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Perspectivation in Nigeria's Political Visual Communication: A Social Semiotic Analysis

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Abstract: Considering the fact that the use of visual resources in political communication is advancing globally, this paper discusses perspectivation as a social semiotic strategy deployed in selected Nigeria's 2011 newspaper campaign advertisements. This is done with the goal of unveiling text producers' deliberate visual representation of candidates and issues. Data comprise 60 full-page newspaper campaign adverts which were purposively selected in line with the research interest of the study. A critical analysis of the data was done using the analytical tools of Social Semiotics with insights from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Findings show that newspapers create social space for advert producers to explore semiotic resources for power contestation in Nigeria. Producers deploy visual resources such as typography, metaphorisation, information value, framing, among others to represent political candidates positively/negatively respectively. Viewed against Nigeria's fledging democratic background, the study concludes that newspaper advert visual representation of politicians is influential in citizens' positive/negative perception of political candidates during campaigns because of its underlying ideologies which are strategically presented in naturalized advertising discourse.

Key words: Perspectivation, Politics, Power, Social Semiotics, Critical Discourse Analysis, Advertising, Newspaper, Nigeria.

Introduction

There is a growing discourse on the ways in which images are becoming a prominent means of constructing meaning about politicians and their struggle for power in modern day democracy. In arguing for its usefulness in Nigeria's campaign discourse, Ademilokun and Olateju (2015) note that visual images provoke deeper feelings, and stir the people to certain required actions more than spoken or written language. They further note that visual images are used for popularization of politicians and political parties preparatory to elections in the country. These are valid observations of some of the purposes which visual communication serves during political campaigns in Nigeria. However, it should also be noted that the interest of campaign discourse producers may not always be explicit. Findings from existing studies suggest that media political campaign advertising, rallies and indeed all forms of political discourse, could be manipulative (Van Dijk, 2006; Oamen and Fajuyigbe, 2016). This is because the interests of politicians and their supporters are often tacitly backgrounded in advertising discourse so that the undiscerning electorate could be deceived by its naturalized ideological content (Osunbiyi, 2001; Cummings & Wise, 2005).

Political campaigns are important to electoral process and in Nigeria political parties deploy creative use of language in marketing their candidates to the electorate during campaigns. The study of the use of language in Nigeria's political campaign discourse has received a lot of scholarly attention (See Ademilokun & Taiwo, 2013; Taiwo, 2008; Opeibi, 2006). Political parties also employ visual communication in

promoting the image of their candidates during campaigns. Indeed, Elebute (2013) in his study of the use of the visual media in Nigeria's political campaigns since 1963 posits that visual concepts have been useful in educating Nigerian citizens on the nation's democratic process. However, not much has been done in the critical study of the use of semiotic resources in newspaper campaign advertisements produced during Nigeria's political campaigns. This paper therefore intends to study the ways in which advert producers deliberately use semiotic resources in representing Nigeria's political candidates to the electorate during campaigns.

Perspectivation in Visual Communication

Wodak (2009) identified five strategies of positive-self presentation and the negative presentation of others. They are referential/nomination, predicational, argumentation, perspectivation/framing and intensifying/mitigation strategies. Perspectivation as a discursive strategy refers to the means by which producers express their point of view and involvement/distance in the reporting, description, narration or quotation of relevant events in persuasive rhetoric. Perspectivation is achieved in visual communication through the interactions between represented participants (the people, places and things depicted in the images) and the interactive participants (the people who communicate with each other through the images; that is, the producers of the images and the viewers). Kress and Leeuwen (1999) posit that producers' selection of a perspective or point of view in representing participants implies expressions of attitudes which are often socially determined. Visual resources such as size or frame of an image, image

act and gaze, layout, etc. could be deliberately deployed to project producers' point of view in visual communication. Considering the fact that the major objective of political campaign discourse is to achieve a positive image of a politician (Frolova, 2014), this study focuses on investigating the ways in which visual communication is employed by campaign advert producers to strategically project political candidates from positive/negative point of views to the readers.

Social Semiotics and the Critical Study of Visual Communication

Social semiotics is an approach to the study of semiotics which views language and other modes of communication as social practice. Social semioticians posit that sign making is a motivated activity deployed to express meaning rather than a random use of signs. In this regard, they share Critical Discourse Analysts' preoccupation with the study of ideology and power relations in seemingly neutral discourses of institutions (Anthonissen, 2003). However, while much of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) research has focused on the study of texts and talk, social semioticians examine ideology in linguistic and nonlinguistic modes of texts. They argue that no single semiotic code can be understood in isolation since meaning resides in the multiplicity of codes deployed in texts (Hodge and Kress, 1995). Media platforms under which newspaper advertising discourse falls, involve a complex interplay of written text, images and other graphic elements. A holistic investigation of all the semiotic modes employed in its meaning making should therefore yield a more robust research outcome (Kress, 1997; Anthonissen, 2003).

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) studied the emerging prominence of visual images in the communication of ideas. In their critical analysis of semiotic modes, they explained that the Systemic theory of functional use of language could be extended to describe the 'grammar' of visuals. They adopted Michael Halliday's (1985) metafunctions in describing the roles of visuals in the representation of reality (ideational metafunction), interaction (interpersonal metafunction) and message (textual metafunction). This paper follows this critical view in its investigation of visual communication in Nigeria's 2011 presidential campaign advertisements. Thus, it critically investigates the use of semiotic resources in newspaper advertising visual communication in order to unveil the perspectives adopted by the discourse producers in representing three presidential candidates. In analyzing discourse participants' representation, image act, gaze, size, information value, placement, salience and framing among others are examined.

The paper focuses on the social semiotic analysis of campaign adverts produced for Goodluck Jonathan, Muhammadu Buhari and Nuhu Ribadu who were the three major presidential candidates in the Nigeria's 2011 general elections. The 2011 presidential election was crucial because the People's Democratic Party (PDP) had been in power for 12 years. As the incumbent president, its candidate Goodluck Jonathan had the enormous resources of his office at his disposal for the electoral campaign. Nevertheless, PDP also had internal frictions at this time, particularly with the choice of Jonathan, a southerner. Some of PDP stalwarts opposed his

emergence because they felt it signalled the end of the party's power rotation arrangement between the north and south. Jonathan's key political opponents were Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) and Nuhu Ribadu of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN). Buhari was contesting for the presidential seat for the third time but CPC was new and had limited access to government resources. ACN on the other hand was better resourced financially than CPC because they had five state governors and 16 senators. However, Ribadu was making his appearance in Nigeria's presidential race for the first time. The struggle for power was therefore rife among the candidates and their political parties during the campaigns. Therefore, the semiotic resources such as photographs, cartoons, typography, layout among others deployed to represent these political candidates within the nation's socio-political context in 2011 are worth a critical investigation because they should aid the understanding of advertisers' strategic use of visual perspectives in the positive or negative representation of political actors in Nigeria's newspaper campaign advertisements. The critical perspective is emancipatory because it is concerned with unveiling hidden persuasive and manipulative discursive practices. The specific objectives of the study are to: critically examine the visual resources deployed to represent the political candidates; discuss the semiotic strategies employed by text producers to influence readers' perception of political candidates; and relate the texts to the socio-political contexts of their production.

Persuasive Discourse and Newspaper Political Marketing in Nigeria

Persuasive discourse is defined by Lakoff (1982 cited in Hardin, 2010:155) as 'the non-reciprocal attempt or intention of one party to change the behaviour, feelings, intentions, or view point of another by communicative means'. Advertising, propaganda, rhetoric and religious sermons are examples of persuasive discourse. Scholars (Cook 2008; Opebi, 2004; Hughes 2003; Olujide *et al*, 2010) agree that political advertisements are produced primarily to elicit specific behaviours, such as voting, and/or increased awareness of a candidate or party. Although the newspaper is about the oldest medium of mass advertising, its choice as a means of advertising all over the world has been challenged by the audio and audio/visual advantages of radio and television respectively. Nonetheless, it could be argued that in Nigeria, the factors of tangibility, access to the target audience, short lead time and easy production of visuals have helped to keep newspaper as a significant means of reaching the electorate during campaigns. Researchers (e.g. Opeibi, 2004; Ademilokun & Taiwo, 2013 and Oamen, 2015) have studied the use of language in newspaper campaign advertisements in Nigeria. They agree that text producers explore language resources to favourably sell their candidates to the electorate. Horsbol (2006) however insists on a more robust approach to the study of political newspaper adverts, stating the usefulness of multimodal perspective in robust investigation of the genre. Perhaps the closest study to this in terms of context and focus is Ademilokun & Olateju (2015). The study, which is a

multimodal discourse analysis of visual images employed in political rallies during the 2011 electioneering campaigns in Southwestern Nigeria endorsed the significance of semiotic artifacts for motivating the Nigerian public during political rallies. The study particularly noted that the use of semiotic artifacts for campaigns in Nigeria reflects discourse participants' ideologies and political leanings. This study is also focused on the investigation of visual communication in Nigeria's campaign discourse. However, while Ademilokun & Olateju's research is focused on a multimodal analysis of artefacts such as vest, head wears, *ànkàrá* and surrogate languages as signifiers, this study critically examines discourse producers' strategic deployment of semiotic resources in representing political candidates positively/negatively in selected Nigerian newspaper campaign adverts.

Methodology

The data for this study are drawn from newspaper campaign advertisements in seven national dailies in Nigeria: *The Guardian*, *The Punch*, *Nigerian Tribune*, *THISDAY*, *Daily Trust*, *Daily Sun* and *Vanguard*. A total of 126 political advertisements by the two major contending political parties were elicited from the archives of the newspapers. These comprise 18 samples from each of the newspapers. Choice of the newspapers was influenced by the assumption that they were used by the political parties for advertisement placements due to their wide circulation in the country. However, ownership and domain of circulation were also salient factors which informed our assessment of the national representation of the newspapers. *The Punch* and *Nigerian*

Tribune are owned by South Westerners, *The Guardian* and *Vanguard* by South Southerners, *THISDAY* and *Daily Sun* by South Easterners and *Daily Trust* by a Northerner. In addition, data were gathered from newspapers published between 14th January and 15th April 2011. This covers the peak period of the political campaigns for the presidential election. The data were limited to campaign advertisements of presidential candidates of PDP, CPC and ACN.

Findings and Discussions

Due to space constraints, the discussions centre on some samples of the data gathered for the study. The study revealed that visuals were used as a means of signifying the candidates as desirable or undesirable during the campaigns. The adverts produced for the incumbent president strategically represented him as a charismatic, capable and ideal leader while those produced for his opponents revealed opposition's resistance of the incumbent's hegemonic control of power. In the analysis below, samples of political adverts which portray these observations are examined.

Visual Metaphorisation of Political Actors

Metaphor is an important linguistic and cognitive tool used in politics to influence the minds and choices of the people (Kamalu & Iniworikabo, 2016). Beyond the traditional perception of being a 'trope' or figure of speech, metaphor has been identified in critical studies (Taiwo, 2013; Ezeifeke, 2013) as a major vehicle for understanding our physical, social and inner world. Metaphor functions by mapping conceptual structures from a relatively familiar source domain unto a less well-known target domain (Lakoff, 1993

cited in Musolff, 2012). In political discourse, metaphor would require that a reader/listener associate connections of experiences with the relation between frames deployed by the text producer (Kamalu & Iniworikabo, *ibid*). in campaign advertising, this mapping is sometimes done with the use visuals to infer positive/negative identities for political candidates and their opponents

respectively. Figures 1, 2 and 3 below are examples of the ways in which advert producers exploited visual metaphor to implicitly represent Jonathan and PDP negatively and Ribadu and his running mate, Fola Adeola positively. In Figure 1 below, cartoon is used as a semiotic resource to attack Jonathan's image.



Fig. 1: *The Punch*, April 3, 2011

The advert explores the shared socio-cultural context for its meaning signification. An umbrella which is the symbol of PDP is used metonymically to satirise the party and its candidate. Metonymic use of images is popular with political cartoons whereby characters are used to represent something or somebody else it is related to or associated with. The cartoon illustration shows a man, tacitly used to represent the PDP leadership, walking comfortably in the rain under the safe cover of an umbrella. His comfort is contrasted with images of mass suffering, portrayed by men and women standing in the rain without any form of protection. The top left side of the advert contains the headline and copy which both decry the adverse social situation of Nigeria and the insensitivity

of the PDP government to the sufferings of the people. The top right side contains the imperative 'Vote ACN' and the ACN logo, symbol and slogan 'Democracy for Justice!'

On the left side of the advert, there is an empty space between the copy and the cartoon, the type that Van Leeuwen (2005: 12) refers to as 'no-man's land'. However, the vectors formed by the raindrops connect the participants in the cartoon to the headline and vividly reinforce the suffering of the people. The long shot of the cartoon illustration and its lack of sharpness of details strategically backgrounded its participants. The men and women were pictured from the oblique perspective without direct gaze at the reader and this implies that they were preoccupied with their unpleasant situation. In addition,

their facial expressions are not distinct and this implies dehumanisation of Nigerian masses under PDP administration. However, the man under the umbrella who is a semiotic representation of Jonathan keeps a somewhat direct gaze at the reader but his head is tilted to an angle and he appears to be peeping at the reader from under the umbrella rather than keeping a confident gaze with her/him. The impression created by this representation is that the man looks insincere.

On the right side, the top content of the advert intrudes into the picture space and this arrangement implies sameness or relationship between ACN logo, symbol, slogan and its candidates. The logo and photo also rhyme through

common features of size and sharpness of colour so that they are the most salient elements in the advert. This signifies a demarcation between the chaotic world of the Nigerian masses under the PDP government and the promised calm world of the ACN candidates. In contrast to the participants in the cartoon, the ACN candidates on the right are visually represented through close shot, direct gaze and friendly looks as warm and willing to enter into a cordial relationship with the reader. In all, the central message of the advert is that the Umbrella and by extension PDP government provides protection only for party leadership, their members and supporters rather than the masses.



Fig. 2 is an ACN advert, which also presents a caricature of Jonathan and PDP. The metonymic representation of PDP and its candidate is achieved through the use of an illustration of a man holding a damaged umbrella. The colours of his attire are significant. His shirt is yellow and this signifies excitement, youthful exuberance and

sunshine. His trousers are purple. This signifies nobility or the notion that the wearer is influential. His shoes are blue and this suggests calmness. In sum, his attire suggests that the cartoon character is a leader who is excitedly on a mission or journey. It is important to note however, that the artist deliberately introduced some dimness into the

brightness of his yellow shirt which means that the excitement of the wearer has somewhat been dimmed either by challenges from the opposition or corruption. The yellow shirt has red stripes which are also found on the damaged umbrella. This signifies a connection or relationship between the man and the damaged umbrella.

It is noteworthy that the cartoon character holds on to the damaged umbrella. This suggests that he considers it useful to some extent. However, the condition of the umbrella affects his posture so that he droops and looks crooked as he walks along. It is important to note also that though the pictorial perspective of the illustration is frontal, the man looks down at the umbrella rather than the reader. In other words, he is preoccupied with the damaged umbrella rather than the

reader. The long shot of the picture also signifies social distance between him and the reader, which means that he is detached from the reader and seems to be involved in his own troubled world. Presented in this way, the advert suggests that PDP is not a dependable party and thus its presidential candidate could also not be reliable. The alternative leadership is presented in the pictures of the ACN presidential candidates who are attired officially in dark suits, white shirts, red ties and recommended eye glasses. Presented in this way, Ribadu and Adeola are positively represented as technocrats and the ideal leaders of a modern democratic government. In addition, their frontal and direct gazes indicate their well-defined focus and desire for a close relationship with the electorate.



Fig. 3: *Daily Trust*, April 14, 2011

Fig. 3 is another metonymic representation of PDP which was issued to delegitimize the reliability of the party and its candidate. The cartoon is an illustration of a man and a woman with a baby strapped to the woman's back walking under a perforated

umbrella. The implication of the state of the umbrella is that it can no longer satisfactorily perform the function for which it was made which is to protect its carrier from rain or sun. This observation is demonstrated by the rain pouring down on the people under the

umbrella through the holes in it. The presentation of a pictorial frontal angle of the man and woman reveals their facial expressions. Their direct gazes show their worried looks and portray them as sufferers rather than significant societal figures. The medium long shot also supports this view of their social estrangement. In sum, the cartoon represented ACN's claim of Nigerian masses' anguish under the leadership of PDP. On the other hand, the pictures of ACN candidates which show their attires, frontal pictorial angle, close shot and direct gaze positively represented them as purposeful and amiable technocrats. By placing contrasting chaotic cartoon situations beside the calm context of the ACN candidates the symbolically suggests the promise of a more stable and efficient nation under the ACN leadership.

Perspectivation in Pictorial Representation

Pictures could be tactically employed in political campaign adverts to represent a candidate positively or negatively. In analysing pictures as a form of visual art in campaign advertisements, attention is paid to the form of the work of art, as well as what it represents because the two cannot be treated separately (Grant,

2002). For example, Fig. 4 below is a PDP advert picture of Jonathan through which the producer sought to establish identity between him and the Nigerian Muslim electorate. The close shot photograph affords the reader a detailed view of Jonathan's attire from head to shoulder. His attire includes a turban and thus gives a visual impression of a Christian presidential candidate who has affinity with the Islamic religion and culture. His direct gaze signifies a connection between him and the reader in order to compel her/him to enter into some form of solidarity with the incumbent. When a represented participant looks directly at the viewer's eyes in photography, it connotes a direct visual address with the reader and also represents the participant as demanding that the reader enters into some form of relationship her/him (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996). The plain and dark background of the picture foregrounds Jonathan's image and makes him the object of the reader's attention. In sum, while his direct gaze, pictorial colour and shot are employed to connect him with all readers, his attire strategically projects a bond between him and Muslim electorate.



