Segun Ogungbemi

The African European Inter-Play

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Chapter Seventeen

WHICH WAY FRENCH?

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Introduction

I t is commonly accepted that Modern French in its grammatical structure is still in most respects the way it was codified in the 17th Century (Price 1971). This observation does not mean that the French Language has remained *in situ* ever since, but rather in the 17th Century we witness the association of a political and social structure whose variety of French and whose hegemony is still dominant in France today.

Contrariwise, French has undergone serious evolution regardless of stringent linguistic regulation laws put in place to ensure its purity, homogeneity and uniqueness. The focus of this essay is to probe into some of the trajectories that Modern French has covered since the 17th Century and see what these winds of change, both external and internal has made of the language.

A Bird's –Eye View of the History of French

French has not always existed, just as France has not always existed. The prehistory of French begins with the

colonisation of Gaul by the Romans. The Celts who inhabited Gaul when the Romans came were Indo-Europeans.

They were related to the Greeks, Romans and Germanic tribes in both language and culture. The Celts appeared to have originally lived in Eastern Europe but began to migrate westwards around 500 B.C and settled in Gaul, displacing other peoples they found there, notably the Iberians.

The Gaul was approximately, where the present day France is, although it spread farther than that. The Celtic language had some impact on Modern day French. It gave the French language words like *alouette, bec, charrue, chemin, balai, chêne, chemise, cloche* etc. The Gaulois had curious habits of counting by 20. They would ask *'l' homme n'a – t – il pas 20 doigts à sa disposition, ceux des mains et ceux des pieds?* To express 40, they would say, *deux – vingts, 60, trois vingts*. (Hamon A. 1962). *Les six – vingts* features in Molière's *l'Avare*. This trace is in modern French where 80 is *quatre – vingts*.

French, because of the numerous structural characteristics it shares with other languages such as Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Romania is classified as being genetically related to them and hence, member of the Romance group of languages. The Romance languages derive their resemblances from their links to a common ancestor, Latin.

Latin was imposed on Gaul by the Roman conquerors. This period was known as the period of the latinisation of Gaul. Let us imagine what happened to the former French colonies in Africa. French was imposed on them to the extent that autochthonous languages of the colonies were left undeveloped. In the former Portuguese colonies, the situation was even worse. Comparatively, the latinisation of the Gaul was worse than these two situations. In all likelihood, a situation commensurate to this was the European and mainly Spanish assimilationist policies in the Americas where hundreds of American Indian languages

were virtually reduced to substratum. It was probably worse than that.

By 500 AD, the Roman Empire was already in decline. It was no longer possible for Rome to continue holding on with an iron fist to Europe including Gaul. As a result, local varieties of Latin began to diverge from the common Latin ancestor.

In Gaul, a local variety of the language began to spring up and was moving fast away from Latin. This was how French started to bud. However, the influence of Latin though still being felt, began to shed its structures. Latin is a synthetic language. For example *amavi* (I loved) is one word. The same utterance is rendered in French in three words. *J'ai aimé*. French gradually became an analytic language. French had to turn to other languages for loaned words. It borrowed from old Greek such words as ange, diable, prophète, apôtre, église, paradis and many more. From Hebrew, it borrowed sabbat, amen, alléluia, séraphin, chérubin etc.

After 400 AD, the Germanic hordes began to spread rapidly across Gaul. One apparently amazing characteristic of the so called barbaric hordes was their willingness to learn the Latin based variety of Gaul (Andrin Battye and Marie-Anne Hintze, 1992). The conquering gangs must have encountered in Gaul a culture more sophisticated than their own. One of the Germanic tribes, the Franks gave France its name. Besides, they gave several words to French such as guerre, orgueil, banc, jardin, bannière among others. Furthermore, other languages contributed to the development of French, for example Arab which gave it zéro, algèbra, alcool, café, cotton, orange, amiral etc. Turkish and Persian languages are also not left out.

From the 15th Century onwards, European voyages and great discoveries contributed to French, directly and indirectly. As a result, words were borrowed from Africa, Asia and South America.

However, it is from European languages and particularly English that French borrowed heavily. It has been doing so, since the 11th Century. For a long time, Latin remained the language of education throughout Europe.

As a result of the continued political unification of France in the 16th century, the prestige of French started to increase. French soon became the language of trade and diplomacy. Not only did French take the place of Latin as the language of international communication between men of letters, Heads of states, scientists and intellectuals all over Europe. Catherine the Great of Russia, the German Philosopher Grimm, the English writer, Walpole and others wrote elegant French. Gazettes and journals were published in French in most European capitals.

Then in 1789, the French Revolution took place. The new regime concerned with consolidating the revolution and the Republic as one and indivisible, attempted to do away with all genres of local languages which were regarded as obstacles to revolutionary propaganda (H. Walter: 1994). It became apparent that French rulers associated linguistic diversity with the disintegration of the French nation. So, all dialects and patois were and are still being discouraged and stigmatized.

