

## CULTURE MIXING IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART, CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S PURPLE HIBISCUS AND SEFI ATTA'S EVERYTHING GOOD WILL COME

**Anicet Odilon Matongo Nkouka**

*Département des Langues Vivantes Etrangères, Faculté des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines,  
Université Marien Ngouabi, Brazzaville, Congo.*

### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims at showing the effects of culture mixing in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus and Sefi Atta's Everything Good Will Come. By way of the postcolonialism theory and close reading of these novels, the result is that, culture mixing has both positive and negative effects. In Things Fall Apart, Umuofian people under colonial rule have different ways of reacting to the societal change and control; some embrace it, others do not. People mimic what they believe a faithful Catholic is like. There is a case of a woman whose ambivalent efforts led her to become a man. Hybrid characters are more or less affected by the colonizer's ways and rules. In Purple Hibiscus code-mixing is very common in the speeches of semiliterate characters. They often code-mix to reflect the realities of the use of English in Nigeria, and preserve the culture and tradition of the Igbos.*

**Keywords:** *Ambivalence, Culture Mixing, Denunciation, Hybridity, Mimicry, Postcolonialism.*

### 1. Introduction

The present work is devoted to the examination of culture mixing in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus and Sefi Atta's Everything Good Will Come. "By culture we mean all those historically created designs for living, explicit and implicit, rational, irrational, and non-rational, which exist at any given time as potential guides for the behavior of men" (Kluckhohn & Kelly, 1945); "learned and shared human patterns or models for living; day-to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is mankind's primary adaptive mechanism (Damen, 1987); "set of shared and enduring meaning, values, and beliefs that characterize national, ethnic, or other groups and orient their behavior" (Mulholland, 1991). "Culture is the shared knowledge and schemes created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to the social realities around them" (Lederach, 1995); "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category from another" (Hofstede, 2011); "culture is values, attitudes and meanings that are learnt and shared by members of the community and that influence their way of life"

(French, 2015). The useful definition is Kluckhohn's definition: "culture is to society what memory is to individuals. It includes what has worked in the experience of a society, so that it was worth transmitting to future generations. Culture mixing refers to the coexistence of representative symbols of different cultures in the same space at the same time. It reflects the new paradigm of polyculturalism in the culture and psychology research. This study offers nuanced understandings to features of the culture mixing stimuli, personal and situational factors that affect responses to culture mixing, and the sociocultural and psychological consequences of culture mixing.

This mixing of culture is something this work focusses on when we analyze the three novels. The effects of colonization on the characters can be discussed and analyzed with the help of other concepts. This study looks into and uses the concepts of ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity. Ambivalence is defined as a person who experiences opposing emotions and attitudes. We use this concept to analyze the characters' mixed feelings and the authors' way of describing them. Mimicry is the second concept that we focus on. Mimicry is when someone tries to copy someone else in some

way and the result can become almost ridiculous: "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha, 1984: p. 122). Here we focus upon the characters' difficulties in finding a place in society during or after the societal change; that is, whether they try to become like the colonizers or how they feel when someone else mimics the colonizers. Finally, the concept of hybridity is a blending of cultures or traditions. Peter Barry (2002) states that: "hybridity /.../ that is the situation whereby individuals and groups belong simultaneously to more than one culture, for instance, that of the colonizer, through a colonial school system, and that through local and oral traditions". The concept is important since it describes the unstable environment that the colonized is forced to either adapt to or work really hard to reject. The colonial power is strong and the possibility to become a member in a hybrid community is more or less inevitable. Here the focus is on how the characters react when the two cultures mix and whether or not they adapt to this hybrid environment. With the use of the three concepts it is possible to find out how each of the characters is affected by the colonial domination. We analyze the three novels in relation to ambivalence and then summarize the analysis, and repeat this pattern for mimicry and hybridity. The object of this research work is culture mixing. The objective is to show the positive and the negative effects of the mixing of peoples and cultures. The problematics is: How do ambivalence, mimicry, hybridity, and code mixing show the negative and positive effects of culture mixing? We phrase our hypotheses as follows:

*In Things Fall Apart, each member of Umuofian village still under colonial rule could have different ways of reacting to the societal change and control; some might embrace it, others might not. Enoch could mimic what he believes a faithful Catholic should be like, and Okonkwo might resent men who are weak. In Nwoye's case it could be his ambivalent efforts to become a man. Hybridity could be discussed through different characters because they are all more or less affected by the colonizer's ways and rules. In Purple Hibiscus code-*

*mixing is very common in the speeches of semiliterate characters. The characters often code-mix as Adichie might try to reflect the realities of the use of English in Nigeria, and preserve the culture and tradition of the Igbos.*

By way of a postcolonialism theory and close reading, this work analyzes Things Fall Apart, Purple Hibiscus and Everything Good Will Come. We, therefore, and accordingly proceed with a comparative study of the extracts from the above mentioned concepts from the novels under scrutiny.

