Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.7 No.1 March, 2024; p.g. 347 – 361; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

CHARACTER DEFINITION AND IDENTITY: THE CASE OF CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING IN *AMERICANAH* AND *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN*

[1]AKAEZE, MAGDALINE CHIOMA
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
chioma.akaeze@unn.edu.ng
Phone: +2348035531080

[2]ONYEKA, CLEMENTINA UKAMAKA
Directorate of General Studies
National Institute for Nigerian Languages, Aba, Nigeria
beautyclems2021@gmail.com
Phone: +2348064421223

[3]EZEBUBE CHINEDU C.
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
chinedu.ezebube@unn.edu.ng
+2347030565592
&
[4]UZOKWE, CHRISTIANA CHINAZO
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
christianauzokwe8@gmail.com
Phone: +2348103956160

ABSTRACT

Understanding how code-switching and code-mixing intersects with character definition and identity may not be easily overlooked in a multidisciplinary study of this nature. Code-switching and code-mixing are usually common in multilingual societies. The importance of these linguistics activities, particularly in communication, calls attention to the need for more research into these occurrences. Communication, as we all know, is inevitable in building strong human relationships. In the study of character definition and identity, through the lens of code-switching and code-mixing, pertinent intriguing questions to ask bother on how language use shapes the representation of characters, their relationships with others, and their self-perception within various contexts. The objectives of this study are to investigate the social and cultural implications of code-switching on character identity and explore the narrator's identification through the same style in selected texts. In order to tackle the set objectives of this study, the scholars followed the qualitative technique of content analysis in the study of the selected literary texts. There was intense observation of some library and internet print materials. The theoretical frame work of the study is drawn mainly from the views of Accommodation theory of Code Switching and code mixing. The study discovers that the act of code switching/code mixing could aid in the identification and revelation of the social, cultural and personal traits of characters in a text. The same language act could also be a means of capturing and defining the

narrator of the text. It is recommended that African writers writing in their lingua franca can adopt the use of this device in projecting their cultural values, identity, ethics and language to a wider readership and accessibility.

Keywords: Code Switching, Code Mixing, Character, Identity, African Literature.

Introduction

When two or more people communicate with each other in speech, we can call the system of communication they employ a code. Language is a code used by interlocutors or people from a particular speech community to express their emotions, needs and thought in general. It has been a norm in bilingual speech communities to have polyglots who either acquire or learn different codes (languages) which fit into what is obtainable or acceptable in that particular geographical area. Linguistically, a code is essentially a language variety or dialect used in communication.

Code switching and code mixing are foundational concepts of bilingualism or multilingualism which involve the use of two or more languages by an individual. Trudgill (2000:105) opines that 'speakers switch to manipulate, influence or define the situation as they wish and to convey nuances of meaning and personal intention'. Verscheren (2003) views code as "any distinguishable variant of a language, involving systematic set of geographical area, a social class, an assignment of functions or a specific context of use". Wardhaugh (2006:1), observes that in most cases, 'code is something we may also want to call language.' Domain (that is; space and geographical location), plays a part in the choice of language adopted by a literary writer in a bilingual community.

Scholars of sociolinguistics, language and literary studies have shown great interest in the discourse of code switching and code mixing. These phenomena occur in multilingual communities and have implications for communication, identity, and social interactions. Understanding how code-switching/mixing influences character identity is crucial for exploring the complex relationship between language use and individual self-perception.

Poplack (1980: 591) identifies code-mixing as language alternation. Here, he says that language alternation across sentence boundaries is known as code-mixing and has been referred to as intra-sentential alternation. Getha (2010) explains that the difference between code switching and code mixing is basically a theoretical difference based on a matter of grammatical items involved, in addition to the situation and topic. For Muriel (2003, 48), code-switching can simply be seen as a change to another code within a single speech event. Code Switching is basically the juxtaposition of two languages in a spoken discourse which involves transferring from one code to another in communication while code mixing uses two or more codes in a single utterance. Many people use the term code switching and code mixing interchangeably. Some linguists make a distinction in which code mixing refers to the hybridization of two languages and code switching refers to the movement from one language to another.

The choice of code switching and code mixing is prevalent in many communities around the world. Bilingualism and multilingualism remains the background cause of such Linguistics styles. However, there may be some personal, social, cultural, political, Psychological and