In the 20th Century however, French met with serious setbacks. In 1919, on the insistence of the U.S.A. and Britain, the Treaty of Versailles drawn up in English as well as in French dealt a severe blow to the exclusivity which French had enjoyed over a long period. A further setback occurred at the foundation of the U.N.O. Only English, Spanish and Russian were proposed as working languages.

French and Chinese were added only as a result of energetic protest from the French and the Chinese.

Which Way French?

French is undoubtedly the most highly codified language in Europe. The goal of codification in this respect, as (Milroy, J. and Milroy, L. 1985) rightly put it is "the suppression of optional variation in language". In spite of this age-old practice, the pressure has continued to mount on French from three main fronts.

The first is from English which has considerably transformed the structure of French (Olufemi Ogunyipe: 1998). Broadly speaking, modern terminology in science, technology etc. is often characterised by borrowing from English, the thing together with the concept being introduced along with the word. Words such as tuner, walkman, compact – disc, video – clip etc. fall into this category. For these neologisms, the ministerial commission on terminology prescribed *syntoniseur, baladeur, disque audionumérique and bande vidéo promotionnelle* respectively (H. Walter: 1994). These and many others seems "jaw-breaking" and hence often difficult to internalize.

The second opening from which pressure is mounting on French is from French commonwealth countries, *la Francophonie* outside France. In these francophone communities, characteristic local accents, the use of peculiar lexical items and differences in syntax and morphology are exhibited. Examples of such communities are many, for lack of space, we shall briefly consider a few: namely, Canada, and French speaking communities in Africa.

Canadian French

The morphology of spoken Canadian French has its own peculiarities. The negative *particule* is absent: *J'ai pas vu.* Verbs are frequently regularized: *je vas, vous disez, ils vontaient* (corresponding to *vais, dites, allaient* respectively). (A Battye and M.A. Hintze, 1992). The lexicon comprises items which in some respects might have been influenced in my own opinion by American English. The versions in bracket are in Standard French. *Avant – midi* (matinée), *fini de semaine* (week-end), *magasiner* (faire les courses), *inlogeable* (inhabitable), *anticiper* (prévoir), *disconnecter* (couper), *expecter* (attendre), *checker* (vérifier), *mouver* (déménager), *truster* (avoir confiance), *dissatisfait* (mécontent), *jouer les second violins* (passer au second plan). (Id. ibid), *casher un cheque* (toucher un cheque), *s'appareiller* (s'habiller), *espérer* (attendre), *ligne à linge* (corde à linge) *pas pire* (très bien), *être en famille* (être enceinte). (H. Walter, 1994).

Some of the peculiarities found in the French language in Africa are products of borrowing, derivation and semantic shift. The attempt to adapt French Language to the realities of Africa required lexical borrowing from African languages such as Bambara, Wolof, Lingala among others. However, in this paper we are restricting ourselves to the lexis. Formation of parallel words to the Standard French through derivation is a visible phenomenon. *Arriérer* (reculer), *cigaretter* (fumer), *doigter* (montrer du doigt), *confiturier* (mettre de la confiture sur son pain), *grever* (faire grève), *accorder* (donner son accord) etc (A. Baltye and M.A. Hintze; 1992).

Semantic shift is another aspect of the African variety of the French language. Here are some examples: *Ambiancer* (fête), *serrer la bouche* (refuser de dire la vérité), *grossir*

(grossir – pour une femme enceinte), gros mots (grands mots, mots savants), il tombe (il pleut), je vais m'étendre (je vais me reposer), fatigue (malade), crier quelqu'un (engueuler quelqu'un), etc (H. Walter; 1994).

French Inside France

If pressure in form of loan words from English is understandable, such cannot be said of a language that has been policed, protected and regulated over the centuries, and yet is rebellious from the inside. Even though grammatical forms have evolved in an infinitesimal way since the 17th century, the structure of French has always been considered immutable and virtually untouchable.

Now, the relative pronouns are not what they used to be. The relative pronoun dont is becoming rare. When used, it is by highly educated people and often used clumsily. People often generate sentences such as:

- C'est de lui dont je te parle.
- C'est l'âme dont il s'occupe (H. Walter; Id. Ibid)

Speakers often do not realise that don't already contain "de" (de qui)
Hence one can say correctly
- C'est lui dont je te parle.
Or
- C'est de lui que je te parle

The compound forms, lequel, auquel, etc. find themselves in unusual situations. The following sentences were produced by academics, politicians and young intellectuals.
- ils reçoivent des télégrammes de vingt mots dans lequel on leur dit...
- toutes les raisons pour laquelle....

- la seule raison pour lesquelles ils n'ont pas été....
- une légende révolutionnaire auquel je tiens...
- d'une carrière politique dans lequel on cherche à obtenir...
- des fictions sur lequel.... (H. Walter; Id: ibid)

Some may even justify the absence of agreement between the relative pronoun and its antecedent. In the last example, 'des fictions sur lequel'...it is arguable that nothing is lost by not having 'lequel' in the plural form. The information needed has already been provided by 'des fictions'.