The plan of this study includes three parts dealing respectively with post-colonialism defined, postcolonial literature, and the engagement of the Nigerian postcolonial novelists, hybridity and culture, analysis and interpretation.

#### **Post-colonialism defined and the Engagement of the Nigerian Novelists**

Broadly, post (-) colonialism is considered as a period of time after colonialism which is pointed out as the policy of acquiring colonies and keeping them dependent. On a worthier side, it was presented as the extension of civilisation which justifies a racial and cultural superiority. Boehmer (as qtd. in McLeod 2000: p. 8) has defined colonialism as the settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and attempts to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands.

In the present study, the term "postcolonialism" is used as a single word to refer to disparate forms of representations, reading practices and values instead of the hyphenated term „post-colonialism“. John McLeod expresses the view that the single word "postcolonialism" is more appropriate than the hyphenated term „post-colonialism" since the hyphenated term denotes only a particular historical period or epoch, such as „after colonialism“, „after independence" or „after the end of the Empire." Leela Gandhi (1998: p. 3) also shares the same view on the grounds that postcolonial condition is inaugurated with the onset rather than the end of colonial occupations. She expresses her preference for the unbroken term "postcolonialism" as it is

more sensitive to the long history of colonial consequences.

Colonial studies consist of examining the politics of knowledge (creation, control and distribution) by examining the functional relations of social and political power that sustain colonialism and neo-colonialism, the how and the why of an imperial regime's representations (social, political and cultural) of the imperial colonisers and the colonised people. As for the postcolonial literature, it is typically characterised by its opposition to colonisation. Almost the whole world was, by the middle of the twentieth century, under the control of European countries. In a broad sense, post-colonial literature is the writings which have been "affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcrot et al, 2002).

In the beginning of the independent era writers produced literature and art which has become the object of post-colonial studies. This field had had a profound echo in the 1970s and has been developing ever since. By assumption, as assigned by postcolonial theories, most of the literary works in post-colonial era were produced to describe the interactions between European nations and the peoples they colonised through description, narration, and dramatisation. It was laid out prominently on the questions of history, identity, ethnicity, gender and language.

It, mainly, focuses on race relations and the effects of racism. The tendency of post-colonial literary works often varies from racism or from the history of genocide, including slavery, apartheid, and the mass extinction of peoples.

Writers do not write in a vacuum (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1981 and Niyi Osundare, 2007) hence, and arguably, every writer is a product of his own society. Therefore, since this is the reality, it behooves on the writer to utilize the raw materials provided by his environment in the crafting of his art. It is instructive to add that the writer in doing his job of writing cannot afford, like the proverbial ostrich, to bury his head in the sand of indifference while everything around his being is in a state of anomie, and far from the expectations of the

people and the society at large. It is against this background that for the people living in postcolonial Africa, it can be safely concluded that, despite the gaining of independence from colonial rule, the colonizers have since given way to the fog of postcolonial disillusionment.

The postcolonial African writer's place in reflecting the realities of his society is already tailor-made for him by a postcolonial Africa that is consciously sliding from the path of a destiny to become great, after freeing herself from the yoke of colonialism. If the assertion that "most African writers write out of an experience and out of commitment to an African destiny" (Achebe, 1976: p. 9) is true, then, Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* is a rich addition to an existing collection of works of African writers that interrogate the disillusionment that has become the order of the day in post-independence Africa. Postcolonial Africa especially Nigeria that the novel presents its recent history in graphic details is a basket case of failure and disappointment. The novel, *Waiting for an Angel*, can comfortably rest on Ayo Kehinde (2005: p. 87) states that "it is an indubitable fact that the postcolonial African novel to a very great extent reflects the realities of the continent". These realities include but are not limited to bad governance, crumbled or non-existent infrastructure, human rights abuse, war, famine, hunger, diseases and poverty.

The important roles that the novel plays in signposting the prevailing postcolonial realities of the African continent cannot be overemphasized. More so that Michel Zeraffa has placed a huge price on the sociological roles the novel must play in helping the writer in his duty as a social crusader. As he puts it:

*The novel is directly concerned with the nature of our situation in history, and with the direction in which that situation is about to move. Most great novelists are theorists of their art because there poses the most insoluble of all problems of interpretation: what meaning, and therefore what form, should we give to unceasing flow of human life? The novel should at once and the same time describe what is happening to us, extract its*

*meaning, and signpost the direction in which we are going. (Zeraffa, 1976: p. 10).*

The above passage means, if it is agreed that the writer reflects society, then he must not only be ready to take on the forces that create what he writes about, importantly, he must also attempt to use his art to correct the ills that bedevil the society. When and if this is done, the writer emerges as a „righter“. The writer has a final say on how he intends to go about the business of “righting” perceived societal ills because:

