

EXPLORING LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN NIGERIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE: EDUCATIONAL INSIGHTS AND APPLICATIONS

EXPLORANDO ESTRATÉGIAS LINGUÍSTICAS NA LITERATURA INGLESA NIGERIANA: INSIGHTS E APLICAÇÕES EDUCACIONAIS

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Abstract: This study delves into the educational implications of the 500-year history of the English language in Nigeria, a journey marked by extensive interaction between diverse cultural systems and civilizations. The contact between English, Nigeria's indigenous languages, and Creole has resulted in a rich tapestry of linguistic, cultural, and infrastructural diversity. Central to this educational exploration is the analysis of linguistic strategies employed by Nigerian writers in their literary works and the pragmatic aspects these strategies reveal. Utilizing a corpus of quotations from novels by Nigerian authors, the study examines various techniques employed in ethnospecific texts, with a particular focus on English as the medium of expression. These ethnospecific texts serve as models for a new sociocultural reality, showcasing the dynamism of languages extending beyond their original geographical and cultural confines. This investigation provides insightful perspectives for language education, particularly in multilingual and multicultural contexts, highlighting the role of literature in understanding and teaching the complexities and nuances of language use in a globalized world.

Keywords: Nigerian creative writing. Indigenous languages. Ethnospecific texts. Multiculturality.

Resumo: Este estudo investiga as implicações educacionais dos 500 anos de história da língua inglesa na

Nigéria, uma jornada marcada por extensa interação entre diversos sistemas culturais e civilizações. O contacto entre o inglês, as línguas indígenas da Nigéria e o crioulo resultou numa rica tapeçaria de diversidade linguística, cultural e infra-estrutural. Central para esta exploração educacional é a análise das estratégias linguísticas utilizadas pelos escritores nigerianos nas suas obras literárias e os aspectos pragmáticos que estas estratégias revelam. Utilizando um corpus de citações de romances de autores nigerianos, o estudo examina várias técnicas empregadas em textos etnoespecíficos, com foco particular no inglês como meio de expressão. Estes textos etnoespecíficos servem de modelos para uma nova realidade sociocultural, mostrando o dinamismo das línguas que se estende para além dos seus limites geográficos e culturais originais. Esta investigação fornece perspectivas perspicazes para o ensino de línguas, particularmente em contextos multilíngues e multiculturais, destacando o papel da literatura na compreensão e no ensino das complexidades e nuances do uso da língua num mundo globalizado.

Palavras-chave: Escrita criativa nigeriana. Línguas indígenas. Textos etnoespecíficos. Multiculturalismo.

1. Introduction

Nigeria is one of the most polyethnic African states. Sociolinguistic situation in the country is very complex because there are more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria which speak 521 languages. English is the official language in the country and serves Nigerian peoples' way of life. It is the former colonial language which is supposed to boost and facilitate the cultural and linguistic unity of the country. English plays the unifying role in the country where multilingualism is a rule. When Nigeria gained political independence in 1960, there was no indigenous language that could perform the function of English as a politically neutral language.

There are discussions about the development of local indigenous languages in a very complicated ethnic and political situation in Nigeria. The English language interacts with numerous indigenous languages (the three major languages are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, the languages of the largest ethnic groups). In many areas of the country ethnic groups use more than one language. Nigeria's linguistic diversity is a microcosm of Africa as a whole, since the major languages of Nigeria represent three major families of African languages.

Most ethnic groups prefer to communicate in their own language and English is widely used for official purposes, education, business. The government encourages children to learn one of the three major languages which have semi-official status (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba), other than his/her own mother tongue, in addition to English. Nigerian Pidgin English which has become Creole (Germanova 2019:162) is spoken around the country and is influenced by substrate deriving from local languages. Traditionally linguists use the term Pidgin English but actually it is Creole. This idiom is used by all ethnic groups and nowadays there are attempts to codify its norms. There is a dictionary of Creole, advertisements, radio and TV in Creole in Nigeria.

Creole is widely spoken in ethnically heterogeneous states of Nigeria (Delta, an oil rich region where a lot of migrants live and work), in Abudja, the capital of the country and in economic capital Lagos. (Igboanusi 2002:14). Creole is a marker of identity and solidarity, a sort of interethnic code, known to Nigerians.

Pidgin has been developing in Nigeria for 500 years now, and resulted from voyages embarked upon by the Portuguese in the 15th century who made attempts to speak the language with Nigerians during trade contacts in the region.