Conclusion

Spoken for centuries all over the world by different peoples of different races and cultures, French has and is still demonstrating the capacity to adapt to the modern needs of communication, in spite of the zeal in condemning non-standard use of the language. There is also the desire to protect the traditional standard from both foreign and locally generated variations and "contaminations".

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OLUFEMI OGUNYIPE

Translation in Cultural Development: The Yoruba Weltanschauung

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Introduction

Weltanschauung is a German term which means a conception that a people have of the course of events in, and of the purpose of the world as a whole, forming a philosophical view or apprehension of the universe and the general idea embodied in a cosmology. Though this term has often been translated as "worldview" in English and "vision du monde" in French, its values transcend the interpretations given by English, French and many other languages.

As a nation's weltanschauung is not known to be static throughout the ages, one of the phenomena responsible for its transformation is translation. Hence, in theory it should be possible to undertake extensive studies of the translation of major works of the world and bring out its implication on the target languages and the nations concerned. In other words, such studies should be able to bring into light directly or tangentially how the imparted knowledge through translation has led to the evolution of new ideas and gradual advancement of nations.

For centuries, the vehicle of intellectual discourse in Western Europe was Latin. European vernaculars had no term to designate, for instance, abstract philosophical vocabulary. They could only be conveyed in Latin in those days and it was considered superior to other tongues. The quest for national language and national self-determination had as foundation the determination to have the Gospel in vernacular. John Wyclif,

translating literally from the Latin Vulgate gave the English people the first whole Bible in English. (Dickson, 11) Martin Luther translated the Bible into German during the Reformation to give it a boost as a potential national language that would soon displace Latin. (Steniar, 85)

The phenomenon is not restricted to Western Europe alone. Already in the 9th century, the Slavs in Eastern Europe were the first to imbibe Christian culture. There arose in Great Moravia, the first historic Slavic empire governed by Slavs–the use of a liturgy using national language. The era brought not only the emergence of Slavic literature, but also the first formulation of the national idea in Czechoslovak and in all Slavic history (Jackobson, 586-7). The fire of translating the Gospel into non-Slavic tongues extended to Rumanian, Polish and numerous Finno-Ugrian peoples who possessed a vernacular translation of the Gospel (Ibid., 595)

Yoruba Weltanschauung

A pattern of Weltanschauung is observable in the African experience. Apart from the fact that quite a number of the indigenous African languages are yet to be converted into written alphabet, translation as an activity in the African cultural experience has been accompanied by the usual problems which are summed up in the following words in *Encyclopaedia Brittannica*:

The tasks of the translator are the same whether the material is oral or written, but, of course, translation between written texts allows more time for stylistic adjustment and technical expertise. The main problems have been recognised since antiquity and were expressed by St. Jerome, translator of the famed Latin Bible, the Vulgate, from the Hebrew and Greek originals. Semantically, these problems relate to the adjustment of the literal and the literary and the conflicts that so often occur between an exact

translation of each word, as far as this is possible, and the production of a whole sentence or even a whole text that conveys as much of the meaning of the original as can be managed. These problems and conflicts arise because of factors already noticed in the use and functioning of language: languages do not operate in isolation but within and as part of cultures, and cultures differ from each other in various ways. Even between the languages of communities whose cultures are fairly closely allied, there is by no means a one-to-one relation of exact lexical equivalence between the items of their vocabularies. (583)

The majority of indigenous African languages fall in the tonal category, while the major influences on them have emanated from cultures that are informed by intonational languages. The implication of this scenario is that translation will be easier from English or French or Portuguese, as the case may be, to Fulfude or Fulani, for example, than to Igbo or Yoruba, for example, because Fulfude and Fulani are more intonational than Igbo and Yoruba.

Although meaningfulness in language is as much a feature of the phonetic process as other features of language use, the lexical aspect has proved quite exciting in translation in the African experience. The Yoruba language was among the early beneficiaries of the christian scripture in Africa: Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther translated the Bible into Yoruba. But one sore point of the exercise is the translation of the biblical "Satan" and "devil" into "Esu". Esu, as some scholars have pointed out, is one of the demon-gods of the Yoruba pantheon, believed by its adherents to have both a positive and a negative side and is not really the equivalent of the biblical devil that is wholly the opposite of God who is holy, infallible, loving and perfect.

There is the interesting development which translation has effected: the old notion of a demon-god capable of both good

and evil is rapidly giving way to the Christian view of Esu as a devil totally given to evil. Nowadays, Christian individuals with family names that venerate Esu (Èsùbíyí, Èsùgbénró, Èsùdáre, etc) have begun to change such names in reaction to the new Christian semantic associations of "Esu". By contrast, the translators of other sacred documents different from the Bible have retained a lexical fidelity in the translation: satan is translated as "asatani". But what "Esu" has effected in Yoruba culture since the advent of Christianity is a demonstration of the importance of translation as a formal cultural exercise.

