

PROVERBS AND METAPHORS AS DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES IN SELECTED NOVELS BY ACHEBE AND ADICHIE

Vero-Ekpris Gladstone Urujzian

verogladstone1974@gmail.com

Department of English, Akwa Ibom State University
Akwa Ibom State

Abstract

Language is at the heart of literature, and Nigerian creative writers deploy the resources of language in intriguingly compelling ways to express their sociocultural realities. Among these linguistic strategies are proverbial and metaphorical expressions. However, studies on the novels of two prominent Nigerian novelists – Chinua Achebe and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie – have paid negligible attention to how these novelists’ literary characters engage proverbs and metaphors as discourse strategies. This paper studies the discursive functionality of proverbial and metaphorical expressions as conversational strategies which the novelists’ characters deploy in interactive situations to make their contributions align with the issue being discussed. The data for this paper were collected from four novels: Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (henceforth *TFA*) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (henceforth *AS*) and Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (hereafter *PH*) and *Half of a Yellow Sun* (hereafter *HYS*). The analysis undertaken in this paper is guided by Braj Kachru’s concentric theory, which delineates the use of English across the world. It is revealed that the novelists utilise proverbial and metaphorical expressions to articulate Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria cultural ways of interacting with social reality. This study contributes to extant studies on anthropolinguistics and literary studies. In so doing, the novelists insightfully exemplify how English words heave with the indigenous thoughts of their Igbo people.

Key words: proverbs, metaphors, Igbo, culture, Achebe, Adichie

Introduction

Language is the material by which literature is created, and serves as a platform on which literature stands to express itself. The emphasis on

language is very important because the writer is not only a reflector of society, but also responds and reacts to social events and changes through the use of language. Language is the most important instrument through which a writer organises experiences and memories. The African writer is conscious of this reality, the reality that language is fundamental to cultural expression (Joseph 2004, Oben and Ekpe 2018). Critics have continued to argue that the imposition of European languages annihilated indigenous languages, and since the writer has no option but to write in the colonial language, the African writer has to decolonise or Africanise European languages in order to express their African thoughts (Ngugi 2018).

Achebe is well-known as an African writer who has “bent” the English language in fascinating ways to narrate his African experience. His successful hybridisation of English and Igbo has almost become a narrative template for many an African writer. Adichie, his “granddaughter” (Aboh and Igwenyi 2021), has religiously followed this narrative template with a bit of “modernisation”, though. In this regard, Adesanmi argues that the new generation of African writers will continue to use European languages as well as expand, appropriate and decolonise them in order to express their African experiences and worldview. In his own words, Adesanmi writes, “my generation writes predominantly in English, Nigerian English, and shall continue to do so in the foreseeable future...The Igbo genius is unmistakable in Oguibe’s poetry...” (2002: 126). Accordingly, from the pioneering period of the African novel to the present, Nigerian writers have continued to produce a variety of English, which Adesanoye (2014: 46) describes as “Literary Nigerian English”, a variety of English that is “of creative writing”. It is at such intersection that Aboh sheds light on the innovative appropriation of the English language by the Nigerian writer in articulating their thoughts. He avers that “...the Nigerian literary environment exemplifies how English is adapting to sociocultural situations, depicting its various pragmatic uses and how the different contexts provide a framework for the propagation of a variety of English that many Nigerians can identify with, communicate through and express themselves in” (2018: 81). In an earlier thought, Aboh and Uduk (2016: 6) contend that “it is perhaps unthinkable to discuss the issue of language in Nigerian literature without specifying the underlying pragmatism that informs a writer’s use of language”. This thought

coheres with that of Urujzian (2022: 49), who writes that “language plays an important role in the production and reproduction of ideologies”. This study explores the way Achebe and Adichie Africanise the English language through proverbial and metaphorical expressions to articulate their Igbo worldview.