linguistics reasons behind code switching and code mixing, especially in many African literary works. Africa, as a continent, is rich with histories, culture and tradition which show their particular way of life. Apart from being rich in all the above mentioned, the continent is diverse in different languages (codes); some developed and some others underdeveloped. Many of the African languages are seriously endangered. It is in this huge diversity and colonial experience that certain authors settle to the use certain widely preferred codes in expressing their thought through writing. The codes seen as being more prestigious by most African authors are usually the ones accepted as a Lingua-Franca of an author's country of origin. Some authors decide to use a language generally accepted in their speech communities in communicating their thoughts in writing. Such authors are people like Chinua Achebe who wrote in English and Mariama Ba who wrote in French. They are both of African descents. Both wrote in their different countries generally accepted code (language) for wider reception. In a situation like this, the practice of code switching and code mixing may not likely be easily avoided. After all, the style of code switching and code mixing does not require the speakers to be perfectly fluent in both their local language and the ones accepted as a Lingua-Franca. Rather, a sufficient level of proficiency in the languages can help the speakers to switch between the languages. Romaine (2006) states that many linguists have stressed the point that switching is a communicative option available to a bilingual member of a speech community on much the same basis as switching between styles or dialect is an option for the monolingual speaker. This is to buttress the fact that African writers of African Literature choose to code-switch or code mix for emphasis or for style. Code-switching and Code-mixing in African literature helps to project the native language of the author or the chosen code to the mainstream as both languages are simultaneously used in a single conversation. In reading many African texts, it is discovered that some thoughts are better expressed in an author's native language if otherwise; such thoughts tend to lose their efficacy and flavour (meaning). This is because they can be best said or written in their original form as perceived in the mind of the author. Examples are poems, adages, some names and cultural symbols. Infixing these indigenous codes or that which rightly communicates the thought of the author is where the concepts of code-switching and code-mixing come in.

Objectives of the study

Based on the background introduction above, it is pertinent, at this juncture to note that the main purpose of this study is to examine the place of code switching and code mixing in relation to character identity and definition in two Literary works; *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun.* The study, therefore aims at; investigating the social and cultural implications of code-switching on character identity or definition, considering factors such as community norms, linguistic heritage, and societal expectations. More so is to investigate the narrator's identification through code switching/mixing in the study texts

A study that investigates the relationship between code-switching/mixing in connection to character identity is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of how language practices influence individuals' perceptions of self and others within diverse linguistic environments. Methodologically, this study adopts the qualitative paradigm based on content analysis of selected literary works of Chimamanda Adichie. The exact data used were retrieved from the selected texts through intense reading and observation of other print and oral media materials.

Conceptual Review

Code-Switching

Gumperz (1982:59) defines code-switching as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems". Myers-Scotton (1993a:4) described code switching as "the selection by bilinguals or multilinguals of forms from an embedded language (or languages) in utterances of a matrix language during the same conversation." This means that in bilingual or multilingual communities, speakers can use their languages or codes naturally. They switch between languages or codes to fill a lexical gap, such as when they do not know a specific word in one of the codes, or they might switch for another specific purpose Myers-Scorton (1993: 63) classified code switching into two kinds such as marked and unmarked code switching. Marked code switching, according to him refers to the unexpected use of code-switching while unmarked one refers to the conventional use of code-switching. According to Muriel (2003:48) in Ethnography of Communication, "code-switching can simply be seen as a change in languages within a single speech event" Nordquist (2020) further notes that code switching is usually studied by Sociologists to determine why people code switch and the surrounding context of their conversation, whether professional or casual. Ugwumsinachi (2021: 9) notes that there are conversation and situational code-switching. Situational refers to instances when code-switching is prompted not by something in the conversation but by circumstances surrounding the act of discourse, while conversational code-switching would be attributed to an element in the discourse itself.

In this study, we can say that code switching is a practice of alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a conversation or interaction. It is a linguistic phenomenon that is common with bilingual or multilingual speakers, who effortlessly switch between languages based on various factors such as context, audience, topic, or social setting.

Code-Mixing

Essie (1995:281) posits that code-mixing is ad-hoc and strongest in areas such as the academic disciplines, professions, politics and economy. He adds that Code-mixing is one of the features of the use of language resulting from complex linguistic system and biculturalism. Matras (2009: 101) clearly states that Code Mixing is used by some to refer to language mixing within the phrase or utterance, reserving Code Switching for the alternation of languages in between utterances or phrases. (Muysken, 2000), distinguishes between two kinds of code-switching, as inter-sentential code-switching and intra-sentential code-switching. He explained that intra-sentential code-switching could be termed code mixing or intra-sentential code-mixing. He also adds that Inter-sentential code-switching occurs at clause boundaries, whereas intra-sentential code-switching (or mixing) occurs within the domain of a clause

The study texts as African Literature

The two literary texts the study is focused on, *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, are set in African culture. Hence, a brief definition of African literature becomes pertinent. Obi-Wali (1963), in a work titled, *The dead end of African literature,* argues that African literature must be (written) in African languages or lose its artistic autonomy as African literature. Bami, (2018), on the contrary, says that African literature is any literature that tells the African story, be it from the perspective of the colonizer or the colonized. He goes ahead to say that this literature can be written by Africans themselves or people with origin different from that of Africans.

