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NATIONAL LANGUAGES DEVELOPMENT, SYMBOL OF THE SOCIETAL HERITAGE OF A PEOPLE: CASE OF MALI

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Résumé

L'acculturation est l'un des phénomènes qui déracine l'enracinement des civilisations endogènes dans de nombreux pays africains. Le mélange des civilisations et cultures exogènes et endogènes dû aux histoires postcoloniales joue encore un point négatif sur le comportement des générations modernes dans la plupart des pays africains, principalement le Mali. Cet article traite la politique de reconnaissance, de promotion, de développement, de renforcement et de valorisation du patrimoine sociétal sur la base des langues nationales pour favoriser le développement social. La langue est l'instrument de la civilisation et de la culture de tout peuple. L'aspiration de la recherche est de définir les identités et les patrimoines culturels d'un peuple. De plus, il s'agit de défendre, de protéger et de développer les cultures et les langues nationales au Mali. Les recherches indiquent que la pratique et la promotion des langues et cultures nationales sont une priorité pour de nombreux Maliens vivant dans toutes les zones locales et urbaines. Il y a un manque de volonté politique formelle de la part du gouvernement pour valoriser et sauver le patrimoine sociétal des Maliens.

Mots clés : : acculturation, développement, culture, identité, langue, patrimoine.

Abstract

Acculturation is one of the phenomena that uproots the rooting of endogenous civilizations in many African countries. The mixture of exogenous and endogenous civilizations and cultures due to postcolonial histories still plays a negative point on the behavior of modern generations in most African countries, mainly Mali. This article deals with the policy of the recognition, promotion, development, reinforcement and enhancement of societal heritage on the basis of national languages to promote social development. Language is the instrument of civilization and culture of any people. The aspiration of research is to define the cultural identities and heritages of a people. Moreover, it is a question of defending, protecting and developing national cultures and languages in Mali. Research indicates that practicing and promoting national languages and cultures is a priority for many Malians living in all local and urban areas. There is a lack of formal political will from the government to enhance and save the societal heritage of Malians.

Key words : Acculturation, development, culture, heritage, identity, language.

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Introduction

Malian societal cultures are one of the main dominants in West Africa. Mali is a conservative country where the entire population is attached to its own social cultures. Each people has its own means of disseminating, safeguarding and protecting its own societal culture. Mali faces several exogenous civilizations due to the phenomena of colonization and religious domination such as Islam and Christianity. Mali had several kingdom-level social civilizations namely the Bambara Kingdom of Segou, the Gao and Kenedougou Kingdom, and empires such as the Songhai Empire, the Ghana Empire and the Mali Empire. Each of these social movements and organizations has positioned itself as the protector and promoter of the civilization of Malian cultures based on their mother tongues. The most dominant kingdoms and empires were those of the Bambara Kingdom of Segou and the Mali Empire. The rooting of Malian cultures comes from these different social organizations. They were all based on promoting societal cultures and protecting the social heritage of ancestors. National languages were considered as the starting point for social integration.

The mutual connectedness between culture and language is the message transmission system. Culture is the set of distinctive, intellectual, spiritual and material ideologies of a nation. Culture involves in the nation restoration and independence. It is the identity of the whole country. Culture is a part of civilization of a country such as arts, life styles, faith and sciences. Language is from culture. It is the key instrument of social culture, social development and social civilization and history of any society, community and country. Development is a chant that requires the involvement and participation of each individual and people to bring out their experiences. The national language plays an important role and place in the field of social growth, social reconciliation, socio-economic mobility and stability, mutual and social intelligibility and the promotion of social culture. Identity refers to social roots, histories, civilizations and habits.

In Mali, the instrument of defending of the identity of the Malian heritage is the national language. This national language does not correspond to the language of formal instruction in schools. This phenomenon of sidelining national languages in Malian daily life has an impact on the enhancement of societal heritage. Research questions: What are the social identities and heritages of a people? What is the status of national languages in Mali? How can Malian social cultures be defended internationally? What are the ways and means of protecting and developing national languages in Mali? Research objectives: Describe the social identities and heritages of a people. Examine the status of national languages in Mali. Defend Malian social cultures internationally. Identify means of protecting and developing national languages in Mali.

