



LINGUISTIC IDENTITY AND LITERATURE IN NOVEL OF CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART*

¹Gururaja S Ghodageri, ²Hanumantha, ³Braj Gopal Yadav

¹Research Scholar, ²Research Scholar, ³Assistant Professor

¹Department of Studies in English,

¹Sunrise University, Alwar Rajasthan, INDIA

Abstract: This research examines the use of language identity in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. It aims at analyzing the roles and significance of the Igbo and African context as well as their application to achieve a unique language identity that can be traced to a cultural base. Widely recognized as "the father of the African novel in English", a label that has endeared him to many critics, Achebe is one of the most prominent writers in Africa with a literary vision that has strongly influenced the form and content of modern African literature. We shall see in this research how Achebe has been able to enrich his narrative and engage the readers in continuous affection and a profound understanding of the rich Igbo culture through the use of proverbs and a unique linguistic style. This peculiar linguistic behavior that gives Achebe's writing a distinctive flavor has largely been responsible for his success as a writer. In this research, proverbs are studied as one of the many indices of language utilized in constructing identities in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.

Index Terms - Language, Literature, Linguistics culture and Things Fall Apart.

I. INTRODUCTION

Studying African literature and African authors is incomplete without studying their ideologies. A literary critic studies literature and authors to uncover the truth about the world and its writers. Many critics believe that the study of literature has sufficiently explored the depth of biographical analysis. The African literature serves two purposes for linguistic analysis. The scientific nature of linguistics allows for a fresh perspective on literary criticism. In language, man dissects behavior and communicates ideas. These things can be examined as they relate to an author and the text of the author through linguistic analysis of literature. The potency of languages is determined by their speakers, and the study of crucial speakers within a society will reveal how they feel about their language and how they behave toward other speakers (Achebe, 1982). Communication among individual speakers and with surrounding speech communities can provide insight into the evolution of a language. Steven Pinker argues that communication is "rooted in our development as individuals, but also in the history of our language community" (Guthrie, A. K, 2011). Individual speakers have a lot to learn from each other when they choose to twist an adaptive complexity like language into a subconscious method of expression for an entire community. John Edward (2013), sociolinguistics is the main research area that is focused on linguistic identity (*Language, Society, and Identity* 3) and human behavior is essential. Sociolinguists call a language attitude a sense of self-identification or a sense of assuming the identity of others (Rudwick, 2006). A linguistic attitude is a cognitive, emotional, and even physical portrayal of how a person perceives the language and the surrounding linguistic communities (Abigail, 2011). An attitude towards a language can be directed inward, such as an egocentric vision of acquiring the mother tongue or certain beliefs about fellow native language speakers, or outward, towards alien speech environments and the 'other' speakers of the world (Ravenscroft, 1969).

METHODS AND MATERIAL

Surveys and socio-historical research have frequently been used in academic studies of these language prejudices. Linguistic surveys are designed questionnaires that, when completed, can inform the researcher about the patterned preconceptions that an individual exhibits.

These surveys are best used on target populations. Researcher Tore Kristiansen says, "The best way to detect 'real' attitudes is to record behavioral reactions to language in real-life situations" (292)3. Communicating with the people and observing the pupil in marketing places, and cinema halls, etc. Surveys attempt to elicit behavioral responses from an audience in a movie theatre, in markets, which are then used as determinants of linguistic attitudes and stereotypes (Zevin, 2013).

The researcher determines which studies reflect a linguistic attitude and which are naively motivated by education, the environment, or personal preferences. As analysts of language attitudes (Anne Gere and Eugene Smith, 1979), argue in their book *Attitudes, Language, and Change* that "our professed attitudes may appear enlightened, but they often differ from the subconscious attitudes that inevitably govern our judgments and behavior. Thus, with a survey that purposefully elicits one of these professed language attitudes, how does a linguist quantify that subconscious part of a person's linguistic attitude and linguistic stereotype with just a short questionnaire or survey (Kosasih, 2019)? (Snell-Hornby, 1999) says that social and historical factors are the second most common way of determining a person's linguistic stereotype.