He says that it is a literature rooted in the oral culture of Africa and tradition as well as the Colonial and postcolonial heritage of the continents. In line with Bami's (2018) argument, Akwaya, (2013:335), defines African literature as a creative writing in which African experiences originating in Africa are internal. If we go by Bami's (2018) and Akwaya's (2013:335) argument, one can claim that, *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun,* are African literature. They are both literary works of art that tell about the African experiences through the course of time which happened at a particular geographical entity. They are written literary works and by an African. African literature is not one conceived in the vacuum neither is it conceived in isolation but almost every idea behind any African literary work of art is borne out of an author's life experiences through the course of time and space.

Identity

The answer to identity may be derived from the way one responds to the question, "Who are you?" This question may be posed explicitly or implicitly, at a personal or a collective level, to others or to oneself. Vignoles et al, (2011) define identity as "unitary" or "multiple", "real" or "constructed", "stable" or "fluid", "personal", or "social", and in many other ways that often seem to contradict each other. Hence, some tradition makes a distinction between personal and social identity in terms of content rather than problematic. It only seems that people's interpretation of a given aspect of identity content as social or personal that makes it so-and this may also be highly variable across contexts. Drew's (2023) opinion is that one's identity may refer to the qualities, traits, and characteristics that define one. It is made up of multiple different features, which could be called the aspects of one's identity.

Character

Character is the most important component of humanity. It gives a kind of recognition to a person or a group. As an organization is known by its work or culture, a government is known by its administration, a film actor is known by his unique art, similarly a person is known by his character. Traditionally, character can be conceptualized as a singular construct such as integrity or honesty. Swain (1990:21) states that characters "are like tapestries, each is woven of many threads. But some threads are more vivid and visible than others, like strands of red through a gray fabric." This comparison emphasizes the importance of diversity and complexity as well as the significance of obvious and more subtle qualities as part of a good character design.

Lickona (1991) defines character as doing the right thing despite outside pressure to the contrary. He adds that Character exists only in so far as unity and continuity of conscious life exists and manifests itself in systematic consistency of conduct. In the words of Vogler (2007: 31);

Some qualities and traits should be in conflict with each other. A character is torn by warring allegiances to love and duty" for example, "is inherently interesting to an audience." At the same time a protagonist who has "a unique combination of contradictory impulses, such as trust and suspicion or hope and despair, seems more realistic and human than one who displays only one character trait,"

In a nutshell, in this study, character could be seen as someone's behavior, way of expressing feelings or thoughts. It could also be seen as one's personality disposition, temperament, personality or the prevailing traits distinguishing a person or group.

Theoretical Framework

Accommodation Theory of code switching/mixing

Accommodation Theory is a sociolinguistic theory proposed by Howard Giles in the 1970s. It explains how individuals adjust their speech and language to fit others' communication styles. Accommodation Theory offers insights into the motivations behind individuals switching between languages in a conversation. It views code-switching/mixing as strategic communicative behaviors that individuals use to achieve specific social goals. Accommodation Theory holds that such acts may be influenced by social context, linguistic proficiency, and communicative goals. The idea here is that speakers adjust their language use to converge or diverge from their interlocutors. In the view of Accommodation Theory, code-switching/mixing can serve various functions, such as; establishing Social Identity, expressing Solidarity (to demonstrate closeness or affiliation with others who share the same linguistic practices) and clarifying meaning (i.e. to convey nuanced meanings or emotions that may not be easily expressed in a single language.) Proponents of Accommodation Theory view both code-switching and code-mixing as adaptive strategies that individuals use to navigate complex social interactions and communicate effectively across linguistic boundaries. However the critics of Accommodation Theory like Vygotsky, (1978), Kohlberg (1981) and Stern (1993) are of the view that this theory may reinforce stereotypes and perpetuate inequalities. By emphasizing the idea of adapting one's speech to fit in with a dominant group, they argue that the theory could inadvertently promote assimilation and discourage individuals from embracing their own linguistic or cultural identities. This can be particularly problematic in multicultural societies where diversity should be celebrated rather than suppressed

Review of Empirical Studies

Studies on code switching/mixing have attracted a lot of attention from different scholars. A few of such studies will be reviewed here. Yusuf (2012) investigated the Social Meanings of Hausa-English Code-Switching and Code Mixing among other bilinguals studying at University of Utara, Malaysia. In his study, he found out that Hausa bilinguals alternate between Hausa and English to perform some functions, to make an objective comment, to quote a speech made by someone without dropping the intended meaning, to share their individuality that fixes them together and to address different audience within the same utterances. Yusuf (2012, 87) argues that bilingual schools wish to avoid message ambiguity by uttering the same statement in another language to clarify the message to the anticipated listeners. The only difference this study has with the current study is that the current study looks at Character Definition and Identity with regards to Code-switching/mixing in *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* respectively while Yusuf's (2012) study investigates the social meanings of Hausa-English Code-switching among other bilinguals studying at the university of Utara Malaysia.

