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Modernity vs. Traditions in Gabriel Okara's *The Voice*

Submitted by

**Hana Tidjani
Saida Kobbi**

Supervised by

Dr. Halima BENZOUKH

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Board of Examiners

Mrs. Assia Kaddeche	University of Ouargla	Chairperson
Dr. Halima BENZOUKH	University of Ouargla	Supervisor
Mrs. Fouzia Bahri	University of Ouargla	Examiner

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

My beloved husband: **Zohir Tidjani**,

My Kids: Lamis, Aymen, Ouissal, Mayar and Djoury

My parents **Fatma** and **Ahmed Ammar**, and my second mother and sister
Nezhat-elkoloub Tidjani: Her support has been shown in wonderful ways recently.

Every single member of my family,

To all my respected colleagues,

And to every one of those who motivated me to reach this level.

Hana

This work is dedicated to:

My generous Family, especially my husband, **Muhammad**, who encouraged me and stood by
my side,

To (the soul) of my sister Ahlem

And to all my loyal friends who supported and encouraged me constantly.

Saida

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Abstract

Concomitant with the post-colonial literary wave in Africa, resistance has been mirrored through a variety of techniques and strategies, as such preserving African literary traditions. The present study delves deeply into the representation of traditions and modernity in Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964) and the rationale behind employing such contradictory aspects in African literature. Alongside such an analysis, insights into African literature, culture, and history are bestowed. Likewise, the conceptions of modernity and traditions are defined with regard to the African context. Binarism between modernity and traditions is implied in many ways as the relationship between chief Izongu and Okolo. The study, hence, provides a practical analysis of how setting, language, style, characters, social status, and cultural traditions are presented in the novel with the purpose to compare the hero's role in the novel as a modern enlightened character and the communities as representative of traditions and the African heritage. The mother tongue preserves elegance and originality in the novel in spite of the different literary forms of African orality and those of modern literature.

Key-words: Modernity, traditions, African literature, originality, African orality.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Research Questions
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6. Methodology
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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Existentialism is a philosophical pursuit that foregrounds the enigma of human existence and sheds light on the subjective experience of thinking, feeling, and acting. In *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1946), Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher, political activist and literary critic, articulates that decision, freedom and responsibility are all emanating from existentialism. Likewise, he adds that many social organizations, even religious and political ones, have at present tried to break and eviscerate the very essence and meaningfulness of freedom, which is, in fact, the bedrock and the catalyst behind the value of humanitarian existence.

Gabriel Okara in his famous folklore novel, *The Voice*, uses the protagonist Okolo as a voice for truth. Okolo is in a perennial quest about his existence and his role in life. Indeed, Okara is reconsidering and assessing his country people and their daily life. *The Voice* protagonist Okolo returned to his small village, Amatu, after finishing his studies, seeking answers to numerous questions. He faces a huge resistance by the villagers who were hoodwinked and blinded by loyalty to the leaders. In general, the meaning and essence of life differ from one person to the next. Such a difference, hence, is probably the root of conflicts. No one, after all, attempts to permeate another person's inner self, and even if he does so, he is mostly kicked out at the door.

This research traces hints of contrast and antagonism between tradition and modernity in the African community's daily life, at one level, and sets a generalizable universal human motif at another level. Gabriel Okara tried his hardest to merge African traditions with its dissimilar European literary form of the novel through the direct translation from Ijaw into English. At the level of the language, he flooded African idioms into English without

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translating them literally. In terms of characterization, the discordance is mirrored through the embodiment of the two conflicting characters Okolo, the seeker of truth, and the tyrannical leader Izongu.

2. Statement of the Problem

Through the course of this dissertation, the integral problem of contradiction between modernity and traditions in *The Voice* by Gabriel Okara is discussed. The novel, which is built on the duality of existence and essence, is dissected through a literary analysis that encompasses analyzing stylistic features, prevalent themes, and a comprehensive summary. The exploration of the duality between modernity and traditionality in African novels usually highlights aspects of resistance and oppression and gradual change.

3. Research Questions

The research problematic brings about the following questions:

1. How are modernity and traditions manipulated and tackled in *The Voice* by Gabriel Okara?
2. What are the cultural, social, and political contexts shaping and inducing *The Voice*'s events?
3. How does the novel reflect the African literary trends concomitant with the writing?
4. How does Okara preserve the origin of the African language?