Fig. 4: *Daily Sun*, March 16, 2011

Fig. 5 presents a covert taxonomy of three pictures of Jonathan, Namadi Sambo, his running mate and Shehu Shagari, the first civilian president of Nigeria. This was used to visually establish similarity in the personality and political influence of the participants and also to signal Shagari's endorsement of Jonathan's candidature. His power and position were given salience through the size of his picture which was the biggest of the three pictures. The dressing of the three participants represents them as civilian leaders and this is useful for endearing them to the electorate. The producer

sought to establish solidarity and friendship between the PDP candidates and the reader through their look. In addition, the oblique perspective of Shagari represents him as focusing on Jonathan and Sambo rather than the reader. A vector formed by the direction of his glance connects him to the other participants and demonstrate his approval of the two candidates. In this way, the pictorial representation enacts the discourse of power because it visually displays the level of influence that Jonathan and Sambo have with former political leaders of Nigeria.



In Fig. 6, a discourse of exclusion is enacted through its pictorial presentation of Muhammadu Buhari and the late General Sani Abacha. Sani Abacha was one of Nigeria's military dictators that died in 1998, while still in power. The producer strategically establishes similarities between Buhari and Abacha who has been criticized severally for his past corrupt and despotic leadership. The black and white presentation of the

participants' close up pictures strategically decreases the authenticity of the participants' personalities. Kress and Leeuwen (1996: 163) explain this strategy in photography thus:

We judge an image real when for instance its colours are appropriately as saturated as those in 35mm photographs. When they are less saturated we judge them 'less real', 'ethereal', for instance, or 'ghostly'.

The military outfits of the participants also aid the producer's intention to delegitimize Buhari. By presenting them in military uniforms, the producer tacitly hinted at a universal tendency among military leaders to be despotic. Indeed, there is no direct eye contact between Buhari and the reader. Rather

he is represented as speaking to an unidentified participant. On the other hand, Abacha gazed directly at the viewer but not in a friendly way. Rather, his gaze is presented as aloof and calculating. The two participants are thus depicted as distant from the reader.



Fig. 6: *Nigerian Tribune*, March 29, 2011

Fig. 7 is an example of ACN's use of pictorial strategy to campaign for a needed change of leadership in Nigeria. The setting of the bigger picture in the advert reveals a shanty settlement with five participants. A nude child is backgrounded at a distance standing by the door of a bamboo hut. This way, he served as a link between the children in the picture and their poor accommodation, thereby reinforcing the producer's message of abject poverty of the Nigerian masses. Four participants are foregrounded and arranged in covert taxonomy, a form of classification which according to Kress and Leeuwen (*ibid*: 81) helps to establish a sense of commonality among the participants of an advert. Three of the foregrounded children are clothed in rags while one is unclothed similar to the child by the bamboo hut's door.

The medium shot of the participants and the mixture of direct gaze and its absence among the children indicate some level of societal estrangement between them and the literate, middle/high class newspaper reader. Although some of them look directly at the reader, yet it is done from a detached distance and so does not reflect any form of identity or affinity. In fact, the second and third foregrounded participants (from the left) appear pensive and uncertain. Their pictorial presentation seems to say 'although we are part of you, yet we do not belong in your world'. The second picture in the advert is that of Ribadu who wore a smile and directly looked at the reader as if inviting her/him to a close relationship. When a presidential candidate is strategically represented this way, he is portrayed as affable and

willing to enter into a relationship of

social affinity with the reader.



Figure 7: *Daily Trust*, February 11, 2011

Fig. 8 below is PDP's visual attempt at negating the idea of government's failure to provide good life for Nigerian children. It contains two pictures which are separated by a frame. The bigger picture is that of a group of participants which includes a teacher and some school children who are involved in a collaborative classroom activity. The close shot of the picture enacts an inclusive discourse of closeness between the represented participants and the reader. In other words, the picture seems to affirm the claim that the classroom environment shown in the advert is a familiar experience for the reader also. While some of the participants are pictured frontally others are represented obliquely. However, they all look directly down at the textbooks on the table rather than at the reader. Pictured in this way, an exclusive discourse is produced in which the teacher and pupils seem to be involved in their own world of academics.

The act of looking down into the textbooks connotes the fact that the academic world lies at the feet of these Nigerians or rather that they have academic power. This is in contrast to the pensive looking children in Fig. 7 above. This picture presents a more optimistic image of the Nigerian child as the future leader who is in a purposeful process of formation. Their attires are also significant. The teacher is dressed in Nigerian attire for women, while one of the female pupils wear hijab (a head covering worn by Muslim women to conceal their hair and neck) and the others are dressed in conventional school uniform. This implies that the education system promised by the PDP candidates is all embracing albeit of modern standard. The second picture is that of Jonathan and Sambo. The picture is a close shot and they are represented as looking directly at the reader or viewer with friendly smiles. In this way, they are shown as warm, affectionate and caring and by extension committed

to realising the promise of better education and life for Nigerian children.

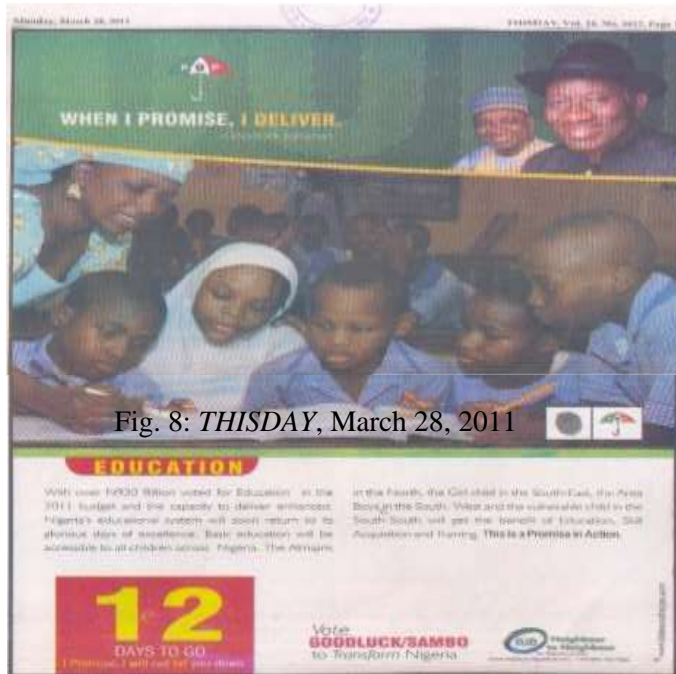


Fig. 8: *THISDAY*, March 28, 2011

Perspectivation in Newspaper Campaign Advertisement Layout

In interpreting representational and interactive meanings of campaign advert layout elements, information value, salience and framing were considered. According to Kress and Leeuwen (*ibid*: 181), ‘the placement of elements endows them with specific information values relative to each other’. In Figure 9 below, the producer employs the vertical axis and left-right information value to attack PDP’s inability to provide lasting solution to the problem of fuel supply in the country. Words and visuals are strategically combined to communicate the message. The top of the advert contains a bold headline and the picture of a very long queue of cars

at an Oando (a major petroleum marketer) petrol station. The use of picture here is an instance of naturalistic modality in which visual truth includes the assumption that the more an image of a thing resembles the way we would see it in reality, the truer or higher is its modality (Leeuwen, 2005). The centre of the advert contains the copy while the party’s logo and the picture of the ACN candidates at the bottom are placed on the left and right respectively. In its mediating role therefore, the copy serves as the verbal explanation of the long queue at the petrol station and also introduced Ribadu and Adeola as the candidates who can solve the problem of fuel scarcity in Nigeria.



Figure 9: *Daily Trust*, March 8, 2011

Fig. 10 on the other hand, is PDP's reaction to Fig. 9 (*Daily Trust*, March 8, 2011). A typical discourse of the powerful is enacted through semiotic resources of pictures and number to counter ACN's claim of perennial fuel scarcity in the country. The advert contains five pictures and a body copy which is placed under the pictures. The pictures are separated by frame lines. Framing helps to signify positional differences of both parties on the claim of a fuel scarcity free situation in Nigeria under Jonathan's administration. The semiotic potential of framing is that disconnected elements could be read as separate and independent or even contrasting units of meaning whereas connected elements could be read as belonging together in one way or

another as continuous or complementary (Van Leeuwen, 2005). The first picture on the top left corner is the ACN advert on fuel scarcity (Fig. 9), while the other four pictures show fuel stations working without any sign of queue of cars. In addition, Fig. 9 is strategically placed on the left and separated from the other pictures by a thick frame line. The distinction between the left and right is important in cultures all over the world and has been a source of meaning and morality. The left is often associated with negative moral values and the right with positive moral values. The left is also associated with the past and the right with the present (Van Leeuwen, *ibid.*). This signifies that fuel scarcity challenges in Nigeria have been resolved under Jonathan's leadership.



In Fig. 11, the producer strategically combined visual and verbal resources in such a way that Jonathan's image is given prominence while the other candidates are backgrounded. This advert was placed in the newspaper two days before the end of the electoral campaigns for the presidential election. The producer exploits the average Nigerian's disenchantment with the military and thus deploys semiotic resource of attire and layout to directly attack the ACN and CPC candidates. Attire is used to communicate the message that Jonathan is the only civilian among the three candidates and thus is the one qualified to be a democratic president. The picture of a friendly-looking Jonathan is placed at the top of the advert which made him the most salient and eye-catching figure in the composition. On the other hand, his opponents are dressed in military uniforms and look pensive. A picture of

the map of Nigeria is placed very close to the right side of Jonathan with the phrase *fellow NIGERIANS* written on it. The adjective 'fellow' inclusively connects him to the citizens and tacitly excludes his opponents. The advert layout also enacts the 'we' and 'others' discourse as Jonathan's picture is separated from those of the other candidates while he is represented as sharing affinity with the people of the country. In addition, by placing his opponents' pictures at the bottom of the advert, the text producer strategically delegitimized their political influence. The notion of high and low could be deployed to demonstrate the participants' access to power or a lack of it. Verticality is also sometimes tinged with moral values so that high could connote positive attributes while low connotes the negative (Leeuwen, 2005).



In Fig. 12 below, the vertical dimension is also used in the placement of elements in the advert. The picture of Muslim worshippers is placed at the top of the advert, while that of Jonathan is placed at the bottom. The headline *Muslims vote wisely* is placed within the pictorial space of the Muslim worshippers and in this way indicates the referents of the headline. The copy of the advert is placed in the middle to serve as a link between the pictures. It connects the worshippers and Jonathan by stating the reasons why he should be elected instead of Buhari who the advert claims ‘chooses a radical Christian as

his Vice President’. The information value of the picture of Muslim worshippers is reflected in their act of worship rather than in the individuals. In spite of their frontal pictorial perspective, their individuality is backgrounded because of absence of direct gaze with the reader. On the other hand, Jonathan’s image is foregrounded through size, sharpness and action. He is strategically placed at the right hand side at the bottom of the advert to portray him as a new breed of political leader who is tolerant of all Nigeria’s multi-religious status.



In contrast, in Fig. 13 (*Daily Trust*, April 14, 2011) below two close shot pictures of Buhari and Jonathan are used to tacitly compare their characters on the cover page of the newspaper. Layout is employed to delegitimize Buhari as an ideal leader. His picture which was taken at the grand finale of his presidential campaign outing at the International Conference Centre in Abuja on Wednesday, April 13, 2011 depicts him as emotionally weak. Although the picture shows a frontal perspective of him, there is no direct connection between him and the reader. Rather, with the use of a circumstance

of means which in this case is a handkerchief, he is represented as if trying to shut out the rest of the country. Conversely, the PDP advert which includes a close up shot of Jonathan is placed at the bottom of the cover page to depict Jonathan as an amiable candidate. His genial smile and direct gaze directed at the reader are inviting and demonstrate a desire to connect with the reader. The dominant green background of the advert and the white lettering of the copy are also strategically employed to serve as a reminder of the nationhood of Nigeria and to stir up a sense of nationalism in the reader.



Fig. 13: *Daily Trust*, April 14, 2011

Perspectivation in Newspaper Campaign Advert Typography

Van Leeuwen (2006: 142) asserts that a new typography has emerged which can no longer be regarded as an 'abstract art' but as a means of communication in its own right. This form of typography is often employed in newspaper political adverts for strategic visual communication. In some of the campaign adverts selected for this study, producers employed typography for strategic visual communication. Typography was used to foreground

salient information in persuasive attempts deployed to influence the reader's perception of information in the adverts. For instance, in Fig. 14 (*Daily Trust*, March 15, 2011) the text producer attempts to create identity between Jonathan and PDP and the Nigerian Muslim electorate by including an Arabic version alongside the Hausa and English versions of the advert copy. In this way, the verbal-typographic message enacts an inclusive discourse of Jonathan's all-embracing promised leadership.



Fig. 14: *Daily Trust*, March 15, 2011

In Fig. 15 (*The Guardian*, April 5, 2011) below, graphology is strategically deployed in form of a handwritten letter to index a poor albeit ardent Hausa supporter of Buhari. In this way, the producer attempts to validate CPC's claim that its candidate is loved and supported by the Nigerian masses. ACN also ideologically indexed child

speakers in some of its adverts through the use of childlike handwriting. In Fig. 16 (*Daily Trust*, March 25, 2011) this strategy is used to index child speakers in order to influence the feelings of the reader and get her/him disenchanted with the suffering of the masses under the PDP government.

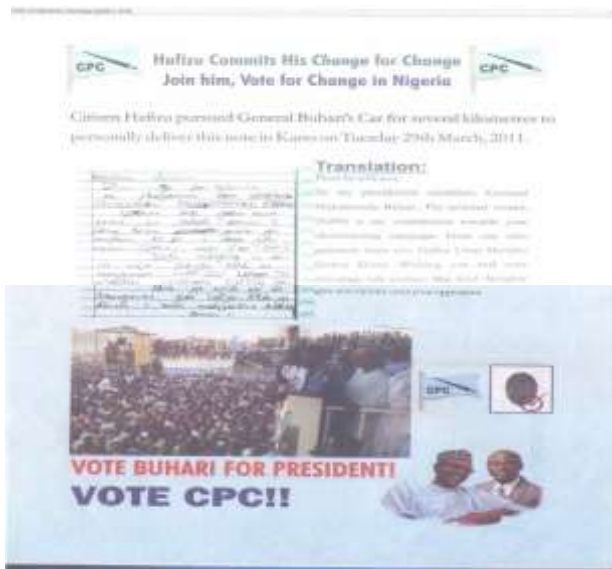


Fig. 15: *The Guardian*, April 5, 2011



Fig. 16: *Daily Trust*, March 25, 2011

Conclusion

In this study, a critical investigation of Nigeria's campaign adverts' visual communication was carried out. This was done with a view to making clear the strategic use of perspectives in the visual representation of political actors in newspaper campaign adverts. The social semiotic analytical approach was adopted in the study of semiotic resources deployed in the 2011 presidential advert campaign discourse. The findings reveal that the interests of advert producers influence their constitution of visual elements in

campaign adverts. The study also shows that the text producers deployed semiotic resources of framing; metaphorisation, layout, typography and layout among others to tactically to project political candidates as desirable or otherwise. Viewed against Nigeria's need for voters' campaign discourse literacy, we conclude that newspaper advert visual representation of politicians serves as a force that could influence citizens' positive or negative perception of political candidates during campaigns.

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The Oral Tradition as Index: The Leitmotif of Music in the African-American Literary Imagination

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Abstract: The oral tradition forms part of the aesthetic pillars of African-American literature and the study of its presence in African-American literary works deserves more attention. This article shows how African-American creative artists have used their oral tradition, more specifically music, as an index to construct narrative contents, structure and decorate them, thus conferring them beauty, originality and complexity. It focuses on the deployment of the Jazz, the Blues and the slave secular and civil war songs in texts by Langston Hughes, Margaret Walker and Toni Morrison.

Keywords: oral tradition, music, blues, jazz, narration, spirituals, aesthetic

Introduction

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the African-American intellectuals have been urging their community to turn back to their cultural heritage, particularly the folk culture as a means of not only valorizing their identity, but also crafting a distinctive and original form of art. Eminent scholar and visionary, W.E.B. Dubois forms part of the pioneers who promulgated this use of African-American folklore in *The*

Souls of Black Folk (1903). Robert Bone largely shares this view when he traces the roots of the development of the nationalistic trend in African-American literature to the growth of the Niagara Movement of the 1900s. For Bone, the African-American intellectual of the 1920s “shared fully in the spiritual alienation of the Lost Generation” and like the white expatriate, he rejected the dominant culture. The alienation of the black intellectual as “an artist caused

him in turn to alter his goals as a Negro” and “instead of advocating blind assimilation into a hopelessly materialistic culture, he began to think in terms of preserving his racial individuality.” These desires to build a distinctive tradition made the “alienated Negro” dig into his folk culture (64).

This incipient nationalistic and even “postcolonial” trend grew stronger with the Harlem Renaissance, the nationalism of Garvey’s “back to Africa” and later the Black Arts’ movement. These movements spontaneously coalesced around a common interest in Africa, a continent celebrated as a cultural matrix and the harmony of which was contrasted with the decadent White civilization. This pride in Negro cultural heritage and history resulted in the accentuation of cultural markers in literary works and a desire from the marginalized people to depict ignored aspects of their cultures and civilizations” (Dieng 2). As a result, from the mid-twentieth century onward, many African-American creative artists have indeed self-consciously used their folklore in the design and ornamentation of their literary output.