There is the ongoing debate in the study of African literature which pits "Afrocentricity" against "Eurocentricity": some critics are contending that African writing is too European in thinking, orientation and presentation, and they propose a corrective measure involving a return of African writing to the relevant indigenous African languages from the former languages of colonialism. Ngugi wa Thong'o who began his writing career using the English language now writes first in Gikuyu before translating his writing into English.

The step adopted by Ngugi seems reasonable because it will ensure the survival of the indigenous African language, Gikuyu, while still making the literary work so written available to the rest of the world through translation. It should be pointed out here that the translator of the work need not be the author himself: any bilingual scholar, so trained, can make a work available in either language. For example, Leopold Sedar Senghor's poems written in French are available to readers in English and in several other languages because of the input of translators. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart is being read in several different languages although it cut off the Igbo reader initially because it was first written in English instead of Igbo language.

Thus, in the debate over how to tackle the problem of African post-colonial cultural dilemma, the argument should not necessarily be for greater involvement with the language of colonialism or the adoption of an African language as lingua

franca (Wole Soyinka once proposed Swahili for all of Africa) but greater pursuit of bilingualism and the formal production of trained translators.

The training of a translator is important because of the necessity to master two languages and understand the cultures from which the languages have emanated. There is also the imaginative component in translation: it is an exercise that relies on the imaginative faculty for its effectiveness. A comparison of the translations of the Bible in English and Yoruba will show that apart from mastery of language, a translator must be imaginative as well. This is probably why some people say of certain documents that they prefer a given translation to another. While the imagination of a translator will serve him or her well in literature, in other areas of cultural experience the imaginative content can prove harmful. For example, the Christian Bible is the word of God given to men though the inspiration of the Holy Spirit

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

God has given His word to men and women through the human agent with the potential for interference by the imaginative faculty of His divinely inspired servants. But the Lord Himself offers a solution: in the mouths of two or three witnesses, let the truth be established. The different portions of the Bible, though by different people at different points in time, sometimes centuries apart, must be in agreement. God will not contradict Himself. He is faithful to His word.

The book of Proverbs is a collection of moral and Christian maxims. It contains instructions concerning right living. In the book, discourses on wisdom, justice, industry, purity, etc., are pronounced. A contrast is drawn between wisdom and folly,

righteousness and sin: nowhere in the Bible is folly or ignorance justified or sin approved of.

Anger

i. A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, and a man of wicked intentions is hated. (Proverbs 14:17)
Ẹni tí ó bá tètè bínú, hùwà òmùgọ̀ ẹni elété bíburú ni a kórira.

ii. He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly (Proverbs 14:29)
Ẹni tí ó bá lọ́ra láti bínú, ó ní ìmọ̀ púpọ̀, ṣùgbọ́n ẹni tí ó bá yára bínú ó fi ìwà òmùgọ̀ rẹ̀ hàn.

Correction of Children

i. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6)
Tọ́ ọmọdé ní ọ̀nà tí yóò tọ̀, nígbà tí ó bá dàgbà, kì yóò kúrò nínú rẹ̀.

ii. Foolishness is bound up in the Herat of a child, the rod of correction will drive it far from him (Proverbs 22:15)
Àyà ọmọdé ni ìwà wèrè di sí; ṣùgbọ́n pàsáfi ìtọ́ni ni yóò lé e jìnnà kúrò lọ́dọ̀ rẹ̀.

Fear of God

i. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure with trouble (Proverbs 15:16)
Díẹ̀ pẹ̀lú ìbẹ̀rù Olúwa, ó sàn ju ìsura púpọ̀ pẹ̀lú ìyọnu nínú rẹ̀.

ii. The fear of the Lord to life and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil (Proverbs 19:23)
Ìbẹ̀rù Olúwa tọ́ sí ìyè: ẹni tí ó ní yóò jókòó ní ìtẹ́lọ́run; a kì yóò fi ibi bẹ̀ ẹ́ wò.

Fools:

i.   The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise (Proverbs 12:15).
Ọ̀nà aṣiwèrè (omugo) tọ́ lójú ara rẹ̀: ṣùgbọ́n ẹni tí ó fetí sí ìmọ̀ràn ni ọlọgbọ́n.

ii.   A wise man fears and departs from evil, but a fool rages and is self-confident (Proverbs 14:16).
Ọlọgbọ́n ènìyàn bẹ̀rù, ó sì kúrò nínú ibi, ṣùgbọ́n aṣiwèrè (òmùgọ̀) gbéraga, ó sì dá ara rẹ̀ lójú.

Indolence

i.   Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger (Proverbs 19:15).
Ìmẹ́lẹ́ mú ni sun oorun fonfon; ọkàn ọlẹ ni ebi yóò sì pa.

ii.   The lazy man says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!" (Proverbs 22:13)
Ọlẹ wípẹ, "kìnìhún ńbẹ̀ lóde, a ó pa mi nígboro!".