By undertaking such a study as this, I not only contribute to extant studies on the intersection on language and literature, how language gives expression to literature, but also show how the African writer has continued to write the English language in a way it effectively expresses their cultural exigencies. In this way, I also pursue the idea that culture and language are ultimately intertwined. Apart from foregrounding the idea that literature and culture are defining features of a writer’s identity, I, in this study, uphold the view that language is a component of ethnic identity.

Previous Studies

Both Achebe’s and Adichie’s novels have enjoyed a robust harvest of scholarly criticism – Anyokwu (2011), Egudu (2013), Onukaogu and Onyerionwu (2010), Lagemah (2015), Aboh and Uduk (2016), Aboh and Igwenyi (2021), among others. Aboh and Uduk (2016) study focus on the pragmatic undertones to which the use Nigerian English is put in Adichie’s novels, namely, *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah*. They investigate the pragmatic relation between utterances and meaning-figuration, and make the case that the use of English in Adichie’s novels is pragmatically oriented. Undertaking a contextual analysis of English use in the novels by deriving insights from pragmatic context, Aboh and Uduk reveal that the context in which the English expressions are used is reflective of the Nigerian sociocultural milieu, and the sociocultural milieu exert pressure on as well as determines the meaning discourse participants squeeze from utterances. They go on to argue that some of the expressions thought to be English may be difficult for native English speakers to understand because they are written in English but convey Igbo/Nigerian cultural thoughts. This position concerts with Kachru’s concentric theory, which states that the meaning of English words varies from region to region. I shall return to this.

Similarly, Aboh and Igwenyi (2021) study the use of endearment terms as linguistic means of constructing in-group identity in selected

novels by Achebe and Adichie. Arguing that both Achebe and Adichie draw their creative resources from their Igbo language and culture, Aboh and Igwenyi explore how Igbo endearment terms function as strategies with which interactants in socio-discursive encounters employ “to enact and re-enact as well as maintain their belonging to or membership of a group” (123). Using social constructionism and van Dijk’s concept of literary pragmatics, Aboh and Igwenyi reveal how Igbo endearment terms such as *Nne*, *Nneka*, *Nna anyi*, *Umuada*, *ununna*, among others are pragmatically deployed by discourse participants to maintain in-group identity. The study concludes that the use of endearment terms enables understanding of the social and cultural life of the Igbo, and some of their traditional belief systems. The present study gains insights from Aboh and Igwenyi’s study to explore how metaphors and proverbs that are drawn from the authors’ language and cultural practices are used to convey specific meaning in interactive contexts.

Applying literary and sociological perspectives to the discourse of religiosity and family dysfunction as exemplified in Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*, Onwuka and Kehinde (2021) explore the disruptive character of religiosity in the family, and their consequences in the family. Also, the study accounts for how certain characters display contempt for indigenous belief systems that have sustained family cohesion in African cultures, especially the Igbo culture. The study, which is a textual analysis of randomly selected excerpts that exemplify the conflict between religion and family expectations, concludes that a combination of individual flaws of religious single-mindedness and traducing agelong indigenous ethos of the Igbo culture by the protagonist rendered the central family dysfunctional.

Despite these illuminating scholarly engagements, critics have remained silent on the strategic conversational functions to which proverbs and metaphors are put. For example, studies on Achebe’s use of proverbs in his novels have concentrated mostly on the literal and figurative meaning. Although these levels of analysis are essential and productive in understanding proverbial usages, Esimaje (2014:224) insists that “the ability to understand proverbs calls for the investigation of language beyond its literal or surface meaning”. The fact is that African proverbs have underlying semantic significations that can only be contextually accounted for. Elaborating the contextual functions to which proverbs can be put, Fashina admits that proverbs “reveal the