There is polarization of communicative functions of English and Creole. English has official functions and is on a higher social level and Creole is on a lower social level. English plays an important role in introducing Nigerians to modern knowledge, creating new types of thinking

and contributing to the development of national self-awareness. Writing in English by Nigerian literary artists has created a unique Nigerian literature marked by its own characteristics imbued with features of inter-cultural communication (Igboanusi, 2001: 53)

In relation to the French language in the works of writers of Maghreb, Prozhogina comments that the French language in the creative writing of Africans living in the North of the continent abounds in local words and expressions and bears the imprint of coexistence of cultures of many peoples and has practically become the Northern African French. (Prozhogina. 2021:91)

Nigerian English, the English language in the novels of Nigerian writers has its specific features we are going to explore, focusing on creative strategies employed by the authors. The objective of this work is to investigate and analyze the linguistic strategies utilized in Nigerian English literature, with a focus on understanding how these strategies reflect the country's unique sociocultural realities. This study aims to provide educational insights into the use of English in a multilingual and multicultural Nigerian context, exploring its implications for language learning and teaching in a globalized environment.

2. Materials and Methodology

The data for the study are taken from the novels written by Nigerian authors. The corpus consisted of 15 novels composed in English. The sources of the research are also dictionaries (Dictionary of Nigerian English Usage. H. Igboanusi, Ibadan, Nigeria, 2002; Igbo-English/English-Igbo Dictionary & Phrasebook, Awde N., Wambu O.; Hippocrene Books, US.; N.Y., 1999; 2019; Yoruba-English/English-Yoruba Dictionary & Phrasebook, Ogeleke C. Mawadza A., Hippocrene Books, US.; N.Y., 2019).

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach and we mostly focused on the peculiarities of the ethnospecific texts with the emphasis on their pragmatic aspects.

3. Results and Discussion

Contacts of languages and cultures led to the creative writing by authors, for whom the language of their works was not their mother tongue. Some scholars define it as contact literature, bilingual literature, cross cultural literature, transcultural or translingual literature. There is also the term post-colonial literature, which is often used regarding literatures in former colonies written in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese.

Following the tradition of Russian literary studies, we use the term Nigerian literature in English or the English-language novel in Nigeria. (History of Novelistic Forms in African Literature, 2010).

In relation to Nigerian creative writing in English it would be appropriate to speak about text polyglossia, because more than two languages are present in it. The English language has been nativised in the works of Nigerian authors and is marked by local colour and aura at all levels of linguistic analysis: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexico-semantics and pragmatics.

Nigerian writers create literature in English deriving from African background with local situations. They modify English and adopt various strategies. They employ these creative strategies in their works and highlight their stylistic significance.

In 2012 in his memoir book “There was a country” a prominent Nigerian author Chinua Achebe wrote about the role of a writer in Africa: “Some of us decided to tackle the big subjects of the day - imperialism, slavery, independence, gender, racism, etc.... Engaging such heavy subjects while at the same time trying to help create a unique and authentic African literary tradition would mean that some of us would decide to use the colonizer’s tools: his language, altered sufficiently to bear the weight of an African creative aesthetic, infused with elements of the African literary tradition. I borrowed proverbs from our culture and history, colloquialisms and African expressive language from the ancient griots, the worldview, perspectives, and customs from my Igbo tradition and cosmology, and the sensibilities of everyday people.... By “writing back” to the West we were attempting to reshape the dialogue between the colonized and the colonizer. Our efforts, we hoped would broaden the world’s understanding, appreciation, and conceptualization of what literature meant when including the African voice and perspective”. (Achebe, 2012: 54-55).

Ashcroft B., Griffiths G., and Tiffin H. use the term appropriation which describes acts of usurpation in various cultural domains, but the most potent are the domains of language and textuality. In these areas the dominant language and its discursive forms are appropriated to express widely differing cultural experiences, to interpolate these experiences into the dominant modes of representation to reach the widest possible audience. Chinua Achebe noted that the language so used can “bear the burden of another experience”, and this has become one of the most famous declarations of the power of appropriation in post-colonial discourse.

By appropriating the imperial language post-colonial societies are able to intervene in the dominant discourse to interpolate their own cultural realities or use that dominant language to describe those realities to a wide audience of readers (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin (2000:19-20)

Russian literary criticism defines creative writing of African authors as metis writing, as it depicts cultural miscegenation, synthesis of cultures in which a European language is saturated with words and expressions in indigenous languages. (Ljakhovskaya, 2010:420)

Here are some examples of loan-words which reflect traditional customs and religion, the Igbo experience and worldview as well as ethnic expressiveness and ethnic belonging from the novel "Things Fall Apart" (1958) by Ch.Achebe.