The oral tradition, which includes storytelling, music, myths, proverbs, sermon, language, songs, etc., ranks among the most utilized elements of African-American folklore as some theorists and critical analysts have posited. In “A Blues View of Life” (Literature and the Blues Vision, 1989), Traylor (1989) argues that African-American literature is built on oral folklore. Williams (1979) also points out the importance of the oral traditions in African-American creative writing in her study of Lucille Clifton’s poetry, “The Blues Roots of Contemporary Afro-American Poetry” (1979). She

assesses that Clifton’s work epitomizes the birth of a “new tradition built upon the synthesis of black oral traditions and Western literate forms” (191).

Today, the oral traditions continue to inspire the muses of prominent contemporary African-American creative writers. Morrison (1999) for instance, follows this aesthetic tradition because she is preoccupied with conferring her works a print quality but also an oral quality. She believes the novel should replace the traditional stories that helped educate the community, suggest solutions and raise key issues. Morrison further argues that she did not initiate this practice, for many antecedent African-American creative writers “incorporate...unorthodox novelistic characteristics” such as features of the black art in their works (Morrison, 1999, p.200). In this work, which forms part of a wider project on the motif of the oral tradition in African-American literature, the focus is put on the examination of the various uses of music in the crafting and molding of texts written by African-American authors, including in the recreation of events, narrative and decorative purposes. Following a chronological order, this study focuses on representative works of three authors namely Langston Hughes, Margaret Walker and Toni Morrison to illustrate that music, more specifically the spirituals, the Jazz and the blues, have been utilized for various purposes in African American creative works: mimesis, narration, and decoration.

The Fusion of Jazz and Blues in Langston Hughes’ Works

The world-renowned novelist, poet, children’s books creator, and critical and political essayist, Langston Hughes forms part of the first wave of African-

American writers who developed a folk-based aesthetic, mingling traditional European and revolutionary Negro forms. Hughes blossomed in the context of the Harlem Renaissance - a period of self-assertion and celebration of Negro cultural heritage, and he was a trendsetter who encouraged black artists to climb over the racial mountain to implement new aesthetic forms rooted in their folk culture. This encouragement is proclaimed in his famous essay: "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," in which he exhorts black artists not to be afraid of being their own selves, of escaping from the limiting prism of Western forms and in which he urges them to set up a new aesthetic rooted in black culture.

Faithful to this aesthetic creed, he experimented the Jazz, Blues, and bebop poetics in his works and for this reason, most critics view him as a modernist creating tensions between the verbal center and the musical margin. For Miller (2006) for instance, Hughes is the voice of modernity "who subverted the very conventions of genre through which tradition and modernity have sought to confine the free imagination" (*The Art and Imagination of Langston Hughes* 27). Positive and negative reception of his poems earned him the sobriquet of Jazz poet and illustrates the high presence of music in his poetic output. James Baldwin, known for being a detractor of the poet, softened his criticism" and acknowledged that by the 1950s, "[Hughes] no longer created the blues—he began to recite the blues" (Wallace, 2012, p.96). More conservative voices of the Harlem Renaissance such as Alan Locke accused Hughes of writing a "Jazz version of Negro life," while Countee Cullen who had a traditional approach to

writing and good knowledge of Western versification viewed Hughes' "Jazz poems as interlopers in the company of truly beautiful poems in the other sections of [The Weary Blues]" (Tidwell, 2007, pp. 4-5).

Langston Hughes had a passion for music and used it extensively in his literary output. He loved listening to music, especially the blues and the jazz, and he always travelled with his records. The poet and novelist had quite extensive knowledge of blues and jazz notes. As a matter of fact, he was in "constant contact with the finest musicians and composers including WC Handy, Duke Ellington, Kurt Weill, Nina Simone, Louis Armstrong, Randy Weston, Hazel Scott, Charles Mingus, and Tony Scott, to name a few" (Wallace 79). Hughes' poetry was truly musical: he even collaborated and performed with many of the above-cited musicians throughout the 1950s in a reading series called the "Poetry-to-Jazz Program." Amiri Baraka, a great connoisseur of music, poet and central actor of the Black Arts movement who has published a book-length study on music acknowledges Hughes as "one of the most influential "Jazz" poets" and calls him "one of the first American writers (black or white) to respectfully and seriously consider blues as a laudable and important part of American culture" (Wallace, 2012, p.69).

Several studies related to the presence of the Jazz and the Blues in the poet's works have been completed. It is well known that Hughes mimed the techniques, structure, language, rhythm, cadences and other features of blues and jazz melodies in his verse. Rob Wallace devotes a whole chapter –"Langston Hughes: How To Take the Impossible and Make It Dance" of his book entitled

Improvisation and the Making of American Literary Modernism, to the poet's utilization of music, more specifically the Jazz and the Blues in *The Big Sea, I Wander as I Wonder, Montage of a Dream Deferred* and *Ask Your Mamma: 12 moods for Jazz*. He elaborates on the use of improvisation in the works of Langston Hughes. Wallace also explains that Langston developed a version of blues he calls blues imagism in his poems. Following on Larry Scanlon's footsteps, he explains that Hughes "manipulated the spirit and form of the blues to create a blues sublime rather than show the capacity of poetic meter to capture blues rhythm" (89).

Among Langston Hughes' blues poems, critics list *The Weary Blues* (1926), *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951), *Harlem* (1951), and *Ask Your Mamma* (1961). Resemblances with the blues songs can indeed be identified at several levels: in the rhythms and cadences, improvisational mode, the comments about the vicissitudes of life and the presence of an infinite amount of choruses. "The Weary Blues," as Trudier Harris in "The Blues in African American Literature" notes so well, "captures the form and ethos of the blues"(67). The paratext of the poem establishes an obvious parallel between the poem and the music and the form and ethos clearly replicate features of the black music. Indeed, Langston Hughes' 1926 signature poem reads.

The Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard a Negro play.

To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.

In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I head that Negro sing, that old piano moan--

"Ain't got nobody in all this world,
Ain't got nobody but ma self.
I's gwine to quit ma frownin'
And put ma troubles on the shelf.

I got the Weary Blues
And I can't be satisfied.
Got the Weary Blues
And can't be satisfied--
I ain't happy no mo'
And I wish that I had died."

The singer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head.
He slept like a rock or a man that's dead.
(Rampersad 1995, 50)

In these lines, the singer expresses his feeling of loneliness and isolation. He complains that his life is miserable

because he is by himself. He has been probably abandoned by the love of his life. However, far from being a mere

complaint, the song, like a blues' lyric, plays a cathartic function and serves as a means for the speaker to get rid of the sorrow and transcend the situation. The plaintive as well as cathartic function of the blues appears in these four lines: "Ain't got nobody in all this world, Ain't got nobody but ma self. I's gwine to quit ma frownin'/And put ma troubles on the shelf." Putting his troubles on the shelf allows him to release his intense suffering and be able to go to bed and "sleep like a rock" at the end of the poem. The poem opens on a note of sadness, a note that even the moaning piano echoes, but it ends on a positive note: there is hope because the singer will enjoy a new day when he wakes up after a good night sleep.

Johnson and Farrell (1979), who closely scrutinized the presence of the blues in Langston Hughes's poems, consider that the blues' influence shows more in Langston Hughes' early poetic productions and the poems he wrote after his revolutionary interlude in the 1940s. The language, structure and rhythm of early poems such as the ones in *Fine Clothes to a Jew* (1927) are clearly influenced by the blues. Johnson and Farrell (1979) state "when Alfred Knopf published *Fine Clothes to a Jew*, Langston Hughes became one of the most innovative voices in American poetry and the first poet in the world to transform the idioms of blues and jazz into poetic verse" (55). They also explain that although Hughes was carried away from blues poetry by the revolutionary wave of committed writing resulting from his immersion in communism, he returned to it fifteen years later with the publication of *Shakespeare in Harlem* in 1942. The poems in *Fine Clothes to a Jew* and *Shakespeare in Harlem* are all

structurally designed after the lyrics of the blues. However, Hughes modified his use of blues after his revolutionary interlude: 1) the poems in *Shakespeare in Harlem* had less of an ethnic imprint, 2) they include less black speech idioms, 3) one can notice in them an attempt to make form consistent with content, 4) they emphasize class rather than race and 6) more poems emphasize class rather than race. Finally, the majority of the poems in *Shakespeare in Harlem* focus on economic and social problems while most in *Fine Clothes to a Jew* deal with male-female relationships, unrequited love, etc. (55-9).

Like her male counterpart, Langston Hughes, Margaret Walker, another product of the Harlem Renaissance whose literary output fully blossomed in the 1960s draws literary flavor from music. However, whereas Langston fell under the charm of the Blues and the Jazz, Walker taps to the source of slave secular songs in her novelistic craft.

Margaret Walker's Use of Music as an Index for Reconstructing History in *Jubilee*

Margaret Walker no doubt makes an extremely original and innovative use of the oral tradition in her 1966 historical novel she began in the 1930s and takes the use of music in literary craft a step higher. In *Jubilee*, she not only exploits music to organize the narrative structure, but also to complement her scholarly reconstruction of the period encompassing slavery and the civil war years. She herself explains in *How I Wrote Jubilee* that her intention was to develop a "folk novel based on folk material: folk sayings, folk belief, folkways" (25). She adds that as a historian who had read the dominant representations of the period of

enslavement, read slave narratives, read slavery and civil war novels, listened to oral histories, made field trips to the South and spent years of unremitting hard work researching the period. She was aware that the true nature of African-American experience was not depicted in Anglo-American historical writing and fiction. Walker believed that Anglo-American historical writing, was propagandist, biased, and incomplete in nature and a similar neglect, bias, and destruction of black history can be identified in literary representations of slavery and the Civil War years by white authors. No traces of agency of the enslaved could be found in these representations which also, like Barbara Christian notes in reference to antebellum narratives, disseminated “images of blacks as servile and inferior race” (Christian, 1985, p.19). Stereotypes such as the black Sambo, the minstrel, the mammy, the conjure woman, the Jezebel, and the lewd black woman found their origins in antebellum and postbellum white Southern women writers’ fictions. Civil War novels written in the nineteenth and twentieth century performed analogous silencing, “othering,” and marginalization of black subjects as fictions of plantation tradition. With *Jubilee*, Walker wanted to revise history to accommodate a valid black perspective and to revive the African-American memory swept away by these master-narratives. She planned to write a folk novel so as to capture the slaves’ experience and cultural memory and to show the significance of the Negro people and their role during the war because these aspects had been blotted out of the dominant culture’s representations (*How I Wrote Jubilee* 26).

To complement her research and the oral narratives she had heard about the period, Walker resorted to the enslaved people’s secular and Civil War songs because she understood that music is a metaphor for the African Americans’ lived experience, a vehicle of their history in the New World. As Leroi Jones argues, in *Blues People* (1969), a fruitful examination of the history of African-American music cannot eschew a scrutiny of the history of African Americans and vice versa because music “was the history of the Afro-American as text, as tale, as story, as exposition narrative, or what have you, the music was the score, the actually expressed creative orchestration, reflection, of Afro-American life, our words, the libretto, to those actual, lived lives” (ix). Indeed, music is history in African-American culture because when they were forcefully transplanted to the New World, Africans retained the ancestral tradition of preserving their lived experiences in songs: they “recorded the circumstances of their daily live in song just as assuredly as if they had kept diaries or written biographies” (Southern, 1971, p. 66).

They created songs under every imaginable circumstance and condition: in the kitchen, in the fields, in the levee camps, in the woods during secret religious services, and in the quarters. Slave songs were expressions of social comments and conveyed the slaves’ feelings of joy and sadness, their thoughts and their reactions to conditions, to work, to the masters and the overseers. For example, a slave could improvise a song to express how sorry he/she was to see his/her best friend punished. The spiritual “Motherless Child” is a good illustration of the slave’s use of songs as a daily

form of expression of sorrow. In this song, an enslaved woman expresses her pain and despair. She laments: “O sometimes I fell like a/ motherless child. Sometimes I feel/ like a motherless child. O my Lord, sometimes I feel like a motherless child.” Behind the pain and despair, there is always a measure of hope because the enslaved woman is going to get down on her knees and pray and God will certainly provide. Den I gi’down on my knees and pray./ pray. Gi’down on my knees and pray.”

Thus, the slaves’ secular and religious songs provide entry to the totality of the enslaved people’s lived experience. These artifacts of the African-American oral tradition carry the slaves’ social comments, thoughts, and reactions to miscellaneous objects, prayers, and attitudes. They are historical records, diaries and biographies. But how does Walker utilize the motif of music in her text?

Walker exploits the leitmotif of music to build the structure and content of *Jubilee*. The title of the novel is drawn from a traditional spiritual, Jubilee. The three parts and fifty-eight chapters of the narrative open with epigraphs, which are either slave secular or religious songs or Civil War songs. James Spears, in “Black Folk Elements in Margaret Walker’s *Jubilee*,” argues that the epigraphs opening the three parts and fifty-eight chapters of the narrative organize Walker’s historical novel structurally and thematically. He illustrates that the motif of the children of Israel conveyed in the song opening part two and three—“Mine eyes have seen the Glory” and “Forty years in the Wilderness”—helps Walker organize the parts into a coherent story: “together with the chapter titles, two of which parallel the bondage of children of Israel

in Egypt, these epigraphs also help establish the thematic organization of the novel” (14). The resilience and strong faith expressed in “Mine Eyes” parallels the dominant theme of Margaret Walker’s *Jubilee* (1962). Like the enslaved Africans, the speaker in this spiritual is able to transcend the daily sufferings because he is convinced that God will put an end to his predicament and this is visible from the opening lines: “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;/He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;/He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword: /His truth is marching on” (The Atlantic Monthly Vol. IX, NO. LII, 1862, p.10).

Walker thus imposes order on her narrative with the motif of music. For Spears (1980), music confers thematic unity to the narrative and this view is easily exemplified, as the musical structure of the novel dictates the development of themes in the parts and chapters of the narrative. For instance, it is obvious that the songs used as epigraphs introduce the themes of the different chapters. “Swing Low, sweet chariot” relates to the theme of Sis Hetta’s death in chapter one. “Go Down Moses” relates to the theme of the slaves’ oppression in chapter two; “When Israel was in Egypt land,” which focalizes the slaves’ precarious conditions of life and work in Dutton’s plantation. A similar intertextual link can be argued between the epigraphs and the content of the remaining chapters.

Thus, Walker employs the musical structure as an index for recreating Vvry’s experience in time and space. Far from being mere organizational devices and simple markers of shifts in

themes, time, and space, these songs also form part of the narrative discourse. Their meanings fuse with the content of the narrative to provide a better understanding of the slaves' thoughts and attitudes, thereby illuminating their incipient political consciousness and revolutionary spirit. Several chapters, more visibly chapter eight and sixteen, contain events that parallel the content of the songs. Additionally, Walker weaves songs into the fabric of the narrative and the characters' discourse.

The motif of music not only helps the narrative capture with effect the slaves' consciousness, but also it supports the effective description of the slaves' ontology and resilience, which, as noted earlier constitutes an important part of Walker's project. In the narrative, Walker utilizes "Go Down, Moses" the language and cadences of which are particularly suitable for a sermon to illustrate the slaves' revolutionary spirit, thereby further buttressing the narrative's discursive content. Thus, given its central function in the novel's development, its use in reconstructive history, and its discursive performance in the text, one can say that music is a tool through which Walker reclaims history. Music further enables Walker to achieve self-representation and to recover the slaves' voice, consciousness, and resistance.

Music in Narrative Structure: The Jazzesthetics in Morrison's *Love*

Contemporary author Toni Morrison is another creative artist whose literary imagination draws from the enriching well of oral tradition in general and music in particular. Though open to the enriching breezes of postmodernism and avant-gardism, Morrison's literary imagination is rooted in African-American traditions. The artistic credo

that she self-consciously implements in her novels, is promulgated in her interviews and non-fiction, more specifically in "Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation" (1984) and "Memory, Creation and Writing" (1984). Black art, in her view, should perform the same therapeutic role as music, and the novel should replace the enlightening classical mythological archetypal stories that parents once told their children to raise key issues that may arise in their lives, to suggest what the conflicts are, to open doors for them without necessarily providing solutions to them (Morrison, 1999, p. 200). Morrison also perpetuates in her creative works the African-American oral tradition. For her, black art should have "the ability to be both print and oral literature," to tell stories that can be read and heard at the same time (Rootedness, p. 200). It should also perpetuate the African-American oral traditions such as the sermonic tradition that dates back from the period of enslavement and which played a cathartic role in the lives of the formerly African-American people. Morrison also pleads for a type of literature that builds a participatory relationship between the writer/artist and the reader/audience (Rootedness, p.198-9). This plea resonates in "*Memory, Creation and Writing*" where she argues that the aesthetic of her works reflects the characteristics of African-American art forms—antiphony, functionality, improvisational nature, relationship to audience, the critical voice which upholds tradition and communal values—and translates them into print (385-90). Morrison's artistic concept of a novel permeated by orality and musicality is better epitomized by *Love*

(2003) though it also transpires in her antecedent texts such as *Jazz*.

It is however important to succinctly present the characteristics of a jazz composition to demonstrate how the narrating instance in *Love* replicates its features. A Jazz composition is characterized by “the ethics of antiphony” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 200), the interaction between the performer and the audience, improvisation and swing. Schuler Gunther explains that this antiphony or “juxtaposition of solo and ensemble music” that “manifests itself in the entire call-and-response typology” constitutes a basic characteristic of African music (57-8). Experts in the field such as Schuler Gunther, Martin Norgaard, and Daniel J. Healey agree that improvisation remains no doubt the most salient quality that distinguishes Jazz music from the European tradition. As for Schuler (1968), he illuminates that “the improvisation of many lines at the same time is a typically African concept, and is perpetuated in most forms of early jazz” (Schuler, 1968, pp. 57–58). Norgaard also clarifies the concept of improvisations when he states:

Improvisations in jazz music “include repeated rhythmic and melodic patterns [...] improvisers use procedures based on the rules of tonal jazz to create an improvised output. This output may contain patterns but these patterns are accidental and not stored in procedural memory for later use” (271).

