

Emerging Trends in The English Language And Literary Studies In Post Covid 19 Nigeria

A Festschrift for Jane Ifechelobi

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## **Acknowledgements**

We are immensely grateful to the Almighty God for granting us the opportune moment to coordinate the writing and publication of this festschrift in honour of Prof. Jane Nkechi Ifechelobi, and also to celebrate her as a seasoned academic of great repute. It is, indeed, a thing of joy for one to work and retire from active service with one's life intact.

Our sincere gratitude goes to the contributors who painstakingly conducted the researches and sent their academic papers which this festschrift consists of. The consultant editor, Prof. Amechi Akwanya, deserves a worthy mention for his unalloyed support and doggedness towards the success of this academic project.

These acknowledgements would be incomplete without acknowledging the huge financial contributions from our benefactors, especially in these austere times. May the good Lord bless you immensely.

## **Foreword**

The tribute of a festschrift is most fitting for Professor Jane Ifechelobi to commemorate her many years of devoted service in university education. And I am highly honoured to contribute a brief preface to the volume. Professor Ifechelobi has not only researched and published on a wide range of issues pertaining to the nature and functions of language and has taught many language courses over many years, but also gave academic leadership, supervised the research of numerous young scholars, mentored many academics, and guided and motivated generations of students. This translates to a fulfilled and fulfilling career as a senior academic.

Collected in this volume are more than forty research papers prepared specifically for this festschrift by former students and colleagues in Nnamdi Azikiwe University where she has been serving these many years as a distinguished Professor, and colleagues from other universities. These research papers reflect the range of intellectual activities that Professor Ifechelobi mostly has been focusing, collaborating, and leading research on, with major and significant results recorded. Even though the general academic discipline area of research is language and literature, her own unique approach is people-centred; and so teaching, research, professional and conference interactions have worked out for her as a human space for networking and collaboration, mutual encouragement and solidarity.

The papers, especially the ones on language, show that the official language of Nigeria, the English language, is not yet, or is extremely slow in being domesticated, despite that it has been in service in the country's educational and official usage for over one hundred years, but continues to present major challenges to the learners in both the spoken and the written media. Yet this language has continued to be productive in literature, sometimes in association with a hybrid language, Pidgin. Indeed English language usage, including in literature, is one of the issues Prof Ifechelobi dedicated her research activities to. Let it be mentioned too that the dominance of English in literary production in Nigeria has left little space for productions in the indigenous languages.

Besides serving as a collective tribute by colleagues from across universities and disciplines who have found points of interface and shared interests with her work, the articles collected in this volume by capturing findings and conclusions from research contribute at least in one important dimension in the overall functions of a university, the aspect of preserving knowledge. The

volume is therefore a major reference material for research and for teaching. It is important that this volume not go the way of books in Nigeria, where they frequently do not live beyond their first impression. This volume has to help in bringing about a reset to normal practice in the intellectual tradition. Let it be preserved, and let it be in continual and profitable use for many years to come.

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*28 October 2022*

## **Preface**

This book, *Emerging Trends in the English language and literature: A Festschrift in Honour of Jane Ifechelobi*, is a collection of academic papers in celebration of Prof. Ifechelobi's academic prowess and her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday as she bows out of active service. This collection of academic papers comprises 11 sections with the last being two papers written by Jane Ifechelobi whilst still in active service.

Section A comprises three papers. In the first chapter, Uche Oboko and Frank Onuh discuss "Beautifying the Ugly: Euphemism as a Politeness Strategy in Language Use". The authors analyse how language users seem to employ euphemisms to mitigate the effects of face threats caused by the use of words perceived as offensive or impolite. Findings reveal that euphemisms serve mainly communicative and rhetorical purposes and facilitate social interaction by masking unpleasantness in language use and the degree of use depends on the context and the perceived social relationship between the interlocutors. Ezinne Chima explicates Grice's Cooperative Maxims and Implicatures in Advertisement Taglines of Selected Products in the Nigerian Malls in the second chapter. The author examines and analyses Grice's Cooperative principle in advertisement taglines of selected products in the Nigerian malls. Findings reveal that three maxims (Quantity, Quality and Relation) are flouted at varying intervals and implicatures are generated. The study reveals that the advertisers flouted these maxims deliberately to change the attitude of the potential customers towards the advertised products. Michael C Uyanne, Lucky Onebunne & Oziomachukwu Ajemba critically analyse Subtextuality of Narrative in the Faction of Uche Nnyagu's *Dear Mother* in the third chapter. The paper rationalizes the existential naivety of the infantile innocence, which was influenced by the external social construct of being like others. The author is unaware of himself, therefore, he mirrors himself through the lens of his immediate tenor. The narrative structure of the *Dear Mother* reenacts the events of the affective involvement of the participants and processes, through the lexical expressions which invoke

nostalgic semiotics of the author's experience. The conceptualised use of language in the text represents experience in language which was characterized by lexical consciousness.