"But the Igbo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his chi says yes also. Okonkwo said yes very strongly: so his chi agreed". (pp. 34-35) Chi is personal god in Igbo traditional culture.

"It was a full gathering of umuada, in the same way as they would meet if a death occurred in the family (p.111) Umuada is a family gathering of daughters.

"I don't know why such a trifle should come before the egwugwu" (p.83) Egwugwu is a masquerader who impersonates one of the ancestral spirits of the village.

"On the following morning the entire neighborhood wore a festive air because Okonkwo's friend, Obierika was celebrating his daughter's uri". (p.95) Uri is part of the betrothal ceremony when the dowry is paid.

The old man, Uchendu, saw clearly that Okonkwo had yielded to despair and he was greatly troubled. He would speak to him after the isa-ifi ceremony". (p.111). Isa-ifi ceremony. If a wife had been separated from her husband for some time and were then to be reunited with him this ceremony would be held to ascertain that she had not been unfaithful to him during the time of their separation.

"Cam wood was rubbed lightly into her skin, and all over her body were black patterns drawn with uli". (p.65) Uli is a dye used by women for drawing patterns on the skin.

We can find translations of Igbo words and phrases into English in the Glossary given by the author in the novel.

The next example shows that Igbo words are sometimes explained in the text:

"This man told him that the child was an ogbanje, one of those wicked children who, when they died, entered their mother's wombs to be born again". (p.71) Ogbanje is a child who repeatedly dies and returns to its mother to be reborn. It is almost impossible to bring up an ogbanje child without it dying, unless its iyi-uwa (a special kind of stone which forms the link between an ogbanje and the spirit world) were discovered and destroyed.

In his first novel *Ch.* Achebe used a lot of Igbo loan-words which reflect traditional culture of his people. The Glossary in the novel is important because the writer composed this work for both Nigerian and Western readers.

In the creative writing of the first generation of authors the problem of continuity of folklore tradition becomes the problem of artistic method and a problem of capturing traditional custom, manner and nature. Achebe's novel is an example of the synthesis of African oral tradition and a novel. Focusing on the English language in the works of African writers Ch. Achebe wrote: "My answer to the question, "Can an African ever learn English well enough to be able to use it effectively in creative writing?", is certainly yes. If on other hand you ask: "Can he ever learn to use it like a native speaker?" I should say, I hope not. It is neither necessary nor desirable for him to be able to do so. The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use". (Achebe 1965, cit.: Proshina 2017:124).

Very important changes can be observed in the cultures of former colonies in Africa in post-colonial period. Different cultures – European and African coexist and overlap, producing complex hybrid structures. Ethnospecific texts are patterns of new sociocultural reality in which function the languages that went beyond their initial area of existence.

There is some kind of ambivalence in ethnospecific texts: original instrument is one of European languages, and the image of the world created is African, the coordinate system of which are African cultural codes. (Saprykina, Naydyenova, 2017: 44)

Ch. Zabus mentions the strategy of indigenization in the works of African writers. One of its techniques is relexification – interrelation of two or more languages is one text, when the text in a European language has inclusions of components from African languages. Another technique is pidginization – the intention of an African author to depict the peculiarities of a European language in the situation of intense language contacts It occurs more often in the prose of English speaking writers as pidgins are widely spread in former British colonies. Pidginization implies code-switching between a European language, a local language (languages) and Pidgin. (Zabus, 1991:47)

Code-switching, being a common occurrence in multilingual societies, is often used in the speech of Nigerians. The instances of code-switching can be studied in the novels of Nigerian authors.

Code-switching involves rapid transition or change from one language to another, depending on the situation, audience and is considered to be a consequence of multilingualism and languages in contact.

Code-switching occurs in the course of the same communication act and communicants transfer from one language to another, deciding to change linguistic means, depending on what aspect of their interrelation is important for this stage of communication. The borders of these transitions are quite precise and appear, for example, in the limits of sentences or subordinate clauses.

Socially important in this kind of situations is not the choice of a particular language unit but preference of one code to another under the influence of different social factors. (Shweitzer, 2012:81).