1. National Language Attitude

National languages play the function of social communication within a country. The foundation of social values, beliefs, customs and knowledge comes from the language of daily communication. The language of daily communication in Mali is based on the national languages. The openness of social knowledge is linked to one's own language used. National languages are called upon to shape the daily actions either of the group of individuals or of the

country as a whole. Therefore, they are associated with the culture and civilization of any people. In Mali, the national language remains the means of preserving and promoting innate cultures and traditions. The main national linguistic action refers to the promotion of socio-culture, history and tradition. Moreover, each people constructs its knowledge according to national languages.

In Mali, technical knowledge and some practical knowledge are promoted on the basis on the foreign language such as French. These technical and practical skills relate to formal performance and formal school skills. Practical skills support people's daily activities and commitments. The schooling rate is described as low in Mali because of French. Shazia Khokhar and *al.*, (2016, p. 234) sustains that

Members of society communicate, interact and socialize with the help of language. One of the important features that distinguish human beings from other animals, say dolphins and chimpanzees, is faculty of speech with which they are gifted. Our languages as also used in written form which informs us about information of global dealings.

Language is a social tool that builds social unity and socially values a given people. People restore their thinking and opinion based on language. The identity construction of a people advocates the development of language in different forms of education such as formal, non-formal and informal cases. C. Migratórios (2008, p. 66) states that "language is intrinsic to the expression of culture. Language is a fundamental aspect of cultural identity. It is the means by which we convey our innermost self from generation to generation. It is through language that we transmit and express our culture and its values". Language has an indisputable attitude towards social construction and the stratification of society. Human idealism is at the base of all language. In Mali, the national languages that are used the most can be the threshold of social unification. The appearance of postcolonial languages in Mali has tended to overthrow endogenous languages in the field of social communication and education. This policy has missed its advance value towards the annihilation of endogenous languages. The Malian people remain interested and attached to their social and cultural identities.

2. Cultural Heritage

The product of a people's history is culture. The sustainable development approach requires the valorization of the culture of a people. Culture psychologically reinforces the policy of safeguarding the independence, sovereignty and autonomy of a state. The development of the identity of African nations must be based on the development and recognition of endogenous culture. Culture as traditional heritage, ritual norms, ancient beliefs, civilization and religious needs to be saved and protected in Africa, mainly in Mali. Culture is a particular social symbol of a people. C. Migratórios (2008, p. 65) comments

In the social sciences, identity is defined as the way that individuals label themselves as members of a particular group; in psychology, it refers to an individuals' self-esteem or self-image. We can speak about social identity, gender identity, cultural identity, religious identity, national identity and many other identities.

Despite the postcolonial policy of developing and strengthening exogenous cultures in Mali, many Malians maintain and value the practice of national cultures and heritage based on

national languages. There is a local policy of socializing the use and promotion of national languages. The process of socialization of national languages refers to the daily use of the language during daily activities. National languages are required in daily communication in all public and private services and administration in Mali.

The interrelationship between language and culture can be defined as body and blood. A body deprived of blood is deprived of all resistant psychic forms. Culture is hoisted by language on the basis of written and spoken communication. Language is embodied in culture. C. Migrat6rios (2008, p. 66) describes that

Culture is a defining feature of a person's identity. The shared values, customs and histories characteristic of a particular culture have a very strong influence on how a person behaves, thinks, and views the world. Cultural identity then encompasses for me all that relates to self, belonging, systems of beliefs and sentiments of self-worth.

A culture does not exist without language and a given language is the instrument of culture. The national languages are the tools par excellence for the transmission of Malian social cultures. National languages allow Mali to bring out and archive the cultural genealogy of a people and of the entire country. Each people has the duty and the obligation to learn, to be informed, to exchange and to transmit its knowledge, its skills and its experience in the process of social development. This massive participation in the development process passes through the recognition of the national culture in a formal framework. The lack of recognition and development of national cultures such as language endangers the socio-economic development of Mali.