4. Hypotheses

To answer the previously-raised questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

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1. A major supposition holds that the contrastive comparison between modernity and traditions is evident in the relationship between chief Izongu and the novel's hero, Okolo.
2. It is assumed that Okara maintained local language authenticity in his portrayal of African traditions.
3. It is assumed that the recourse to African traditions and orality is in fact a common facet of postcolonial resistance.
4. We assumed that Okara used domestication while translating the original language into English.

5. Aims of Study

Presenting modernity and traditionalism side by side illuminates and supplies the reader with a wide array of images reflecting the daily life of community members and their differing mindsets. Indeed, the study, thus, aims to extract and give eminence to such aspects. By the same token, it seeks to accentuate the difference between the power and mechanisms of the government and that of the community. Pertinent to the novel's distinctive peculiarities, the study further sets to encourage novelty and praises the author's bravery in undertaking the unprecedented adventure of fusing orality with the modern form of the novel by presenting the work's worth and its worldwide spread in the literary terrains of post-colonialism.

6. Methodology

Methodologically, the present dissertation adopts a contrastive analytical method centered on two subtle aspects that are traditional African culture and modern life. This is in order to build up a comparison between traditionalism and the hero's modern mindset, and this is an adherence to the idea of an ideal life and search for virtue in a community that preserves

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a blind loyalty to the ruling leaders. Herein, traditionalistic features are highly figured through tracing Okara's adoption of African originality and orality.

7. The Structure of the Dissertation

The current dissertation presents a three-fold division. Whilst the first chapter is devoted to the literature review, that is pertinent to the history of African literature, the second chapter depicts the critical analysis of Okara's *The Voice*. Along similar lines, the third chapter unfolds an analysis of the binary opposition that is modernity and traditions in *The Voice*. A synthesis to the proceeding chapters in the general conclusion is weaved.

Chapter One

African Literature: An Overview

Chapter One

African Literature: An Overview

Introduction

1. Raymond Williams' Theory

1.2 Criticism of African Literature

1.3 Oral Literature in Africa

1.3.1 Oral Traditions and Written Words

1.3.2 Vernacular Written Literature

1.4 Languages in African Literature

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1.8 Modern African Novel

1.9 The Criticism of African Fiction

Conclusion

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African Literature: An Overview

Introduction

African Literature is any literature that tells the African story from the colonizer's or the colonized's perspectives. This literature can be written by Africans themselves or by people of other different origins (Bame, 2016). Europeans use the expression "African Literature", which implies poetry, performances, and narration written in English, French, and possibly Portuguese by Africans (Julien, 1995). Thus, we should turn to oral literature and vernacular written literature to better understand African literature and highlight the new form of the African novel.

Julien (1995) states in her book, *African Literature*: "we routinely divide African literature by region (West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Central Africa, and South Africa), each of which is more or less distinctive environmentally and historically" (p. 296).

The change from classical African literature to modern African literature and the importance of the debate have been used to define the area between the Sixties and Seventies. It's miles secure to suggest that writing outputs have been not automatically welcomed or diagnosed as African literature. The cause of this alternative and unique state of affairs is the keen interconnection between subculture and politics. It is understandable that new literary expressions, such as historical writings, within the African continent, have been hotly debated and disputed (Mami, 2018).

1.1 Raymond Williams' Theory

As Williams has argued, literature is certainly a cultural production. However, it is exactly the same manner that human economic practices, modes of political business

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enterprise, and religious systems are cultural. The difference is that the energies of man or woman, which are the opposite cultural practices that are seeking to collectivize, allowing a certain variety of freedom in art and literature. There may be an absolute confidence that their miles are making a theoretical assertion to say that literature is a cultural product. It can also be a widespread and vague theoretical statement. However, this declaration embraces all different varieties of cultural experiences. We want further statements within the theory that cope specifically with the character of literature (Akwanya, 2000).