This approach uses wide-ranging sociological analysis to conclude gender, ethnicity, and nationality studies. The paired camouflage technique is a method in which actors are recorded in the standard "correct" variety of English and then again in the variety that corresponds to the target population (Low, 2020). This approach is often a practical and statistical way of demonstrating how one or two different speech communities unconsciously stereotype others. The matched guise technique, however, has a critical limitation. It fails to establish sociological distinctions correctly when both parties examined belong to the same community of speech or nationality. For instance, whether a linguist is interested in studying speakers from African countries, the dual camouflage technique cannot be used as a stable determinant of linguistic stereotypes if the speakers are from the same linguistic or sociological background (Cecil L Nelson, 2001).

The branch of sociolinguistics studies the development of language attitudes, and when the research on language attitudes is applied to literature, it offers a new approach to literary criticism and, in particular, the African literary dilemma. The linguistic analysis in this research remains fixed on Chinua Achebe and his use of language in *Things Fall Apart* (Ukwuaba, 2015). It assumes the author's authority and intent and works to uncover the language methods and stereotypes that Achebe uses in literature. Thus, instead of a theoretical approach to language, it also takes a step towards an interdisciplinary analysis, using the field of linguistics as the primary research method.

DISCUSSION

Linguists may use fictitious texts to define new parameters for linguistic data. Authors who write with authorial intent, who compose literature for specific purposes and from a deliberate ideological standpoint, present to the linguist an irrefutable linguistic discourse, ready to be analyzed and unquestionably a unique representation of the author's language attitude. This paper uses Chinua Achebe's new novel *Things Fall Apart* as a research study for linguistic attitudes (in Africa). Nigerian author Chinua Achebe has recognized English as a strong presence in his Nigerian society and has chosen to implement it as the main language in his literature (Clarke, 2017). In the linguistic analysis of *Things Fall Apart* in the English standard British language, he is unfailingly loyal to his first language and finds an even deeper level of Achebe's language attitude: a level that even brings the subconscious language choices of Achebe to reflect his passion for his country and his dedication to preserving it (Jenkins, 2003). Achebe finds value in the content words of Igbo, and although he chooses to address the world in English, he cannot and will not sacrifice his Igbo lexicon for a foreign tongue. African writers wanted literature to remain purely African, written in African tongues and purely for the African people. Even half of the African writers are in support of writing African stories in the English language too. In the present day, African writers write in the English language, but the journey has not been an easy one, and a quick overview of that linguistic situation uncovers the state of language attitudes (Achebe, 1984). (Ngugi Wa Thiong' 1994) a strict division between language use and beliefs about language is mistaken. Even Wa Thiong'o and his compatriots, Achebe stoutly affirms: the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o used English as a writing medium, but later formed his decision that a "choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves about their natural and social environment and hence

language has always been at the heart of the two contending social forces in the Africa of the twentieth century". Wa Thiong'o claims that the language through which an author chooses to communicate is the culture to which he chooses to adhere. He later claims: "Language, any language, has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture". The story of *Things Fall Apart* has united African literature, arguably more than any other work of African fiction. The influence of the novel has been discussed recently by two African writers, Adebayo Williams, and Olaniyan Tejumola. Chinua Achebe, conversely, looks to the unification of African storytellers and the collective efforts of African people to produce African literature. Olaniyan focuses solely on those parts of the literature that benefit from his subjective opinions and discredits the role of objectivity and authoritarian intent. Such an approach reduces the effectiveness of Achebe as an author in the African canon, and the influence of Olaniyan as a contemporary African literary critic.