Oppression

i.   He who oppresses the poor reproaches his maker, but he who honours Him has mercy on the needy (Proverbs 14:31).
Ẹni tí ó bá ńni tálàka lára, ó gan Ẹlẹ́da rẹ̀: ṣùgbọ́n ẹni tí ó ṣàánú fún tálàkà ó bu olá fún un!.

ii.   A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor, but he who hates covetousness will prolong his days (Proverbs 28:16)
Ọmọ-aládé tí ó se aláìmọye púpọ̀ ní ńse ìwà-ìkà púpọ̀ pẹ̀lú; ṣùgbọ́n ẹyìn tí ó kórira ojúkòkòrò yóò mú ọjọ́ rẹ̀ pẹ́.

Pride

i.   By pride comes nothing but strife, but with the well advised is wisdom (Proverbs 13:10)
Nípa kìkì ìgbéraga ni ìjà tí ńwá; ṣùgbọ́n lọ́dọ̀ àwọn tí a fi ìmọ̀ hàn ni ọgbọ́n wà.

ii.   Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18) Igbéraga ni nsaaju iparun, agidi okan ni nsaaju isubu.

Prudence

i.   Every prudent man acts will knowledge, but a fool lays open his folly (Proverbs 13:16)
Gbogbo amọ̀ye ènìyàn ní ńfi ìmọ̀ ṣiṣẹ́; ṣùgbọ́n aṣiwèrè (òmùgọ̀) tan ìwà òmùgọ̀ rẹ̀ kalẹ̀.

ii.   The simple believes every word but the prudent considers well his steps (Proverbs 14:15).
Ọ̀pẹ̀ ènìyàn gba ọ̀rọ̀ gbogbo gbọ́; ṣùgbọ́n amọ̀ye ènìyàn wo ọnà ara rẹ̀ dáradára.

Scorners:

i.   Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble (Provers 3:34)
Nitooto o kegan awon elegan: sugbon o fi oore-ofe fun awon onirele.

ii.   A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, but knowledge is easy to him who understands (Proverbs 14:6)
Ẹlẹ́gàn ńwá ọgbọ́n, kò sì rí i: ṣùgbọ́n ìmọ̀ kò sòro fún ẹni tí òye yé.

Temperance:

i.   Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise (Proverbs 20:1)
Ẹlẹ́yà ni ọtí-wàìnì, aláriwo ni ọtí líle, ẹnikẹ́ni tí a bá fi tànjẹ kò gbọ́n.

ii. Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitter at heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more (Proverbs 31:6-7)

Fi ọtí líle fún eni tí ó múra tán láti ṣègbé, àti ọtí-wáìnì fún àwọn onínú bíbàjé. Jé kí ó mu, kí ósi gbàbé àìní rè, kí ó mâ sí ránti òsì rè mọ́.

The Tongue

i. The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked. (Proverbs 10:11)

Kòǹga ìyé ni ẹnu olódodo; ṣùgbọ́n ẹnu èníyàn búburú ni rìbo ìwà-ipá mọ́lẹ̀.

ii. He who guards his month preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have dsruction (Proverbs 13:3)

Eni tí ó pa ẹnu rè mọ́, ó pa ẹmí rè mọ́; ṣùgbọ́n ẹni tí ó ṣí ètè rè gbọpọrọ yóò ní iparun.

Unjust gain

i. Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, but he who gathers by labour will increase (Proverbs 13:11)

Ọrọ̀ tí a fi ìwà-asán ni yóò fàsẹ́hìn; ṣùgbọ́n ẹni tí ó fi iṣẹ́ owó kójọ ni yóò má pọ̀ sí i.

ii. Getting treasures by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death (Proverbs 21:6)

Nínáfìṣura-nípa ahọ́n èké, ọ́jẹ́ ìkuukùu t'á ńfẹ́.kiri, ìdẹkùn ikú sí ni pẹ̀lú.

Wealth

i. Wealth makes many friends, but the poor is separated from his friend (Proverbs 19:4)

Ọrọ̀ fa òrẹ́ púpọ̀; ṣùgbọ́n tálákà ni òrẹ́ rè ńyẹra fún.

ii. Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one perverse in his ways, though rich (Proverbs 28:6)

Tálákà tí ńrìn nínú ìdúró-ṣinṣin rè, ó sàn ju alárekérekè ìwà, bí ó tilẹ̀ ṣe ọlọ́rọ̀.

Oscillating between literalism and faithful but autonomous restatement of the Book of Proverbs in Yoruba, the translator has demonstrated the capacity of the language in accommodating foreign sensitivities by being hospitable, for example, to new metaphors, and calcified phrases. The Book has been adorning and continues to garnish the language of native speakers of Yoruba irrespective of their beliefs. It is a common place to hear speakers in their everyday speech, uttering phrases such as:

- Ìgbéraga ni ṣaájú iparun...
- Ẹni tí ó bá tètè bínú, hùwà òmùgọ̀...
- Ẹni tí ó bá fa ọwọ́ pàsan sẹ́hìn, ó kòrìra ọmọ rè...
- Tọ́ ọmọdé ni ọ̀nà tí yóò tọ̀...
- Ìbẹ̀rù Olúwa ni ìpilẹ̀ṣẹ̀ imọ̀...
- Ọnà asiwèrè (òmùgọ̀) tọ́ lójú ara rè...
- Má ja tálákà ní olè...