Wabende (2014) working with *Americanah,* focuses on a Stylistic Approach to the novel. His study investigates the features of style that are fore grounded in Chimamanda Adichie's *Americanah.* His study focused on the realization of the semantic level through graphological

and synthetic use. This study is similar to the present study because they both make use of the text *Americanah* in their analysis; they are although different because Wanende focuses on the stylistic approach of the novel while the present study focuses on Character Definition and Identity as it relates to Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in *Americanah" and Half of a Yellow Sun.* Haruna (2016) carried out a research on code-switching in three Hausa novels: Maikaunata (my love), Raynwar Gayya (Revenge) and Matanzamani (Women of Nowadays). He found out that code-switching was used in the text mainly to entertain the target readers while the authors display their level of bilingual creativity through their characters. Here, code-switching functions as a linguistic device used for communicating purposes. The similarity of these studies lie in the fact that Code-switching is being studied using literary texts but then, Haruna (2016), made his study using three novels written in the Hausa language while this present study makes use of two novels written in the English language and by a different writer of a different cultural background.

Stephen (2019) made a research on the Psychoanalytic Reading of *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In this research, the researcher shows how these characters' unconscious and conscious personalities necessitated transformation in their lives. Importantly, these personalities became central to the story and affected transformation process of the diasporic subject. By focusing on the tripartite theories (id, Ego and Superego) of the factors that influence human personality behavior, the study has been able to reveal the reasons behind the migration of the characters, the conditions that led to their transformation, the need to struggle for survival in diaspora and the misplaced identity that left them with a sense of grief inside as in the case of Ifemelu, Obinze and Bartholomew. This study is closely related to the present study as both works studies the *text, Half of a Yellow Sun* but slightly different from the present study in that it studies personality behavior only in *Americanah* while the present study focuses on Character definition and identity in Adichie's *Americanah"* and also, *Half of a Yellow Sun* in relation to code-switching in the two texts.

Summary of Literature Review

In this paper, the literature review begins with a Conceptual Review of some terms such as code switching, code mixing, character, identity and African Literature. There is also a look at some theoretical frame work related to the study. Then empirical studies related to the study are reviewed also. From this review of related literature, it is evident that these researchers have not conducted any research on Character Definition and Identity especially with regards to Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, using Accommodation theory of code switching/mixing. For this reason, the present study attempts to account for character definition and identity holding on the views of Accommodation theory of code switching and code mixing in the selected novels. In so doing, the study will contribute to knowledge beyond what earlier critics have done.

Data presentation and Analysis

Synopsis of the novels

SYNOPSIS OF THE TEXTS

***HALF OF A YELLOW SUN* BY CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE**

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie tells the story of the Biafran/Nigerian civil war from 1967-70. It is a story of how a once peaceful land was all of a sudden disrupted by some Power-hungry military men who led coups and counter-coups. Issues that followed caused the

war between Nigeria and the Biafran Republic. The war ushered in hunger and penury which led to numerous deaths, including children, women, and the elderly. Above all was the massacre of many innocent Igbos. The story features Odenigbo, a lifelong bookworm. He is Ugwu's master. Ugwu is a village boy from Nsukka. The Story also presents Olanna, the spouse of Odenigbo, who witnesses a massacre of Igbos and her relatives in Kano when she visited her niece, Arinze. However, she was saved by a friend, Mohammed, who made it known to her that their Quran is against killing innocent people. *Half of a Yellow Sun* talks about love, hate, war, betrayal, class, grief etc. And all these are captured in characters such as Odenigbo, Olanna, Kainene, Richard, Mr and Mrs Ozobia, Abdulmalik, Major Mmadu Mmadu etc. After the war, Odenigbo and his family moves back to Nsukka with his wife who is frantically looking for her missing sister Kainene who went to "Afia attack" few days before the war ended, to get food for the victims of war at her camp and never returned. Ugwu eventually writes a book titled, *The world was Silent when we Died,* and he dedicated it to master my good man. Some of their friends were lost to the war such as Okeoma the poet. Although the war ended, things were never the same again.

***Americanah** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*

The author tells the story of two love birds, Obinze and Ifemelu. Obinze and Ifemelu met at a party, and they fell in love. They were together until a strike forced them home. Obinze and Aunty Uju encouraged Ifemelu to apply for American school, and they planned to reunite in America. Unfortunately for both of them, things did not work out as planned. In Princeton, New Jersey, Ifemelu struggles with her student visa and lack of full tuition. She is unable to work. She accepts a white tennis coach's offer, but becomes withdrawn and ashamed with what she involved herself in. She stops communication with Obinze, never returning or reading his messages. Ifemelu is eventually introduced to Kimberly, a white nanny, who offers her a steady work and a chance to focus on her studies. Curt, Kimberly's cousin, falls in love with her and helps her get a green card. Ifemelu, finally, could not keep up with any American boyfriend, She thinks of her childhood love, Obinze, who is now a wealthy man in Lagos. Obinze's wealth is due to his cousin's connections and his loyalty to Ifemelu. Obinze, could not be granted American visa. He travelled to London. As an illegal immigrant, he did not last there. Ifemelu returns back to Nigeria and slowly finds her feet. However, she is hesitant to contact Obinze. At last, she texts him, and he wants to meet up with her as soon as possible. Their attraction is still undeniable. Obinze finally divorces his wife and reunites to Ifemelu.