CONCLUSION

A cursory interpretation of *Things Fall Apart* is not enough to understand the complexity of Chinua Achebe and the attitude of language. African literature is a complex mixture of oral and written stories. It addresses the particular situation in Africa, and often many universal situations as well. Language in the hands and hearts of willing vessels has the power to shape the world, and the choices that individual language speakers make daily will ultimately determine the validity of their oral and written language. World literature, both oral and written, should be appreciated for its wealth of cultural and linguistic information. It is Achebe's success both as an author and as a member of the struggling African canon that has earned him the place as a father of African literature, as well as a pillar of world literature. This research is only the beginning of further research. This paper shows an undeniable bond between language and a literary masterpiece and in future research, this relationship could prove to be a valuable link between critical reading and understanding of world literature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am thankful to Sunrise University and Guide for giving an opportunity to carry out my research and supported during the course of investigation in the campus.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

ORCHID

Gururaj S Ghodageri ID: 0009-0009-7046-7398

REFERENCE

- [1] Abigail K. Guthrie. Language and Identity in Postcolonial African Literature: A Case Study of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* April 2011, UMI Number: 1491459
- [2] Abrahams, C. (1980). Margaret Laurence and Chinua Achebe: Commonwealth Storytellers. *ACLALS Bulletin*, 5, 74-85.
- [3] Abrash Barbara. *Black African Literature in English*. Since 1952. New York; Johnson, 1967. Print 188
- [4] Achebe, C. (1984). *The trouble with Nigeria*. Heinemann.
- [5] Achebe, C., wa Thiong'o, N., & Said, E. W. (1994). *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory: A reader*. Columbia University Press.
- [6] Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1982. Print.
- [7] Ackley, Donald G. "The Male-Female Motif in *Things Fall Apart*," *Studies in Black Literature*, 5, 1, 1974.
- [8] Cecil L Nelson. *Intelligibility and creativity in world English literature*. The three circles of Singapore: Unipress 2001. Pp: 35 – 44
- [9] Chinua Achebe, (1991) *A Man of the People*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., Print.
- [10] Clarke, C. (2017). *An analysis of Chinua Achebe's An Image of Africa: racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*. CRC Press.
- [11] Edwards, J. (2013). *Sociolinguistics: A very short introduction* (Vol. 365). Oxford University Press.
- [12] Gere, A. R. (1974). *West African Oratory and the Fiction of Chinua Achebe and TM Aluko*. University of Michigan.
- [13] Gere, A. R., & Smith, E. (1979). *Attitudes, Language, and Change*.
- [14] Guthrie, A. K. (2011). *Language and identity in postcolonial African literature: A case study of Chinua Achebe's "things fall apart"*. Liberty University.
- [15] Jenkins, J. (2003). *World Englishes: A resource book for students*. Psychology Press.
- [16] Kosasih, M. M. (2019). *A Stylistic Analysis of Chinua Achebe's Things Falls Apart*. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS)*, 1348.

[17] Kristiansen found that five consecutive target audiences in a Danish cinema discriminated against movie actors based on their accents. Surveys revealed a distinct preference for actors who used more standardized accents as opposed to dialectal variations, or accents unknown by the target audience. Kristiansen's survey proved certain behavioral traits and linguistic stereotypes that the Danish people carry with them and use to analyze the world around them (292)3.

[18] Low, G. (2020). *Publishing the Postcolonial: Anglophone West African and Caribbean Writing in the UK 1948-1968*. Routledge.

[19] Ravenscroft, A. (1968). African Literature V: Novels of Disillusion. *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 3(2), 120-137.

[20] Regmi, Y. N. (2011). *Colonial Consciousness in Chinua Achebe's A Man of the People* (Doctoral dissertation, Central Department of English Kirtipur, Kathmandu).

[21] Rudwick, S. I. (2006). *Language, identity, and ethnicity in post-apartheid South Africa: the Umlazi township community* (Doctoral dissertation).

[22] Snell-Hornby, M. (1999). Communicating in the global village: On language, translation, and cultural identity. *Current Issues in Language & Society*, 6(2), 103-120.

[23] *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Astor-Honor, Inc., 1959. "An End to Sovereignty", *Voices from Twentieth-Century Africa*,

[24] Tucker, G. C., Windapo, A., & Cattell, K. S. (2015). *Africa in Modern Literature to see his classification of African literature and its writers*.

[25] Ukwuaba, O. K. (2015). *A linguistic study of proverbs and language identity in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Lagos).

[26] Zevin, J. (2013). *Social studies for the twenty-first century: Methods and materials for teaching in middle and secondary schools*. Routledge.