Nigerian authors use gastronomic vocabulary in the process of code-switching. The gastronomic vocabulary of Nigerian English is influenced by the Nigerian worldview and culture. Borrowings from local languages (mainly Yoruba and Igbo) play a major role in forming the culturally important lexicon of Nigerian English.

A few minutes later she sat down to a lunch of garri and okra soup. (Okoye, 1982:22)

Garri is cassava flour, cassava tubers grated and fried. (from Yoruba and Hausa)

Okra soup – the fruit of *hibiscus esculentus* used for thickening soup (found in most Nigerian languages)

It took six balls of akara to appease her. (Shoneyin, 2010:94)

Akara is a bean cake. (Yoruba)

Please, ma, come and tell me how you want this moyin-moyin served. (Shoneyin, 2010:39)

Moyin-moyin or moin-moin (Yoruba), Mai-mai (Igbo) used for ground beans boiled to taste.

The research allowed us to discover secondary nominations that denote Nigerian flora and cuisine, to reveal their metaphorical usage.

Yams is a very popular tuber similar to potato used as one of Nigeria's staple food. It may be cooked, pounded or fried for eating. This lexeme can be used metaphorically, where the moon is compared to yams: "What a bright moon", Efurum remarked "Yes, how bright it is. The wonderful work of nature. A piece of yam that is sufficient for all the world." (Nwapa 1966:13).

The example shows process of employing common lexical units as a basis for symbolization.

Lexicon from indigenous languages in the gastronomic vocabulary depicts the objective world of the country, this vocabulary constitutes one of the most impressive Nigerian cultural codes.

For many centuries the Africans' clothes have been an important cultural code, emphasizing their national identity. Nigerian writers use many words dealing with clothes from indigenous languages to stress their authenticity;

Chief Ozobia looked expensive, with his arching hand gestures he made as he spoke, the intricately embroidered agbada, whose folds and folds of blue cloth made him even wider than he was. (Adichie 2007:59).

Agbada is a large flowing gown worn by men, often embroidered at the neck and cuffs. (Yoruba)

She was extravagantly made up and was dressed in a flowered buba and lappa. (Okoye, 1982:3)

Buba is a collarless short loose garment with ample sleeves worn mainly by women. (Yoruba)

Lappa is wrapper or waist-cloth, i.e. one or two piece cloth used mainly by women. (Pidgin)

There is another example worth mentioning carrying important ethnospecific information:

She wore an iro and buba made from a deep blue adire material (Kilanko.2012:6)

Iro is a skirt (Yoruba).

Buba and iro are usually worn together making an outfit.

Adire is a colourfully designed and painted wear worn by both men and women (Yoruba).

Sefi Atta describes the traditional technique of dyeing cloth called adire. The young character's aunt, who was a "master adire dyer, taught the girl to paint patterns on cloth using chicken feathers. The women used a cassava starch mixture on the bales of white cloth and dipped the cloth into the vats of indigo... The girl knew which elu leaves to pluck, how to sieve the pulp through cocoa ash, stir the indigo juice, taste, feel, until the dye was ready for use... She liked the smell of the indigo in the vats, the patterns the women painted: rings, stars, petals, cowry shells, pestles". (Atta 2010: 45-46).

The art of adire was passed in Yoruba culture from generation to generation and the secret of creating cloth was kept in the family. The cloth and the outfit became the text as with the help of the paintings on them women could tell a story, leave a message, a wish to herself or her family.

In Yoruba culture indigo colour was and continues to be very popular. It's the symbol of fertility and kindness. The cloth of deep shade demanded more dye and only well-off people could afford it. So it was the symbol of social differentiation. Nowadays the art of adire is in demand in the world of design. So as we can conclude many lexemes need research and explanation and convey to the reader important information about Nigerian traditional culture.

Yoruba usually wear clothes made from the same fabric on special occasions called aso ebi. (Yoruba)

Aso is a fabric in Yoruba.

Ebi is a family in Yoruba.

“Baba Segi asked me to make aso ebi for the entire household. The neighbour’s birthday was in two weeks’ time and he wanted us all dressed in the same fabric from top to bottom. (Shoneyin, 2010:67) The writer mentions the traditional outfits for the big polygamous family, using expression from a local language.

Vocabulary from indigenous languages, realities of everyday life are connected with the objective world of Nigerians.

