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CONCLUSION
CHAPTER V

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The present dissertation deals with all round aspects of fourth world writings within Igbo Literature, Igbo writers who write in English, as well as those who have written in Igbo, and Igbo works that have been translated into English.

Through a careful perusal of Igbo Literature, it can be established that the Igbo writers have presented a very diverse and impressive body of work despite of the many challenges they were faced with. The foundation of this literature was laid by Olaudah Equiano in 1879. While strictly not a piece of literature, this was the first time anything was written in English. His contribution is tremendous in Igbo Literature as one of the forerunners of literature. He founded the slave narrative, which not only had an enormous impact on the writers of the African continent, but also among writers of African descent in America. The landmark novel of American Literature, like Uncle Tom's Cabin, and other novels follow this narrative.
The other writer, who is credited with being the father of Igbo Literature, is Pita Nwana. His novel *Omenuko*, was written in Igbo, but translated into English in 1933. And then we have Chinua Achebe, who till date is the most famous face of Igbo Literature. He wrote *No Longer at Ease* in 1960. While this novel was not as famous as *Things Fall Apart*, but the promise of Achebe as a writer capable of greatness was there.

The second phase of Igbo Literature (the writers writing between the 1960s - 1980s) is seen taken over by the authors of the next generation. This is also the period when the Igbo writers reach their zenith. Writers like Vincent Chukwuemeka Ike, Elechi Amadi, and Flora Nwapa, exhibit great maturity, and reveal the layers of complexities in issues like the impact of colonialism, and traditionalism; that hitherto were taken at face value. The western culture and its impact on the tribal culture is shown, but is well synchronized with the use of the Igbo mythical element. There is no apology of the superstitious beliefs, and tribal rituals. In this period of Igbo writing the authors are found making attempts to showcase the tribal culture that Africa has to offer.

It is also during this stage that Chinua Achebe wrote his magnum opus, *Things Fall Apart*; his most famous novel, which was honored by being selected as one of the hundred best novels in the English Language between 1923 to 2005, by the *Time Magazine*. It has been translated in several languages all over the world, and studied as a text, at various universities around the world. No other novel breaks down the misconceptions that the world has about Africa as this one. It can be said, that Igbo literature in English has flourished since the publication of Achebe's first novel Achebe is
the most renowned Igbo writer who started the real tradition of Nigerian literature. He adapted the European form to suit African literature. He creates a Nigerian texture. The main area of exploration is the impact of Western civilization upon traditional Igbo society and tribal values vis-à-vis modern, urban life.

During the contemporary era of Igbo writing, a number of considerable writings made and impact which includes contemporary authors like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Nnedi Okarafor, and Chris Abani. The writers show a lot of promise, Adichie's first novel *Purple Hibiscus* was highly acclaimed and was nominated for the Booker Prize. If Adichie found critical acclaim; then Nnedi is unique as she has chosen fantasy as her genre of creative fiction writing. This is a genre that is very contemporary, and every bit as challenging.

### I. Characteristics of Fourth World Literature – How Igbo Literature is a part of Fourth World Literature

Fourth world literature generally means the literature written about and by the poorest, oppressed, underprivileged and marginal people of any nation. For the oppressed, poor and the underprivileged people, literature was a tool through which they expressed the injustice, cruelty and racial discrimination meted out towards them. The Dalit and tribal literature of India, the Igbo literature of Nigeria and the Black literature belong to the Fourth World category of literature.
Fourth world writers generally wrote about social expulsion and discord, racial discrimination, injustice, untouchability, colonization, effects of colonization, slavery etc. It is through literature and the English language that voiceless people are able to articulate their joys, sorrows and especially the injustice inflicted on them. Literature empowers neglected, suppressed and oppressed people to make their voices heard and write back to the Europeans. Literature also serves as an instrument of assertion and paves the way to overcome inferiority complex that years of suppression has inflicted. Fourth world literature is rich and brings to the world a myriad of experiences from cultural clashes, problems of conversion, alienation, violence, identity crisis, complexity of relationships, slave narratives and so on. The English language has proved to be a boon for making these works accessible to the entire world. The language which started as an instrument of control for the colonizers eventually turns into a technique of empowerment because through this language marginalized people and their experiences can be brought to the centre; otherwise they would have languished in oblivion.