*The writer not only chooses his subject, he also chooses his vision and perhaps his audience, the human target of that vision. This choice is almost entirely deliberate and social, a product of social complexes and mutations, not a fortuitous outgrowth of some irrational-inspirationalist anarchy (Osundare, 2007: p. 6).*

It seems clear that one of the ideas central to postcolonial studies is the idea of “the empire writes back”, which embodies African writers’ attempt at retelling the African story in a way that is dissimilar to European writings on the same subject. Postcolonialism, especially as it concerns Africa, is a springboard for what Peter Barry (1995: p. 192) calls “cultural resistance” which ultimately is “the first step for colonized people in finding a voice and an identity to reclaim their own past”. But the phase of postcolonial criticism that concerns this study is that which showcases postcolonial African writers as critics of the prevailing new order in the continent; a new order that borders on postcolonial disillusionment which manifestly hangs over Africa and its people. This phase of postcolonial studies is responsible for African writers suddenly making “a turn towards explorations of themselves and their society” (Barry, 1995: p. 196) and this phase is critically important in understanding the writings of new writers from Africa, as it marks a clear departure from the much popular past time of rewriting and retelling the past. Although this critical „new“ phase in African literature is to a large extent being grown, germinating and concretizing abroad, this is realistically so because the postcolonial African writer tends to emigrate to

the centre (Pius Adesanmi, 2007) as a result of the push and pull factor.

Consequently, this group of emerging African writers is not afraid to make socio-economic, political and futuristic statements. This group, of which Habila is a member, seems to find a worthy role model in a writer like Chinua Achebe, some of whose works especially *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* have taken a break from retelling African past to commenting on the present and projecting the future. Like Achebe’s characters, Habila’s characters in *Waiting for an Angel* have a clear understanding of the historical phase they occupy. Writing on characterization in African literature, Ngugi avers that:

*He (Achebe) has given back to the African character the will to act and change the scheme of things...His characters have that vital relationship with their social and economic landscape. We can see and feel how his characters, their whole view, their aspirations, have been shaped by a particular environment, in a particular historical phase. They live in history yet are not mere cogs in a machine because they... are makers of that history (Ngugi, 1971: p. 7).*

No doubt, Habila’s characters in the novel fit into Ngugi’s conceptualisation of Achebe’s mode of characterization in his novels. Mindful of their sacred roles, the characters rise up to be counted as the makers of history in a society facing multiple layers of problem.

### **Hybridity and Culture**

To begin with, the following words quoted in (Francis, p. 53) are meaningful: “Apparently dominated culture and the ‘interpellated’ subjects within it ‘are being’ swallowed up by the hegemony of empire.”

As mentioned previously, during the colonial era, the colonizer maintained its hegemony over its colonized territories following certain oppressive strategies. Its desire was to reconstruct anew, different identity for its colonized subjects, while the indigenous cultures of the colonized nations faced a sever denial and fogginess.

Accordingly, colonized people developed a sense of inferiority. Besides, they were displaced from their motherlands. The latter is when educated elites are used to guarantee total control over the colonies even after the formal independence. Thus, colonial mentality seeks to forge and erase the features of the national identity such as language, identity, home, place, and substitute them with new hybrid ones. Rutherford (1990: p. 211) informs that "all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity", consequently, literature is a hybrid product:

*Postcolonial literature/s, therefore, as a produce and component of postcolonial culture is soaked up by and engendered within the ambience of hybridity Postcolonial text, therefore, is —a hybrid, a dynamic mixture of literary and cultural forms, genres, styles, languages, motifs, tropes and so forth (Prayer, 2014: p. 126).*

Bhabha (1984: p. 167) mentions the cultural contact zone or what he refers to as "borderline affects and identifications". These contact zones are areas or spaces where the overlapping actions, which are results of the conflicting species, shove hard the other as a matter of accommodation, assimilation and by force of resistance. That is to say, these contact zones function as motivators and facilitators that improve the transaction and translation between the opposing cultures. Moreover, the contact zones are where fragmented cultures meet, confront, clatter and finally integrate to create new hybrid identity. For Bhabha (1984: p. 211), exotic multiculturalism is the only thing that dissident societies being of hybrid identities may feel.

Besides, since cultures are neither unitary, nor dualistic as in the relation self / other, cultural dimensions, like space and time become homogeneous and standardized or self-contained. Thus, they are never understood. Consequently, the birth of third space, which does not belong to none of the two sides; self / other, superior/ inferior, first / third world, master / slave. Then, for Bhabha (1984: p. 36), meanings are basically produced in that, "in-between space," regardless to all cultural boundaries, antagonisms and any

referential systems. Accordingly, Bhabha (1984: p. 211) believes that entirely all different forms of culture are in continuous process of hybridity. At this state, although the colonial era is over and the colonizers withdraw, they are in fact still present in their colonies. Not only has that but, some of their former colonized subjects definitely become just like them.