The gradual and continuous impartation of the book on Yoruba Weltanschauung is made possible by the fact that it is not linguistic patterns that seem to determine man's model of the universe. Benjamin Lee Whorf in his study of Hopi, an American Indian language, declares "We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native language" (Whorf, 88). If his assertion were true, ~~base~~ man would have been inhospitable to translation.

The main theme of the Book of Proverbs is the nature of true wisdom; Solomon writes "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). He then proceeds to throw light on how to live according to godly wisdom. It covers a range of topics, including youth and discipline, self-control and resisting temptation, words of the tongue, knowing God, marriage, immorality, poverty, evil, and good, etc. The proverbs are short poems, usually in couplet form, containing a holy mixture of common sense and timely warning. They all cover a wider semantic field or even changed completely. For example, an evil woman is not necessarily only an adulteress or a witch, but a

woman with a slippery tongue is. A fool is not limited to an idiot or imbecile, he is also he who ignores the facts, (the Gospel) or he who has the facts and fails to apply them to his life.

Conclusion

Historically, Weltanschauungen (in plural form) evolved bit by bit and gradually. The Yoruba Weltanschauungen have been changing since the advent of the Gospel and the Bible in Yoruba translation. The issues of conversion, new creation, foreknowledge, the nature of divine omniscience are gradually marking the course of Yoruba logic.

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APERÇU SOCIOLINGUISTIQUE DE L'EMPRUNT LEXICAL DU FRANÇAIS A L'ANGLAIS

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Introduction

Dans cette communication, nous présenterons l'analyse de quelques emprunts qui prennent le chemin de la langue française à partir de l'anglais. La recherche est basée sur la traduction de l'œuvre de I.K. Galbraith (1974).

La recherche ne s'enferme pas dans les limites d'un simple répertoire bilingue de mots, mais elle est d'abord d'ordre beaucoup plus élevé. Elle touchera l'histoire des idées, de l'échange des idées et ses implications pour le français.

Nous allons traiter les emprunts du français à l'anglais sous deux rubriques :

(i) l'emprunt du mot,
(ii) l'emprunt du sens.

Sous chacune de ces rubriques, nous traiterons trois autres genres d'emprunts :

(i) les emprunts de culture générale,
(ii) les emprunts de termes techniques,
(iii) les emprunts de termes économiques.

Au cours de cet exercise, nous allons dépouiller un type particulièrement intéressant de ce phénomène, les calques de concept

Préambule théorique

Le phénomène de l'emprunt lexical est un des facteurs proprement socio-linguistiques qui jouent un rôle dans l'évolution du langage. Ce phénomène appelé processus d'idiomatisation par Jean Gagnepain (Cours ... 1974-78) permet d'expliquer la communication linguistique. Ce même phénomène auquel il donne une appellation encore plus technique de « diaschise » se présente sur trois coordinées :

(a) Coordonnée chronologique : transmission à travers le temps, de génération en génération,
(b) Coordonnée spatiale : transmission à travers l'espace ou propagation,
(c) Coordonnée organique : transmission de couche en couche, ou diffusion.

En fait, cette perméabilité se fait de génération en génération, de proche en proche et de couche en couche. Dans les trois axes de la diaschise, il y a toujours les emprunts. Contrairement au point de vue de la tendance « aristocratique » de la linguistique historique et comparative, les emprunts ne se limitent pas aux langues « socialement bien assises ». A titre d'exemple, le mot « cambrioleur » est un emprunt à travers la frontière organique ; l'argot (Pierre Giraud 1975).

C'est un fait que le lexique français comporte un nombre considérable de mots anglais, mais la réciproque est vraie aussi. Dans un ouvrage classique de Fraser Mackenzie (1939), dont le dépouillement s'arrêtent à 1920 et présentent donc un retard d'environ quatre-vingts ans, on relève 4,500 anglicismes en français et plus de 6,000 gallicismes en anglais, et l'inventaire n'est pas exhaustif. Donc, l'emprunt à travers la coordonnée spatiale est un phénomène inévitable.

Les langues n'ont d'histoire qu'en s'interférant entre elles. Autrement dit, c'est grâce à l'interférence qu'elles s'historicisent. Ainsi, l'étude du vocabulaire français montre le rôle de l'Italie dans la musique classique comme aujourd'hui celle de l'Amérique dans le jazz. Ce n'est pas un hasard aujourd'hui que le vocabulaire du cinéma, de la science militaire et spatiale et de l'ordinateur est presque tout entier des mots anglo-saxons. Ceci montre le rôle prépondérant que joue l'Amérique dans ces domaines.