dynamics of amoral social and ethical disorientation which ...challenge and pervade the moral, cultural and religious ethics that Africans have valued since the dawn of history” (2008:314). Asserting Fashina’s views, Aboh (2013:109) writes of how, “In Africa, especially in the Nigerian context, expressions are not considered rich and intelligent except when they are duly punctuated with proverbs”. This stream of argument implies that proverbs form a part of the pool of the cultural/linguistic reservoir of a people. One’s ability to occasionally punctuate one’s speech with proverbs is an exemplification of one’s communicative competence to partake in “mature” conversation when important matters are being discussed. This is also the case with metaphorical expressions. Metaphors express specific meanings that are sociocultural in nature, reflecting the sociolinguistic reality of a speech community. The function of metaphor in language is to aid the reader's visualisation of the author’s writings. A fascinating discourse feature of Nigerian literary language is the adoption and adaptation of cultural images, mainly through the use of metaphors and similes, drawn from the indigenous culture of a writer. Basically, this paper highlights the deployment of proverbial and metaphorical expressions not only as cultural tropes, but as conversational strategies which discourse participants activate to make their conversation compelling and meaningful as reflected in the works sampled for analysis.

Theoretical Framework

To drive the analysis, this study adopts Braj Kachru’s concentric theory. Concentric theory explains the various manifestations of English as it leaves its original home and gains new territories, accounting for the globalised nature of the language, especially English in contact situation. In this model, the diffusion of English is captured in terms of three Concentric Circles: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle.

The inner circle refers to the users of English as a native language or mother tongue such as America, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Anglophone Canada and South Africa, and some of Caribbean territories. In these countries, English is the native language or mother tongue of most of the populace. The outer circle comprises the users of English in the former British Colonies and includes users in Nigeria, India, Malaysia and Tanzania. In these countries, English is not the

native tongue but serves as a useful lingua franca between ethnic and language groups. The expanding circle encompasses countries where English plays no historical or governmental role but it is used as a medium of international communication. Countries like China, Japan, Korea, etc. are in this category.

Consequently, many varieties of the English Language have developed to cater for the communication needs of users of the language across the globe. According to the concentric theory, the inner circle is 'norm-providing', i.e., the English Language norms are developed in these countries. The outer circle is 'norm developing'. The expanding circle is 'norm-dependent' because it relies on the standards set by native speakers in the inner circle.

English is bound to have different varieties due to its global expansion. The Nigerian variety of English belongs to the outer circle which is said to be norm developing. It has clearly identified features which distinguishes it from the other circles. These features point to the cultural nuances of the language users in this circle. This is true of the novelists under study as the features of the language in the texts are the types that portray Nigerian local colour and cultural identities. In order to make their works available to a wide international readership, and at the same time maintain their national identity, these writers employ different linguistic features in their creative enterprise. Bandia (1996) points out that a characteristic feature of African creative writing is the use of code-switching/mixing as a narrative technique. Evidently, postcolonial writers have appropriated and reconstituted the English language into their texts through some nuanced linguistic processes. Some of these linguistic practices – proverbs and metaphors – are also used by Achebe and Adichie as conversational techniques. This is the fulcrum of this paper.

Proverbial Strategies

The novels selected for this study illustrate abundant use of proverbs in articulating the cultural sensibilities of the people. I discuss some of the proverbs. Achebe's novels are replete with proverbs. In *TFA*, there is the use of the proverb "A toad does not run in the day time for nothing" (p.15). The proverb is an explication of Igbo cultural belief. A toad is a nocturnal animal, and in Igbo philosophical outlook as have some

Nigerian cultures, sighting a toad during the day is an evil omen. This world view prompts Ogbuefi Idigo to reason that all is not well since Obiakor, a reputable palm-wine tapper, has to suddenly give up his trade. Ogbuefi clarifies:

“There must be something behind it”, he said wiping the foam of wine from his moustache with the back of his hand. “There must be a reason for it. A toad does not run in the daytime for nothing”. (Achebe 15)

Similarly, in *AS*, to articulate the importance the Igbo place on early marriage, Beatrice recounts,

One of my girlfriends – a more sensible and attractive person you ever saw – except that she committed the crime to be twenty-six and still unmarried; she was taken by her fiancé to meet his people in some backwater village of his when an aunt or something of his made a proverb fully and deliberately to her hearing that if *ogili* was such a valuable condiment no one would leave it lying around for rats to stumble upon and dig into! (Achebe 89)