### **Mimicry and Ambivalence**

The analysis and interpretation are based on concepts such as individual ambivalence, ambivalent mimicry, division and hybridity. To begin with, in *Things Fall Apart* we talk of individual ambivalence. In fact, the Umuofian village is under colonial rule and each member of the village has different ways of reacting to the societal change and control; whereas some embrace it others do not. Okonkwo is a man who never would embrace a new culture. To surrender to the colonial power would mean to let go of a culture he feels is competent and just. He is a man who would never go against village customs and rules. For example, when Okonkwo is forced to leave the village to live in exile, he does it without any objection. When he returns back to the village after seven years, he finds his fellow tribe members more or less adapt to the colonial power. He feels ambivalent towards the people he used to know and trust. He is unable to adapt to the new cultural change. He commits suicide which is taboo in his village; "It is an abomination for a man to take his own life. It is an offence against the Earth, and a man who commits it will not be buried by his clansmen" (Achebe, 1958: p. 151). Okonkwo would not be able to commit suicide if he followed the village rules. He respects the village laws yet he violates them in the strongest possible way. He is ambivalent in his actions.

In addition, Nwoye is confused about his own culture's customs. He finds some aspects of it to be wrong. One such example is when someone gives birth to twins and they are forced to kill them, which is something he considers to be cruel. When he learns that the new religion is more compassionate towards twins being born he becomes curious: "Nwoye

passed and repassed the little red-earth and thatch building without summoning enough courage to enter" (Achebe, 1958: p. 110). He is ambivalent, he wants to know the message and context of the religion but he struggles with his emotions whether to be a part of the new church or not. Enoch is a man with a strong religious belief and he shows no ambivalence at all. When he starts a conflict between the church and his old traditions, he reacts against the church way to solve the problem: "They decided that Enoch should be hidden in the parsonage for a day or two. Enoch himself was greatly disappointed when he heard this, for he had hoped that a holy war was imminent" (Achebe, 1958: p. 137). He has no second thoughts about breaking the old traditions he has lived by earlier. He turns his back on his old community. Either all the characters show different forms of ambivalence, as in Enoch's case, did not feel ambivalent at all. The pressure from the colonial power makes them react differently. In *Things Fall Apart* Okonkwo is ambivalent in his actions. He celebrates and respects the village customs and laws, but when he commits suicide he violates the Umuofian customs in the worst possible way. Furthermore, Nwoye is ambivalent whether or not to join the new religion and become a part of the new community. Finally, there is Enoch who is not ambivalent at all, and he has no second thoughts about turning his back on his old traditions. Mimicry is also present in *Things Fall Apart*. In fact, Enoch mimics what he believes a faithful Catholic should be like and Okonkwo resents men who are weak; he feels they mimic their mothers. In Nwoye's case it is his ambivalent efforts to become a man. Nwoye had since childhood constantly lived under his father's watchful eyes. He tried hard to become the man his father wanted him to be, strong and masculine: "Nwoye knew that it was right to be masculine and to be violent, but somehow he still preferred the stories that his mother used to tell" (Achebe, 1958: p. 39). He feels he needs to be a man even if it does not match his feelings. He does not have the ability to be emotionally hard and angry. His images of how a man should act and behave do not agree with his personality. However, he tries to mimic

what he feels a man should be able to do; therefore, he nags about women's inability to do some tasks. He gets his father's approval when he does this, and he ends up having contradictory feelings. His effort to mimic his father's ideal man becomes difficult for him and to uphold it pushes him away from his father and the old culture. He finds peace in the new religion. Enoch is a member of the new Church and he lets everyone know that his faith is strong and he has no second thoughts about pointing fingers when he feels someone does not measure up to his standards. Enoch feels he needs to be a person with a stronger faith than anyone else; otherwise he cannot point fingers at the other members of the congregation. His temper gets him and the church into trouble when he breaks the village old traditions: „Enoch had killed an ancestral spirit, and Umuofia was thrown into confusion" (Achebe, 1958: p. 136).

The outcome is that he turns the new society against the village clan members, something he almost welcomes. He is not content when things stay on an even level, it has to be exaggerated. To become a faithful Christian, he needs to mimic the others, but it ends up being wrong. Okonkwo dislikes weak men and he thinks that they mimic their mothers. He is worried that his oldest son Nwoye will become a weak man and he thinks: "I have done my best to make Nwoye grow into a man, but there is too much of his mother in him" (Achebe, 1958: p. 48). Even though he loves his son, he is worried about him and he feels Nwoye mimics his mother's behavior, which Okonkwo cannot accept. A man who shows emotions is a sign of weakness and therefore he rather pushes his son further away from him than approving Nwoye's "womanly features" (Achebe, 1958: p. 48). When he hears that Nwoye is attending church he cannot accept it and he throws him out of his home.