L'emprunt de mot
Les emprunts de la culture générale

Parmi les nombreux emprunts de la culture générale, il convient de mentionner le mot « jury ». En fait, il a été emprunté d'abord à l'ancien français « juré », qui avait comme signification « serment » ou « enquête ». Il a été réemprunté à l'anglais à titre de terme de droit criminel comme une institution en vertu de laquelle de simples citoyens sont invités spécialement à participer dans l'exercise de la justice criminelle (Paul Robert, 1974C : 890).

En France, le jury a été institué en 1790 par l'Assemblée Constituante (Paul Robert, 1974c : 890). Le mot désigne aussi une assemblée ou commission chargée officiellement de l'examen d'une question. Ce genre d'emprunt représente un intérêt particulier, car il suppose ce que nous allons appeler un,

processus bilatérale d'échanges linguistiques. A côté de ce mot, nous avons pu dépouiller des calques où les structures syntaxiques du français sont respectées.

Foreman of jury – Chef du jury
Member of jury – Membre du jury
(Mansion and Ledésert, 1977b : J.10)

D'une façon générale semblable, le mot « film » est un emprunt à l'anglais. Ce mot qui désignait d'abord « pellicule » en photographie et puis en cinéma a été employé pour désigner une oeuvre cinématographique sur film (Paul Robert, 1974c : 16)

Calques :

X-ray film – le rayon-X
Silent film – le film muet
Comic film – film comique
Film in technicolor – film en tehcnicolore
(Mansion and Ledésert 1977a : F.20)

Le verbe « boycotter » s'est trouvé au rang des emprunts à l'anglais suite à la mise en quarantine d'un propriétaire irlandais, Boycott au début du 19e siècle. Ce concept qui s'est vu transformé en action d'infliger un dommage matériel ou moral à un individu, un groupe ou un pays en lui refusant d'entretenir des relations avec lui (Paul Robert 1974a : 545) s'est déjà internationalisé. On le retrouve dans plusieurs langues européennes. En russe, on dit « boïkotirovat ».

Le mot « international » a été créé en Angleterre par le célèbre économiste Jeremy Bentham pour nommer la branche du droit qu'on appelait alors en anglais « law of nations » et qui correspondait au « droit de gens » en français. C'est grâce à la traduction de l'ouvrage de Bentham que « international » a pénétré en français (Emile Benveniste 1947).

Calques :

International law – droit international
International trade – commerce international
International market – marché international
(Mansion and Ledésert 1977a : L.32)

Les emprunts de termes techniques

Les emprunts techniques à l'anglais occupent une place importante dans le vocabulaire technique du français moderne. Mentionnons d'abord le terme « test ». Il a été employé pour la première fois en anglais dans le sens moderne en 1890, après l'avoir emprunté à l'ancien français « tet », qui servant

à l'essai de l'or (Paul Robert 1974 : f 528). Maintenant il est employé pour désigner des sens précis en psychologie, en médecine et même en économie politique.

En psychologie, il est défini comme l'épreuve servant à déceler la présence chez un sujet de certains caractères psychiques ou intellectuels. En Médecine, ce mot désigne une épreuve de contrôle portant sur les échantillons prélevés au hasard dans une série de produits. Et enfin, en économie politique, « test » désigne la méthode d'enquête par sondage sur l'évolution probable de la conjucture (Paul Robert 1974f : 528). Toutes ces définitions sont plus ou moins calquées sur les méthodes américaines.

Calques :

Endurance test – épreuve d'endurance
Intelligence test – test de capacité intellectuelle
Vocational test – test proféssionnel
(Mansion and Ledésert 1977b, T.19).

Dans ce groupe d'emprunts, on trouve également le terme « téléphone ». Ce mot désignait autrefois tour dispositif destiné à transmettre les sons à distance. Il a pris un autre sens grâce à la découverte de l'Anglais Graham Bell en 1876 (Paul Robert 1974f : 491). Le nouveau sens désigne un instrument ou un appareil qui permet de transmettre à distance des sons par l'intermédiaire d'un dispositif approprié, suivi d'un circuit électrique et d'un récepteur (Paul Robert 1974f : 491).

Le terme « technique » a été inventé d'abord pour exprimer tout ce qui appartient aux arts. Ce n'est qu'en 1947 que pour la première fois, le président de la Compagnie Ford l'a employé pour désigner aussi bien l'introduction de la manutention mécanique dans les machines automatiques se réglant d'elles-mêmes que l'application des calculatrices électroniques à toutes sortes de tâches (Paul Robert 1974f : 486).