For Healey (2014), solos in Jazz melodies can be improvised from scratch even if they can also incorporate a variation of the melody. In an improvisation, rhythmic or melodic phrases may be repeated but also slowly

altered. Improvisations can be individual or collective: in a collective improvisation “some or all members of a group participate in simultaneous improvisation of equal or comparable weight;” a collective improvisation “does not preclude the presence of a soloist but it implies a degree of equality between all players in the ensemble” (Kernfeld, 2001, p.III.3).

Articulation constitutes an aspect of paramount importance in improvisations. It refers not only to the ability of performers to articulate clearly the lines they play while improvising, but also to establish the right connection with the time of the rhythmic section. As a summary, articulation implies good enunciation, good playing of scales, and most importantly playing in time and swinging. It thus establishes harmony between the improvisations of the performers and the melodic line of the rhythm.

In the narrative of our focus, the juxtaposition of two narrating modes, the organization of the story, the interaction between the ghostly narrator and the reader/audience, and the temporal order of the narrative mirror the organization of the musical structure of Jazz, more specifically its antiphony, call and response, individual and collective improvisation, swing, articulation, cadence and rhythm. Morrison opts for an extremely anachronistic narrating instance mingling L’s oral story (typographically signaled through the use of italics) and a third-person narrator alternating limited omniscience and full omniscience and exploiting the perspectives of several characters. L, the ghostly narrator, acts as a conductor in the narrative performance: her oral interventions open the novel and she reappears in several

parts of the narrative, including part 3, 4, 6, and 9 to close the novel. As a matter of fact, even though she is one of the several voices that participate in the telling of the polyphonic story, L is the most omniscient of the voices and plays a central role in the narrative. She in fact claims authority over these voices as a prime witness at the center of events and as an exclusive depository of knowledge. She is the one who enables the reader to piece together the scattered parts of the story so as to reconstruct the true meaning of events.

As in a call and response performance, L interacts with other narrators through recalls and replays their tunes in different melodies. The call and response can be further located in the relationship between L and the reader. Her tone is conversational, and the flow is so fluid that you can close your eyes and hear her talk. L directly addresses the reader/listener through a constant use of “you,” and creates a certain form of familiarity through interpellations such as “listen to me.” The use of expressions such as “No, I don’t care what he told people, something else wrecked his resort” and “but, I know” confers an oral quality to her interventions.

The centrality of L in the novelistic discourse mirrors her key role in the narrative’s melody and arrangement. As noted earlier, L sets the melody of the tale: her epilogue delimits the scope and subject of the narrative and sets the melodic line. Her allusions to June on page 9 establish the transition into the first narrative, which begins with the young girl’s arrival in Silk and ends with the death of Heed in the Hotel Resort. L’s epilogue is characterized by a constant swing movement from “now” (present) to “then” (past) and vice versa.

Indeed, the third-person narration built on the perspectives and voices of various characters follows the same harmonic cadence that progresses on mainly two chords: present and past. This rhythmic movement is mainly achieved through characters’ speech, analepses, and embedded narratives with a predominance of recollections of characters such as Sandler, Vida, Heed, Christine, Romen, and June. Consequently, in the multilayered third-person narration, the various voices of the characters improvise over the first narrative controlled by the narrator.

The harmony of the narrative melody rests on articulations that are established by mixing analepses and allowing temporally second narratives to rejoin the first narrative, comparisons, and thematic bridges. The narrative segments are not really connected by temporal markers as in the Western tradition. The different chapters are thematically organized in such a way that events are naturally connected and the temporally second narratives rejoin the first narrative through thematic pivots and comparative portraits. For instance, in chapter 3, entitled *Stranger*, the title’s theme helps to establish a link between past and present through characterization. June, the used-to-be stranger in the Settlement now stranger in One Monarch Street, feels a certain connection with Bill Cosey, the stranger in the portrait who made her feel at home. In chapter 4, L shifts from “now” to “then” through the subtle comparison between Junior and Celestial. The resemblances she perceives between Junior and Celestial serve as a means to jump back to the past to provide the reader antecedents. Similarly, in chapter 5, entitled *Lover*, the title helps interweave past and present. This

segment of the first narrative focalizes Vida and Sandler's grounded suspicions about Romen's hidden involvement with a woman based on his new demeanor. The temporally second narrative shares an obvious connection with the first one, as it describes Bill Cosey's appetite for women and his love for Celestial, a former prostitute. L and the third person narrator adopting various perspectives also play a great role in the articulations of the numerous scattered narratives. L for instance, establishes transitions between the two narrating instances by sketching themes developed in the third-person narrative. The third-person omniscient narrator also brushes up themes and topics before taking the perspectives of actors such as Heed, Christine, etc.

The melody in *Jazz* presents rhythmic variations and the repetition of some tunes. As the story unfolds, the rhythm of the narrative goes crescendo and the tempo slows down. Indeed, the improvisations of the various characters become longer. The narrative begins with the short analeptical accounts of Vida and Sandler in chapter one, which suggests a rather syncopated rhythm and a faster tempo. As it progresses, there is a deceleration of the tempo and change of rhythmic variations. The retrospective accounts of characters become longer. Rhythm constitutes the arrangement of notes according to their relative duration and relative accentuation. Furthermore, one can note a dialogic dimension in the improvisations of the various performers in the narrative. They improvise over the same notes to provide convergent and divergent tunes. To illustrate, several characters including Sandler and L recount some events such as Bill Cosey's boat parties. In this respect, L

can be said to play a central role in the orchestration of the melody, she not only sets the cadence, but also she allows the reader/ listener to interpret correctly the melody by arranging airs. Her various recalls provide true meaning to events that are ignored or misinterpreted by other characters in the story.

Conclusion

Music constitutes an extremely important index which has been exploited for various purposes in African-American literature since the turn of the twentieth century, going through the various movements of cultural self-assertion to contemporary times. Music has inflamed the African-American literary imagination and continues to shape the craft of writers such as Morrison and the young poets' verses replicating the beat and rhythm of rap.

Langston Hughes was no doubt of the pioneers who advocated the use of and actually integrated music into his texts. For this reason he was dubbed a "Jazz poet." Hughes did not only replicate features of the Jazz through constant improvisation in his work, he also used the blues. Hughes' most famous musical poems include *The Weary Blues* (1926), *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951), *Harlem* (1951), and *Ask Your Mamma* (1961). These works recreate the rhythms and cadences, improvisational mode, the comments about the vicissitudes of life and the presence of an infinite amount of choruses of the Jazz. Like the blues, they were also complaints about hard days but also triumph over and resolution of conflicts.

Later on, perpetuating a newly established tradition, Margaret Walker tapped into the sources of enslaved people's secular and Civil War Songs to

complement her historical reconstruction of the period going from bondage to the fratricide war. For instance, music is a tool of mimesis in *Jubilee*. Walker understood that to reclaim “true” history, captures the true consciousness and agency of the enslaved, she had to exploit music which recorded their daily lives and experience. Music permeates Walker’s novel including the paratext, intertext, and text. It decorates and confers organization to the overall narrative and its different parts and chapters. The epigraphs have a close intertextual link with the novel and its different divisions.

Faithful to her conception of art, Morrison perpetuates the esthetic tradition initiated by Hughes and exploits the beauties of Jazz in the narratological organization of *Love*. The narrative replicates features of a Jazz

composition’s characteristics, mainly the antiphony, the call and response, the individual and collective improvisation, the swing, the anachronic structure, the polyphonic narration and the narrative order. In the novel, Morrison established direct contact between the ghostly narrator and the audience and reader thus creating an effect of call and response. The voice of the ghostly narrator, L, is also juxtaposed with the voices of various other characters. This dual form of narration replicates the antiphony of Jazz. Like a conductor, L sets the melodic line of the story and lets the other characters’ improvise over it; harmony and articulation are established by themes and mixed analepses. The anachronic structure, characterized by a constant movement from past to present and vice versa, confers a swing movement to the narrative.

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Reconstructing the Nigerian English Identity in Nigerian Literary Fiction: A Study of Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Purple Hibiscus*

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Abstract: Language has been identified as the most flexible and pervasive of the many symbolic resources available to man for identity construction. Nigerian novelists such as Chinua Achebe, Elechi Amadi, Wole Soyinka, and Gabriel Okara had in their generation explored this basic function of language not only for the reclamation of the African identity but also in the construction of an identity for the Nigerian variant of the English language. These identities were however regional. The onus therefore lies on contemporary Nigerian literary artists to consolidate the Achebean tradition and negotiate an all-embracing state-of-the-art national identity for the Nigerian variety of English. This study employs the framework of the cultural identity theory and through a descriptive approach examines Adichie's reconstruction of the identity of the Nigerian variety of English as national, legitimate, viable and adequate for fictional narration in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Purple Hibiscus*. In doing this, the paper advocates continued and persistent reassertion of the authenticity and collective ownership of the variety by Nigerian literary artists in order to finally put to rest all lingering reservations, enhance national cohesion and realize the codification of the variety.

Keywords: *Nigerian English, Identity (re)construction, Codification, Literary Discourse*

Introduction

When Chinua Achebe, in an interview with *The New Yorker* (1980) remarked that 'literature is not a luxury for us. It is a life and death affair because we are

fashioning a new man', he categorically acknowledged the power of literature to create, sustain and assert identity through the deployment of the rich resources, inherent variability and

stylistic potentials of language. He also lauded the pioneering but concerted effort of his generation to exploit this power in not only the reclamation of his country's history from generations of colonial writers but also in the construction of an identity for the variant of the English language which though 'still in communion with its ancestral home' had been 'altered to suit its new African surroundings' (Achebe, 1975, p.55). This identity creation was most expedient because: 'there is danger in relying on someone else to speak for you. You can trust that your message will be communicated accurately only if you speak with your own voice' (*The New Yorker*, May 26, 2008).

There was therefore a growing need to establish an identity for the entirety of the 'Nigerian voice', or the Nigerian English. This 'own voice' had to be socially acceptable and internationally intelligible: 'an English which is at once universal and able to carry the full weight of [African] peculiar experience' (*The New Yorker*, May 26, 2008). This need is as pertinent and pressing today as it was five decades ago especially because of the 21st century Nigerian need for a national language and identity. Such national identity will enhance national cohesion and stability that ethnic identities usually preclude. This paper, therefore, examines Adiche's efforts towards the reconstruction of the identity of Nigerian English as the collective property of Nigerians.

English in Nigeria

The beginning of the use of English in Nigeria may not be categorically stated but historical records speculate that the earliest contact was around the 15th century when the Portuguese sea merchants and pirates came to the West

coast of Africa in search of a new trade route to the Orient (Awonusi, 2004). Dike (1956), Ajayi (1956) and Crowther (1962) however date it around the 16th century. English in Nigeria, like other New Englishes, therefore has roots in trade relations, missionary activities and colonial interests which have been identified as the most important factors in the entrenchment of English on the Nigerian soil (Odumuh, 1987, Igboansu, 2002).

Bamgbose (1995) identifies three strands in the development of Nigerian English: Contact English, made up of Nigerian Pidgin and Broken English; Victorian English, which was 'bookish' and School English, the variety taught to and used by majority of educated bilingual Nigerians. It is the school English, which has been subjected to nativization (Adetugbo, 1978) but all three strands are today interwoven to give the Nigerian variety of the English language. Nigerian English is thus the variety of the English language which has become institutionalized in Nigeria (Kachru, 1986) amidst the multiplicity of languages and cultures. Nigerian English reveals the evolution of distinctly Nigerian usages, attitudes and pragmatic use of language. It is characterized by phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic innovations and loan words from the many local languages (Bamiro, 1994; Bamgbose, 1995; Igboansu, 2002). It is 'English in Nigeria doing what Nigerians want it to do' Adegbiya (2004, 20). Nigerian English is however not homogenous. No natural language is. It is a classic example of the inherent variability and flexibility of human language. Varieties (sometimes described as 'lects or levels) have been identified within the variety (see Banjo,

1975, Brosnaham, 1958; Adekunle, 1979, Adesanoye, 1980, Kujore, 1985, Awonusi, 1987, Jowitt, 1991, Banjo, 1993, Igboanusi, 2002).

These varieties have been identified along ethnolinguistic or regional lines; thus, there are Igbo English in the East, Yoruba English in the West, and Hausa English in the North. These variations are however most distinct at the phonological and lexical levels. Linguistic scholarship have argued for a monolithic standard, at the syntactic, lexical and semantic levels, based on 'the twin criteria of social acceptability and international intelligibility (Banjo, 1995, p. 209) or grammaticality and appropriateness (Okoro, 2004). Consensus appears to favour the adoption of 'educated Nigerian English', the variety used by educated Nigerians irrespective of ethnic affiliation, as the standard (see Odumuh, 1984; Awonusi, 1987; Jowitt, 1991; Banjo, 1995; Kujore, 1995; Bamgbose, 1998; Igboanusi, 2002; Alo & Igwebuikwe, 2012). Educated Nigerians include Nigerians who have, at least, a university degree (Banjo, 1971; Awonusi, 1987; Udofot, 2003; Gut, 2012). This category of users has supposedly acquired lect-related linguistic competence and has been spatially and socially conditioned by the Nigerian environment (Uzoezie, 1986). Codification and elaboration of the educated variety are among the current pre-occupations of scholars of Nigerian English (Adegbite 2010). The issue of social acceptability has, however, remained a problem and according to Schneider (2007):

standardization or the acceptance of local forms of English as a means of expression of a new identity involves acceptance of

structures as adequate in formal usage, the positive evaluation of structures, structural homogeneity of a variety and codification (49).

Nigerians, therefore need a re-orientation and an attitudinal change towards the Nigerian English variety in order for the codification and elaboration attempts to pay off.

The Nigerian English Literary Tradition

Nigerian literary English has its origin in Chinua Achebe's seminal *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It was born out of a burning need to correct the jaundiced Western image of Africa popularized by such literary texts as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and show Africans as a people with a rich cultural heritage and identity. The term, Nigerian 'English Literary Tradition,' refers to 'the many modification processes the English language has undergone since it came into contact with the indigenous languages' (Aboh & Uduk, 2016, p. 7). It received global attention with Professor Wole Soyinka's winning of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986. Although couched in the English language, Nigerian English literature discusses issues that are Nigerian and shares the sensibilities, consciousness, worldview and other aspects of the Nigerian culture (Arayela, 2013). Nigerian writers have remained true to their cultural heritage especially in their employment of oral traditions, local idioms, and proverbs in their narrative. But since English was the weapon used 'for the colonizing and civilizing the untutored African' (Arayela, 2013, p.30), it is only logical that it be used to 'de-colonize' Africa.

Three generations have been identified in the pedigree of Nigerian English Literature. The first generation, the 'trail

blazers' (Arayela, 2013, p.31) include writers like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, Elechi Amadi, J. P. Clark, Gabriel Okara, and Amos Tutola, among others. These writers built on the Western literary traditions but couched their works in a language that is uniquely Nigerian. By employing local idioms and proverbs, and deploying stock English phrases in unfamiliar ways and capturing the rhythms and nuances of speech of their local languages in their narrative, they created a 'new English.' Bamiro (1991) observes that their English is characterized by direct translations from Nigerian languages, observance of the principle of least effort and economy of expressions, socio-contextualization of English language forms and hypercorrection of the norms and code of the use of English. He therefore groups their language into basilect, uneducated Nigerian English, mesolect, semi-educated Nigerian English, and the acrolect, educated Nigerian English. Their themes revolved around pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Nigeria, and the oppression and exploitation of the weak by the strong among others. They were nationalistic in their orientation.

The second generation, 'the experimentalists' was born out of 'a disillusionment with the gains of independence' (Arayela, 2013, p.32). The generation comprises writers like Femi Osofisan, Niyi Osundare, Festus Iyayi, Buchi Emecheta, Zulu Sofola, and Zaynab Alkali among others. Arayela (p. 33) reports that these writers 'experimented with the old forms to produce new and novel forms' and like their predecessors, borrowed from the oral tradition and history of the people. Literature, for them, was a social force

and an ideological weapon (Obafemi, 1994). As such they preached social change through collective effort.

The third generation includes contemporary Nigerian English literary artists like Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche, Akachi Adimora Ezeigbo, Chika Unigwe, Helon Habila, and Vincent Egbuso among others. These writers, many of whom are Nigerians in the Diaspora, are both heirs to the Nigerian literary tradition and symbols of a new creative movement. Their generation is characterized, on the most part by thematic innovations in addition to explorations of the social and cultural intricacies of the Nigerian state. A major difference between this generation and Achebe's however, is that their narratives, 'while sometimes set in Africa, often reflect the writer's experience of living, studying or working elsewhere and are flecked with cultural reference – and settings – familiar to western audiences' (Lee, 2014 as cited in Santo, 2016, p.4).

Identity Construction in Nigerian Fiction in English

Identity is central to human existence and can be manifested at the individual or social group level. It defines and distinguishes an individual, a group, a society and a language. Deng (1995, p.1) defines identity as 'the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, language....' It is fundamental to a person's sense of self. Fearon (1999) traces the concept to the work of psychologist Erik Erikson in the 1950's. He argues that the semantic field of identity has widened in contemporary times so that the word now means 'dignity', 'pride' or 'honour'. In other words, one's identity

distinguishes him and makes him socially consequential.