SOME CS/CM ELEMENTS IN *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN*

S/N	LANGUAGE	PAGE NUMBER	WORD/CLAUSE/SENTENCE LEVEL	EQUIVALENT/GLOSS
1	Igbo	8	Akpu	Pounded cassava.
2	Igbo	8	... Umunna	Kinsmen.
3	Igbo	17	Okwuma	Shear butter
4	Igbo	5	Ị kpọta go ya?	Have you brought him?
5	Igbo	6	Kedụ afa gị?	What is your name?
6	Igbo	8	Nee anya	Look here

7	Igbo	14	Nzogbu, nzogbu enyimba enyi.	Trample, trample elephant of the tribe.

SOME CS/CM ELEMENTS IN *AMERICANAH*

S/N	LANGUAGE	PAGE NUMBER	WORD/CLAUSE/SENTENCE LEVEL	EQUIVALENT/GLOSS
1	Igbo	33	Darling, kedu ebe ị nọ?	Darling, where are you
2	Igbo	78	Amam atu inu	I know how to speak proverbs
3	Igbo	78	A kọta ife ka ubi, elee ọba	If something bigger than the farm is dug up, the barn is sold.
4	Igbo	78	Achọ afụ adị akọ na akpa dibia	The medicine's man's bag has all kinds of things
5	Igbo	102	Ndo	Sorry
6	Igbo	104	Ifem kedụ?	Ifem, how are you?
7	Igbo	513	Ife esika	Things are hard

Character Definition and Identity in Adichie's *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Half of a Yellow Sun" and "Americanah are the artistic efforts of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. An interview with the BBC, as published in the Vanguard news (2019) presents Adichie as a writer who grew up a bilingual, speaking Igbo and English Languages very well. Hence, the common use of English and Igbo languages respectively through the style of code switching/mixing to project most of her themes. When asked why she combines indigenous languages in her literature, she observed that it is her way of preserving her cultural heritage and identity in the face of preference of writing in a widely read and more acceptable language of Literature. She observed that the challenges that compel one to writing in English Language are not enough to deny a writer the opportunity to incorporate some indigenous expressions for so many reasons. In the present study, we are set to explore the aspect of incorporating some indigenous expressions, in form of code switching/mixing, in order to target character definition and identity in the study texts.

Characters could be seen as the entities through which a story is told. They usually perform actions and dialogues within a narrative. They may be human, animal, supernatural beings, or even inanimate objects that possess human-like qualities and characteristics. The Britannica Dictionary captures Character definition as the way someone thinks, feels, and behaves, that is, someone's personality. Identity as we have pointed out earlier is the qualities, traits, and characteristics that define one. It encompasses various aspects such as personal identity, social identity, cultural identity, and national identity.

The social and cultural implications of code-switching/mixing in relation to character identity within the study texts

Accommodation theory explains the social as well as cognitive reasons for code-switching in inter-group interactions. It conceptualizes code-switching as a partial accommodation in an attempt to minimize social differences. A typical example is where the author makes use of different linguistic terms from different ethnic groups. In the two texts under study, Adichie tries to project social affinity and tolerance that is typical of a multilingual setting. It could be a device for embracing people from different ethnic groups in order to enable them follow her line of thought in the texts. This mixture of codes/ languages in her work makes her works to be easily understood by speakers of different languages in the in the texts.

For instance, in page 104 of *Americanah,*" aunty Uju asked, Ifem, kedu? This is said in Igbo language which means 'Ifem, how are you?' Code switching into Igbo when the expression could have continued in the main Language of the text could be said to be a deliberate attempt to identify a place setting of the text. The people that speak the language switched into are the Igbo. So, both the name of the Character, 'Ifem', and the question posed amount to code switching and mixing. Such techniques could be seen as identification devices. Furthermore, such devices could serve as a mirror through which the character trait or nuance of the speakers of the code switched/mixes element is inferred. So, the Igbo could be identified as people who are culturally concerned about the welfare of a person close to them, hence, *kedu?*, (how are you). In a similar case, Chimamanda in page 27 of, *Half of a Yellow Sun* used an expression, *kai*, which is common among the Hausa speaking people of Nigeria. Such a code introduced in a dialogue could serves as a technique employed for representing the cultural and linguistic diversity of Nigeria which happens to be the place setting of the novel. It is also worthy to note that the element, *kai*, could be used in a pidgin or colloquial sense in Nigerian expression to display 'amazement, surprise, shock, disbelief or astonishment.' It is used in many instances in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. It could be said that it is employed to identify the emotions of some characters in a specific contexts. The usage of 'kai' does not only help to immerse the reader in the setting of the novel but also provides insight into the identification of characters' perspectives and reactions to situations in different situations or contexts.