The term culture is varied and broad. It is not limited to language, history, social civilization and beliefs. The term culture is broad in the sense that it encompasses agricultural cultivation, traditional trade, fish harvesting and animal husbandry. It is for this reason that culture is considered the economic and development resource in Mali. The phenomenon of annihilation of the cultures of a people, in majority, of the national and indigenous languages impacts the social diet in the sense that if a given people is assimilated to exogenous cultures. Such people can change their traditional behavior, form habits and even dress food. These different cultures characterize the behaviors and lifestyles of a group of people, a community and the country as a whole. Cultural development plays an undeniable role for socio-economic stability in Mali.

3. Acculturation Effect

The acculturation phenomenon surged in Africa for a longtime due to the postcolonial history. The colonial history swayed away the doctrine of many Africans' know-how. Acculturation means the mixing of endogenous and exogenous cultures in a given territory, society and country. The cultural interpretation of two or multiple different countries and societies. E. M. Rothe and *al.*, (2010, p. 681) defines that "acculturation refers to the process that occurs when groups of individuals of different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, which changes the original culture patterns of either or both groups". This cultural mix leads to a brutal change in the collective and individual behavior of many African countries. The lifestyle of the former and cultural civilization such as thinking, acting, organizing,

regrouping, informing, socializing and developing is affected in many African countries for the benefit of those borrowing from the West. This exogenous cultural appearance disorders the ancient civilization. It is started from language of education to social life and behavior. Culture imported from the West is beginning to become the source of identification for some Africans.

There is a kind of psycho-domination of Western culture in Africa. The ease of acculturation can dissociate a community from its ancestral culture. This phenomenon was born on the basis of a misinterpretation of the culture of the other by the other. This form of interpretation is a form of psychological assimilation of a certain number of people within African society. These assimilated individuals have no other vocation than to denature and transform themselves at their origin. This phenomenon of psychological and sociological weakness leads to the loss of beliefs and cultural ways of life. The weakness of individuals in psychological and sociological management weakens the endogenous society in its mode of societal creativity, cultural organization and social development.

Acculturation has a disadvantage on the development and enhancement of societal identity and heritage. It favors the total loss of human value of a country under Western colonization. The exogenous tradition somehow disorients the practice of national cultures. The reculturation policy is essential for the promotion, enhancement, instrumentalization and recognition of the national language in the education system. B. Parajuli (2021, p. 14) terms that “language transmission from one generation to another generation provides a foundation for cultural transmission and modification as mother tongue interaction in a family and society helps to learn all the basic cultural values and traditions which grow as an identity in the future”. The misinterpretation of foreign cultures negatively affects traditional society and its values. Contact between two or more cultures results in the creation and enlightenment of a new modern culture. This encourages the creation of a new business with new know-how parameters. This new life setting ends up being absurd in its form of implementation and promotion in Africa due to misinterpretation. It could be a new possessed society far from any well-defined culture and civilization. This phenomenon is amplified by myopia vis-à-vis the national culture and intellectual blindness in given societies. A policy of asymmetric adjustment is needed for national and indigenous cultures in Africa. Thus, a new intellectual and optimal state of mind is necessary. The implementation of this intellectual revolution requires an awareness through scientific writings.

The acculturation appearance influences the ancestral civilization by settling a modern life in many African countries. The manifestation of modern events does not reflect on the traditional and ancient cultures and civilization. This phenomenon scatters in many main towns in Mali. City-dwellers seems to be modern and clever people than local habitants because of their life styles, namely social speech, social behavior, clothing, dances, songs, gaits, eating, wedding and drinking. The urban wedding relies on huge expenditures over the modern habit at the image of west such as clothing, eating, dances and drinking. Nationalists neglect the practices of traditional rules during this social events. Some wedding festivities in Mali focus on the west civilization. E. M. Rothe and *al.*, (2010, p. 681) considers that “the encounter causes cultural diffusion of varying degrees and may have one of 3 possible outcomes: (1) acceptance, when there is assimilation of one group into the other; (2) adaptation, when there is a merger of the 2 cultures;