Writers of Nigerian fiction in English have through the generations of the genre constructed various identities by means of a domesticated variety of English (e.g. Igboanusi, 2001; Wali, 2015, Lawal & Lawal, 2013) and through the explication of indigenous thoughts and ideals (Okolo, 2008; Lamidi & Aboh, 2011). These identities are constructed through a narrative form delineated by opposing legacies: the colonial legacy (English language and Western civilization), and the indigenous legacy (language, history, socio-cultural realities, norms and values). The writer is therefore a cultural and linguistic hybrid whose sources are his socio-cultural realities and traditional verbal sources, which he integrates into his narrative (Arayela, 2013). His Nigerianness is however seen in the balance between local colour and international intelligibility (Owolabi, 2012, p. 488).

Owolabi (2012) identifies transliteration, interference and importation of first language structures as the domestication strategies that have been employed by Nigerian writers to create various identities. This corroborates Igboanusi (2001) identification of the conscious manipulation of English, as well as influences and interference of the Igbo language and culture as identity negotiation strategies employed by Igbo English writers to create an identity for Igbo English, an ethnic variety of Nigerian English. Also, Abel (2005) speaks of Hausa English as signified through a narrative form circumscribed by the Arab-Muslim and Euro-Christian hegemonies and the indigenous tradition. The same could be said for the

identity of Yoruba English as evident in the literary works of Yoruba writers like Wole Soyinka and Ola Rotimi: an identity negotiated through linguistic experimentation. Lamidi & Aboh (2011) examine the symbolic uses of names in the construction of cultural and group identities in 21st century Nigerian novels. Wali (2015) however, differs from both Igboanusi and Lamidi & Aboh in focus. He investigates how Acbebe and Adichie's language use create identities about them that distinguish them from other writers.

The negotiating of ethnic identities, though desirable, undermines the negotiation of a national identity for Nigerian English. Okoro (2004) therefore warns against the stereotyping and divisiveness that such identities bring in their wake. Nigeria, by virtue of the amalgamation of 1914, is a nation of nations. Nigerian English is therefore the totality of the socio-linguistic and cultural peculiarities of these nations, ethnicities and users as well as the common core features, which the variety shares with other varieties. Its identity is not fragmentary. Walsh (1967 cited in Ogu, 1992, p. 88) acknowledges this communal ownership: 'the varieties of English spoken by educated Nigerians no matter their language, have enough features in common to mark off a general type which may be called Nigerian English'. Simo Bobda (1995) reiterates this:

Notwithstanding this diversity, there is evidence that a vast majority of features heard in Nigerian English cut across ethnic lines and can be considered typical of the Nigerian... (p. 252)

There is therefore need for Nigerian literary fiction to continually deconstruct the jaundiced often regional

identity of Nigerian English and reconstruct a national identity. Aluo (2017, p. 105) identifies the negotiation of national identities as ubiquitous in the writings of Adichie. In Adichie's words (2010, as cited in Aluo, 2017, p.106) 'literature can lead to change by creating a collective sense of who we are'. Literature is the vehicle for image rebranding (Urama, 2010).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and the Nigerian literary tradition

The Nigerian born and bred Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a third-generation writer, was born in Enugu on 15th September, 1977 to Grace and James Nwoye Adichie. She grew up in Nsukka, where she began her educational career before proceeding to Drexel University, Philadelphia to read communication and later to John Hopkins, Baltimore, for a master's degree in creative writing. She is a novelist, short story and non-fiction writer. She was described by Achebe, to whom she credits her literary success, as coming almost fully made. *The Times Literary Supplement*, a weekly literary review published in London by News UK, describes her as 'the most prominent of a procession of critically acclaimed young Anglophone authors [who] is attracting a new generation of readers to African literature' (16th Dec. 2011, 20). In 2008, she was awarded a MacArthur Genius Grant. Her first novel, *Purple Hibiscus* (2005), won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for best first book; her second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2007), won the Orange Broadband Prize for fiction in 2007 and her third novel, *Americana* (2013) was named one of the *New York Times* top ten best books of 2013. Her other works include *The Headstrong Historian* (2008), *The Thing Around Your Neck*

(2009), and *We should all be Feminists* (2014). The latter is a non-fiction essay adapted from a TED talk. Her most recent work is entitled *Dear Ijeawele or a Feminist manifesto in fifteen suggestions* (2017). In her literary works, Adichie explores the sociocultural realities of the Nigerian state and the Nigerian people within and outside the shores of Nigeria. She addresses the themes of identity, culture, racism, migration, colonialism, Nigerian politics, religious fundamentalism, domestic violence, Western interference, war and violence among others.

In contrast to the work of most writers of her generation, Adichie's works evince the emergence of a 'new experience in literature of the English language and the renewal of the African literary canon (Santo, 2016, p.3). She opts for a traditional western style and the language of the colonizer to deliver her story (Santo, 2016) just like the Achebean era. In doing so, she explores the diversity of the English language in Nigeria and offers her readers a different perspective on Nigeria while emphasizing the dangers of a single story. Anyokwu (2011) describes her English as thoroughly domesticated and replete with Nigerianisms, slang, and buzz-words among others. Although her Igbo socio-cultural and linguistic heritage colour her works, yet in addition to projecting her Igbo identity, she negotiates a national identity. In an interview with Obie Brooke during her 2014 NBCC award Adichie acknowledges this fact:

I've always had Igbo [in my writing]...[because] for me what was more important, for the integrity of the novel, was that I capture the world I wanted to capture rather than to try to mold

that world into the idea of what the imagined reader would think. (Adichie, 'NBCC Fiction Award).

In her narrative enterprise, therefore, she focuses on rearticulating the Nigerian and Nigerian English identity through her competent mixing of the exoglossic and endoglossic codes.

Orakwue (2016) highlights and analyses some stylistic devices in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*. She groups the devices into lexical categories, grammatical categories, code switching/mixing and context. She examines how these are used to reveal Adichie's ideas and the extent to which Adichie's cultural and linguistic background affect her style. Lawal & Lawal (2013) further examine language and ideology in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and focus on her language use as an explication of the ideological factors of power and gender. Ikediugwu (2013) differs from the two by investigating the feminist inclinations in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (HYS) (2007) and *Purple Hibiscus* (PH) (2005) whereas Aboh & Uduk (2016) try to account for the pragmatic relation between utterances and meaning explication in Adichie's three novels, *Purple Hibiscus* (PH) (2005), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (HYS) (2007) and *American* (2013). Aluo (2017) is a study of Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and 'A Private Experience' one of Adichie's short stories in her collection of short stories, *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009). Aluo argues that even though Adichie negotiates Nigerian national identity and African identity in the works, she comes 'close to misrepresenting Northern Nigerian identity in her fiction' (p. 105). He believes that a postcolonial identity is achievable through the mixture of many

ethnic identities, not through their denigration.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the Interpretive Approach; an aspect of Cultural Identity Theory in pursuance of its objectives. Cultural identity is an umbrella construct for related group identities like nationality, race, ethnicity, ethno-linguistic identity, regional identity, etc. It is central to a person's sense of self and is shaped and reshaped by communication choices, behaviours, and negotiations within intercultural discourses. It is both an individual choice and a group choice and is adaptive, evolving, flexible, negotiable, distinct, communal and discrete (Chen & Lin, 2016). It can also be facilitated or compromised. Interest in understanding cultural identity began with the publication of Cross (1978) theory of Nigrescence. Cultural identity theory is an interpretive approach conceived by Mary Jane Collier and Milt Thomas in 1988. As identified by Collier (2005 as cited in Chen & Lin, 'Critical/interpretive approach, 2016), the interpretive approach aims to:

... advance understanding of the ways in which individual members of groups, organizations and social institutions discursively negotiate their positioning and identifications while simultaneously navigating the complex and particular contexts in which they live.

It regards cultural identity as traversing cultural positioning and identifications that are historical, contextual and relational (Chen & Collier, 2012; Chen & Lin, 2016; Collier, 1998). Cultural identity theory centres on how individuals use communicative processes to construct and negotiate their cultural group identities and

relationships in particular contexts (Chen & Lin, 2016). The theory acknowledges culture as one of the many identities conveyed in communication interactions. It posits a relationship between inter-cultural competence and cultural identity and believes that identities can be negotiated, co-created and reinforced.

Although cultural identity theory was originally conceived as an interpretive inquiry to cultural identities, recent years have witnessed the incorporation of critical perspectives, attention to contextual structure, ideologies and status hierarchy (Chen & Lin, 2016). It may be nationalistic, ethnic, political, class, gender etc. Collier and Thomas (1988) distilled seven properties of the theory, strategies of identity communication by group members from the ethnography of communication and social construction. Among these properties are: avowal and ascription - how one sees and projects his group identity and how he is perceived by others; salience or prominence; modes of expression; individual, relational and communal identity; content and relational levels. However, the first three properties will be of interest to this study and in doing so, emphasis will be on identity re-articulation, co-creation, negotiation and reinforcement.

Nigerian English in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Nigerian English plays an important communicative, identity recreation, assertion and negotiation roles in Adichie's novels. She uses this linguistic medium to 'instantiate the Nigerian-ness of her narrative discourse (Aboh & Uduk, 2016, p. 8). Adichie's English in *Purple Hibiscus* (henceforth *PH*) and *Half of a Yellow Sun* (henceforth *HYS*) evinces the

phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic, and semantic characteristics of Nigerian English identified in Nigerian English scholarship (see Jowitt, 1991; Bamiro, 1994; Igboanusi, 2002; Dadzie, 2004; Daramola, 2004; Okoro, 2004; Ogunsiji, 2006). These characteristics include among others: reduced sentences, discourse particles, code-mixing/switching and innovative ordering and innovative use of grammatical categories at the syntactic level; loan words, coinages, influences from L1 and culture, translation equivalent and acronyms at the lexical level; semantic shift, extension and restriction due to influences from the local cultures and worldviews at the semantic level; idioms at the discourse level; loaning, clipping, affixation, etc. at the morphological level and mother tongue (MT) interference at the phonological levels.

The study identifies the following aspects and instances of Nigerian English in the novels:

(i) Code-mixing/code switching:

1. 'I na-ezuzu ezuzu? Are you stupid?' (*HYS*, 299)
2. 'Eh! You speak Igbo, I na-asu Igbo' (*HYS*, 151)
3. 'Safe journey, Ijeoma'. (*HYS*, 26)
4. 'O na-agakwa? Is it going well?' (*HYS*, 38)
5. '...you are a sheep, aturu' (*HYS*, 211)
6. 'Na gode. Thank you Hajia' (*HYS*, 46)
7. 'Kedu?' (*HYS*, 22) (How are you?)

(ii) Loan words and Acronymy

8. 'You know Papa nnukwu's akwam ozu is next week?' (*PH*, 203)
9. 'They have blockaded us *kpam kpam*.' (*HYS*, 293)
10. '...rub his body with *okwuma*...' (*PH*, 14)

11. 'I will leave tomorrow because I must attend an *umuada* meeting.' (HYS, 239)

12. '...Kambili just behaved like an *atulu* when my friends came.' (PH, 150)

13. 'Na gode. Thank you *Hajia*' (HYS, 46)

14. 'Those flies in the kitchen, sah, they are a sign somebody has done bad medicine from the *dibia*'. (HYS, 215)

15. 'Which one is for big *oga* to try and bribe me with an interview? I ask you, eh, which one is that?' (PH, 206)

16. '...this is not a good time for *NEPA* to take light'. (PH, 165)

17 '...and scribbled WCC: WAR CAN CONTINUE.' (HYS, 330)

(iii) Transliterated/translated local idioms and culture-bound expressions

18. 'They said he *did not rise well* three mornings in a roll'. (PH, 156)

19. '*Let the day break*' (HYS, 291)

20. 'I thought Odenigbo's girl is a human being; he didn't say you were a *water mermaid*'. (HYS, 283)

21. They will have Anulika's *wine-carrying ceremony* next Saturday'. (HYS, 176)

22. '*Bushman*. He does not know it is Bee-afra not Ba-yafra'. (HYS, 289)

23. 'Which one is for *big oga* to try and bribe me with an interview? I ask you, eh, which one is that?' (PH, 206)

24. 'Master found a *rain-holder* on the wedding day'. (HYS, 245)

25. 'That soup smells like something *Amaka washed her hands well to cook*'. (PH, 155)

26. '*God take power from the devil*' (PH, 242)

27. 'You people I *ate the money* for the zinc...' (PH, 97)

28. '...this is not a good time for *NEPA* to take light'. (PH, 165)

(iv) Syntactic innovations and Discourse particles

29. Your cousins will be back soon. They *went out to say happy birthday* to Father Amadi...' (PH, 121)

30. '*Me and my madam and the children are leaving tomorrow...*' (HYS, 175)

31. 'Which one is for big *ogato* try and bribe me with an interview? I ask you, eh, which one is that?' (PH, 206)

32. 'Will you not go to school, *gbo*, Ugwu?' (HYS, 241)

33. '*Eh!* You speak Igbo, I na-asu Igbo' (HYS, 151)

34. '*Haba*, I will cut this line if you keep wasting my time.' ((HYS, 102)

Discussion

The discussion is divided into four parts: the first part deals with code-mixing/code switching; the second, loan words and discourse particles; the third, transliterated/translated local idioms and culture-bound expressions and the fourth, syntactic innovations and acronyms as identity avowal, expression, salience and reconstruction techniques.

Code-switching/code-mixing

One of the identity avowal and reconstruction techniques Adichie employs is code-switching and code-mixing. Code-switching and code-mixing are two related sociolinguistic notions common in bi-lingual and multi-lingual communities or diaglossic situations. Both concepts involve the juxtaposition of two language systems or two language varieties (codes) but while the former reflects the grammar of both codes working concurrently, the latter does not involve the grammars, rather mere intra-sentential switching (Singh, 1985). In Gumperz (1982, p.59) words: [code-switching] 'is the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems'. Romaine

(1989, as cited in Aboh and Uduk, 2016, p.11) adds that the constituents of a code-switched discourse are 'tied together prosodically as well as by semantic and syntactic relations equivalent to those that join passages in a single speech act'. Adichie uses the technique to convey the dual cultural make-up of Nigerian English: The exonormative code co-existing with the indigenous code(s) in a symbiotic relationship. The italicized expressions in excerpts 1-7 are instances of code-switching/code-mixing and are regular features of Nigerian English.

The code-switched elements in the excerpts function to reinforce each other by way of emphasis or reiteration. In excerpt 1, Olanna's emotional discomposure is emphasized; in 2, the emphasis is on the wonder, delight and kinship Nnaemeka feels when Richard speaks Igbo to him. Adichie seems to say here that features of the indigenous codes in the foreign code serve to connect Nigerians to each other. Excerpt 3 underscores Odenigbo's earnest desire for Olanna's safety just as excerpts 4 and 5 underscore Olanna's concern for her cousin's education and Jomo's impatience with Ugwu's naivety, respectively. Excerpt 6 involves the Hausa word '*Na gode*' juxtaposed with the English equivalent 'Thank you'. Adichie uses this to show the multiple socio-cultural and linguistic influences on Nigerian English.

Worthy of note is the skillful way Adichie uses code-mixing in the excerpts to avow the identity of Nigerian English: sometimes the indigenous code precedes the foreign code and sometimes the foreign code precedes the indigenous code, suggestive of a struggle for relevance. Moreover, the code-mixed expressions

are usually exact equivalents, reminiscent of nouns in apposition. Why then does Adichie juxtapose the two codes? The excerpts reveal that whenever there is the need to express deep emotions or emotional attachment or cultural values, Adichie makes recourse to code-switching/mixing as if to say the foreign code alone is inadequate in this respect. Achebe refers to this inadequacy of the English code to express Nigerian socio-cultural realities when he warns that one can trust that his message will be communicated accurately only if he speaks with his own voice. (*The New Yorker*, May 26, 2008). Nigerian English is thus for Adichie '[Nigeria's] own voice', Nigeria's identity.

Olanna's switch from English to Igbo in excerpt 7, 'Kedu' (How are you?) is particularly instructive. In making a woman, Ugwu describes her English as 'a superior tongue, a luminous language, the kind of English he heard on master's radio, rolling out with clipped precision' utter the Igbo word, Adichie places the Igbo tongue on the same pedestal as the English! When she adds: '...her Igbo words were softer than her English... he had not expected English that perfect to sit beside equally perfect Igbo' Adichie masterfully renegotiates the identity of the Igbo language and justifies its influence on Nigerian English.

Acronym and loan words

The second identity reconstruction and assertion technique Adichie employs in the novels is acronym and loan words from the indigenous cultures and language. She again, by means of this technique, shows the rationale for a Nigerian variety of the English language - a variety that will exhaustively catalogue the things, events and processes in the Nigerian environment

(Carroll, 1966). Adichie uses this mode of expression to give prominence to the core symbols, shared meanings, norms and values which may only find expression in the Nigerian variety of English. By so doing, Adichie asserts the adequacy of Nigerian English as a linguistic code: a language must serve the interests of its users. The loan words *papa nnukwu* (grandfather), *akwam ozo* (funeral), *okwuma* (shea butter balm), *umuada* (daughters of the family), *atulu* (sheep), *Hajia* (Hausa for 'senior wife' or a woman who has been on pilgrimage), *dibia* (witch/native doctor), *oga* (Yoruba for 'senior') in excerpts 8-15 do not have the Standard British English (SBrE) equivalents with the same cultural import, associations and pragmatic force as the loan words from the indigenous languages.