Fourth world literature takes the world into a journey of discovery and the writings of Fourth world writers open up avenues for understanding and the removal of prejudices harbored against certain peoples of the world. Above all, it teaches the world the lesson that no one should be looked down upon. Every race, community, tribes etc. have rich cultures which can provide examples to the world. Fourth world literature hence, paves the way for a growing understanding and a brighter and more just world.
The Igbo were colonized by the Europeans and so they were greatly influenced by the Europeans and also by the Atlantic slave trade. The Igbo writers wrote about colonization, effects of colonization and the slave trade. The Igbo writers also wrote about the horrors of the slave trade. After the British left Nigeria, a series of ethnic clashes between Northern Muslims and the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria living in Northern Nigeria took place between 1966 and 1967. As a result a war broke out. This war was known as the Nigerian Civil War or the Nigerian-Biafra war. Many Igbo lost their lives during the war. Even after the war ended, many Igbo people found themselves discriminated against by other ethnic groups and the new non-Igbo federal government.

So the Igbo were ‘twice oppressed and marginalized’- firstly by the British and then by other ethnic groups in Nigeria. For the Igbo writers’ literature was a tool through which they expressed the injustice, racial discrimination, violence and cruelty meted out towards them by the British and also by other ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Igbo writers also wrote about the effects of slave trade, colonization and the Nigerian-Biafra war. Igbo literature voices the encounter between their traditional values and culture as they collide with Western beliefs. Igbo writers get an opportunity to show the world that their culture and traditions are progressive. Just as every culture has its own drawbacks, they also have their problems specially in considering their women inferior. But the coming up of talented women writers brings a feminist and progressive point of view, which brings women empowerment. Hence, Igbo literature can be called a part of Fourth world literature.
II. Themes

Thematically speaking, the Igbo writing throws light on various aspects of the Igbo way of life. The Igbo is the largest ethnic group of Africa, and exert a great influence in Nigeria; to which most of the writers studied here belong. In the study of marginalized literature, whether Black Literature or the Dalit Literature, we find that writing becomes a tool, through which the writers convey the plight of their people and the injustices meted out to them. Fiction is initially used as a platform to display their culture, and to clear misconceptions that the world has about them. It is only later that other themes develop. This is the case with most writers of the Fourth World Literature.

The clash of the Igbo value system as opposed to the western thinking and values is a recurrent theme in the novels by all the writers. However, this is not the only theme that we find. The writers show divergence in themes. The important themes of Igbo novels have been examined below.

1. Igbo Ethos

*Things Fall Apart* is the study about all the aspects of Igbo life, exhibiting the different political, social, and religious facets of this community. The book breaks down the misconceptions of Africa as a land of savages, and primitive tribals. The book is in fact based on the clash of two different civilizations, each trying to understand the other. Achebe's earlier novel *No Longer at Ease*, also attempts to do this. Achebe's themes reflect the cultural traits of the
Igbos, the impact of European civilization upon traditional African society, and the role of tribal values in modern urban life.

Instead of going back to Achebe, who conveys this theme in all his novels, we have a good case in point in John Munonye’s novel *The Only Son*. The book deals with the subject of beliefs, ideas and attitudes that clash with each other.

2. Spirituality

The Igbo people due to the effects of colonization, and the presence of missionaries, had converted to Christianity. This is the reason why spirituality is an important theme in Igbo Literature. Even in Equiano’s slave narrative, the underlying theme is the journey from being a heathen to a Christian. Questions and doubts regarding salvation, and spirituality are raised. Olaudah Equiano’s autobiography *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa the African* written way back in 1789 is about the evils of slave trade. It traces the writer’s journey from the life of bondage to that freedom. Moreover, the book has a political flavor to it. Equiano was actively involved in the anti-slave trade movement.

Yet the book also has a strong religious element. Escape from bondage, is the main theme, but then so is salvation. The writers show great maturity by including questions that deal with penance, salvation, and in general the human condition.
The writers that come later enmesh African mysticism within the realms of literature. Elechi Amadi’s *The Concubine* (1966), *The Slave* (1978), *Isiburu* (1973), and *Estrangement* also show the African ethos, the simple village life, customs, and interestingly the belief in the supernatural. While thematically Amadi talks about the African way of life, the way in which the supernatural element is woven within the theme is skillfully done.

This brings us to another theme here, the spiritual element. Amadi’s novel *The Concubine*, is about the human condition, and the relationship between Gods and man. The story is also about how we can shape our own destiny. Adichie’s book of twelve short stories, *The Thing Around your Neck*, has themes ranging from religious fanaticism, religion versus tribal culture, the intermingling of Christianity and Nigerian culture.