Here are some more examples of switching from English to local languages:

In the novel “Kehinde” (1994) Buchi Emecheta switches from English to Yoruba and from English to Igbo, explaining the meaning of the word in the text. “I think I was about five or so when we saw an iyabeji - the name the Yorubas give to the mother of twins - dancing as those mothers do”. (p.19) The writer explains the meaning of the word as the novel is addressed primarily to a European reader. “I was eating iwu-akpu, which I liked because it was cool and filling and really tasty”. (p.19) Iwu-akpu is grated boiled cassava, soaked in slightly salted cold water; it is a traditional Igbo dish.

In the same novel the author makes emphasis on the fact that quite often young Nigerians don’t know their mother tongue as they speak English to their parents. Parents may switch to their common indigenous language in private talk:

Kehinde replied tightly in Igbo. Joshua looked at his sister. “Let’s get out of here. Whenever they speak their language, it means they don’t want us around”... “Whose fault is it that you don’t speak your mother tongue when you refuse to learn?” “You mean your mother tongue. Mine is English.” (Emecheta, 1994:3)

The writers insert words and expressions from the indigenous languages into English sentences due to the inability to find suitable words with which to express the ideas. Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie (1977), a well-known Nigerian writer turns to the Igbo culture, their tradition and language using a lot of Igbo vocabulary. Sometimes these Igbo words are explained in English in the text. In her novel “Half of a Yellow Sun” (2006) we come across this example: “Her name was Olanna. But master said it only once; he mostly called her nkem, my own... Master was laughing now, saying, “But we will live here together, nkem, and you can keep the Elias Avenue flat as well”. (p.24)

There are expressions of politeness: “Kambili, kedu?” Kedu means “How are you?”. These insertions are forms of address or greetings in Igbo, which don’t bear basic information. Amaka and I greeted Auntie Ifeoma’s friend who wore a bright tie-dye boubou and her short hair natural. She smiled and said “Kedu?” (Adichie, 2004: 71, 242) Abi is interjection used to confirm information in Yoruba. “What’s the matter? Abi, you done quarrel with Abby?” – “Well, dat no be bad thing, abi?” (Emecheta 1994: 8-9) These examples show that the words in local languages fulfill some social function. They are the symbols of social and ethnic belonging of the characters.

Sometimes the characters explain why they prefer to speak their mother tongue. A young woman, who is Yoruba, speaks this language to her neighbour. Both ladies are educated and have a good command of English. “We always spoke in Yoruba, Mr. Durojaiye and I. If I didn’t, she would be offended: English was not polite enough”. (Atta 2010:61) In informal situation they chose their common indigenous language.

Another example of using Yoruba comes from the novel “Stay with me” (2017) by Ayobami Adebayo: “Iya Martha tapped Funmi on the back. “Oya, you go and greet your iyale”. I shuddered when Iya Martha referred to me as Funmi’s iyale. The word crackled in my ears, iyale –first wife. It was a verdict that marked me as not woman enough for my husband”. (Adebayo 2017:12). In this case the word in Yoruba is used to hurt the woman who was childless, and whose husband decided to look for a new wife.

In the same novel we find explanation of switching to English: “Akin, you knew this? I spoke in English, shutting out the two elders who spoke only Yoruba”. (Adebayo 2017 :13). The woman did not want the two elders who didn’t know English to understand her.

We find similar example in the novel “No Longer at Ease” by Ch. Achebe: “He sent for Charles and asked him in Igbo (so that miss Tomlinson would not understand) why he had not fulfilled his promise.” (Achebe 1960:252). As we can see characters in the novels switch to their mother tongue to exclude from the conversation the unnecessary person.

There is another example when the author comments on his character’s switching to an indigenous language “Listen”, I said, switching to Yoruba: there was a seriousness I could never achieve in English. (Atta 2010:29). In informal situations Nigerians often speak their mother tongue.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her novel “Purple Hibiscus” (2004) employs code-switching to depict Nigerian environment. Her characters use Standard English, Igbo language and Pidgin English in different circumstances. Ch. Adichie uses this stylistic device to portray her

characters' emotions and their psychological condition. It is evident that most characters code-switch in anger, joy, surprise, out of shock etc. as situations demand.

Aunty Ifeoma, a university professor, who normally speaks English at home with her family members, switches from English to Igbo on receiving a phone call informing of her brother's death.

She exclaims: "Hei, chi mo! nwunye m Hei"! She responds to the horrible news being in shock, but switches to English, telling Kambili, her niece, of her father's death: "It's your father. They called me from the factory, they found him lying dead on his desk". (Adichie 2004:286)

The characters often switch from English to Pidgin English. Obiora, Aunty Ifeoma's son, who speaks good English, expressing his anger when his mother's home was searched, uses Pidgin: "How you just come enter like dis? Wetin be dis?" (Adichie 2004:231) Pidgin English is the most convenient language of communication for people who represent different ethnic groups and social classes, and also used in informal situations.