Ogili, a soup ingredient made from oil bean or melon seed, is used to compare an unmarried lady. Due to the fact that *ogili* is cheap, it is not always preserved like other valuable soup ingredients: fish and meat, so mice have easy access to it. Within the Igbo cultural axiom, an unmarried lady at the age of twenty-six is considered an *ogili*. The Igbo considers early marriage an acceptable way of life. Consequently, to be unmarried at that age shows that the lady is not “valuable”. Beatrice captures this Igbo reality in a far-gripping manner. Strategically, the fiancé’s aunt discusses the girl’s situation with accurate proverbial functionality, the reason it has some pragmatic effect on Beatrice who understands the weight of the proverb and the pressure many an unmarried lady come under.

Adichie has been greatly influenced by Achebe, particularly in matters of form. It is not surprising that her works are also replete with

Igbo proverbs. Hers, like Achebe's characters, deploy proverbs as conversational strategies, connecting the proverbs intrinsically to the topic of discourse. For instance, in *YS*, Olanna laments her misfortune of not only having Odenigbo sleep with Amala, but also impregnating Amala through a dialogic activation of the proverb,

“My grandfather used to say that other people farted
but that his own fart releases shit”. (Adichie 232)

“Fart” represents a natural human experience that should ordinarily be harmless. Although they are both released through the anus, the two do not usually co-occur. While “fart” refers to intestinal gases that can be released at any time, “shit” describes human excrement which every healthy adult would normally prepare for or have control over. That one's fart releases shit is an explication of ill luck, embarrassment and inability to control a situation. This is why “shit” symbolises something unwanted which, in this context, has come out against the intention of Olanna – “farting”. The proverb systematically delineates Olanna's helplessness. But then, Olanna's deployment of the proverb deconstructs the view that proverbs are exclusively reserved for elders. Essentially, the deconstructual effort logically responds to the current discourse as it explains the fact that Olanna should not be degraded simply because of her inability to have a child. She is embarrassed that her lover, Odenigbo, impregnated a village girl when all her efforts to get pregnant failed. Her “fart” is a discursive representation of Odenigbo's betrayal, and her “shit” is the despicable situation she finds herself.

In the next example drawn from *PH*, Father Amadi uses a proverbial expression to ruminate his childhood as well as teach Auntie Ifeoma's children, Kambili and Jaja the virtue of patience. When he sees how some termites Obiora stuff into his mouth slip out, Father Amadi says:

Our people say that after *aku* flies, it will fall to the toad.
(Adichie 226)

Aku is an Igbo name for an edible termite that has wings and usually flies in large numbers sometimes after a rainfall or at night. People (usually children) chase and catch the termites for consumption. The toad eats *aku* too, but cannot catch any because termites fly. Since the

toad cannot hunt termites, it waits patiently until they lose their wings, fall to the ground and crawl like other insects. This is when the toad eats them. Symbolically embedded in the proverb is the notion that what is destined to be will be despite attempts by outside forces to thwart its occurrence. Thus, the proverb defines the culture of morality and expected social behaviour from each stratum of society. It equally indicates that one does not need to unnecessarily over-reach one's natural abilities in order to achieve a goal. Through the deployment of this proverb, the author uses English in a fundamental way to deliver cultural morality.

The examples sketched above indicate that Achebe and Adichie use proverbs as conversational constructs that draw from the culture, objects in society, animals and human behaviour in absorbing ways to dismantle amoral behaviour as well as uphold morality. In constructive deployment of proverbs, as each proverb perfectly intercepts with its conversational situation, we see Achebe and Adichie carefully interweaving the cultural belief of their people into their artworks.

Metaphorical Expressions

Another linguistic strategy that Nigerian literary writers deploy in their artwork is metaphorical expressions. Achebe and Adichie, like other Nigerian literati, use culture-specific metaphors that enhance the reader's imagination to clearly perceive characters and scenes in the narrative enterprise. Most importantly, through the use of metaphorical expressions, Nigerian authors succeed in leaving cultural marks that distinguish their English from other national varieties of English. The following examples illustrate how Achebe and Adichie deploy metaphors in the four texts sampled for analysis. Almost all the examples resonate with cultural significations.