3. Marriage and Gender Equations

The other theme is that of love and marriage, which we find in the Igbo authors writings. Through marriage and love the relationship between the genders is explored. Marriages give the writers a chance to delve into ancient tribal rituals like the *Urū* ceremony. The *isa-ifī* ceremony is seen in *Things Fall Apart*. In this novel by Achebe we find a detailed description of the courting rituals.

His earlier novel *No Longer at Ease* also has love as a theme, as the protagonist Obi falls in love with Clara who is an outcaste. Eventually Obi gives in to the pressure of his family and friends, and marries the girl deemed
right by his family. The protagonist Obi has a lengthy discussion with Joseph about marriage as a compromise and trade off between two families. The Igbo society is a patriarchal society, but this novel gives evidence that the women have their place too. This is evident when the rituals of courting and marriage ceremonies are described.

Chukwuemek Ike's the *Bride Price* has marriage and love as its main theme, as is obvious from the title of the novel. It explores the notions of love and marriage, and delves into the lives of married couples.

The traditional view of certain tasks being accorded to women, and some to men is shown here. Also the time-honoured outlook of manhood equated with brute strength and power; and womanhood with beauty and ability to bear sons, is shown. The women are supposed to be the weaker sex - meek, mild, and submissive.

Alongside the fixed roles, we find that in the novels, the changing gender equations with the onset of colonialism and education. We find in novels of Achebe and other writers this kind of thinking is prevalent. But none more so than Flora Nwapa. She is the first female Igbo writer. She is appropriately called the mother of Igbo novels. Her novels have a feminist slant.

In the novel *Efuru* that is set in rural Africa she introduces us to Efuru, the female protagonist. She is very headstrong, and has her own mind. She defies tradition at every opportunity. Her views and the way she chooses to live her life are at variance with the socially acceptable conventions of the tribal society. She has scant regard for the accepted notions of marriage and has
three marriages behind her. She ends up doing social service and helping her people. All this she manages within the superstitious, mysticism of tribal Africa. This is Flora Nwapa’s most popular novel.

4. Politics

Africa has been struggling for independent dignity and individuality in all spheres of life. Therefore one of the other themes in these novels is that of politics. The first novel an Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, uses the novel as a genre as a mouthpiece to fight against their colonial masters. This is where the foundations of Igbo Literature exist. The writers ‘at the onset’ deal with the colonization, and its effects, and the atrocities committed by the white man. Achebe’s books are about how the Igbo overcome this onslaught on their culture, and how they develop in the modern world; successfully bridging the gap between the modern and traditional.

The second generation of writers deal, with the atrocities committed during the war. The 1960s was a politically volatile age, as there were several coups in Nigeria, before the Biafran War. The civil war lasted from 1967-70, and had obviously a deep rooted effect on the Igbo psyche. This was reflected in a just about all the works. Buchi Emecheta’s book The Rape of Shavi talks about the civil war and European Colonization.

The contemporary writers like Adichie, too have religion, and politics as an underlying theme, as seen in Purple Hibiscus. The very idea of the purple
hibiscus is the existence of hope, amidst all the violence and oppression. Adichie’s book *Half of a Yellow Sun* has the Biafra – Nigeria war as its backdrop. The details of the thought running through the author’s mind are discussed in the previous chapters. Chris Abani’s *Graceland* unashamedly uses novel as a vehicle to make strong political statements. The book was called a political thriller, but was much closer to fact than fiction. This combined with strong anti-establishment views, the then government to arrest Abani, suspecting him to be involved in a military coup. The book was published after his release.

### III. Literary Attributes

This chapter will now examine the literary attributes of the Igbo writers. The recognition, that the Igbo writers have received as being a part of the Fourth World Literature is remarkable; considering that the roots of their language lie in an albeit rich, but oral tradition. With no tools of grammar to aid them, the writers have had to deal with the uphill task of both containing themselves within the bounds of grammar, refining their skills in a language not their own, and yet portray an ethos that is at once alien to the language. A language that is in itself shackled with colonial history, rules, principles, and values that are at variance with the Igbo ethos, it should be understood that the Igbo writer who writes in English writes in a language that is his second language. Therefore his use of the language is very different from that of his European or American counterpart.
The language of the writers of Igbo literary tradition is an ethnic variety of Nigerian English. Chinua Achebe has given his outstanding contribution to Nigerian literature through his peculiar and creative use of language. The most prolific Igbo English writers, precisely like John Munonye, Buchi Emecheta, Chukwuemeka Ike, Cyprian Ekwensi, Nkem Nwankwo, and Elechi Amadi also demonstrated in their work an Igbo tradition which emanates from Igbo language and culture. This legendary convention has become a significant stylistic device. This grants writers the freedom to use the English language more creatively. The works of these authors demonstrate a good instance of the “Igbonization of English” (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp).