and (3) reaction, which results in antagonistic contra-acculturative movements”. This imitation in most African countries is untransmitted and misinterpreted. All urban towns and some municipalities deal with civil registry wedding in order to document it for eventual justice after divorce and equity in the wedding. This practice creates a real disorder in some cases in Mali mostly in the monogamy marriages. As for leisure, it destroys young men and women because of the misinterpretation. Modern leisure psychologically and morally endangers many people namely adults and even elders. Some daily leisure is based on the cigarette, drugs and alcohol consumption. Such practices impact on social development and endanger individuals’ health forever. The implementation of this consumption increases the banditry phenomena in any country.

4. Cultural Aspects of Development

The absence of a sustainable policy granted to the promotion of social culture disadvantages the involvement and mobilization of human resources in the socio-economic transformations of the country. In Africa, national socio-economic, political and technological development strategies lag behind reputable countries due to the influence and lack of interpretation of exogenous cultures. Cultural heritage or culture plays a fundamental and unavoidable role in the process of social development. The practice of indigenous beliefs and values contributes to the policy of implementing communal and national sovereignty, autonomy and independence. The recognition and enhancement of cultural aspirations mobilize a certain number of incentives within a cultural society to participate in the processes of socio-political development. Culture and social value are closely linked. These two expressions refer to societal traditions.

Mali finds itself in a situation where the establishment of a mechanism for strengthening the national heritage on the basis of national languages is mandatory and beneficial to political, economic and human development. E. Hobsbawm (1996, p. 5) mentions that “a single national language only became important when ordinary citizens became an important component of the state; and the written language had to have a relation to the spoken language only when these citizens were supposed to read and write it”. The implementation and promotion of this policy reflect the affirmation of the recognition of the cultural identity of the Malian peoples. The spiritual and moral liberation of each people passes through the mobilization of its culture and its ancestral civilization. Culture is a stimulating activity in a traditional country like Mali. This cultural recognition allows individual, ethnic and racial groups to acquire and nurture their traditional past. Cultural aspects can positively respond to social development through the adoption of a fundamental policy for the strengthening of social values, beliefs, civilizations and practices.

The reinforcement mechanism is paralyzed vis-à-vis the practices of national heritages. Crops beneficial to social development deposited on agriculture in general. The taking into account of exogenous cultures is beginning to be set aside on a daily basis in Mali in favor of exogenous values and behaviors. This cultural rejection is identified by certain Malian behaviors towards cultural diets. Some Malians living in urban areas do not like to eat based on traditions and exogenous foods. Mali’s traditional and exogenous foods are derived from maize, yams, potatoes, sorghum, groundnuts, millet, beans, cassava and shea. However, the cultivation of these seeds is somewhat neglected in favor of exogenous crops such as rice, wheat and apple.

5. Methods

This study falls within the framework of sociolinguistics which studies the development of languages, especially national languages, in relation with society for the restoration of sustainable education for all, for the promotion of societal values in Mali and for the recognition of cultural identities. This study is developed following the concepts of the qualitative approach. Qualitative data was gathered to arrive at an expected result. It is about knowing the existing relationship between the national language, the social culture and the social development of the country. The relationship between the national language and development can only be understood by conducting qualitative surveys. Mali is a French-speaking country where the promotion of exogenous culture is being promoted in schools, in professional spaces such as public and private services with the aim of destroying the practice of national and exogenous cultures. The practice of exogenous cultures leads to radical changes in certain Malian communities, particularly educated people. Some of these social strata are assimilated for the valorization, recognition and practice of Western cultures to the detriment of exogenous culture. Therefore, a policy of recognition of national values and beliefs must be put in place in Mali. It is a question of knowing the means by which this policy of valorization of exogenous culture can take its starting point.