Then, mimicry is found in different forms in both novels but what they have in common is that they describe how the characters feel, act and behave to fit into the old or new society. The exaggerated efforts to become someone else are something Enoch experiences. When he violates the old

traditions he gets the church into trouble. He wants to be an important and prominent member of the congregation. Nanapush is against people who try to mimic someone from the new world, and tries to mock them in any way he can. He wants them to be true to their old traditions. Nwoye tries to mimic how a man should act and behave, at least according to his father's standards. He pushes himself to become a man and yet he feels out of place. He finds that he betrays his own values and he finds comfort in the new religion. The fact that his son does leave the old culture to join the church is something he cannot accept. The combination of living in a society where a new one is also present causes difficulties as Peter Barry (2002: p. 199) describes it: "the situation whereby individuals and groups belong simultaneously to more than one culture". The native population's interchangeable mixture of cultural differences creates problematic situations. Nanapush (cited by Lois Parkinson Zamora, 1997: p. 122) describes this cultural mix as follows: "Our troubles came from living, from liquor and the dollar bill. We stumbled toward the government bait, never looking down, never noticing how the land was snatched from under us at every step". This is a rather determined and strong statement, where there is no question about who is to blame for the complicated life he and his tribe members need to adapt to.

Next, in *Things Fall Apart* hybridity can be discussed through different characters because they are all more or less affected by the colonizer's ways and rules. Even the novel's name *Things Fall Apart* implies the complicated situation of combining new traditions with old ones. It indicates the problems which arrived together with the missionaries. The Igbo population is forced to increasingly accept the new standards: "Hybridity is the perplexity of the living as it interrupts the representation of the fullness of life" (Bhabha, 1984: p. 314). Hybridity stops the old traditions and way of life and creates a mixture of a new one; something the people in the village of Umuofia learn when the missionaries and government bring new rules, regulations and religion to the land. However, they do not see it as a

tremendous threat because: "many of them believed that the strange faith and the white man's god would not last" (Achebe, 1958: p. 105). They underestimated the new culture. Some of the villagers embraced the new culture but some resisted it. Okonkwo's resistance against the new culture alienates him in his own village. When he arrives, after seven years in exile, he has troubles to understand why the villagers have not fought the colonial power: "What is it that has happened to our people? Why did they not fight back?" (Achebe, 1958: p. 128).

His rigid attitude towards the colonizers and his lack of understanding towards his fellow tribe members brings him into a position where the colonial power becomes even stronger. He finds himself in a position where his attitude makes him lonely and confused. He becomes more and more a loner in the old society. Nwoye finds comfort in the new religion and finds it to be more compassionate than his old society's values. He is unsure about attending church at first, but his curiosity and feelings of loneliness make him go to mass. His advancement in the church gets him a new position and he becomes a teacher. At first the students who were sent to church were not prominent members of the community. However, the people changed their mind and sent more people to school: "If Umuofia failed to send her children to school, strangers would come from other places to rule them" (Achebe, 1958: p. 132). They need to surrender to get some kind of control. Nwoye becomes a part of the villagers' adaption to the colonizer's way. Enoch on the other hand loves the position he has gained in the new society. He feels he is a powerful and a prominent member in the congregation: "On Sundays he always imagined that the sermon was preached for the benefit of his enemies" (Achebe, 1958: p. 135). He is quick to pass judgment on the other members of the church. The new community has placed him in position where he is content with his life. When he violates the old traditions he hopes it will start a holy war. He has no second thoughts about turning against his old community.

In the light of what we have said above, it seems clear that hybridity is not difficult to

detect when using a postcolonial critical approach and reading a novel which describes the problematic situations when two cultures mix. Achebe presents many different ways to express such cultural mixing. The church and education play an important part in the societal change. Nwoye and Enoch become a part of the new religion. Okonkwo on the other hand resists the new world in every way he can and he finds it difficult to understand his fellow tribe members' choice when they do not want to fight.

### **Socio-Cultural Meaning of Code-Mixing**

Code mixing refers to the alternate use of constituents from two languages within a sentence. It deals with alternating especially the grammatical rules of one language to the other. Code mixing occurs within a sentence and thus, it is intrasentential, constrained by grammatical principles and is motivated by socio-psychological factors. It is important to note that sometimes, speakers code mix due to the fact that it becomes difficult for them to find appropriate words and expressions to convey the thoughts they seek to express to other interactants in a speech event. Like code switching, code mixing occurs usually in informal contexts such as at social events or in familial discourses. In such situations, the interactants in the discursive event share common linguistic backgrounds and so each one can understand the code mixed variety or language. It is worth re-echoing that unlike code switching, code mixing occurs within a sentence structure but both code mixing and code switching serve some linguistic and social functions. Code-mixing is one of the major characteristics and sources of Nigerian English usage which preponderate in the novel under study. Code-mixing involves using particles of another language within the sentence domain of a language (Aranoff & Rees-Miller, 2003, p. 59).

It is worth mentioning again that many studies have been conducted on code switching and code mixing from varying perspectives (see Nilep, 2006, Larsson, 2007, Hill, 2009). However, there appears a dearth or paucity of studies looking at the concept of code switching

in literary texts (Ibhawegbele and Edokpayi, 2012). To a large extent, most researchers have concentrated much on code mixing on the other hand; refer to the alternate use of constituents from two languages within a sentence.

