

## **Les communautés sociolinguistiques virtuelles. Le cas des pratiques scripturales numériques synchrones et asynchrones mahoraises**

Virtual sociolinguistic communities. The case of synchronous and asynchronous digital writing practices in Mayotte

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**Abstract:** Writing occupies a central place in our contemporary societies. ICT-mediated writing practices are very numerous with the result that never have so many people written so frequently in so many languages. To support our contention, we will first show how heterogeneous digital writing is, before trying to demonstrate that it leads writers to form sociolinguistic communities, communities of virtual communication. To illustrate our point, we will describe the situation in Mayotte.

Ever since broadband access has been available to them, the people of Mayotte appear never to have written so much, as if they were rediscovering and re-appropriating their language(s) while purchasing ICT equipment. These recent upheavals have deeply altered their relationship with digital media. Indeed Mayotte virtual communities have been mushrooming lately; what's more, within these communities, there has been a sharp increase in multilingual written exchanges. In other words, IC technologies are generating remarkable writing practices in as much as the variety of the languages written is a true reflection of the sociolinguistic complexity of the Island.

**Key words:** electronic communication, virtual community, writing, orthographic variation, Mayotte, French, Shimaoré, Kibushi.