« Taylorisme » vient du nom de l'ingénieur américain F. Taylor, qui a mis en oeuvre une méthode d'organisation scientifique du travail industriel par l'utilisation maximale de l'outillage en supprimant les gestes inutiles ou plus précisément, une méthode destinée à accroître la productivité du travail par la décomposition et le chronométrage des mouvements nécessaires (Paul Robert 1974f : 485). Ainsi parle-t-on de la taylorisation pour indiquer l'application du taylorisme à une production

Emprunts de termes économiques

Les emprunts de termes économiques anglais en français aussi bien qu'en d'autres langues de l'Europe de l'Ouest traduisent le fait que ces pays sont obligés de calquer plus ou moins le système économique américain. En effet, c'était un moyen de protection contre l'infiltration idéologique de l'Est au cours de la Guerre froide. Voici quelques exemples :

Le terme « trust » est d'origine anglaise « to trust ». Il reflète les pleins pouvoirs confiés aux dirigeants par les membres d'une compagnie. L'usage a peu à peu fait perdre à ce mot anglo-saxon son sens initial pour lui donner celui des grandes entreprises sous une direction unique. Dans le langage des sciences économiques, le terme se réfère à une entreprise assez puissante pour exercer une influence dans les secteurs économiques en dominant le marché (Paul Robert 1974f 692).
Calques :

Vertical trust – trust vertical
Anti-trust legislation – legislation anti-trust
(Mansion and Ledésert 1977b : T.57)

« Marketing » n'a fait sa parution qu'en 1959 aux Etats-Unis. Depuis, il est couramment employé dans les pays francophones pour désigner à la fois les études de marché, les analyses et recherches sur la distribution. Le marketing désigne plusieurs aspects de l'élaboration des décisions, telles les décisions portant sur la production, la distribution, le financement et l'adaptation aux éléments nouveaux du marché. Bien que ce terme puisse être remplacé par « étude », « technique » ou « science » des marchés, ces alternatives sont mal adaptées car elles ne sont pas aptes à calquer les procédés américains (Paul Robert 1974g : 306).

Le mot « technocratie » a été créé en 1919 par l'Américain V. H. Smyth, et provient de l'anglais « technocracy ». Il a été repris plus tard en économie politique comme un exercice du pouvoir d'organisation et de décision par un petit groupe d'hommes de formation technique dans le domaine de l'économie, de l'industrie, du commerce ou de la grande entreprise. Le groupe en question accepte en principe la discipline hiérarchique et est généralement placé sous l'autorité d'un chef (Paul Robert 1974f : 486).

Emprunt de sens

Nous allons examiner ici quelques mots qui ont plusieurs sens, mais dont le sens américain domine.

Les emprunts de la culture générale

Parmi ce genre d'emprunts, il convient de mentionner « sénat », qui signifie étymologiquement « conseil des anciens». Puis il a été repris pour désigner le conseil souverain de la Rome antique sous la République pour désigner la plus haute autorité de l'Etat (Paul Robert 1974f : 205).

Le sénat continue à exister en France. Néanmoins, quand il s'agit du mot « sénat » on se réfère au sens qui lui est donné en Amérique.

Dans son sens initial, le mot « capitole » désignait une des sept collines de Rome, de la citadelle et du temple de Jupiter, élevés sur cette colline. Dans certaines villes, ce mot est employé pour nommer le lieu de réunion de la municipalité, par exemple, « le capitole de Toulouse » désigne l'hôtel de ville (Paul Robert 1974a : 630). Mais en général, « capitole » est un raccourci pour le capitole de Washington, siège du Congrès américain.

Les emprunts de termes économiques

Bien que le terme « corporation » s'applique en français aux compagnies d'officiers (Paul Robert 1974a : 962), quand on en parle, on fait souvent allusion à la corporation américaine.

En français « investissement » signifie action d'investir une place, une ville, etc. Néanmoins, le sens qui lui est donné en science économique est emprunté à l'anglais. Il sert à désigner l'action d'investir dans une entreprise des capitaux destinés à l'acquisition de moyens de production. (Paul Robert 1974c : 816).

CONCLUSION

Grâce à l'analyse de l'emprunt lexical à l'anglais en français, nous avons pu établir des types de rapports qu'ils entretiennent. Autrement dit, nous avons pu retracer l'histoire de leurs relations. En effet, tel phénomène est la condition sous-jacente des échanges extra-linguistiques, entre les deux communautés linguistiques.

L'emprunt lexical est un phénomène sociolinguistique très important dans tous les contacts de langues. Il est aussi un processus qui permet d'apprécier l'histoire et l'évolution des langues, des idées et des sociétés.

Quel genre de rapports existe-t-il aujourd'hui entre l'anglais et le français dans le domaine de l'emprunt lexical ? A notre avis, on commence déjà à voir un certain déséquilibre défini. La pénétration des mots scientifiques et économiques d'origine anglaise en français moderne n'est pas le fait du hasard

Ceci est dû à la place qu'occupe à partir de 1918 (fin de la première Guerre Mondiale), la science, la technologie et l'idéologie américaine chez l'Occident

Les implications du pouvoir américain pour le français, c'est-à-dire l'américanisation de la langue dans le domaine de l'emprunt lexical continueront à l'être tant que les États-Unis demeureront la super-puissance politique, économique, scientifique et militaire et où la France tout comme la quasi-totalité de l'Occident les prennent pour modèle.

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