To a large extent, most researchers have concentrated much on code switching from purely linguistic perspectives. Such studies thus concentrated on the semantic and syntactic elements that depict code switching in novels. The choice of Igbo mixed with English sometimes entails a risk of alienation in intra-ethnic communication. Code-mixing is also a sociolinguistic phenomenon, resulting from language in contact. It is an effect of bilingualism and multilingualism. It occurs when bilinguals communicating in a language insert words or expressions from another language into their sentences. Unlike in code-switching, code-mixing occurs without changes in situations of utterances. Hudson (1980: p. 53) calls this situation "conversational code-switching, involving a situation, where a fluent bilingual talking to another bilingual changes code without any change at all in situation". Essien Okon (1995: p. 272) defines code-mixing as "a language phenomenon, in which two codes or languages are used for the same message or communication". Code-mixing generally takes place in informal situations, usually among speakers with the same linguistic background. It occurs at home, in parties among intimate people etc. Code-mixing is done for specific purposes, serving both linguistic and social functions. Essien (1995: p. 281) also asserts that code-mixing is ad hoc and strongest in areas such as the academic disciplines, the professions, politics, the economy etc.

Code-mixing is one of the features of the use of language in Nigeria, resulting from the complex linguistic system and biculturalism. Instances of code-mixing abound in Nigerian prose fiction. It involves the presence of the dominant English language (the target language), and the indigenous Nigerian languages (the source languages) in literary creation. The novelists involve their characters in the insertion of words and expressions of the

local languages into English speeches and sentences. Code-mixing is very common in the speeches of semiliterate characters in Nigerian novels.

In *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for instance, the characters often code-mix as Adichie tries to reflect the realities of the use of English in Nigeria, and preserve the culture and tradition of the Igbos. She actualizes her aims by the insertion of a lot of Igbo words and expressions into English sentences of the characters in her novel. These are exemplified below. Lunch was Jallof rice, fist-size chunks of azu fried until the bones were crisp, and ngwo-ngwo (Adichie, 2003: p. 32). "Papa Nnukwu, nno," I said (Adichie, 2003: p. 152). Only the chirping of Ochiri birds outside interrupted it. (Adichie, 2003: p. 32). But, gwakenem, will the truth feed your children? (Adichie 2003: p. 223) [...] his cheeks would bulge out like unripe udala fruit... (Adichie, 2003: p. 209). Aku is flying (Adichie, 2003: p. 218) Lunch was fufu and onugbu soup. Mama was already making me ofe nsala. (Adichie, 2003: p. 14). [...] so that chukwu will send a good man to take care of you and the children (Adichie, 2003: p. 183). Code mixing are also in the following passages:

*"Eugene gave you a schedule to follow when you're here? Nèkwánù ánya, what does that mean?"*

(Adichie, 2003: p. 124).

*"Have you forgotten, ímarozi, that the doctors went on strike just before Christmas? I called Doctor Nduoma before I left, though, and he said he will come by this evening."* (Adichie, 2003: p. 152).

*...Papa-Nnukwu was not a heathen but a traditionalist, that sometimes what was different was just as good as what was familiar, that when Papa-Nnukwu did his ítu-nzu, declaration of innocence, in the morning, it was the same as our saying the rosary."* (Adichie, 2003: p. 166).

*"That is our àgwọnatumbe," Papa-Nnukwu said, proudly, after the mmúọ had walked past. "It is the most powerful mmúọ in our parts, and all the neighbouring villages fear Abba because of it..."*

(Adichie, 2003: p. 86).

From these excerpts, two patterns of code-mixing, as revealed in the novel, are

observed namely, code-mixing involving items which do not have translation equivalents, and code-mixing involving items that are probably deliberately introduced by the writer. The latter form of items can be faithfully translated into English. Such linguistic items as "Nèkwánù ánya", "ímarozi" (in Examples 1 and 2), and "Papa-Nnukwu" (which appears in Examples 3 and 4) are translatable, whereas other items like "ítu-nzu" and "mmúọ" (in Examples 3 and 4) may not have direct translation equivalents in Standard British English (SBE). Whereas "Nèkwánù ánya" and "ímarozi" can respectively translate in English as „can you imagine" and „don't you remember," the closest meaning that can be given to the other category is: "ítu-nzu" („morning devotion"; or as the writer glossed, „declaration of innocence in the morning") and "mmúọ" ("spirits, which come from the land of the ancestors").

In *Purple Hibiscus*, Adichie utilizes these to captivate attention. Examples of these switches are: It was Uncle Eugene who did that to you, Okwia? She asked (Adichie, 2003: p. 220). Do you not hear what I have said gbo?

Aunty Ifeoma said, raising her voice (Adichie, 2003: p. 214). Kambili, Ke Kwanu? (Adichie, 2003: p. 202).