Due to early presence and influence of the printing presses at Omtsha, Igbo writers have a chance to dominate the writing style of literature, in Nigeria. Further the motivating influence of the successes attained by the pioneer Igbo writers of English, the rich linguistic and cultural resources lead creative use of English by incorporating Igbo speech habits. Igbo writers are, today, some of the most prolific writers in Africa in terms of output and attention given to their novels.

The study of African literature reveals the fact as it is today, by linguistic diffusion and cultural diversity with respect to multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria, her literature should be treated in terms of the cultural and national literatures of which it is made up. After publication of Achebe’s first novel, Igbo
literature in English has flourished which has contributed enormously in the development of Igbo and African literature. This development may be due to the wide acceptance given to Achebe’s flexible literary style in *Things Fall Apart* and his subsequent works. Common to these writers, they have thus established an Igbo identity in style, culture and linguistic experimentation. Their writing represents an ethnic variety of Nigerian English based on local experiences, needs, and situations.

Traditionally Igbo written literature derives from the oral tradition. Igbo oral literature embodies the literary aspects of Igbo oral performances such as folktales, folksongs, proverbs, riddles, incantations, anecdotes, myths, legends, tongue twisters, drama, and festivals. Igbo life, culture and world view are usually reflected in Igbo oral literature. Contemporary Igbo literature is the extension of Igbo oral literature. Igbo literary tradition can be said to be rooted in the language and culture of the Igbo. The contemporary Igbo writers write in the tradition of Igbo literature because of their general indebtedness to a unique oral legendary heritage and the circumstances, which have made English their language of expression.

Bokamba has also observed that lexical items in African English may be created in four principal ways: Semantic extension, Semantic shift, Semantic transfer, Coinage. Similarly, Bamiro (1994) suggested that lexicon semantic variations in NE are classifiable under the following ten linguistic categories: Loan shift, Semantic under differentiation, Lexicon-semantic duplication and redundancy, Ellipsis, Conversion, Clipping,
Herbert Igboanusi in his study reveals the fact that lexicon-semantic innovation in Igbo English literature as a stylistic device has become part of the Igbo literary tradition.

IV. Igbo Writers Who Write in English

The African writer writes in English as a second language. His use of English is similar to the writers from Britain and America who write in English. When speakers of one language learn a second language, their tendency is to transfer some of the linguistic behaviors of their first language to their second language performance. This is often unconscious and habitual. However, when the Igbo writers, for example, write in English, they may have two classes of audience in mind—the Igbo or African audience and the European audience. The Igbo writers use English language in such a way that they incorporate the idiom and language resources of Igbo without distorting English language grammar. The creative writing by African writers is largely a problem of culture. The real African creative writer must alter the English language to suit African surroundings. The English that emerges from this consideration must be "new" in the sense that it can "carry the weight" of the African writer's experience.

Igbo writers who use English as their creative medium are presenting Igbo experiences, derived from the Igbo background. These writers now write in
English either because they cannot write in Igbo or to reach a wider readership. Europeanized Igbo writers put their thoughts in Igbo (their mother tongue). This influences their use of English, in which they write. The literature of these Igbo authors originates principally from Igbo life and language. In exploring the Igbo life, they have had to "alter" the English language so as to incorporate Igbo language features and thought processes, which constitute the linguistic characteristics of Igbo English bilinguals.

The peripheral dialects of Igbo prove that the legendary tradition cuts across all the linguistic and cultural areas of Igbo land. The examples from the novels, studied in this chapter are drawn from two levels: the linguistic performance of the authors themselves and the linguistic performance of the characters of the novels. These two levels are inter-related in that the author is both the writer of the narrative and the conversation of his characters.

V. The Igbo Contribution to Nigerian Fiction

The Igbo convention is English based Igbo legendary culture. This convention is part of Igbo heritage resulting from its historical circumstances. Cultural experiences are here expressed in a heritage language. Literature is often an expression of a culture’s perception of its problems and of the solutions. The writer’s sources of creativity are his traditions. His mode of expression is English. Achebe intimated this literary tradition and has, therefore, provided a foothold to which other Igbo writers can relate and a model for them to build on.
The development of the Igbo tradition through Achebe to others shows a great degree of continuity, consistency and creativity. It builds on a strategy, which involves linguistic and cultural translation. Based primarily on the examples from the novels of seven prominent Igbo authors, this chapter shows that the Igbo tradition is characterized by linguistic innovation which can be classified under the following seven categories:

1. Indigenous Igbo words
2. Coinages
3. Loan-blends
4. Translation equivalents
5. Semantic extension
6. Collocation extension
7. Colloquialisms.