Language and culture are inseparable especially because culture is transmitted through language and a people's culture and, invariably, identity are given expression in their language. It is therefore not surprising that Adichie borrows from the indigenous codes because by doing so, she distinguishes the Nigerian variety of the English language from the British and other native varieties. She avows the identity of the variety as that which is relevant to its users: the variety that captures and reflects the socio-cultural realities of Nigeria the same way American English does for America, British English does for Britain, and Australian English does for Australia. Adichie thus uses these loan words to make a statement about the inadequacy of the foreign code and the adequacy of the 'domesticated' variety of the foreign code in the Nigerian context.

The loan words 'papa nnukwu', literally 'big father', (grandfather) and *akwam*

ozu' (funeral), in excerpt 8 have the cultural connotations that their seeming equivalents in the foreign code 'grandfather' and 'funeral' do not have. Papa nnukwu, in the Nigerian context, is not just a grandfather. He is a revered family head, leader, elder, and soon-to-be ancestor! 'Akwam ozu' is not just a funeral ceremony: it is a rite of passage, a preparation for a great journey, a sending off to the ancestors. 'Kpamkpam' in excerpt 9 has a note of finality and hopelessness which the English equivalent 'completely' lacks. It is possible that the repetition of the morpheme 'kpam' is responsible for this. 'Okwuma' in excerpt 10 is more vivid and suggestive of its use among the indigenous peoples than 'shea butter cream' ever could be. 'Umuada' in excerpt 11 represents a strong force in Igbo land. They are not just daughters but gate-keepers and custodians of family traditions. No wonder mama says she must attend their meeting. The consequences of not attending could be dire! Its English equivalent 'daughters of the family' seems drab in comparison. Adichie's use of 'atulu' (Igbo word for sheep) is both symbolic and evocative. In the Igbo context; atulu means 'foolish, useless, senseless, purposeless, abnormal, foolishly naïve, dull-witted etc.' Amaka's reference to Kambili as an 'atulu' shows her deep-seated resentment of and impatience with Kambili's reserve and naivety. 'Hajia' in excerpt 13 and 'oga' are used to show respect, deference and distance. A 'dibia', excerpt 14, is a doctor of sorts: herbalist, providing traditional herbal remedies; diviner, wizard, and spiritualist, someone who can 'make good and bad medicine' (give healing and killing portions) etc. Adichie's use of the loan word has all these meaning

associations which no one English equivalent can have.

Excerpt 17 and 18 are instances of acronym: NEPA means National Electricity Power Authority (or Never Expect Power Always) and WCC means World Council of Churches (or War Can Continue). Acronyms are a regular feature of Nigerian English. Adichie uses them to impress upon her readers the nature of Nigerian English: innovative adaptations to reflect the Nigerian environment and people.

Transliterated/translated local idioms and culture-bound express

Idioms, by definition, are frozen expressions whose meanings are arbitrary and not retrievable from the meanings of the constituent parts (Gibbs & Colson, 2012) but from the socio-cultural worldview and meaning conventions of the users. They are thus culture and context bound and may not be understood outside the cultural context. In deploying this technique, Adichie again reasserts the identity of Nigerian English as the variety that captures the socio-cultural realities of Nigerians. The expressions are decipherable only within the Nigerian context. Excerpts 18-28 are in this category. Interestingly, this technique together with the code-mixing technique is the most frequently used in the novels. By its deployment, Adichie reveals that although Nigeria English shows influences from the many indigenous languages, many of its features transcend ethnic and regional borders: the variety is 'Nigerian', a property of all Nigerians.

Excerpts 18, 19, 25, 26, 27 and 28 depict transliterations of local idioms. 'Did not rise well three mornings in a roll' in 18 is Auntie Ifeoma's way of saying her father has been sick for three

days in a row; the English version of 19 'let the day break' [away from the misfortunes of yesterday and into a better tomorrow] 'goodnight' seems grossly inadequate; 'To wash one's hand well to cook' in 25 is the local idiom for a meal cooked with competence, finesse or expertise - a savoury meal. Adichie uses the expression to succinctly capture the anticipated culinary delight. Excerpt 26's closest SBrE equivalent is probably 'God forbid' and excerpt 27's 'embezzle money' but these too lack the vividness, imagery, cultural weight and pragmatic import of the local versions. The phrase 'take light' in excerpt 28 has become idiomatic in Nigerian usage. It does not just refer to the frequent power cuts but to failure or lack of success generally. So for Amaka, the electricity company has failed its customers once again.

Excerpts 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 are culture bound expressions transliterated into English. Adichie uses them to give expressive force to Nigeria's sociocultural reality. Thus there are uniquely Nigerian English expressions with meanings that are retrievable within only the Nigerian context, though couched in English. Excerpt 21 'wine carrying' may be interpreted as 'betrothal ceremony' and 22 'Bushman' as (an uneducated or unenlightened fellow); 23 'big oga' is the Nigerian English coinage for a highly influential man - a man in a position of high authority. In the novel, Ade Coker uses it to refer to the head of state. Its standard equivalent, 'president' or 'head of state' does not capture the meaning and cultural associations the Nigerian equivalent, 'big oga', captures. 'Rain-holder', excerpt 24, literally 'someone who holds the rain', is the Nigerian

English coinage for someone with supposedly magical powers to control the rain. Adichie through this technique identifies the Nigerian variety of English as the variety that fills the semantic gap occasioned by the differences between the English culture and the Nigerian culture and echoes Achebe's (1965) sentiments about the African writer aiming to fashion out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience. Adichie's use of their standard equivalents would strip her creative enterprise of vigour, colour and relevance to the Nigerian situation. 'Wine carrying' in excerpt 21 is not exactly a betrothal ceremony. It may mean anything from an indication of interest in a girl to the actual marriage. The use of the English code would therefore be grossly misrepresentative. The same can be said of 'rain-holder' in excerpt 24: no one English equivalent can capture the cultural implications of the term: not 'magician' and definitely not 'weather forecaster.'

Syntactic innovations and discourse particles

Adichie's linguistic choices in the novels reveal some syntactic innovation processes in Nigerian English: ordering of sentence elements and the use of discourse particles. We have grouped the two together because the two have been identified as processes of syntactic innovation in Nigerian English (Igboanusi, 2006). These are indicative of the influence of the structure and speech habits of the local languages and cultures. Excerpts 29 and 30 are instances of such syntactic innovations. They reveal a transfer of the syntax of the local languages to the English code. Instead of SBrE 'have gone to Father Amadi's birthday party' or 'gone to

wish Father Amadi a happy birthday' and 'My mistress, the children and I...', respectively, Adichie chooses to express the actions of Kambili's cousins and Chinyere's parting words to Ugwu in the syntax of the local languages: Excerpt 29: 'They went out to say happy birthday to Father Amadi...' (PH, 121) 'Ha gara ikele fada maka ncheta ubochi omumu ya' (Igbo), 'Won jade la tiki Alufaa Amadi ku ojo ibi' (Yoruba) and Excerpt 30: 'Me and my madam and the children are leaving tomorrow...' (HYS, 175) 'Mu na nne m ukwu na umuaka...' (Igbo), 'Emi ati iyawo mi ati awon omo n kuro l'ola' (Yoruba), 'Ni da madam na, kuma da su yaran ta...' (Hausa). These are used to capture the rhythm and speech nuances of the indigenous languages.

Excerpts 31-34 contain the discourse particles, 'eh', 'gbo', 'Eh!' from the Igbo language and 'Haba' from the Hausa language. Igboanusi (2006) regards them as sources of syntactic innovation in Nigerian English. They serve to express surprise, interrogation and indignation in the respective contexts. Adichie uses this technique to reiterate the characteristic nature of Nigerian English and the indigenous host languages and cultures.

Conclusion

Recent globalizing tendencies have amplified the need for repeated cultural, social and self-identification worldwide but particularly for post-colonial cultures and languages and emerging languages that need to reclaim their historically marginalized identities and gain a voice. The Nigerian variety of the English language is not exempted from this global need. The variety needs constant identity enactment, reconstruction and negotiation for national and international authenticity.

The contemporary Nigerian literary artists are rising to this challenge. However, as desirable as the identification of ethnic varieties may be, they emphasize differences and may create stereotypes. The varieties should therefore not be seen as independent varieties but as tributaries of a national variety (i.e. the Nigerian English). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, soaring on the wings of her rich Nigerian literary heritage and dual cultural heritage uses her linguistic choices in *Purple Hibiscus*

and *Half of a Yellow Sun* as tools for the construction, assertion and sustenance of the identity of the Nigerian English variety. Through avowal, salience and shared norms, she adroitly and stylistically weaves a tapestry of both standard Nigerian English expressions devoid of ethnic and regional colourings and the Igbo variety of Nigerian English which reflect particular socio-cultural realities of the Igbo nation in her identity reconstruction enterprise.

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Le Balayeur Balayé : Le Revers de la Médaille de la Violence de l'oppression Domestiques dans L'*Hibiscus Pourpre* de Chimamanda Adichie

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Résumé: Les débats littéraires sur les problèmes relatifs à la cause féminine et postcoloniale s'élargissent de plus en plus dans le roman ouest-africain au féminin, pour montrer que la contestation et la résistance contre l'oppression de la femme n'est plus une lutte menée exclusivement par les intellectuels. En effet, jusque-là, dans ces romans à quelques exceptions prêtes, seules les protagonistes munis d'un bon bagage intellectuel avaient le culot de se dresser contre la gent masculine encore moins provoquer, son assassinat. Cet article, en adoptant la théorie de la résistance analyse les circonstances qui poussent une pieuse, analphabète femme de ménage, dépendante entièrement d'un mari qui lui fournit tout le confort nécessaire à se dresser contre celui-ci au point d'engendrer son assassinat. Cette communication examine de façon critique le revers de la médaille de l'oppression et de la violence domestiques dans *L'hibiscus pourpre* de Chimamanda Adichie. Elle conclue que, l'oppression et la violence domestique exercées de manière continue, sur les âmes, mêmes les plus angéliques finissent par provoquer une révolte parfois sanglante.

Mots clés: le balayeur balayé, la théorie de la résistance, oppression et violence domestiques, roman ouest-africain au féminin

Abstract: Literary debates on postcolonial and women gender matters are on the increase in West African novel written by women. These females' writers portray that the contention and resistance against women is no longer a fight handled exclusively by the intellectuals. In fact, in most previous novels, only the protagonist with a sound intellectual background could dare to stand against the male gender ego, let alone provoking his assassination. This article adopts

the theory of resistance, and analyses the circumstances that push a pious housewife, depending entirely on her husband for livelihood, however, this relationship leads to his assassination. The article examines critically the opposite side of oppression and domestic violence in *Purple Hibiscus* of Chimamanda Adichie. It concludes that ceaseless oppression and domestic violence on human beings, even on the most angelic ones, can lead to a revolt, sometimes bloody.

Keys Word: the swept Sweeper, resistance theory, oppression and domestic violence, West African novels written by women.

Introduction

De manière générale, la littérature féminine subsaharienne est une écriture qui se dresse contre les structures patriarcales. Cette littérature montre très souvent des protagonistes qui, ayant eu accès à l'éducation occidentale, se servent de celle-ci pour revendiquer leurs droits méconnus. Dans *L'hibiscus pourpre*, Chimamanda crée un cadre romanesque purement différent où l'on voit deux femmes illettrées se dégager de façon dramatique de la tutelle d'un très grand homme en l'assassinant. Dès lors, on se demande pourquoi ces deux femmes qui ne sont aucunement influencées par la culture émancipatrice en vogue chez les femmes lettrées posent un tel drame. Notre problématique consiste dans cet article à relever et à analyser de façon critique les attitudes et les comportements violents d'Eugene Achike qui ont subitement transformé les saintes dames de ménage en assassins sans vergogne. Nous examinons par la suite comment les victimes de cette violence et oppression domestiques résistent à l'autorité dominante. Pour y parvenir, nous adoptons une approche théorique éclectique. Nous nous servons de la théorie de résistance telle que théorisée par Parry, (2004) citée par Tejumola et Ato, (2007). Les principes de la théorie postcoloniale vont cependant compléter notre grille de lecture et d'analyse.

Encadrement théorique : la théorie de la résistance.

Pour éviter toute éventuelle ambiguïté sur la notion de la théorie de résistance, une définition systématique de celle-ci s'impose. Scott (1987), parlant de la résistance, écrit: « resistance includes any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims...made on that class by superordinate classes... or to advance its own claims...vis-a-vis those super-ordinate classes. » De cette définition de Scott, Il convient de retenir que la résistance est menée de prime abord par les membres de la classe inférieure, et est dirigée contre l'idéologie et les standards mis sur pieds par la classe dirigeante. Fernandes, (1988 : 174) citée par Vinthagen (2007b :5), apportant plus d'éclaircissements à ce qu'est la résistance ajoute :

resistance is the counter-hegemonic social attitudes, behaviours and actions, which aim at weakening the classification among social categories and which are directed against the dominant power(s) and against those who exercise it (them), having as a purpose its (their) redistribution in a more equitable way.

Pile et Keith (1976), allant dans le même sens font la remarque suivante: « resistance stands in implacable

opposition to power; resistance is the people fighting back in defence of freedom, democracy and humanity.» Ces différentes définitions de la résistance ont toutes quelque chose en commun. C'est un acte posé par un subalterne qui fragilise le pouvoir en place, cela implique que la résistance est causée uniquement par ceux que Fanon (1961), appelle les damnés de la terre. On est entièrement d'accord avec Vinthagen et Lilja, (2007 a) qui donnent une définition plus simplifiée de la résistance en ces termes : « resistance is a subaltern response to power, a practice that challenge and which might undermine power. » La résistance est donc toute action du subalterne qui implique une certaine opposition contre une certaine idéologie du pouvoir en place faisant du subalterne un objet et non un sujet. La théorie de la résistance est donc l'ensemble des concepts qui permettent d'identifier et de répudier les actions et appellations erronées qui vont de l'autre un objet et non un sujet de droit à part entière. Selon les théoriciens de la résistance, cette théorie comporte plusieurs formes de comportements oppositionnels. Terdiman cité par Parry, (2004 : 42) identifie deux formes de résistance : « re/citation and de-citation » tandis que Michel Pêcheux, (1982) reconnaît pour sa part ce qu'il qualifie de : « counter-identification and desidentification » La différence entre ces différentes formes selon ces derniers se trouvent sur la nature et le degré de la résistance exercé sur les structures d'oppressions du dominant. Que le comportement oppositionnel soit sous-adjacent ou direct, il cherche dans les deux cas à contester l'autorité du dominant, détecter et désacraliser la structure du pouvoir qui domine. A cet effet, Terdiman ajoute: « the resistance

theory function to survey the limits and the weaknesses of the dominant by mapping the internal incoherencies: truths about the social formation -its characteristic modes of reproduction its previously hidden vulnerabilities. »

Cette théorie permet grossomodo de fouiller la structure du pouvoir dirigeante pour examiner son caractère totalitariste, les contradictions internes de son mode de pensée, subvertir son autorité et contester sa moralité. Appiah (1988 : 164), exposant la topologie des termes permettant d'analyser les concepts de résistance dans le cadre culturel, montre que la théorie de résistance dans le cadre culturel permet d'exposer et de désacraliser le principe de la supériorité culturel en montrant que toutes les cultures se valent. Appiah montre que cette théorie permet de déconstruire les topologies ci-dessous : « inside/outside, indigene/alien, western/traditionnal, colonizer, dynamic donor/ colonized, docile recipient, West, initiator/ native, imitators »

L'univers romanesque de *L'hibiscus pourpre* montre certains protagonistes initialement dépourvus de tout pouvoir de recours pour se débarrasser du radicalisme auquel ils sont assujettis mais qui au fil des événements qui segmentent leurs vies dans ledit roman développent une attitude oppositionnelle montrant que le radicalisme ne saurait régner pour toujours.

Résumé succincte de l'œuvre

L'hibiscus pourpre est un roman de l'écrivaine nigériane, Chimamanda Adichie paru originellement sous le titre *Purple hibiscus* en 2003, qui a été traduit en langue française par Mona De Pracontal en 2004. Ce roman de 350 pages publié aux Editions Anne Carrière, met en scène l'histoire de la vie d'un chef de famille, Eugène

Achike, élevé par des missionnaires catholiques. Ce dernier, très chanceux a eu la possibilité de poursuivre ses études à Londres avec l'aide des missionnaires. Du retour dans son pays, le Nigéria, Eugene devient un très riche entrepreneur et homme politique. En effet, il est propriétaire d'une multitude d'usines et d'un journal indépendant, *Standard* qui malgré les menaces du gouvernement, informe la population sur les mauvaises actions de ce dernier sans avoir froid aux yeux. Eugene est aussi un homme généreux admiré par sa communauté à cause des dons qu'il distribue. En sa qualité de chef de famille, Eugene est un homme très rigide, il dirige d'une main de fer sa famille. Il est très rigoureux envers ses enfants : Kambili âgée de 15 ans et Jaja, l'aîné, âgé de 17 ans et sa femme, Beatrice appelée affectueusement Mama. Elevé selon les injonctions de la foi catholique, Eugene est un religieux fanatique qui conçoit l'éducation de sa famille comme une chasse au péché. C'est pourquoi il n'hésite pas à punir foncièrement quiconque enfreind le plus petit des recommandations du révérend père afin de purifier sa famille de toute impureté et idolâtrie. D'ailleurs en raison de la non-conversion de son père, Paa Nnukwu, il lui tourne le dos et le taxe d'idolâtre. A la suite d'un coup d'Etat, Jaja et Kambili auront l'occasion de quitter le toit familial pour se réfugier à Nsukka, le temps pour leur père de se réorganiser. Les deux adolescents y découvrent avec joie un monde où l'enfant a le droit de porter un jugement critique sur tout enseignement reçu. Ces derniers découvrent avec amertume que leur enfance est bourrée de dogme du catholicisme. Du retour dans leur maison à Enugu, leur ville de résidence, la résistance s'installe. Désormais

animés par un esprit critique, provoqué par l'ambiance chaleureuse de Nsukka, Jaja et Kambili exigent quelques parcelles de liberté de leur père fondamentaliste et tyrannique. Ne voulant aucunement céder, Eugene est tué par sa femme illettrée, Mama avec la complicité de sa domestique Sisi.