Section B, studies in Discourse, consists of three papers. Chiagozie Eburuaja, in the fourth chapter, analyses social media texts on the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine using the Relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson as the theoretical framework for the study. Findings revealed that the writers of the various Facebook posts used different cohesive devices to tie their texts together and equally achieve coherence. And these cohesive devices helped them communicate relevant and sufficient information to their readers. The readers, on the other hand, were convinced that the writers helped them keep abreast of the political happenings in Ukraine by making posts that are relevant. This is evidenced in the different positive reactions garnered by the posts on Facebook. In the fifth chapter, Chinwe Victoria Udoh & Vivian Ejiaso do A Gricean Analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's Channels TV Interview. The authors note that speakers or writers are to adhere to the maxims of cooperative principle, but this is not always the case as there are instances of non-observance of these maxims which results in conversational implicature. They equally note that political discourses are enveloped with non-observance of maxims to achieve different socio-political goals of having them in political discourses. The study adopted the theory of cooperative principle and discovered that violations, flouting and opting out of maxims were used in order to structure the political discourse to achieve a desired goal. The sixth chapter by Juliana Njoku is titled "Language as a Change Agent and a Tool for Tackling Insecurity in Nigeria". The paper reiterates that proper use of language will usher in the needed change: the restoration of peace and security in Nigeria.

Chapter seven by Basil Ovu and Queen Anyanwu investigates trends in Sentence Meaning. The paper identifies three major types of meaning a sentence can generate in English, viz: conceptual meaning, associative meaning and thematic meaning. The paper argues that conceptual meaning is universal, stable and not affected by contextual colouring or emotional overtones while associative meaning is open-ended, unstable and heavily influenced by the diverse historical epochs within the language. The paper goes further to argue that thematic meaning depends on how information is organised within a language. Conclusion shows that sentence meanings depend on how lexical items in a sentence are organised and the relative interpretations that speakers of the language assign to them, any disparity between speakers or a writer's intention and what the listener or reader interprets the expression to be, will be a breakdown in communication. Comfort Obodo discusses "Conversion/Functional Shift: An Indispensable Tool for Creativity in English language and Literature" in the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter. The study considers the contributions of functional shift in English as a productive process which ensures maximal creativity on the part of English language users and the brain behind the thriving of the English language. Chapter 9 by Amarachi Okenmuo is titled "Variant Pronunciation Patterns of Selected English Content Words in Connected Speech by Anambra State English Language Teachers". The study focuses on the pronunciation patterns of selected English words, mostly content words, realized by the Anambra State English language teachers

(ASELT). The results of the analysis show that ASELT have varied pronunciation patterns for English words. For example, in 'interpret' four varieties in stress placement: in.tæ'pri:t, in'tɜ:pri:t, 'in.tæ'pri:t, in'tæ'pri:t were realized. Joseph Ojonugwa does a Sociophonetic Investigation of Speech Perception among Students of Rivers State University, Unkpolu, Port Harcourt in chapter 10. This study probes listeners' use of socio-phonetic details in speech perception. The study concludes that no natural human utterance offers linguistic information without simultaneously indexing some social factors.