Papa-Nnukwu really worried about having a proper funeral (Adichie, 2003: p. 203). From the Kitchen, the spices in Amaka's Ofensals tickled my nose (Adichie, 2003: p. 154). When she held my hand and said, "kee Ka Ime? I was stumed (Adichie, 2003: p. 215). The underlined are Igbo words or phrases which depict meanings found only in the Igbo language and culture. The first two sentence patterns are examples of tag switching. Other instances of switching are ubiquitous in the novel. Beyond this, the writer, through sentence variability, in the novel, identifies with Igbo English- a variety of the Nigerian English. Igboanusi (2002: p. 115) observes that although the Igbo writes in English, his environment and sources of creativity are entirely Igbo. Igbo elements and speech habits are easily observed in the Igbo-novel... Through the linguistic processes of transfer and translation, the following seven linguistic categories – loanwords, coinages loan blends, translation equivalents, semantic

extension, coloration extension and colloquialisms – have been identified as the sources of Igbo English in the novel. This deliberate stylistic device, according to Igboanusi (2002: p. 117) is a reflection of the linguistic resources appropriate to the Igbo and the Nigerian cultural and sociolinguistic situation which also enables the writer to express and translate his/her local experiences into English.

*Complaining bitterly about her brother's ill-treatment of their father Papa Nnukwu, she says: Where is running water? Where is light? Where is petrol? (Adichie, 2003: p. 228)*

*Demanding a change in the leadership of the university administration, they sing: „All we are saying, sole administrator must go! All we are saying, he must go! No be so! Na so!“ (Adichie, 2003: p. 228).*

In addition to Adiche's use of different varieties of English, she employs her mother tongue, Ìgbò, depending on the prevailing circumstances. For instance, Auntie Ifeoma usually interacts with her mother, Eugene, in Standard English. When angry, however, she switches to Ìgbò, abusing him for his abominable acts: Was our father a catholic? I ask you Eugene, was he? Uchu gba gi! (Adichie, 2003: p. 189)

*Furthermore, the novel writes: Yet Eugene will not let him into his home, will not even greet him. Oyoka!*

*Eugene has to stop doing God's work. (Adichie, 2003: p. 95).*

*In other instances, Adiche's characters code-mix, interesting Ìgbò words into English sentences when they lack English words and expressions to adequately express themselves in their interactions. Her ability to apply different language codes to varying situations in various instances confirms her competence in the use of language in narrative.*

In the examples above, Achebe and Adiche put varieties of English and code differentiation to effective use. Their display of linguistic craftsmanship confirms the assertion that different situations and role shifts demand appropriate language codes for effective communication.

In *Everything Good Will Come*, Sefi Atta tries to project and preserve Nigerian languages, which are vital aspects of Nigerian culture, through the speeches and sentences of the characters in her novel. They code-mix, inserting Yoruba and Hausa words and expressions into English sentences, thereby reflecting Nigerian environments. Examples are given below: "You're so funny, aburo!" (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 34). Not even of the eyo who dressed in white sheets like spirits... (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 35). They were omo-ita, street children. (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 45). "Don't mind her jo," (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 232). You and your aje butter friend in the corner who cannot take the smell of... (p. 247). Maybe he thought I was a prostitute like Born Again over here or a crazy like Do-Re-Mi. (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 252). "Sanu, madam," (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 96). Moreover, Atta presents characters that code-mix, inserting some of the words, which have come to stay in the Popular Nigerian English (NPE) into English sentences in her novel as follows: ...private transport vans we call kabukabu and danfo. (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 95). [...] "whereas" my life story was straight, all of a sudden my life story got k-legs?" (Sefi Atta, 2006: p. 252).

The above instances where the characters code-mix, are for stylistic effects. The use of code-mixing, therefore, reflects the Nigerian setting, as well as the realities of the use of English language in Nigeria and the Nigerian prose fiction.

## 2. Conclusion

In the end, when we use the postcolonial critical approach it is possible to detect and describe the complicated situations of people when things change. Culture mixing viewed with the help of the three concepts ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity, shows how the characters react to the colonial and postcolonial pressure. Just before and right after independence, Nigeria witnessed myriad of social as well as cultural interferences from the British colonisers which gave birth to a literature which stood as a shield against their insincerity. In the present paper, we have laid out it by putting forward an empirical phase which has consisted of a cautious and careful

study analysing and interpreting three selected novels of Chinua Achebe, Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche and Sefi Atta, with the intention to depict culture mixing through ambivalence, hybridity, mimicry and code mixing from each. As these concepts are deemed to be enhancers of a "prise de conscience" and nationalist thoughts, we have considered, by far, that postcolonialism literature, in sum, has one unique and common point which is represented by raising the consciousness of the readership. This is something Nwoye also does when he finds a position in the Catholic Church. His complicated family situation drove him towards the new society. Enock tries hard to become members of the new community. He embraces the colonial power and he tries so hard to resemble the colonizers that it becomes almost absurd. Okonkwo on the other hand cannot adapt to the new rules and customs and his efforts to stay the same lead to him becoming alienated in his own community. He goes