The usages under discussion are well known to other Nigerians because they read the works of popular Igbo writers and also share the same environment with Igbo speakers. Igbo authors more frequently use this style of writing than non-Igbo writers. In fact, most Igbo writers have come to accept this style as a tradition, which they all use.

Some of the linguistic processes of innovation found in the novels are very closely related to one another. For example, the processes of lexical creation
discussed under loan-words, coinages and loan-blends involve the retention of meaning. The difference, however, is that while loan-words retain their Igbo meaning and form, coinages retain their Igbo meaning but English form. In the same way, loan-blend retains an Igbo form, which modifies an English form, resulting in retention of the Igbo meaning and an additional meaning.

Translation equivalent is slightly related to the three mentioned processes to the extent that they are a result of interference. But while there is a transfer of form (as in the case of loan-words and loan-blends) and a transfer of meaning (as in the case of loan-words, coinages and loan-blends), translation equivalent results from literal translation. On the other hand, while the basic meaning is extended in the process of semantic extension, different collocates are extended in collocation extension. In the same vein, colloquialism relates to register and context.

1. Indigenous Igbo-Words

The Indigenous Igbo-words can be regarded as "lexical variants". These words reflect the titles, food, religion and traditional customs of the Igbo. The following are the examples of Indigenous Igbo-words selected from the novels. The fore-grounded features and the abbreviated titles are italicized in each example. Explanations, translations and British English equivalents are also provided in brackets under each example. (www.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)
a) It is an ozo dance, the men said among themselves. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 41)

(Ozo is an Indigenous Igbo word for Igbo social rank. i.e. a titleholder.)

b) He called his son, Nwoye, to sit with him in his obi (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 44)

(Obi is an Indigenous Igbo word which means house for the head of the family. Obi also refers to that part of the house in which the host receives his guests.)

c) Mazi Laza retired to his obi. (Ike, The Potter's Wheel 57)

(Obi is an Indigenous Igbo word which means house for the head of the family. Obi also refers to that part of the house in which the host receives his guests.)

d) On the advice of Nwakuku, that woman who had such ill luck with ogbanje children...(Ike, The Potter's Wheel 43)

(Ogbanje is an Indigenous Igbo word used for a child believed to be capable of being born over and over again, to the same parents. Ogbanje is also used for a child born to different parents through reincarnation.)

e) Use some utazi and cook it so that I'll have plenty of pottage water to drink. (Ike, The Potter's Wheel 106)
(Utazi is a Indigenous Igbo-word which is the name of a particular vegetable. This vegetable is used in making soup.)

f) All the umunna were invited to the feast, all the descendants of Okolo, who had lived about two hundred years before. (Achebe. *Things Fall Apart* 117)

(Umunna refers to a group of men who are related to each other.)

g) It was the full gathering of umuada, in the same way as they would meet if a death occurred in the family. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 93)

(Umuada refers to a group of women who are related to each other.)

h) I have come to ask you to plait my hair next Eke. (Amadi 11)

(In the Igbo week system, Eke refers to one of the market days.)

i) Dede, you are hurt. (Amadi 57)

(Dede is a title of respect. A younger person uses this word to address an older person)

j) Your chi is very much awake, my friend. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 34)

(Chi stands for one's own personal god.)

k) Giant ukwa. fried without being burnt, and nicely shelled ready for the mouth (Ike, *The Potter's Wheel* 26)
(Ukwa refers to the seeds of a variety of the breadfruit tree.)

1) Samuel spewed moist earth as a dibia sprays masticated alligator pepper on a patient. (Ike, *The Potter's Wheel* 132)

(Dibia generally means a native doctor.)