Analyse du roman

Chimamanda, dans ce roman donne à voir une scène dans laquelle, une femme pieuse, analphabète aucunement influencée par les mouvements féministes tue son mari en l'empoisonnant. Il convient de rappeler que ce dernier veille si bien sur sa famille qu'elle ne manque de rien. Le dépouillement d'une pensée cohérente trouve la raison du comportement criminel de Mama à l'égard de son mari dans une approche qui est loin d'être féministe.

Résistance contre l'inculcation et l'imposition de l'esprit culturel néocolonialiste

L'hibiscus pourpre est un roman de résistance contre la violence culturelle. Ce roman s'interroge sur la nature de la relation dynamique existant entre la culture impériale britannique qui s'impose et dénigre la culture indigène nigériane en la subordonnant. A travers la vie des protagonistes tels que Tatie Ifeoma, Amaka, Ibiora, on aperçoit le rejet du néocolonialisme.

Un regard postcolonial lancé dans le roman permet de comprendre que, Tatie Ifeoma s'insurge contre la minoration de la langue Ibo faite par Eugene, le dominant qui selon elle est : « un produit du colonialisme » (22). La narratrice le révèle sous une forme ironique en ces termes :

Papa ne parlait pratiquement jamais ibo et même si Jaja et moi le parlions avec Mama à la maison, il

n'aimait pas que nous l'utilisions en public. Nous devons paraître civilisé en public, nous disait-il ; nous devons parler anglais. (22) Papa appréciait que les villageois fissent un effort pour parler anglais en sa présence. Il dit que cela montrait qu'ils avaient du bon sens. (74)

La déconstruction du passage cité à travers les concepts de Parry, (2004 : 275) permet de révéler une certaine subordination de la langue ibo et une prétendue supériorité de la langue anglaise. En suivant le modèle de Parry, on peut reconstituer les couples suivant : anglais/ ibo, public/ privé, civilisé / indigène au profit de la langue métropolitaine. Chimamanda sous la voie d'Amaka, Tatie Ifeoma, et Père Amadi, à titre d'exemples, remet en cause cette prétendue supériorité de la langue anglaise et opte pour le refus du conformisme au modèle imposé par le centre en s'adonnant à la couleur locale. Amaka refuse de choisir un nom anglais pour sa cérémonie de confirmation. (276). Selon cette dernière, (Amaka) son nom ibo Chiamaka qui signifie Dieu est bon glorifie certainement Dieu. Père Amadi, le nouveau prêtre chante ses cantiques et chants d'adoration lors de sa messe en langue ibo. (276) Le professeur de Kambili, une jeune sœur révérende blanche parle ibo, et si bien. (246)

Le principe selon lequel ce qui vient du centre est moderne et de la périphérie indigène, est rejeté. Les couples binaires de Appiah, (1988 : 164) : « dynamic donor / docile recipient ; west initiate / native imitate » sont brisés dans *l'hibiscus pourpre*. Les expressions du nativisme, c'est-à-dire les éléments de la culture d'origine, sont utilisées dans le but de valoriser la langue locale ibo qui selon les colonisateurs est une langue

indigène tandis que le maintien de la présence du colonisateur à travers sa culture et son mode de vie est bannis pour une identité culturelle hybride.

Résistance contre l'inculcation et l'imposition des mentalités spirituelles colonialistes

Eugene inculque et impose les mentalités qu'il a héritées des missionnaires britanniques sur sa famille sans faire une synthèse préalable de celles-ci. Le faisant, il exerce une violence et une oppression inédites sur sa famille. La violence peut se définir comme une atteinte aux droits humains. Elle peut se produire en tout lieu et se présente sous plusieurs formes. Dans ce travail comme nous nous intéressons seulement à la violence domestique, il s'agit du type de violence que l'on rencontre dans le cadre familiale c'est-à-dire au sein de la maison. La violence domestique peut se présenter sous plusieurs formes : sexuelle, psychologique, spirituelle, physique etc. Onyemelukwe, citée par Kwawthar, (2017: 75-76) définit la violence à l'égard des femmes comme "any act directed at the woman in the home or micro-society of which the motive is to cause her physical, mental, emotional or psychological pain, deny her the exercise of fundamental rights, dehumanise her and rob her of a sense of honour and dignity of human person". Sous le regard d'Onyemelukwe, la violence contre le genre féminin est l'ensemble des actes qui s'inscrivent dans le cadre de la négation des droits de la femme. Une analyse minutieuse du roman en étude montre des scènes de violence domestiques qui peuvent être catégorisées en violence spirituelle et physique.

Résistance contre la violence spirituelle

Le roman en étude s'ouvre sur une scène narratologique de résistance qu'il convient d'examiner de près. «A la maison, dit la narratrice, la débâcle a commencé lorsque Jaja, mon frère, n'est pas allé communier et que Papa a lancé son gros missel en travers de la pièce et cassé les figurines des étagères en verre » (11). A travers ce refus de communier, Jaja se dresse contre l'autorité spirituelle violente instaurée par son père au sein de la famille en subvertissant l'ordre établi, pour contester sa moralité comme le montre la théorie de la résistance.

Jaja, tu n'es pas allé communier ?
se demande Papa.

Le biscuit de l'hostie me donne
mauvaise haleine, et le prêtre
n'arrête pas de me toucher la
bouche et ça me donne mal au
cœur.

C'est le corps de Notre-Seigneur.
Tu ne peux pas arrêter de recevoir
le corps de Notre-Seigneur. C'est
la mort, tu le sais.

Alors je mourrai. Alors je mourrai,
Papa. (14-15)

En s'arrogeant le droit à la parole à travers le dialogue ci-dessus, Jaja banalise le caractère sacré de cette cérémonie spirituelle pour montrer combien de fois on peut ne pas prendre cette communion et demeurer en vie. D'ailleurs au lieu de dire « la sainte hostie ou le corps de Notre-Seigneur » comme le voudrait leur père, Jaja parle de biscuit comme s'il avait perdu la tête. En parlant ainsi, c'est la structure du pouvoir spirituel qui est remise en question.

La structure du pouvoir spirituel du roman dénigre et rejette toutes les attitudes spirituelles du peuple nigérian qui doit s'élever en adoptant celles de

l'Angleterre qui selon Eugene est le modèle à suivre. L'Afrique représentée par le Nigeria dans l'imaginaire européenne est un peuple inculqué. Les valeurs spirituelles nigérianes sont dénigrées tandis que celles de l'Angleterre sont célébrées et imposées sur les non-britanniques. La vie spirituelle au sein de la famille Achike est le reflet des scènes sociales où règne l'eurocentrisme. Cette attitude eurocentrique ne donne guère la possibilité à Jaja, Kambili et Mama de s'épanouir librement. Que ce soit à table, à l'école, à l'église ou en famille ces derniers doivent faire la volonté du colonisateur au plan spirituel.

Mais à travers l'ironie, les attitudes spirituelles eurocentriques sont dévoilées, désacralisées et remises en cause. A titre d'exemple, la narratrice dévoile : « père Benedict avait fait des changements dans la paroisse, exigeant par exemple que le *Credo* et le *Kyrie* soient récités seulement en latin ; l'ibo n'est pas acceptable. ... Mais il autorisait les chants en ibo pour l'offertoire ; il les appelait chant indigènes. » (12). L'adverbe seulement montre que les autres langues y compris le ibo sont des langues inférieures, par conséquent, ne peuvent pas être utilisées pour communier avec Dieu. Mais en montrant que le colonisateur accepte le chant indigène ibo lors de l'offertoire, la narratrice dévoile la contradiction interne de la pensée de l'opresseur et sa cupidité.

Cette famille devait aussi se rendre obligatoirement chez le prêtre britannique pour le saluer : « nous passions toujours voir père Benedict après la messe » (39) ou confesser ce que Eugene, leur père estime être un péché même s'il n'en est pas question, après chaque service spirituelle. A titre

d'exemple « ne pas aller chez père Benedict après la messe est un péché et il faut demander pardon » (40). « C'est péché pour une femme de porter un pantalon » (96).

Les termes descriptifs utilisés par Eugene à l'endroit des non-catholiques en disent mieux. Pour lui, le non-catholique est « un païen », (77) « un impie » (74), ou mieux encore « un idolâtre » (84). D'ailleurs, il n'hésite pas à mettre hors de sa concession toute personne qui n'est pas catholique, y compris son père biologique. Pour lui, seul le catholique connaît Dieu, d'où les stéréotypes faits à l'égard des non-catholiques tels : manger chez un non-catholique, c'est manger des nourritures sacrifiées aux idoles. (84), parler avec le non-catholique c'est profaner les langues chrétiennes. (84) ou encore « qu'est-ce que les idolâtres savent de Noël ? » Les fêtes traditionnelles nigérianes sont « des folklores diaboliques » (103). Par conséquent, les chrétiens qui laissaient leurs enfants y participer « étaient des égarés qui finiraient en enfer » (105).

La reconnaissance et la déconstruction de la contradiction inhérente du raisonnement de la métropole vis-à-vis de la structure du pouvoir spirituel de l'opresseur sont aussi dévoilées à travers le récit de la narratrice lorsque sa famille rend visite au chef traditionnel.

Mama l'avait salué selon la coutume traditionnelle pour les femmes, en se courbant jusqu'à terre. ...Ce soir-là, en rentrant à la maison, Papa avait dit à Mama que c'était péché. On ne s'incline pas devant un être humain. C'est une tradition impie de s'incliner devant un *Igwe*. Aussi, quelques jours plus tard, quand nous étions allés voir l'évêque à Awka, je ne m'étais pas agenouillée pour

embrasser sa bague. Je voulais que Papa soit fier de moi. Mais Papa me tira l'oreille dans la voiture en me disant que je n'avais pas de discernement : l'évêque était un homme de Dieu, l'*Igwe* un simple dirigeant traditionnel. » (112)

La double personnalité de papa au nom d'une fois imbécile est dévoilée à travers le passage ci-dessus. La contraction inhérente du discours de cet oppresseur vient du fait que l'interprétation de la parole divine est fonction de celui qu'on voudrait honorer. L'identité africaine est méprisée tandis que les valeurs culturelles occidentales sont valorisées. Si l'on ne doit pas se courber pour saluer un chef traditionnel, comment peut-on donc expliquer le fait que l'on doit se courber pour embrasser une simple bague portée par un autre homme même s'il est un homme de Dieu. Les stéréotypes permettent à Eugene d'avoir la main mise sur la liberté spirituelle de sa famille et la maintenir entièrement sur son contrôle. Mais ce désir de domination absolue est balayé du revers de la main quand ses enfants comprennent plus tard avec l'aide de leurs cousins qu'on peut porter un jugement critique sur tout y compris l'interprétation de la parole divine.

Résistance contre l'oppression et la violence physiques

Pour assurer son maintien au sein de sa famille comme chef et maître absolu, Eugene utilise l'oppression et la violence physique. La violence physique par définition est l'utilisation intentionnelle de la force physique avec le potentiel de causer la blessure, le dommage, l'invalidité ou même le décès.

Les scènes narratologiques illustrent sans ambages les multiples bastonnades

faites par Eugene sur sa femme et ses enfants. De façon délibérée, Eugene porte constamment atteinte à l'intégrité corporelle de sa femme pour continuer à exercer le contrôle absolu sur cette dernière. Le dialogue ci-dessous entre Eugene et sa femme, relatif à la visite devant être faite au prêtre blanc après la messe nous en dit plus

Je pourrai vous attendre dans la voiture *biko* ? Je sens du vomir monter dans ma gorge.
 Es –tu sûre de vouloir rester dans la voiture ? demanda Papa.
 Mon corps ne se sent pas bien
 Je t'ai demandé si tu étais sûre de vouloir rester dans la voiture.
 Je vais venir avec vous. Je ne me sens pas aussi mal que ça, vraiment. (39)

Du passage ci-dessus, on relève une certaine oppression directe sur Mama. Le langage utilisé le montre, « pourrais-je ». Ici, le temps conditionnel est utilisé par Mama tandis que le temps présent est utilisé par Papa pour faire comprendre à cette dernière qu'elle n'a pas de choix ; du fait que c'est Papa qui décide absolument ce que Mama doit faire ou pas. Malgré cette demande polie qui est d'ailleurs refusée, Eugene bat sur sa femme pour avoir essayé de s'opposer à sa volonté en faisant passer ses désirs égoïstes en premier lieu et n'avoir pas voulu rendre visite au serviteur de Dieu après la messe. A la suite de cette bastonnade, Beatrice perd sa grossesse. (45) La narratrice raconte la scène effrayante de cette bastonnade en ces termes :

J'étais dans ma chambre après le déjeuner,...quand j'entendis les bruits. Des coups rapides et lourds sur la porte de mes parents. Je m'imaginai que la porte s'était coincée et que papa essayait de l'ouvrir. ...Je m'assis, fermai les yeux et me mis à compter. Compter

me donnait l'impression que ça ne durait pas si longtemps que ça, que ce n'était pas grave...J'en étais à dix-neuf quand les bruits cessèrent. J'entendis la porte s'ouvrir...Les pas de papa sur les marches étaient plus lourds, ...Mama était jetée sur son épaule comme les sacs de riz en jute que les ouvriers de son usines achetaient en gros à la frontière de Seme... Il y a du sang par terre. (43)

Le portrait de Mama fait par la narratrice montre une femme malheureuse. Mama a une faible estime d'elle-même qui se traduit par sa tristesse et sa passivité. Après la bastonnade qui se produit régulièrement, elle ne dit rien et ne fait rien. Elle se contente seulement d'astiquer pendant des heures des figurines en porcelaine se trouvant sur l'étagère pour apaiser sa douleur.

Il n'y avait jamais de larmes sur son visage. La dernière fois, il y avait seulement deux semaines, quand son œil gonflé avait encore la teinte noir violacé d'un avocat trop mur...Elle boitait légèrement, comme si elle avait une jambe plus courte que l'autre, démarche qui la faisait paraître plus petite qu'elle ne l'était. (19) ... D'habitude,... elle parlait à la façon dont mange un oiseau, par petites quantités. (30)

Kambili est aussi victime à plusieurs reprises de la violence physique orchestrée par son père. Les récits narratologiques des pages 63, 121-122, 241-242 pour ne citer que ceux-ci permettent de voir jusqu'à quel degré, elle a été violentée physiquement par son père. Pour n'avoir pas respecté le jeûne de l'eucharistie à cause du fait qu'elle devrait prendre quelque chose avant de pouvoir avaler le panadol pour calmer le mal d'estomac qu'elle ressentait ce matin-là, son père, avait

sérieusement battu sur elle comme le montre le passage ci-dessous.

Papa m'avait giflé les joues droite et gauche en même temps, si bien que ses énormes paumes avaient laissé des marques parallèles sur mon visage et des bourdonnements dans mes oreilles pendant plusieurs jours. » (63).- Il déboucla lentement sa ceinture...Elle atterrit d'abord sur Jaja, en travers de son épaule. Puis Mama leva le bras quand elle atterrit sur le haut de son bras,... Je posai le bol juste au moment où la ceinture atterrit sur mon dos... Papa était comme un nomade Fulani...quand il envoyait sa ceinture sur Jaja, Mama et moi. » (121 -122).

Face à ces scènes de violence, Mama et ses enfants ne disent rien ; mais cela ne veut pas dire qu'ils approuvent ce comportement enfantin de Papa. Mama se résigne tout simplement pour attendre le moment opportun. La stoïque fierté permet tout simplement à Mama de cacher sa situation d'épouse battue et de mieux méditer sur la stratégie à prendre pour se débarrasser de l'oppresser : « Mama avait...compris qu'elle n'aurait plus besoin de figurines, que lorsque Papa avait lancé le missel à Jaja, ce n'étaient pas seulement les figurines qui avaient dégringolé, c'était tout » (25).

Un autre acte de violence à l'égard de Kambili et Jaja survient quand ils séjournent ; sans dire mot à leur père dans la même maison avec leur grand-père païen lorsqu'ils étaient en vacance chez leur tante à Nzukka. Pour n'avoir pas informé leur père, ils sont torturés par ce dernier qui leur verse de l'eau brûlante sur les pieds. Kambili raconte la scène en ces termes :

Monte dans la baignoire, dit Papa. Il baissa la bouilloire dans la baignoire et l'inclina vers mes pieds. Il me versa l'eau brûlante sur

les pieds lentement... La douleur du contact était si pure, si brûlante, que...je hurlai...la sensation de brûlure sur mes pieds grimpa, par rapides assauts de douleur atroce, à ma tête, à mes lèvres, à mes yeux. Je restai debout dans la baignoire fumante Mama était entrée dans la salle de bains, Les larmes coulaient sur son visage. Son nez coulait lui aussi... Elle m'aida à sortir de la baignoire. (224)

De même pour avoir accepté de recevoir en cadeau de sa cousine, le portrait de son défunt grand-père qui selon son père est un païen, Kambili est sévèrement battue par son père. Elle perd même connaissance et est hospitalisée pour plusieurs jours. (242)

Face à ces actes de violences, provoquant des traumatismes et des troubles émotionnelles dans la famille, Kambili refuse de rentrer à la maison et préfère passer le restant de sa vie à l'hôpital à cause de la peur. « Je voulais sonder... Mais je n'en fis rien, je ne pouvais pas. La peur. Je connaissais bien la peur »(226) rassure-t-elle. « Je ne voulais pas quitter l'hôpital, je ne voulais pas rentrer à la maison »(246)

Mais « les choses étaient destinées à ne plus être pareilles à ne plus respecter leur ordre original » (240). En effet, la tyrannie a fait naître en Kambili et Jaja une certaine haine contre les idéologies néocolonialistes de leur père. Devenant de plus en plus résistant aux injonctions de leur père, Jaja exige la clé de sa chambre pour avoir plus d'intimité. (221). De même, le ton de Jaja change quand il s'adresse à son père ; une demande de permission devant son père devient une pure et simple information. « Nous allons à Nsukka, Kambili et moi ...Nous irons à Nsukka aujourd'hui, pas demain. Et si Kevin ne peut pas nous

conduire, nous irons quand même. Nous irons à pieds s'il le faut. »(295)

Papa qui tenait d'une main de fer sa famille se trouve de plus en plus impuissant devant la demande de liberté de ses enfants qui comprennent que leur père n'est pas un héros mais un tyran. La confession de Mama face aux scènes de violence horribles qu'elle vit au jour le jour l'emmène à se décourager contre son mariage.