against his own traditions and commits suicide, which is the ultimate proof of his ambivalence. Finally, it is proved that Nwoye accepts the changes reluctantly, but uses the changes to resist however he can. Okonkwo does not change and becomes increasingly alienated, Enock attempts to become like the colonizers and achieves status. In these situations, the sense of mimicry lays a clear image of the traits of colonisers which, in times, are not for them that of satisfaction and benefit. The study of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* leaves us with the belief that Adiche constructs what we call "Igbo English". Her aesthetics points the way to the future of literature in Africa. In the literary texts under consideration, English does remain pure neither does Igbo. Thus, the resulting product is a most veritable pointer to the currents of globalization at work in contemporary culture and society. The Igbo rhetorics in *Purple Hibiscus* look at the nativised variety and consequences of language contact.

### References

- Achebe, C. (1966). *A Man of the People*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. London: Penguin.
- Achebe, C. (1976). *Morning Yet On Creation Day*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Adesanmi, P. (2007). "Africa, India and the Postcolonial: Notes towards a Praxis of Inflection". *The Postcolonial Lamp: Essays in Honour of Dan Izevbaye*. Eds. Aderemi Raji-Oyelade & Oyeniyi Okunoye. Ibadan: Bookcraft. pp. 35-56.
- Adichie, C. N. (2003) *Purple Hibiscus*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books.
- Aranoff, M. & Rees-Miller, J. (2003). *The Handbook of Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Atta, S. (2006) *Everything Good Will Come*. Lagos: Farafina, An imprint of Kachifo Ltd.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1993). *Culture's in between*. *Artforum International*. September.
- Bhabha, H. K. (ed). (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1984). *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*. Vol. 28, *Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis*.
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge.
- Barry, P. (2002). *Beginning Theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Barry, P. (1995). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Boehmer, E. (1995). *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

- Essien, O. (1995). "The English Language and Code-mixing: A Case Study of the Phenomenon in Ibibio". In Ayo Bamgbose, Ayo Banjo and Andrew Thomas (Eds.) *New Englishes: A West African Perspective* (pp. 269-283). Ibadan: Mosuro Publisher and Booksellers.
- Francis, T. P. (2007). "Identity Politics: Postcolonial Theory and Writing Program Instruction" University of South Florida.
- Gibbons, J. (1987). *Code-Mixing and Code-Choice: A Hong Kong Case Study*. Bath: Multilingual Matters.
- Habila, H. (2002). *Waiting for an Angel*. Cassava Republic Press.
- Hill, D.K. (2009). Code switching Pedagogies and African American Student Voices: Acceptance and Resistance. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. 53 (2): 120-131.
- Hudson, R.A. (1980). *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kehinde, Ayo. (2005). "Rethinking African Fiction in the Era of Globalization: A Contest of Text and Context". *Journal of the Nigerian English Studies Association*. Vol.11, No. 1, September, 2005. pp 87-98.
- Leela. (1998). *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*. Columbia University Press.
- Luke, K.K. & Richards, J.C. (1982). English in Hong Kong: functions and status. *English World-wide*, 3(1), 47-64.
- Luke, K.K. (1998) Why two Languages Might be better than one: Motivations of Language Mixing in Hong Kong. In Pennington, M. (ed.) *Language in Hong Kong at Century's End*, pp.145-159. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- McLeod, J. (2000). *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester: University Press.
- Nilep, C. (2006). *Code Switching in Sociocultural Linguistics*. Colorado Research in Linguistics. Vol. 19. Boulder: University of Colorado.
- Ngugi, J. (1971). "The African Writer and His Past". *Perspectives on African Literature*. Ed. Christopher Heywood. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, pp. 3-8.
- Osundare, N. (2007). *The Writer as Righter*. Ibadan: Hope Publications Ltd.
- Parkinson Zamora, L. (1997). *The Useable Past: The Imagination of History in Recent Fiction of the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the Discourses of Colonialism*. Routledge: London.
- Prayer, E. R. (2014). Postcolonial Literature, Hybridity and Culture. *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)* .Volume-I, Issue-II, Page no. 125-128 .Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711.
- Rutherford, J. (1990). *The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha*. Identity, Community, Culture, Difference. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Skovde, H. (2007). Code-switching in Chinua Achebe's Novels. Sourced from: [http://www.iteslj.com/Articles/code+switching+in+African+novels\\_/s/1765](http://www.iteslj.com/Articles/code+switching+in+African+novels_/s/1765). Accessed on: 20th May, 2015.
- Young, R. J. C. (2001). *Postcolonialism: an historical introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Zeraffa, M. (1976). *Fictions: The Novel and Social Reality*, England: Penguin Books Ltd.