Another instance of code switching and mixing in Adichie's Americanah is the proverb "Akota ife ka ubi, e lee oba". (Pg. 78). This proverb literally means "If something bigger than the farm is dug up, the barn is sold." In the context of this proverb, young Ifemelu and Obinze are trying to show the extent of being Igbo in their mastery of deep Igbo proverbs. The proverb has a rich value for the Igbo people of Nigeria. Therefore, it is used here as a form of identity. The statement, "Akota ife ka ubi, e lee oba" is precisely made by Obinze. The statement figuratively translates to "If you desire something, you go for it as soon as the opportunity comes up." This adage is reflected in Obinze and Ifemulu's character traits. As significant characters in the novel, they are both portrayed as determined and ambitious personalities. They could be defined as passionate driven individuals throughout the story. Their characters embody the theme of pursuing one's dreams and desires despite obstacles and challenges. The statement "Akota ife ka ubi, e lee oba" encapsulates Obinze and Ifem's mindsets and approaches towards achieving their goals as the narrative unfolds in "Americanah." Their character development and journey are intricately linked to this proverb of determination and perseverance. Their resilience and unwavering commitment to their aspirations make them compelling characters till the end of the novel.

Furthermore, a look at *Half of a yellow sun* page 424 cites more examples of code switching/mixing in form of a war song. Apart from the fact that such a song would lose the rhythm and the mood it evokes when presented in the English language, some social or cultural implications of code-switching, in relation to character identity, could be captured in the song, (code switched/mixed elements). The song captures the philosophy of the Igbo during the Nigerian/Biafran war and is presented below:

Anyị emelie ndị awusa, - We have conquered the Hausa's
Ndị na-amarọ Chukwu, - Those infidels,
Tibue fa, zobue fa, - Beat them, trample on them,
Nwelu Nwude Gowon. - Then, captured Gowon

The code switched/mixed structure in the above excerpt could be interpreted as a powerful tool for projecting the Igbo people's spirit of resilience, pride, and defiance, especially in the face of adversity, (like that of the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafran War). Culturally the lyrics also reflect the deep-rooted cultural identity of the Igbo people's spirit of unity and solidarity, hence the word; "Anyị… (We…)." This particular element has the ability of emphasizing or projecting the Igbo as people with shared consensus on values and beliefs. The mention of "Ndị na-amarọ Chukwu." highlights the religious faith and trust in God that guided the Igbo people through challenging times. The implication of such code switched/mixed elements is that the Igbo may be understood as those who do not cherish persons outside their faith. The character trait of optimism and resilience is symbolically projected by the expression, "Anyị emelie ndị awusa." Implicit in this statement is the Igbo people's unwavering spirit and determination to overcome challenges. It could be argued that through this song, Adichie captures the essence of Igbo identity and their struggle for self-determination.

Narrator Identification through code switching/mixing in the study texts

A narrator, in a literary text is the person who tells the story to the reader. The narrator is responsible for conveying the events and revealing the characters with the settings in different literary styles. The type of narrator a writer chooses determines the point of view of the text. The most common narrators of a novel are, the first person narrator and the third person narrator. The former is one of the characters in a story while the latter is not in the story, but rather an outside observer who tells the story from a distance. Shklovsky (1921), a Russian Formalist critic, is one of the earliest scholars who talked about another type of narrator; the unreliable narrator. This type of narrator is not trustworthy; either because he may be lying, exaggerating, or withholding information from the reader. Bushnell, (2011), notes that choosing a particular type of narrator, helps authors to control the pacing, tone, and emphasis of their narrative, as well as create a unique relationship between the reader and the character in a novel.

Coming to the identification of a narrator through the code switched/mixed elements in the study texts we can cite some examples.

"Ị kpọta go ya? Master's Igbo felt feathery…" (*Half of the yellow sun;* pg. 6),
"…Nee anya…" (*Half of the yellow sun*; pg. 8),
"…Darling, kedu ebe ị nọ?" … (pg.33: *Americanah)*
"…ife esika kịta, the recession is biting…(pg.513: *Americanah*) etc

One can argue that the types of narrators, in the above excerpts, from the two novels under study are both the third person narrators. However, In relation to the code switching/mixing adopted as a narrative technique, the character trait of the narrator, in each case, is that of the unreliable narrator. The narrators may be conceived as perpetuators of inequality as suggested by the critics of Accommodation theory. They are converging with some interlocutors while at the same time diverging from some other interlocutors. Hence, they are unreliable narrators.

It could be argued further that one of the main reasons for code switching/mixing in each context of the stories could be to maintain affinity or solidarity with a cultural group but withhold information from certain readers who may not likely be familiar with such codes. The implication of this observation is that such narrators could be identified as empathic on one side but unreliable on the other hand. The narrator, in each case, is not in the story but tells the story from a distance. Going by the excerpts cited above, it could be argued also that the attribute of culture maintenance could be associated to the narrators. Code-switching/code mixing in each case could help to preserve the original cultural meanings of some concepts presented in indigenous Igbo language. Such Code-switched/code mixed items, especially proverbs, poems, adages, etc. may possibly lose their original meanings if captured in a foreign language. So, the identity of the author or narrator can be captured through Code-switched/code mixed items in a literary text.