The Igbo culture is an agrarian one. It is also a fact that yam is an important crop in Igbo land which many successful farmers (especially men) cultivate. Its central place in the farming philosophy of the people is emphasised by how it is eaten and celebrated through New Yam Festivals. It is also used in discourse situations to explain a people's state of being. For example, when the Bassa government denies Abazon community of pipe borne water because they did not support the Big

Chief's bid to extend his tenure as the Head of State, an elder uses a proverb to capture Abazon's neglect by government:

When the beggar is sick, he waits to recover and then goes to tell the rich man that he has been sick. It is the place of the poor man to make a visit to the rich man who holds the yam and the knife. (Achebe 127)

Two objects (yam and knife), which represent a staple food and its instrument of distribution, are used here to illustrate the relationship that exists between the rich and the poor. This relationship is always in favour of the former due to the dependence of the latter on the former. Perhaps it is expedient to state that interpreting this metaphorical expression superficially will undermine its conversational significance as a metaphor that defines the cognitive and perceptual existence of the poor who are inescapably at the mercy of the rich regarding the way wealth (yam) is distributed by the powerful who hold the *knife*. The yam-knife metaphor therefore succinctly defines the structured nature of society – this is an essentialist “truth”. Thus, in the instance of the metaphorical expose, The Big Chief is the rich man who holds the *yam* and also the *knife*.

Those who cultivate yam are mostly men. Traditionally, the success and wealth of a man is measured by his yam barns. This is why such metaphor reflects the cultural pattern of existence. Beyond the yam-knife metaphorization, the underlying imagery aptly illustrates the insensitivity of government executives to the suffering of the poor masses, necessitating the physical presence of the people to request government's attention. Achebe, in this example, deploys culture-specific images of *yam* and *knife* to make his message more realistic, pragmatically exposing poor governance.

In another cinematic capture of the conjunctive interface between real life situation and literary creativity, Okonkwo's leap to “stardom” is metaphorically depicted:

Okonkwo's fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan after throwing Amalinze the cat in a wrestling bout. (Achebe 3)

Okonkwo's fame is likened to a bush-fire that burns during harmattan season. Harmattan is an extremely dry, cold and dusty wind that blows seasonally in West Africa, especially between November and March. The dry dusty wind dries up leaves, wood and other objects, facilitating and encouraging the occurrence and spread of fire. During harmattan, bush fire is usually uncontrollable since it is usually wild. This comparison implies that Okonkwo became very famous within and beyond Umuofia. Perhaps Achebe's narrative success lies in his propensity to draw significantly from his readers' encyclopaedic knowledge of their "world".

Using this meta-language, Achebe compares a person's achievement to that of a razing wild fire. By so doing, Achebe informs his readers of the wrestling culture in eastern Nigeria, and also the weather condition (harmattan). The juxtaposition of the wrestling culture which gives Okonkwo his fame and the harmattan weather which causes uncontrollable bush fire clinically explains how Nigerian creative writers tap from their daily experiences, environment and culture to make their conversation as realistic as possible.

We have noted that Adichie and Achebe, possibly because of their shared ethnic identity, use language in a similar way. As have Achebe, Adichie tells her stories also through metaphorical snapshots. Interestingly, this cultural tapestry fits snugly into conversational contexts. The underlying implication is that metaphors, like proverbs, are used strategically, not haphazardly in specific conversational situations to depict reality in a more expressive manner. Perhaps the visible application of the theoretical point of reference – concentric theory – is the ability of the "outer circle" writer to capture indigenous ideals in English language. This can be seen in:

Ugwu went back to the bathroom and dried Baby with a towel... Her plaits were wet, the ends tightened in a curly kink, and Ugwu smoothed them and marvelled again how much she looked like her father; his people would say that Master had spit this child out. (Adichie 124)