5.1. Results:

Table: Organic Food Consumption in Mali

Areas	Foods Consumption	Places
Urban	Tô, rice, banana, salad, pancake, spaghetti, hamburger, cake, vermicelli	Dioila, Bougouni, Sikasso, Koulikoro et Bamako
Local	Tô, bean, yam, cassava, peanut, cuscus, funio (foyo), dêkê, milk, bassi	Senou, Massigui, Wakoro, Kanfara, Sirila et Kémé

It is found during my research that there is a food mix in Mali meaning that the phenomenon of acculturation on the habits of Malians is manifested on the whole plan, particularly at the behavioral, linguistic, food and clothing level. . The inhabitants of the big cities, being the landmarks of the country on an international scale, are in a food assimilation phase. Much of the population in cities is unaware of the consumption of heritage, cultural and societal foods. In this context, the defense of culture, tradition and national heritage may remain threatened. The way of life in big cities alludes to the phenomenon of acculture and Western assimilation. The much more consumed dishes are Tô, rice, banana, salad, crepe, spaghetti, hamburger, cake, vermicelli in families and in places of collective entertainment. As for the rural areas, the diet remains unchanged based on ancient tradition. It is the Tô which is the daily food of these places which is consumed night and day in many village families. Some dietary change occurs during collective and traditional ceremonies such as marriage, work groups (N'tondji) and incantations of collective fetishes (N'komon).

5.2. Discussion

In a nutshell, language is a tool of verbal and written communication. It is a sign of the transmission of message and communication by a particular community and country. In Africa, foreign languages are going to dominate and impede the use of endogenous languages. This exogenous culture domination makes in danger the endogenous culture preservation and promotion. It is discovered that language and culture are constructed by a people as the tools of their social identity. A country and community are recognized according to their social culture mainly language. The concept of nation and language is developed in many social studies mainly in the sociolinguistic field. The term of nation is the acceptance of a group of people around the same ideological concepts to construct a State. These ideological concepts derive from historical, cultural and religious heritages.

The different social beliefs and practices represent the identity of a group of persons, an entire community and country. Human identity is about people who struggle for nation empowerment and sovereignty. The first sign for nation empowerment is language. Research brought out that the acculturation phenomenon is developing in the daily habits of Malians from many main towns and cities, particularly in Bamako, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Bougouni and Dioila. Some of these city dwellers in these cities assimilate for the promotion of exogenous cultures and languages. Endogenous cultures and languages are promoted by the illiterate and local population. Some scholars and scholars ignore the promotion of endogenous cultures. They do not like to use and practice endogenous beliefs and traditions. The villagers still exploit endogenous beliefs and traditions such as traditional food consumption, traditional agricultures, traditional medicine and traditional clothing in Mali. As a result, the social identities and heritages of a people rely on languages, beliefs and cultures of their ancestors. The Malian cultures can be defended internationally through the valorization and promotion of national languages in education. The introduction of these languages can urge some of citizens to accept their cultures, traditions and beliefs. The unique ways of protecting national languages is education. The implementation of a language policy towards national languages enhancement protects them in the world scale.

Conclusion

The development of national languages in a culturally developed space like Mali can be a possibility and a means of recognizing and promoting ancestral and traditional beliefs. This policy of recognition and promotion of national languages strengthens not only cultural development, but also political and economic development. Each people needs to construct its social identities and its heritage through the languages of its daily communication and its mother tongues. The main challenge for the development and enhancement of national languages lies in their use in the education system. The national language which is the tool of culture is the image of human values and beliefs. In Mali, the language of daily communication is based on the national languages. This language is linked to social culture. Most of Malian use national languages as the medium of preserving the innate culture and traditions. The automation of a country calls for the involvement and enhancement of the languages used throughout this

country to implement, promote and organize social heritages. The recognition of social culture as a language is one of the models for improving social development. Language is the gateway to the promotion of culture and the permanent identity tool of an ethnic group, a person and the whole country. It is from this case that language is unquestionably part of culture.

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