Je ne sais pas si ma tête fonctionne correctement. Je suis rentrée de l'hôpital aujourd'hui. Le docteur m'a dit de me reposer... mais j'ai pris un taxi pour venir ici...Tu vois la table où nous rangeons la Bible familiale, nne ? Ton père me l'a cassée sur le ventre...J'ai saignée par terre avant même qu'il m'emmène à l'hôpital. Mon docteur a dit qu'il ne pouvait rien faire pour le sauver... J'étais enceinte de six semaine » (283-284).

Face aux abus spirituels, culturels et physiques, Mama cherche désespérément une voie de sortir. Terrifiée à la pensée de ne pas pouvoir y arriver seule, n'ayant pas de ressource pour faire face à la vie de femme divorcée Mama se lamente. « Où irais-je si je quittais la maison d'Eugene ? Où irais-je ? » (285) Ne pouvant pas se résigner indéfiniment, elle cède à la

proposition faite par sa domestique et élimine physiquement son mari pour avoir la paix pour toujours : « J'ai commencé à mettre le poison dans son thé avant de venir à Nsukka. C'est Sisi qui me l'a procuré, son oncle est un puissant sorcier » C'est ainsi que pour avoir la paix le balayeur est balayé. C'est lorsque la situation dépasse très largement les limites du supportable qu'enfin l'action de procéder à un assassinat a émergé, en toute fin du livre.

Conclusion

La déconstruction de la structure dirigeante du roman *L'hibiscus pourpre* montre comment Eugène Achike, le colonisé est parvenu à croire que les valeurs culturelles occidentales sont supérieures à celles de son peuple nigérian et les utilise pour opprimer et exercer la violence sur sa famille. Nous avons vu par la suite comment cette famille résiste à ces valeurs et opte pour une vision multiculturelle de la vie. La négation du droit de l'autre conduit tôt ou tard à une contestation ou une résistance et au développement du comportement oppositionnel. On est parfaitement d'accord avec Tansi, (2007: 272) qui écrit : « unity does not necessary lead to the refusal of the other, unless of course one is a past master at fooling oneself. »

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School Location as a Predictor of Achievement in Reading among Nigerian Learners of English as a Second Language

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Abstract: This study determined whether school location was a predictor of English as a second language learners' achievement in reading when taught with synthetic phonics using the non-equivalent, non-randomized control group quasi-experimental design. The population of the study comprised 1844 primary one school pupils in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. Out of this population, a sample of 66 pupils from urban location and 52 from rural location was drawn using multi stage sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was Initial Reading Achievement Test (IRAT) which was designed by the researcher. Mean, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were used to analyse the generated data. The results of the study revealed that school location significantly influenced pupils' achievement in reading. It also showed that there was significant interaction effect of teaching method and location on pupils' achievement in reading. It was concluded that in addition to teaching method, school location proved to be a predictor of pupils' achievement in reading. Hence, it was recommended that pupils from different school locations should be exposed sufficiently to equal literacy-enriched environment to bridge the gap in achievement among learners from urban and rural school environments.
Keywords: School location, literacy-enriched environment, achievement in reading, interaction effect, Initial Reading Achievement Test, synthetic phonics

Introduction

Reading is one of the four basic language skills which promotes life-long learning. It is the process of learning a number of skills that facilitates the interpretation of meaning and/or the comprehension of a written or printed text. The ability to read is seen as a benchmark for intellectual ability. Hence, reading is key to educational achievement. Synthetic phonics is perceived to be one of the effective ways of teaching beginner reading. It involves a part-to-whole approach in teaching pupils to convert letters to sounds. It is an instructional method that teaches children to first pronounce the sounds associated with specific letters and then combine them to form words in both the spoken and written language. Through synthetic phonics pupils are made to understand that the letters of the alphabet are speech sounds, which can be used to form words. Using synthetic phonics for initial reading instruction is expected to enhance learners' achievement in different reading skills. Achievement can be expressed according to school location.

Scholars, researchers and parents generally hold the assumption that a child's academic achievement may be greatly influenced either by the environment in which he lives or the school location (Amadi, 2018). 'Location' refers to the geographical setting in which a school is situated and such a setting could be rural or urban. Rural schools are located in the interior constituency of a state while urban schools are located in the township area of a state (Amadi, 2018). Rural-urban location of schools has been found to be one of the important predictors of differences in pupils' academic achievement. The urban environment is said to have a stimulating effect on

learning and social interaction which rural pupils are not exposed to. According to Singh, Abdul Rahman and Hoon (2010), some studies align with the commonly held belief that urban learners have relatively less problem coping with the language of instruction (English) compared to their rural counterparts. Nwosu (2009) observes that a wide gap exists between rural and urban areas and this gap as it concerns the academic achievement of students still remains inconclusive. Chianson's (2012) study shows that students in urban schools perform better than their rural counterparts in Circle Geometry. The study is a corroboration of Owoeye and Yara (2012), who compared the performance of students in West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) between 1990 and 1997 based on school location, and it was shown that students in urban locations have better academic achievement than those in rural schools. The researchers however link the rural-urban dichotomy in achievement to uneven distribution of resources, poor school mapping, problem of qualified teachers refusing appointment or posting to isolated, remote villages, lack of social amenities, poor communication, nonchalant attitude of some communities and parents to schooling among others. Ramo, Duque and Nietos (2012) further reveal that the educational achievement of rural-based students was worse than those of urban-based students. This is in tandem with Ulo-Bethel's (2012) study, which also reveals that location had a significant influence on students' achievement in consonant clusters.

Conversely, Uzoegwu (2004) and Macmillan (2012) reveal that there was no significant difference in the achievement scores of urban and rural

students. Macmillan (2012)'s study show that achievement in physics was enhanced by the instructional strategy employed by the teacher, and not location *per se*. Macmillan further explains that despite the differences in the conditions of livelihood in urban and rural areas, the non-existence of achievement gap among students in the two locations may be because they were subjected to equal opportunities of learning physics through the use of the same instructional method. In another study that investigated the relationship between reading achievement and school location, Graham and Teague (2011) observe that rural and urban third graders have lower average achievement than their suburban counterparts. They note that the difference in average reading achievement for third graders in these three locations (rural, suburban and urban) reflect average achievement differences at the start of kindergarten. They also find that suburban children made greater gains in reading achievement from kindergarten to grade three than their rural and urban counterparts.

With regards to the interaction effect of teaching method and location on students' academic achievement, Egbe (2015) reveals that there was a significant interaction effect of method and location on students' achievement in English grammar. On the other hand, the earlier studies of Omeje (2009) and Torty (2010) indicate that there was no interaction effect of teaching method and location on students' achievement.

Researchers have given some explanations for the gaps in reading achievement of students across school locations. XU (2009) notes that rural youths exhibit lower educational aspirations than their urban

counterparts. He found that smaller percentages of students in rural schools were enrolled in post-secondary institutions. Other studies have also shown that students in rural schools tend to place less value on academics, and so have lower academic motivation (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy and Dean, 2005; Macmillan, 2012 and XU, 2009). This may subsequently affect their academic performance.

Differences in academic achievement of students have also been associated with different educational opportunities and school resources available to students in rural and urban environment. To substantiate this, Graham and Teague (2011) in their study on Early Childhood Education in United States report that 39 percent of teachers in rural schools accept that their school library was always adequate as against 61 percent of teachers in urban schools. In the same study, 13 percent of rural teachers indicate that their classrooms were often inadequate compared to 11 percent and 9 percent of teachers in suburban and urban schools respectively. Nwosu (2009) equally reiterates that schools located in urban areas can attract more quality students and teachers who are ready to take academic ventures seriously.

Unequal conditions present in different environments may lead to achievement gaps among students from different school locations. The variation in performance has been associated with a number of factors ranging from differences in school facilities to learners' attitude towards learning. Differences in methods of teaching may also influence the achievement of students in different school locations. This explains the need for the present study, which determined whether school

location predicts differences in reading achievement among Nigerian learners of English as a second language when taught with synthetic phonics.

Research Questions

The following research questions were generated in order to facilitate this study:

1. What is the difference in the achievement scores of pupils in urban and rural schools in reading?
2. What is the interaction effect of teaching method and gender on pupils’ achievement in reading?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated and consequently tested at ($p < 0.05$)

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of pupils in urban and rural schools in reading.

H₀₂ There is no significant interaction effect of teaching method and location on pupils’ achievement in reading.

Methodology

The study adopted the non-equivalent non-randomized control group quasi-experimental design. The instrument used for data collection was the Initial Reading Achievement Test (IRAT). It was constructed to test pupils’ ability in reading after being taught with synthetic phonics. Part one of the instrument was used to elicit the pupils’ demographic

information while part two comprised 15 items which covered different initial reading skills. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85 and was administered as pretest and posttest before and after treatment was administered. Data generated from the instrument was analysed using Mean, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). While Mean and Standard deviations were used to answer the research questions, Analysis of Covariance was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance ($p < 0.05$). The population of the study comprised all the primary one school pupils in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. The sample of the study was 118 pupils in four intact classes drawn from four public primary schools using multi stage sampling technique. Sixty-six pupils were sampled from urban locations while 52 were drawn from rural locations. One school each from the two locations was assigned to the experimental group and another school to the control group through tossing of coin respectively.

Results

Research Question One

What is the difference in the achievement scores of pupils in urban and rural schools in reading?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Urban and Rural School Pupils’ Achievement in Reading (N=118)

Location	Pretest			Post test		Gain Scores	Gain Scores Difference
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Urban	66	26.98	7.96	38.97	13.93	11.99	2.74
Rural	52	22.40	4.38	31.65	7.81	9.25	

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations of achievement scores of

urban and rural school pupils in reading. The result reveals that in the pretest,

pupils in urban schools had a mean achievement score of 26.98 with a standard deviation of 7.96 while pupils in rural schools had a mean achievement score of 22.40 with a standard deviation of 4.38. In the posttest, urban school pupils had a mean achievement score of 38.97 and a standard deviation of 13.93 while the rural school pupils obtained a mean score of 31.65 with a standard deviation of 7.81. The result indicates that the mean achievement scores of

pupils in urban schools are higher than that of their counterparts from rural schools. The implication is that school location makes a difference in pupils' achievement in reading in favour of pupils from urban locations.

Research Question Two

What is the interaction effect of teaching method and location on students' achievement in reading?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Interaction Effect of Teaching Method and School Location on Pupils' Achievement in Reading (N=118)

Instructional Approaches		Location	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Synthetic (Experimental Group)	Phonics	Urban	23	53.30	13.14
		Rural	33	33.42	8.92
Analytic Group)	Phonics (Control	Urban	43	31.30	6.10
		Rural	19	28.58	3.72

Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of the interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on pupils' achievement in reading. The results indicate that the mean achievement scores of urban and rural pupils in the synthetic phonics group were 53.30 and 33.42 with standard deviations of 13.14 and 8.92 respectively. Urban and rural pupils in the analytic phonics group also had mean achievement scores of 31.30 and 28.58 and standard deviations of 6.10 and 3.72 respectively. This shows that urban and rural pupils exposed to synthetic phonics (experimental group) achieved higher than their counterparts exposed to analytic phonics (control

group). The result also showed that urban school pupils in both groups achieved higher than their rural counterparts in reading despite the teaching methods used. This implies that there is interaction effect of teaching method and school location on pupils' achievement in reading. The level of significant interaction effect in the mean scores of the two groups was further verified by testing hypothesis 2 that is, no significant interaction effect of location and teaching method.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of pupils in urban and rural schools in reading.

Table 3: Summary of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of Rural and Urban School Pupils' Mean Achievement Scores in Reading when exposed to Synthetic Phonics Method and Analytic Phonics Method

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11332.930 ^a	8	1416.616	25.945	.000
Intercept	2347.979	1	2347.979	43.003	.000
Pretest	2168.188	1	2168.188	39.710	.000
Method	3718.308	1	3718.308	68.100	.000
Location	1382.405	1	1382.405	25.319	.000
Error	5951.443	109	54.600		
Total	168060.000	118			
Corrected Total	17284.373	117			

The result in Table 3 was derived from testing hypothesis one. The table reveals that $F(1,109) = 25.319$, $p = .000$. With the exact probability value of .000 which is less than the level of significance set at 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural

school pupils in reading in favour of pupils from urban schools. School location is therefore a significant factor in pupils' achievement in reading.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant interaction effect of location and teaching method on pupils' achievement in reading.

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of the interaction effect of Teaching method and Location on Pupils' Mean Achievement Scores in Reading

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11332.930 ^a	8	1416.616	25.945	.000
Intercept	2347.979	1	2347.979	43.003	.000
Pretest	2168.188	1	2168.188	39.710	.000
Method	3718.308	1	3718.308	68.100	.000
Location	1382.405	1	1382.405	25.319	.000
Method * Location	838.079	1	838.079	15.349	.000
Error	5951.443	109	54.600		
Total	168060.000	118			
Corrected Total	17284.373	117			

Table 4 presents the result of the analysis that tested hypothesis two. The Table reveals that F calculated yielded 15.349 ($F(1, 109) = 15.349$) which is not significant at .000. The exact probability value of .000 associated with teaching method and location is less

than 0.05 level of significance; ($p = .000$, $p < 0.05$), hence, the null hypothesis of no significant interaction effect of teaching method and location on pupils' mean achievement scores in reading is rejected. Thus, there is a significant interaction effect of location and

teaching method on pupils' achievement in reading.

Discussion

The findings in Table 1 showed that school location made a difference in pupils' achievement in reading with pupils from urban schools achieving higher than their counterparts from rural schools. This result was further strengthened by the ANCOVA analysis in Table 3 which also showed that there was a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural schools pupils in reading, implying that location was a significant factor in pupils' achievement in reading. The finding is in line with Ramo, Duque and Nietos' (2012) study which found that the educational achievement of rural students was worse than those of urban students. The finding is also in tandem with Owoeye and Yara (2012) who observed that students in urban locations had better academic achievement than those in rural schools in the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) between 1990 and 1997. The study further corroborates Ulo-Bethel's (2012) study which showed that location had a significant influence on students' achievement when tested in consonant clusters in favour of urban students.

The better achievement of students from urban schools over those from rural schools could be attributed to poor learning environment, scarcity of teachers in rural schools and other socio-economic factors associated with the learners. The less achievement of rural pupils could also be as a result of the quality of the pupils and teachers in such locations. This agrees with Nwosu's (2009) opinion that schools located in urban areas are capable of attracting quality students and teachers

who are ready to take academic ventures seriously.

However, the findings of the study negate earlier studies of Uzoegwu (2004) and Macmillan (2012) which reported that school location was not a significant factor in students' academic achievement. In effect, the study on the influence of school location on students' academic achievement still remains inconclusive since research findings are still tripartite in direction. The higher achievement recorded by pupils in urban schools could be attributed to the better learning environment they enjoyed over those in rural schools. Another reason could be the quality of teachers found in urban schools. It could also be attributed to the quality of kindergarten schools the pupils attended before transiting to primary school. However, it is expected that synthetic phonics will bridge these gaps when used appropriately over time since the findings also showed that both urban and rural pupils exposed to synthetic phonics performed better than those exposed to analytic phonics.

The findings in Table 2 indicate that there is interaction effect of teaching method and school location on pupils' achievement in reading. This is further validated by the result of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) presented in Table 4, which reveals that the interaction effect between the variables is statistically significant. Hence, there is a significant interaction effect of teaching method and school location on pupils' achievement in reading. This implies that the influence of school location is significant enough to exact impact on pupils' achievement in reading irrespective of the method of instruction they are exposed to. The finding is in tandem with Egbe (2015) who reported that there was a significant

interaction effect of method and location on students' achievement in English grammar. It is however inconsistent with the studies of Omeje (2009) and Terty (2010) which revealed that there was no interaction effect of teaching method and location on students' achievement. The existence of interaction effect between teaching method and school location revealed in this study suggests that the achievement of pupils in reading across school location is inconsistent. In other words, treatment is sensitive to school location. The different literacy environment the pupils are exposed to in the different school locations might be the reason for the interaction effect observed in the finding.

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Conclusion

The findings of this study prove that school location significantly influences pupils' achievement in reading. The result shows that urban pupils achieved higher than rural pupils in reading when taught with synthetic phonics. In other words, in addition to teaching method, school location proves to be a predictor of pupils' achievement in reading. Hence, it is recommended that in addition to adopting synthetic phonics for reading instruction, pupils from different school locations should be exposed sufficiently to equal literacy-enriched environment to bridge the gap in achievement among learners from urban and rural school environments.

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