Purity Ada Uchechukwu investigates "Linguistic cohabitation of Spanish and English in the United States" in chapter 11. The study notes that speech communities characterized by language contact have been a major goal of modern sociolinguistics. The paper considers the linguistic outcomes of linguistic cohabitation from the perspective of borrowing and substratum interference. The insights gained reveal that the co habitation of Spanish and English in the US is based on socio-historical and demographic factors whose relevance demystifies the myth of the United States as the melting pot for other languages other than English, and aligns its linguistic panorama with the language situation in many other parts of the world in the era of continuous immigration and globalization. Chapter 12 by Lauretta Chinyeaka is titled "Speech Style-Shifts in Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*". The focus of this paper is on the use of speech style shifts by interactants in dialogues. Interlocutors engaged in verbal discourse employ different speech styles on different occasions. This is largely informed by the fact that no one speaks in exactly the same way on all occasions. Many factors inform these shifts such as the speaker, the addressee, the setting, the topic of discourse and the purpose of discourse. Using Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, the study identifies the speech style shifts in the dialogues of the characters and the motivations for the shifts. Findings reveal that the different speech style shifts identified were influenced mainly by the situation and social distance. In chapter 13, Chigozie Nwosu takes a thorough look at language choice and the eroding of cultural identity among Nigerian Facebook users. The author notes that social media have helped in boosting the economy and in promoting brand visibility and awareness which in turn promotes business growth. However, this has come with a price to our cultural identity. The study anchors on the theory of linguistic relativity which postulates that the way in which we think about the world is directly influenced by the language we use to talk about it. Since English is a liberal language and also the medium of expression used in the Facebook pages selected for this study, the outcome of the study shows that many Nigerian users of Facebook do not reflect their cultural identity on Facebook. "Emerging Trends in Nigerian Pidgin: A Nigerian Hip-Hop Perspective in Post Covid-19 Nigeria" by Adaorah Nweke is the fourth chapter. This work examines the trending lexical items in the Nigerian Pidgin Language as seen in the Nigerian Hip-hop music today especially since the Covid-19 era. The study concludes that Nigerian Pidgin has been in the business of making contacts with other languages, either for trade or communication needs, and this has helped Nigerian Pidgin grow lexically and in other morphological duplications. Sociolinguistic Significance of Names in Igbo Culture: The Umuchu Example by Afam Ezechukwu is the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter in the book. Here, the study notes that names - to Umuchu people

- are an embodiment of their mentality and life style which symbolically reveals their culture and sentiments, aspirations, beliefs, hopes, fortunes and values. This study examines Umuchu names from ancient to present to ascertain the extent the names have changed, because of Western or European influence. This study also examines the naming conventions, values of life and love of life in comparison with the present trend of 'Modern' names. It reveals that names are not ordinary tags or labels in Umuchu but are tied to the bearer for life. Grace Ikechukwu & Chinwe Ezech discuss shades of Intimidation in Language Use using Nigerian Films as data for the study in chapter 16. The paper explicates some shades of language intimidation using a Nollywood film titled "The Village Bride" and highlights shades of classification, discrimination, inequality and above all intimidation in the movie. The study recommends that interlocutors should try to accommodate other language users irrespective of their class.

Adaoma Igwedibia & Michael Ikenna Olughu examine the representation of women's identities and embedded subjectivity of self in Lesley Nneka Arimah's *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky* in chapter 17. Textual analysis of the selected stories reveals a patriarchal social order and the power tussle among women as challenges facing the true emancipation of women. The paper concludes that Arimah, as a new feminist voice in the corpus of African literature, has, through this debut collection, added fresh insights to the identities of African women with vistas of underlying issues for critical engagements among feminist critics and writers. In chapter 18, Ebele Okpala investigates the sense in the Snail Sense Feminism using Ifeoma Okoye's "A Strange Disease" and "From Wife to Concubine". The study lends support to Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's Snail Sense feminism. The study examines Ifeoma Okoye's "The Strange Disease" and "From Wife to Concubine" to capture the challenges and adversities of the female characters, to buttress the need for snail sense in patriarchal societies. Findings reveal that based on traditional practices and beliefs, female characters, especially widows, are subjected to marginalization and intimidation. The main characters, in line with Snail Sense feminism, advocate diplomacy and successfully overcome their impediments. The paper concludes that snail sense should be encouraged amongst women as a survival strategy in male dominated societies. Chapter 19 is titled Traditional Laws and Feminist Trajectory in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. The author, Orji Eze, notes that a panoply of factors and forces (laws) have been noted, if not understood by most feminists in their multifarious feminism discourses to be responsible for gender inequalities, oppression and subjugation between opposite sexes around the globe. It follows that, in the absence of a holistic, stable, well-grounded, and coordinated strategic paradigm of thought and action to approach and settle womanbeings' emancipatory agenda in the post covid-19 era, the success of women's collective or individual determination to initiate radical social change and a total transformation of the conditions of their lives from traditional/cultural practices remain low in the face of restrictive and inhibitive laws even in our modern era. The study advances the argument against the antagonistic reception of post covid-19 feminist trajectory against obnoxious norms in an African milieu occasioned by colonialism.