The next extract shows that educated Nigerian women, who usually speak English at home with husbands and children, switch to Pidgin talking to their close friends: "Eh, today na Friday. We get plenty shopping to do. Why you dey chop small, small, like oyinbo?"

"Not be only oyinbos wey chop small small. In fact, sef, dem, chop so so fast too".

"What is the matter? Abi, you done quarrel with Alby?"

"Oh, I no know, Moriammo. I don tell am say, I pregnant"/

"Hm, him no happy? These our men just wan make we get belle every time." (Emecheta 1994: 8)

Pidgin is a social identifier, it is a symbol of the characters' social community, fulfilling the function of ethnic identity. (Shweitzer, 2012:125). During their frank talk, the two women speak Pidgin which is used in informal speech and is associated with sincerity, ease and simplicity.

In the next example the heroine switches to Pidgin to be sure the person understood her: "Sista", he said. "Abeg, make I get wata...".

Her mother refused in English: "Don't you see that this is private property? Don't you know you can't go around begging like this?"

Before returning to the gate, she said, in Pidgin this time, "Na who even tell you say I got wata?" (Okparanta 2016 :30-31)

Some phrases in local languages are followed by translation in English in the text.

"So, the story begins even before the story, on June 23, 1968. Ubosi chi ji ehihe jie: the day night fell in the afternoon as the saying goes." (Okparanta, 2016:5)

In earlier works Nigerian authors often use Pidgin English which later became a Creole. This is how one of the pioneers of Nigerian literature Cyprian Ekwensi explains the use of Pidgin in “Jagua Nana” (1961): “Like Freddie she was an Ibo (Igbo) from Eastern Nigeria, but when she spoke to him she always used Pidgin English, because living in Lagos City they don’t want too many embarrassing reminders of clan or custom.” (Ekwensi 1961:5) The characters spoke Pidgin English which is understood by almost everybody in the country not to focus on their background and the place they came from.

In the sequel to the previous novel the characters speak a lot of Pidgin too: “You know somethin? As you dey for Englan` I no know say you dey dere ah tink dat ah never born pickin” (Ekwensi 1986:233-234). In this work Ekwensi’s heroine speaks Pidgin because the author wants to give ethnic expressiveness to the context and facilitate character drawing.

It would be wrong to suggest that pidgins and creoles have been restricted to extremes of humor or pathos. They have shown themselves to be as flexible and versatile as their users have wanted them to be... Pidgin is used as the spectrum of Englishes found in Nigeria for establishing a network of relationships, thus allowing the characters to understand themselves, each other and the state in which they live. (Todd 1995:76)

Code-switching is used to reflect the linguistic diversity of a society, to highlight cultural and social differences and to create a sense of authenticity.

4. Conclusions

This paper attempts to further understand specific features of Nigerian creative writing in English and explore creative strategies employed by the authors.

Specific development of the English language in Nigeria where English interacts with indigenous languages led to the emergence and evolution of authentic literature in English marked by syncretism caused by the synthesis of African oral tradition and world literature.

In the creative writing of the first generation of authors the problem of continuity of folklore tradition becomes the problem of artistic method. European and African cultures coexist and make hybrid structures.

In relation to Nigerian creative writing in English we speak about text polyglossia, because more than two languages are present in it. The English language has been nativised in the works of Nigerian authors who modify English and adopt various strategies. They use loan words from indigenous languages to reflect traditional culture, customs and religion. The writers employ the

strategy of indigenization which is expressed in the substrategies of relexification and pidginization. Relexification is interrelation of two or more languages in one text. Pidginization is the use of ethnospecific lexemes in the texts of Nigerian authors.

The findings are consistent with the idea that, by appropriating the imperial language, its discursive forms and its modes of representation, post-colonial societies are able, as things stands, to intervene more readily in the dominant discourse, to interpolate their own culture realities, or use that dominant language to describe those realities to a wide audience of readers. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 2000:1920)

European languages in Africa, being the legacy of colonialism, need intent attention and research. Formed within European civilization they adapt to convey the categories of different cultures.

English in Nigeria reflects the peculiarities of Nigerian reality, mentality and linguistic world view of Nigerian peoples and contributes to the substantial position of Nigerian literature in the world literary process.

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