Summary of findings

In line with the theoretical frame work of Accommodation Theory adopted for this study, character, culture and narrator definition or identification are the possible motivations behind the switching between languages as observed in *Americanah* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The look into the texts shows that code-switching/mixing are possible communicative behaviors that can be adopted to achieve specific social, cultural or linguistic goals. Accommodation Theory holds that such acts may be influenced by social context, linguistic proficiency, and communicative goals. As proposed by Accommodation Theory on code switching/mixing, the texts present narrators who can adjust their language use to converge or diverge from their interlocutors. In the view of Accommodation Theory, the excerpts from the texts examined authenticate the claim that code-switching/mixing can serve the functions of, establishing Social Identity, expressing Solidarity (to demonstrate closeness or affiliation with others who share the same linguistic practices) and clarifying meanings that may not be easily expressed in a single language. The claim of the Accommodation theory proponents that both code-switching and code-mixing are strategies that individuals use to navigate complex social interactions and communicate effectively across linguistic boundaries is evidenced in the novels studied. In like manner, the views of the critics that code-switching/mixing can reinforce stereotypes and perpetuate inequalities is possible going by our definition of the narrator as unreliable. Our observation is that in as much as code-switching/mixing entails adapting one's speech to fit in with a dominant group that act could inadvertently promote assimilation and discourage individuals from embracing their own linguistic or cultural identities fully.

In Summary, this research shows that the African author of the novels studied portrays her narrators and characters' communication skills with code switching and code mixing. Each character tends to switch from one language to the other or unavoidably mix codes in a single

conversation. This switch or mix is mostly between indigenous languages of Nigeria and English as the lingua franca. It is found out in this research that the dominant language used is the English language which could be the author's lingua franca. Also, the most used indigenous language is the Igbo language of Nigeria which may imply or connect the characters' or narrator's origin and identity to Igbo. Comparing the texts, *Half of a Yellow Sun and Americanah* in terms of code-switching/mixing occurrences found in them, it is noticed that the Author code-switched more into proverbs or adages in *Americanah and* code mixed single lexical items more in *Half of a Yellow Sun.* However, all of them served in character identification or definition in one way or the other. Lastly, this research work finds out that the code switched elements feature to modify meanings or capture concepts that are likely to lose their true meaning if translated into the author's lingua franca. This is in addition to their observed roles as possible tools for the projection of cultural, setting and character definition and identity.

Conclusion

The data gathered from the selected texts show that the narrator and the characters in a text may code switch and code mix for definition and identification purposes. These acts can aim at establishing solidarity, affinity empathy or reinforce alienation, stereotypes and isolation of readers who are not conversant with the code switched/mixed structures. As the proponents of accommodation theory claim, however one may look at the literary style of code switching /code mixing, a writer's, narrator's or character's passion in projecting their cultural values, ethics and identity could be perceived. Code switching and code mixing are ways of showing adherence to one's culture and language in the face of some challenges that compel one to write in a language that has wider readership or a lingua Franca.

Our suggestion is that while there are so many diverse ethnic languages in Africa that may not be able to cover a larger range of population as the Lingua franca then Code switching and code mixing becomes a choice. The undeveloped African languages could be projected through the works of Africans scholars who write in their colonial masters' language. In addition to that, it is advised that further study should be carried out on the character definition and identity through the use of code switching and code mixing in African literature using other texts to see the role and importance of code switching and code mixing by characters in African literary texts.

References

Achebe, C. (1975). *The African Writer and The English language. In the Morning yet on Creation Day.* London: Heinemann.

Adichie, C. N. (2006). *Half of a Yellow Sun.* United States: Anchor Books.

Adichie, C. N. (2013). *Americanah.* Lagos state Nigeria*:* Kachifo.

Ahmad, B.H. & Jusoff, K. (2009). *Teachers' Code-Switching in Classroom Instructions for Low English Proficient Learners. English Language Teaching*, 2(2), 49-55. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v2n2p49.

Akwanya, A. N. (2013) Literary Criticism: From formal to questions of method. Enugu: University of Nigeria press.

Armstrong M. (2008). *Handbook of strategic human resources management.* London: Kogan Page.

Baker, C. (2007). *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism*. Clevedon; MPG Books.

Bilgin, S.S. *Code Switching in English Language Teaching (ELT) Teaching Practice in Turkey: Student Teacher Practices, Beliefs and Identity*. Educational Research and Reviews, 11(8). 686-702.

Bushnell N. R. (2011). *Minute to Death.* Scottsdale: Poisoned Pen Press.

Brynne V. (2019). *Language, immigration and decolonization: An exploration of the linguistic battleground in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's work.* Maryland: Lexington Books

Clyne, M. (1991). Community Language: The Australian Experience. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, C. (2023). *22 Aspects of Identity*. Available in, Helpful Professor. https://helpfulprofessor.com/aspects-of-identity/ Accessed 1/2/2024.