Chinyelu Nwaenyi investigates insult terms against women in the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book. The objective of the study is to investigate the characteristics of insult terms used by the characters, what the components of these insult terms are and their effects on the female characters. The study concludes that the users of language should be made conscious and aware of the dangers of insult terms which can lead to negative results and recommends the need to change these representational practices in order to bring about a change in the thinking of the people. Religion, Trauma and the Index Of 'Madness' in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies By The Nile* by Ijeoma Anyachebelu forms the 21st chapter of the book. This chapter explores the trauma and post-colonial theories, and interrogates the nexus between religion as a debilitating societal construct and the attendant psychological injury that often results in creating mental incontinence for the woman. The paper concludes that religion should be more liberal and 'wear a human face' in advancing its practices in order not to push one beyond the edges. In chapter 22, Adaobi Ihueze investigates trauma behind closed doors in *While Men Slept*. The author observes that social ideals encourage activities that demean and traumatize women. It then concludes that women should not be intimidated, but rather stay strong, and not droop under the weight of the painful experience. The 23rd chapter is titled "Catholicon of Marriages: *What if ...?*" by Linda Jummai Mustafa. This study examines the catholicon of marriages for healthy marriages and homes. It goes further to examine and analyze the reasons for unhealthy marriages and calls for solutions. The findings reveal that men contribute more to the failure of their marriages than women.

Ifeoma Akabuike investigates ideational representation of domestic violence in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* in chapter 24. The paper aims to find out how the writer's linguistic choices serve as a means through which social meanings and experiences are expressed and understood using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory. This study offers explanations for the lexico-grammatical choices the authors made and how they are analyzed to portray the intended meaning of the authors. The study reveals that both authors used material and mental processes to depict the participants' physical and mental ordeal (domestic violence) in the hands of a man she calls father/husband. "Of Patriarchy, Gender, Paradox and Inference: A Feminist Import In Amma Darko's *Faceless*" by Luke Okolo is the 25th chapter of the book. The novelist, through the use of characterisation and other literary devices, asserts that in spite of dehumanisation women and girls have continued to receive from the male gender, the future of Africa lies in harmonious and collaborative relationship of both sexes, both in domestic affair and in official engagements. The resolution of the novel suggests that the two genders complementarity is essential for maximum productivity and health of the family and the larger society.

In the 26th chapter, Amechi Akwanya delves into 'Steamed into Well-Done Mutton': The Solar Plague and Discursive Formation in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. The study investigates depths of discourse following the track, or as Jacques Derrida would say, the traces left by the sign *end* on signifiers like *witness* and the wilting, wild *Sun of April*, eventually



permeating the entire narrative, and unveils the mythology of the Last Days, with its plagues, as the formation sustaining the whole, and accounting for the work's intellectual structure. Onyebuchi Ile and Buchi Chinedu investigate "Soji Cole's *Embers* and its Implications for Critical Thinking and Development". The study concludes that the human mind or brain uses the simulation effect as in computers to orient itself to social realities as reflected in literary texts and - as a result - literary texts are very effective in cultivating critical thinking skills in. Chapter 28 by Abigail Oaikhena is titled "Discussing Insurgency in Nigeria: A Study of Tracia Adaobi Nwabani's *Buried Beneath the Baobab Tree*". The paper examines Tracia Adaobi Nwabani's *Buried beneath the Baobab Tree*, which could be seen as an allegory of the Chibok girls' story. In chapter 29, Udo Okoronkwo-Chukwu explicates the role of food and the politics of belonging in Alain Mabanckou's *Blue White Red*. The aim of the paper is to address the ways in which Mabanckou portrays food by exploring its intense symbolism in the experiences of undocumented migrants. The study investigates food, food places and rituals as forms of resistance and control. It reveals that food is an empowering agency for the individual, community, as well as government. This research shows how food heightens collective memory, displacement, and socialization and enhances identity-formation. Chapter 30 by Ikechukwu and Chisom Asika is titled "Through the Prism of History: Ecological Re-reading of Wale Okediran's *After the Flood*". This paper examines ecological issues in Okediran's *After the Flood*. It underscores the environmental issues raised in the novel, most importantly, the writer's stance that these crises are largely manmade and avoidable. With ecocriticism as a theoretical anchor, the study concludes on the confluence of history and literature in addressing environmental crisis as gleaned from Okediran's *After the Flood*, vis-à-vis the practicable ways environmental issues can be addressed towards a healthy, humane, and more habitable society.

