to construct new models of African identity. In their works, language becomes a space for dialogue where historical experience is reinterpreted and alternative narratives are created. Future research prospects lie in analyzing new forms of linguistic resistance in the digital environment, as well as in the comparative study of linguistic strategies in the literature of different Francophone regions of Africa, utilizing the methodological frameworks developed in sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysis.

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