2. Coinages

Coinages are newly coined words. These words are a result from the prevailing socio-linguistic factors in Igboland, in particular, and Nigeria, in general. Most of these coinages appear in the form of compound English words. These words simply paraphrase the Igbo concepts. As in other varieties of English, coinages are the most productive process in the creation of the variety of English found in these novels (www.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

The meanings of the coined words and phrases are given in brackets under each example.

a) They took turns in laying out the face water and chewing stick for the teacher. (Ike, *The Potter's Wheel* 110)

(Chewing-stick is a fibrous piece of wood which is used to clean the teeth.)

b) His mother could give him no money, because her brother's second burial ceremony had cleaned her out. (Amadi 28)
(Second burial is a traditional practice whereby the funeral rites of the dead are more elaborately performed and celebrated.)

c) Those old women with long throats are now impatient. (Amadi 32)

(Long-throat denotes greed.)

d) The part went through forests and swamps and there was no knowing when and where head-hunters would strike. (Amadi 14)

(Head-hunters refer to a group of people who hunt for human heads. The human heads are used for the purpose of burying an important personality or for rituals. This coinage has been borrowed into general English.)

e) After them, your husband’s age-group, then your old men. (Amadi 31)

(Age-group describes a group of people of about the same age that often forms a socio-cultural group.)

f) Please let me have some cold water, “he begged.” (Amadi 57)

(Cold water refers to water that is stored in the fridge.)

g) Ihuoma. I want to pay some bride price on you”. Ekwueme said calmly, steadily. (Amadi 89)

(Bride price means “dowry”. A man pays money to the parents of the girl whom he wants to marry.)
3. Loan-Blends

Loan-blend combines items from English and Igbo to form new meanings. In loan-blend, the item from the source language and its partial equivalent from the target language are placed side-by-side to form a nominal group. In the nominal group, the English word functions as the headword while the Igbo item functions as the modifier. The English items help the reader to understand the meaning of the Igbo items. Loan-blends provide a good source of the Igbo tradition in the Igbo English novel. (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

Consider the following examples

a) Some kinsmen ate it with egusi soup and others with bitterleaf soup.  
   (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 117)

b) Oti’s father recognized the importance of their work and brought home for his son the trunk of an okwe tree, excellent for making wheels strong enough to carry human beings (Ike, *The Potter’s Wheel* 29)

c) .. That was after she had nearly bitten off the finger of a schoolmate during a scuffle over one udala fruit. (Ike, *The Potter’s Wheel* 76)
d) Mama Oti helped Mama Obu in shelling a plate of egusi seeds which she would use in making Obu's delicacy... (Ike, *The Potter's Wheel* 84)

e) His son, Oti seems to be following his footsteps; the way he convulsed his face the other day when I gave him okro soup ... (Ike, *The Potter's Wheel* 84)

f) They were logs of the time-honored orepe tree which could glow continuously until the very last bit had been burnt. (Amadi 7)

4. Translation Equivalents

Translation equivalent results from certain linguistic processes operating in the Igbo society. The following are some of the linguistic processes that occur in the Igbo society.

(i) The interference of Igbo patterns on English.

(ii) The translation or transliteration of Igbo speech habits into English.

(iii) The method and context of the teaching and learning of English.

The faulty language habits acquired in the primary school. For this reason, many Igbo English writers use translation equivalents in most of their works. In order to understand translation equivalents clearly, they have been categorized
under three subtitles Igboisms, proverbs and imagery.

(africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

(a) Igboisms

Translation equivalents frequently occur when the authors use expressions in their works. These expressions are called Igboisms. Igboisms reflect the traditional life and cultural habits of the Igbo. These expressions are easily understood in Igbo. These Igbo expressions lack in English contexts or are used in different ways from the English forms. Igboisms are evidently different from coinages. Although words are coined to reflect Igbo experience, coinages may be formed through paraphrase but not through literal translation, as is the case with Igboisms. (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp) The translations and BE equivalents are given under each example.

a) I think it was lock-chest. But what brought about the lock-chest? (Amadi 21)

(Lock-chest translates in Igbo as “mkpochi obi”. In BE it means “heart failure”.

b) On the evening of the brother of tomorrow (Amadi 63)

(Brother of tomorrow translates in Igbo as “nwanne echi”, which is equivalent to BE “the day after tomorrow”.)
c) You really have a lucky face (Amadi 204)

(Lucky face translates in Igbo as “ihu oma” which is equivalent to BE “good luck”.)

d) Who will drink the dregs? He asked. Whoever has a job in hand...

(Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 15)

(“To have a job in hand” translates in Igbo as “iji oru n’aka”, which is equivalent to BE “a newly married man”.)

e) Who will prepare my afternoon meal? (Amadi 78)

(Afternoon meal translates in Igbo as “nn ehihie”, equivalent to BE “lunch”)

f) Madume had one fault most villagers disliked. He was big-eyed...

(Amadi 4)

(“Big eye” is equivalent to BE “greed”.)

g) Madume’s big eye may cost him his life eventually. (Amadi 16)

(“Big eye” is equivalent to BE “greed”.)