Enin. T. & Afful.I.F, (2015). *Stylistic Significance of Code-switching and Code mixing in three African Novels: The English Literature Journal.* vol. 2. 426-434

Essien, O. (1995). The English Language and Code-mixing: a Case Study of the Phenomenon in Ibibio. In Bamgbose, Banjo & Thomas (eds). *New Englishes: A West African Perspective.* (269-283) Ibadan*:* Mosuro Publishers..

Geetha, V., & Kamatchi, B. (2010). *Code Mixing and Code Switching in Tamil Proverbs. Language in India*.10 (5), 232-241.

Giles, H., Coupland, J., & Coupland, N. (1991). Accommodation theory: Communication, context, and consequences. In H. Giles, J. Coupland and Coupland, N. *(eds.), Contexts of accommodation: Developments in applied sociolinguistics*, (1-68). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Grosjean, F. (2000). *Bilingual*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Gumperz, J. J. (1992). Discourse Strategies. In Duranti, A, & Goodwin, C. (eds). *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon*. (Pp.133-175). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haruna, A. & Christopher, A. A. (2016). Code-mixing as a Sociolinguistic Device in Hausa Contemporary Literature*. Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research,* 3(3), 154-161.

Kohlberg, L. (1981). Essays on moral development: The psychology of moral development: The nature and validity of moral stages. In D. K. Johnson, S. J. Keenan, & J. W. Robinson (Eds.), *The child's concept of society: Its development and relation to moral judgment.* (pp. 205-236). New York: Plenum Press.

Lickona, T, (1991). *Educating for Character.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.

Lo, K.N.V. (2007). *Cultural Identity and code switching among immigrant Chinese students, parents and teachers* (Doctoral Dissertation, Faculty of Education-Simon Fraser University).

Matras, Y. (2009). *Language Contact.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meyerhoff, M. (2006). *Introducing Sociolinguistics.* New York: Routledge Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203966709.

Muriel, S. (2003). *The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction.* Australia: Blackwell Publishing.

Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual Speech: A Typology of Code-mixing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Myers-Scotten, C. (1993). *Social Motivations for Code-switching: Evidence from Africa.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nordquist, R. (2020). *Learn the Function of Code Switching as a Linguistic Term*. Retrieved from https://www.thoughtco.com/ code-switching-language-1689858.

Poplack, S.(1980). *Sometimes I'll start a sentence in English Y TERMINO ESPAÑOL: Towards a Typology of Code-switching in Linguistics.* Hague: Mouton Publishers.

Romaine, S. (2000). *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shklovsky, V. (1921). *The Suspiciousness of Plot: A Reading of Hamlet,* Petrograd: Tea and Coffee.

Stern, S. (1993). The role of Intent in the accommodation Process: An explanation of Divergent findings in Accommodation Theory of Literature. *Communication monograph.* Vol. 60 (2) 176 -189.

Stephen, C. (2019). *Psychoanalytic reading of 'Americanah' by Chimamanda Adichie.* B.A

Study of the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages: University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Swain D. V. (1990). *Creating Characters: How to build Story People.* Cincinnati, Ohio: Writer's Digest Books.

Trudgill, P. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society* (4th ed.). Harmondworth: Pengiun.

Ugwumsinachi, (2021). *Code-switching and Code Mixing among Aba market women in Nigeria: The case study of Ariaria and Ngwa (new) road market*. B. A Study of the department of Linguistics and other Languages. University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Vanguard News (2019). Available in https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/01/i-am-proud-to-be-a-product-of-igbo-land-chimamanda-adichie/. Assecced 15th February, 2024.

Velasquez, M.C. (2010). *Language and Identity: Bilingual code switching in Spanish-English Interviews* (Doctoral Dissertation).

Verscheren, J. (2003). *Understanding Pragmatics.* New York: Donold Hodder Publisher.

Vignoles V. L, Schwartz, S. J and Luyckx, K. (2011). *Introduction: Toward an Integrative View of Identity. In Handbook of Identity theory and research* (pp. 1-27). Springer New York.

Vogler, C. (2007). *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.

Vogt, H. (1954). Vogt, H. (1954). Language Contacts and the Problem of Understanding. *Word,* 10(2-3), 287-306.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wabende, N. (2014). *A Stylistic Approach to Chimamanda Adichie's Work*: A case study of Americanah. Department of Linguistics and Languages, Nairobi.

Wali, O. (1963). *The Dead End of African Literature.* Transition, vol. 3. No. 10, pp. 9-17.

Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An Introduction to sociolinguistics.* New York: Blackwell Publishers.

Weinreich, U. (1953/ 1968). *Languages in Contact*. Mouton, The Hague.

Yusuf, C. I. (2012). *Hausa –English code-switching in kanywood films.International Journal of Linguistic 4 (2), 87-96.*