As reflected in this example, Ugwu marvels at the striking resemblance between his Master and his daughter, Baby. Ugwu uses the

Igbo metaphor that views one thing as an exact replica of the other. The expression “had spit this child out” is transliterated from Igbo; it means a conspicuous resemblance that can hardly be disputed. In this metaphorical exploration, the child is considered an exact look of her father. The contextual meaning of ‘spitting out’ a child lies in the culture and the knowledge that the child is a product of the parents. However, there has to be a striking resemblance between the child and either of his/her parent such that someone who has never met him or her before can recognise or identify him/her through such an appearance. In the above instance, the outstanding resemblance is more surprising as the child is a product of the illicit liaison between Odenigbo (Ugwu’s Master) and Amala, the girl Odenigbo’s mother forced on him. It is noteworthy that with such a resemblance Odenigbo cannot deny the fact that he impregnated Amala since the child’s looks are evidence.

In another example, Kambili and her brother Jaja are said to have *asusu anya* (*Purple Hibiscus* 308). Igbo metaphor, *asusu anya*, language of the eyes, refers to a signal or an eye contact that is used by two or more persons when it is not convenient to talk. The meaning of such a signal is known only to the persons who use it and may not be understood by others. *Asusu* in Igbo means speech or language, while *anya* means eyes. Notice that instead of translating this expression as ‘eye contact or communication’, the writer prefers to inject Igbo vocabulary into English syntax and the Igbo meaning which suggests that the signal is carried over to English. *Asusu*, as used in this context, implies spoken language. This means that one speaks with one’s eyes. Kambili authenticates this:

I turned to Jaja after she left and tried speaking
with my eyes. But Jaja’s eyes were blank, like a
window with its shutter drawn across. (Adichie
293)

Kambili is used to communicating with her brother, Jaja, with the eyes because of their father’s high handedness. But in the extract above, she does not get the normal response from Jaja due to the shock of their father’s death. A non-Igbo speaker may wonder why the author prefers to use ‘speaking’ instead of ‘communicating’ in the above example. But Adichie decides to capture the Igbo essence in the

expression through her choice of Igbo words. This way, the non-Igbo reader is made to understand that although there is an English equivalent for the expression ‘eye contact’, the Igbo context alludes to it as spoken form of communication rather than a mere signal.

Similarly, Achebe’s use of metaphorical language is noticed during the naming ceremony of Elewa’s child. Elewa’s uncle, who is invited to name the child as it is customarily required, comes late. Beatrice, Emmanuel, Abdul and some other friends of Elewa name the baby. In Igbo custom, this is considered an aberration as it is an elderly person who is expected to perform the christening, not a younger one. When Elewa’s uncle learns that the younger ones have performed a function traditionally preserved for elders, he metaphorically voices his disapproval:

You young people... What you will bring this world
to is pregnant and nursing a baby at the same ...
(Achebe 226)

The expression “pregnant and nursing a baby at the same time” is a transliteration of the Igbo expression *odi ime ma kworo kwa nwa n’azu* which is used to depict an unpredictable situation or something that is ominous. By using this expression, Elewa’s uncle condemns the effrontery of the young who, according to him, are treading a dangerous path because it is not normal that one should be pregnant and nursing at the same time. By using this cultural metaphor, Achebe paints a picture in the readers’ mind of the unpredictable behaviour of the young as well as the uncertainty youthfulness represents. Achebe’s deployment of culture-specific metaphors helps the reader’s imagination in terms of visualising the characters and scenes. More importantly, through the use of metaphors, Nigerian authors, generally, and Achebe and Adichie specifically, succeed in leaving cultural marks that distinguish their English from other national “Englishes”. This peculiar way of using language authenticates Braj Kachrus’ concentric theory which places Nigeria in the outer circle.