The readers will notice that in the above examples, authentic Igbo idiom is translated into English in such a way that it reflects the mood of the situation. Although the words used are English words, the idiom is distinctly Igbo and what we have is a translation of what would have been said into Igbo-like English.
(b) Proverbs

The Igbo writers writing in English translate and use a number of Igbo proverbs into English in their works. The frequency with which these writers use proverbs in their works can be because of the influence of Igbo oral tradition and also because of the literary significance of proverbs (www.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp). The following are some of the examples of proverbs used in the novels:

(i) He who brings kola brings life. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 5)

(ii) Our elders say that the sun will shine on those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 6)

(iii) As the elders said, if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 6)

(iv) A chick that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 46)

(v) A baby on its mother's back does not know that the way is long. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 71)

(vi) The bread fruit which chooses to fall on the day of festivity has not fallen early enough. (Achebe, Things Fall Apart 6)
The above proverbs are contextually relevant traditional Igbo proverbs. Though these proverbs have been rendered into English, they retain the vivid imagery and culture of the Igbo language

(C) Imagery

Images are specially used in speeches or narratives in order to convey special kinds of information. Images express specific meanings. The meanings expressed by these images can be interpreted on two levels—the literal and the metaphorical. The literal meaning is deduced from a combination of word meaning and sentence meaning. The metaphorical meaning is derived from a consideration of some extra-linguistic factors such as pre-suppositions, socio-cultural contexts and attitude of speakers, which may influence the overall meaning of the utterance. (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

The following are some examples of imagery used in the novels. The BE equivalent of the imagery used in the novels are provided in brackets under each example

a) No, mother, she is the quiet dog that eats up the hen’s eggs without a bark. (Amadi 157)

(Equivalent to BE “She is dangerous”.)
b) In the end Okonkwo threw the Cat. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 3)

(Reference to the “cat” suggests that the back of the cat hardly touches the ground.)

c) That was many years ago, twenty years or more, and during this time Okonkwo’s fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 3)

(“A bush-fire in the harmattan” means that Okonkwo’s fame had grown rapidly. “Bush fire” means “wild fire”.)

d) Go home and work like a man. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 13)

(It means “go home and work hard”.)

e) I am evil Forest, I am Dry-meat-that-fills-the-mouth, and I am Fire-that burns-without-faggots (Achebe. *Things Fall Apart* 66)

(This simply means “I am dangerous”)

5. Semantic Extension

In semantic extension, English words are made to acquire extended meanings. Igbo English writers often reflect Igbo contexts in their use of certain English items. These items then acquire extended meanings in the novels (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp) One example of semantic extension used in the novel is given below.
a) Are you in doubt about who should share the *thing* in the soup? (Ike, *Toads of Supper* 59)

("Thing" is translated in Igbo as "ihe". It is extended to mean "meat").

6. Collocational Extension

Igbo writers in English sometimes use some English verbs to collocate with new nouns so that they acquire new or extended meanings. Semantic extension and collocational extension are very closely related because both of them are created through the same process of translation and both of them create new or extended meanings. However, semantic extension results in the extension of meanings of individual items, while new meanings are formed from the association of different collocates under collocational extension. (africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp)

Below is an example of collocational Extension from one of the novel. The BE equivalent is given under the example.

(i) Yams will do well this year. (Amadi 16)

(This sentence will be equivalent to BE “There will be very good yam harvest this year”.)
7. Colloquialisms

Colloquialisms are styles of usage that are only suitable for ordinary or informal conversation. The Igbo usually have colloquial contexts. The writers through translation have fused these contexts, reflecting the style of Igbo life, into English expression (www.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp). One example of colloquialism used in the novel *Things Fall Apart* is given below. Explanation is also provided under the example.

(i) The other people were released, but even now they have not found the *mouth* with which to *tell* of their suffering. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 125)

(Observe the informal repetition of “mouth” (noun) and “tell” (verb).)

VI. Hard hitting Language

It comes as no surprise that the language of the Igbo writers is hard hitting and harsh. The terrain, the landscape is harsh. The events, the political fallout of colonialism, the slave trade, and the war; all contribute to this brand of literature being harsh. There is a rare instance of flowery speech, of eulogy. Though at times, the writers end up being poetic, and lyrical. But that is more so because of the deep emotion they feel, rather than superciliousness.
VII. Characterization

Though this is undeniably the case with all colonized writers, it is significant, the way the Igbo writers have emerged from the shadows of their colonial past, and history. Writers like Chinua Achebe, John Munonye, Buchi Emecheta, Chukwuemek Ike display great maturity in the portrayal of their characters. The characterization is not that of types, but are well rounded individual characters.