Ngozi Ulogu and Chika Okpalike analyse "The Dialectics Of Elitist Leadership in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born*" in chapter 31. The paper investigates the chameleonic pattern in personality of the leaders and consequent failure of leadership, and sues for effectual leadership for the common good and for humanity. Chapter 32 by Davidson Iwunze delves into "Ethical Apprehensions and the Pedagogic Millstone in Camillus Uka's *When the Wind Blows*". The paper contends that Uka's *When the Wind Blows* provokes not only some ethical apprehensions that demand exigent response, but also underscores the dire sensationalism of examination malpractice and its attendant consequences on the lives of individuals and society as well. In chapter 33, Sylvanus Onyeachulam investigates Politics and Leadership Challenges in Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel*. The study aims at exploring the sufferings, pains, disappointments, deprivations, corruption, tyranny and oppression that characterize the society in the novel as a result of leadership patterns, which are the outcomes of politics of calumny by the ruling class. The study notes that the leadership class is somehow estranged from the people, because of the despotic nature of military leadership in most African countries. Chinua Ezenwa-Ohaeto, in chapter 34, critically analyses representations of Pasts and Memories in selected poems of Taiye Ojo. The paper investigates the representations and interrelations of pasts and memories in selected poems

in Taiye Ojo's *all of us are birds & some of us have broken wings* and how the pasts and memories add to (re)defining the poet's understanding of his environment and experiences. "Contemporary Issues on Colonial Border Cultures" by Odochi Akujobi & Chidimma Ike is found in chapter 35. The chapter notes that one of the consequences of colonialism is the re-mapping and re-delineation of geographical boundaries with consequent split and relocation of cultures and languages, in addition to the introduction of cultural boundaries among people who, hitherto, never shared common cultures. The paper systematically reviews the positions of various scholars and draws relevant inferences. "The Other Side of a Polluted Coin: White Expatriates in Watson's *Tiny Sunbirds, Far Away*" by Ikechukwu Asika is the 36th chapter of the book. The study investigates the portrayal of white expatriates in Christie Waston's *Tiny Sunbirds, Far Away*. The study argues that Waston, in her novel, reconstructs the images of the white expatriates obviously in her bid to challenge stereotypes. Chapter 37 is a poem entitled "Still Heart" by Alex Asigbo.

In chapter 38, Chinweude Ugochukwu delves into a semantic approach of the Place of Igbo Oral Literature in Rekindling Igbo Values. Findings reveal that Igbo oral literature can be very effective in rekindling the Igbo values in Igbo children. The paper advocates the inclusion of Igbo oral literature in the school curriculum from nursery to post-primary level. Thecla Udemmadu and Juliana Akpulu investigate "Exchange Structure and Topic Development in Selected Igbo Phone-in Media Programmes". The study focuses on the exchange structure and topic development in selected Igbo phone-in programme as little or no research has been done on the topic using Igbo phone-in programmes for illustrations. The paper investigates how Igbo phone-in programmes are arranged, and highlights how topics are developed in Igbo phone-in programme using Sinclair-Coulthard (1975) 'Birmingham model'.

Omonigho Akporokah, in chapter 40, takes us into the world of tech as she investigates "Tech-Proficiency and Utilization of Web-Based Teaching System among English and Linguistics Lecturers of State Universities in South-South Region of Nigeria". Findings reveal that the level of utilization of web base teaching tools among the lecturers is poor. The study recommends that government and educational stakeholders should design and implement Web base teaching tools training, workshop and conference for lecturers in order to assist lecturers improve their technological skills and gain better knowledge and awareness of the various web base teaching tools. In chapter 41, Winifred Ngozi Nwachukwu, Ngozi Umelo & Agatha Ikemelu analyse teachers' level of awareness in using wordle to teach in Senior Secondary Schools in Owerri. Findings show that teachers' level of awareness on the use of Wordle in teaching of English studies is low. The study recommends that seminars and workshops should be organised for English language teachers on the use of Wordle in the secondary schools. "How "Necessary Preoccupations" Can Enhance Curriculum Development in African Universities" by Osita Nnaji for is the 42nd chapter of the book. The study observes that almost all African universities offer courses in British philosophy, American philosophy and European philosophy with little or no attention given to courses in African philosophy. The paper claims that African

philosophers and scholars should begin to preoccupy themselves with necessary things that affect the continent with little regards to the sentiments of the western writers. The welfare and needs of the Africans should be given priority in the formulation of curriculum in African universities.

Chapters 43 & 44 are academic papers got from the archives of Jane Ifechelobi.

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<b>SECTION L: INSIGHTS INTO THE FRENCH LANGUAGE</b>	
45. La Traduction : Un Vehicule Indispensable Au Developpement Humain	
<i>Theodora Onuko</i>	