Conclusion

We have examined how Achebe and Adichie deploy proverbs and cultural metaphors as conversational strategies. These modes of writing help the writers to achieve special effects in such a way that it gives the use of English a local flavour that creates a Nigerian identity. Achebe and Adichie use these linguistic features to portray the rich and robust cultural splendour of their L₁ mode. It is worthy to note that Achebe and Adichie do not only succeed in portraying the themes of their novels, but also do well in representing the ways of life of the Nigerian people by their use of proverbs and metaphorical expressions. In conjunction with the foregoing argument, we surmise that in the artworks of Igbo speaking writers, the Igbo world view is well articulated through the use of English to depict the ideals, beliefs, reasoning and ways of life of the Igbo.

References

- Aboh, R. (2013). Proverbs and euphemisms as discourse strategies in Joe Ushie's poetry. *African Studies* 72(1), 107-120.
- Aboh, R and Uduk, H. (2016). The pragmatics of Nigerian English in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novels. *Journal of Language & Education*. 2(3), 6-13.
- Aboh, R. (2018). *Language and the construction of multiple identities in the Nigerian novel*. Grahamstown, South Africa: NISC (Pty) Ltd.
- Aboh, R. and Igwenyi, E. (2021). Igbo endearment terms: In-group identity construction in selected novels by Achebe and Adichie. *South African Journal of African Languages*. 42(1), 123-130.
- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (2008). *Anthills of the Savannah*. London: Heinemann.
- Adesanmi, P. (2002). Europhorism, universities, and other stories: how not to speak for the future of African literatures. In F. Toyin and H Barbara (eds.) *Palavers of African Literature: Essays in Honor of Bernth Lindfors* (pp. 105-136). Trenton NJ and Asmara: African World Press.
- Adesanoye, F. (2014). Of Nigerian English and Nigeria's English. In A. Akinjobi (ed.), *English Language Lecture Clinic Series 4*, University of Ibadan. (pp. 43-62). Ibadan: Edunjobi Enterprises.
- Adichie, C. (2003). *Purple Hibiscus*. Lagos: Farafina.
- Adichie, C. (2006). *Half of a Yellow Sun* Lagos: Farafina.

- Anyokwu, C. (2011). Igbo rhetoric and the new Nigerian novel: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. *The African Symposium: An Online Journal of the African Educational Research Network* 1(11), 80-90.
- Bandia, P. (1996). Code-switching and code-mixing in African creative writing: Some insights for translation studies. *TTR: Traduction, Terminologic and Redaction* 9(1), 139-153.
- Egudu, R. (2013). Chinua Achebe's counselling creativity. *Okike: An African Journal of New Writing* 50, 95-103.
- Esimaje, A. (2011). Cultural influences on the fictional expressions of Nigerian Igbo speaking writers'. *Journal of Languages and Culture* 2 (9), 154-161.
- Fashina, N. (2008). Postmodern ruptures and the de-construction of social-linguistic: a study in "Area Boys" proverbs and tropes in West Africa. *Ibadan Journal of English Studies* 5, 310-29.
- Joseph, E.J. (2004). *Language and identity: national, ethnic and religious*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Legemah, E. (2015). Pragmatizing the language of racism in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*. *University of Uyo Journal of Humanities* 19(2), 72-94.
- Oben, B. and Ekpe, T. E. (2018). A Paradigm shift in ideological orientation: An exploration of Zaynab Alkali's style choices with regards to corruption, socio-political instability and insecurity in the initiates. *Journal of Humanities and Cultures Studies*, 3(5), 1-14.
- Ngugi, M. (2018). *The rise of the African novel: Politics, language, identity and ownership*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press
- Onukaogu, A and Onyerionwu, E. (2010). *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The Aesthetics of Commitment and Narrative*. Ibadan: Kraft Books.
- Onwuka, E. and Kehinde, K. (2021). Religiosity and family dysfunction in Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. *Benin Journal of Literary Studies* 2(2), 47-62.
- Urujzian, V.G. (2022). "They Called us whores, yet they come to us" – Language and patriarchal ideology in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Trafficked*. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research* 19(3), 48-64.