The novel *Things Fall Apart* and its protagonist Okonwo, are very popular, and very important to the study of Igbo literature. The novel is not character based, and is a medium through which Achebe introduces the world to Nigeria, and its customs. This is the first novel which received worldwide acceptance, because it conformed to the norms of European fiction. The chief character, Okonwo has all the character traits of a traditional hero. He is masculine, heroic, stubborn, and cannot tolerate weakness. He is juxtaposed with his father, Unko; whom he sees as lazy and weak. The main character goes through a gamut of experiences as Achebe talks about the evils and superstitions that exist in Igbo culture, and confronts the effects of colonization. There are several character types, specially the English. The one who stands out is that of Rev Smith, as a rigid, unthinking missionary, who fails to catch the pulse of the Igbo community.

Vincent Chukwuemek Ike’s Obu in *The Potter’s Wheel*, is a boy of six years. His intelligence leads his parents to send him school. Here the critique of the education system starts. But the character of Obu is delightful, as he outsmarts
his teacher, who abuses him, starve him, and beat him up. The book ends with him growing up to be a young industrious man. And coming back to the school he studied in. This was a matter of debate, as many felt he should not have come back to the place, where he and other children were abused. But the end shows a cycle, and hence the title *The Potter's Wheel*.

Amadi's *Concubine* is set in pre-colonial Africa. Therefore it is full of mysticism, and supernatural. The main character is that of Omakachi. The novel revolves around her many suitors. The story starts with being a love story, but then the supernatural element takes over. And the end is rather ambiguous. But the book has an interesting array of different Gods, and Goddesses.

*Concubine* does not have a strongly etched character that supersedes all others. But Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* deals with the lofty protagonist, of the same name, Efuru. She has all the things that conventional girl longs for. She is beautiful, young, comes from a rich family, and has a worthy suitor. But this is a feminist novel. And the heroine is a rebel. She does not conform to the traditional idea of womanhood, where the girl is supposed to be meek, and submissive. She is strong, independent, and makes her own decisions. She has scant regard for society.

What is remarkable about the protagonist is, that in spite of breaking tradition, she shares a good relationship with her father, and in laws. She has a good business sense, and undertakes a second marriage to a Christian boy. This is juxtaposed with her first husband, who is weak, and a poor farmer. The book
explores the conventional notion of marriage. The book ends with her being without a husband and childless. She is compared to the Lake Goddess, who is happy despite of being barren.

The book talks about the potential of Igbo women. Finally Efuru spends her days serving her community, and finding satisfaction, and happiness, in the upliftment of her people. All said and done, Efuru is characterized beautifully. She is symbol of survival, and female empowerment. Efuru stands tall among the other protagonists of Igbo Literature.

Thus we can say, though the themes are more or less similar, the novels are very interesting in terms of the characterization. In Equiano the protagonist is the writer himself and his experiences, and his journey, then in Adichie’s Purple Hibiscus the protagonist is Kambili, a teenager. The whole novel is written from the point of view of a fifteen year old, and her brother, who is seven. The novel spans three years. In this narrative, through the eyes of a young girl, complex characters are created, and skillfully etched. The novel Half of a Yellow Sun, is based on the Biafra War. The novel has not one, but four main characters, whose lives change drastically after the war. Ugwu, an adolescent; Olanna, a beautiful, well educated girl, who is a household help; her revolutionary lover, Odenigboand; and Richard a clueless Englishman in love with Olanna’s twin sister.

Nnedi Okorafor is a female writer who chooses fantasy as a genre for her novels. This gives her ample scope to develop and raise her characters to unimaginable heights. In The Shadow Speaker, the protagonist is a Muslim
adolescent girl called Eji Ugabe. She can communicate with shadows, and is a psychic. The book is set against the backdrop of Nigeria in the year 2070. Though the protagonist is a Muslim, this is not a racist novel.

Among the Igbo writers particularly in the contemporary writers, we find the youth playing an important role. In Chris Abani’s *Graceland*, the protagonist is once again a young boy, who lives in Nigeria, and has to survive on his wits, amidst a chaotic political atmosphere, and violence.

We have studied the various Igbo writers, and analyzed their works. The writers seem, fearless creative, and have successfully bridged the gap between the old and new, and reached a happy compromise between the western thought process, and reconciled it with the Igbo culture. They show at once common ethos, and yet a lot of creative use of language and characterization.
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