Every literary work should have a specific concept that is not taken from other works. One of the wishes is to know why the precise work stocks this designation with thousands of various texts. In addition, in research, to recognize a given work, we take a look at literature in reality, which implies a criterion as an independent tool of the work itself. However, literature opens out to infinity because of the variety of works that may be written and enigmatic. Therefore, it is likely to frustrate the theories that are formulated to try to explain it (Akwanya, 2000).

1.2 Criticism of African Literature

Akwanya (2000) argues that he puts criticism between literature and literary theory because of the discourse that hyperlinks the one to the other. It is not an activity that takes place as a form of advocacy, mediation, or instruction between the textual content of literature and the author's audience. This criticism has a target audience, which is the opposite critics, students, and writers. The language of criticism typically excludes the so-called audience of the creative author (Akwanya, 2000). Amechi Nicholas Akwanya (2000) argues that a theory is to evolve phraseology, a huge philosophical declaration, which sets out a rational sample of

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mind and ideas for describing the phenomena that it deals with. The mission of criticism is to observe the given texts in the light of what Mulder and Hervey (1980) called the “primitive statements”. The initial criteria and metaphors provided within the theory generalize the nature and possibly value of literature (Ibid).

The initial impetus for this improvement was probably the early access of European reviewers and dilettantes into the field. These critics regularly tended to be patronizing or treat the work they discussed as an entry point in the conflict against imperialism. In contrast to the white guy, such as Emenyonu’s African Literature (Akwanya, 2000).

1.3 Oral Literature in Africa

In his introduction, *African Literature in the Twentieth Century*, Dathorne states that “African literature in its written form relies heavily on oral literature” (Dathorne, 1994, p.xi). In general, during this research, the main categories that have been faced are classified into three steps: Firstly, the Traditional Oral Literature of Africa is during the Precolonial period. Secondly, the local literature was written in indigenous languages, which took place during the colonial period. Thirdly, the literature which is written in European languages is in the Postcolonial period. Djénéba Traoré, in her book, *African Literature from the Oral Tradition to Current Trends*, classifies oral literature as the first main period among five important periods that helped to improve and determine the development of African literature, which she called “The oral literature or people poetry that prevailed for a long time in Africa” (Traoré, 2010, p. 9).

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1.3.1 Oral Traditions and Written Literature

In general, the African oral tradition works to highlight the essence of people's experiences by forming them into memorable and easily retrievable images of vast applicability, with an excellent capacity for eliciting emotional responses.

Traoré divided her study of African oral tradition into two parts: poems and prose. Poems include an animistic approach, poetic structures, drum poems, proverbs, and epic/heroic epics. Then, there is prose, which includes things like oral fiction, sagas, myths, animal fables, and guessing (Traoré, 2010).

Since the 1960s, realistic West African literature has been improved. After the elimination of colonial power, writers wrote for the African crowd itself and defined the bad social and political statistics significantly and sarcastically. In 1960, Africans were an extra group in the development of the literature of the Francophone and Anglophone countries. Quantitative and qualitative changes may be determined. The UN full meeting proclaimed that the assertion over the final and whole elimination of colonialism and several nations of Africa had accomplished their country-wide and political independence. In April 1966, the first world festival of Negro-Arts was prepared in Dakar. The written literature on the continent has advanced very fast. Furthermore, the number of publications increased considerably (Traoré, 2010).

1.3. 2 Vernacular Written Literature

In the written vernacular languages of Africa, literature offers an ingenious and crucial link between unwritten indigenous literature and writing in European languages. The most

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effective element is that vernacular written literature is carefully related to literary oral forms. Apart from translations, written vernacular literature has drawn from contemporary European writing as well as more popular European models such as love stories and detective stories. This literature shows the adaptability of the oral culture via written vernacular literature. The oral tradition expresses its versatility and variety (Dathorne, 1974). English, Portuguese, and French had come to the rescue, which was an unsolicited gift with gratitude. For this reason, in 1964, Chinua Achebe, in a talk entitled “The African Writer and the English Language”, states that is it correct that a man must abandon his mother tongue for someone else’s?. It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a responsible feeling. However, for us, there is no other choice. We have been given the language and we intend to use it. The possibility of usage in mother tongues provokes a tone of levity in terms of a dreadful betrayal and a responsible feeling. Overseas languages produce a categorical fine embodied (Ngugi, 1986).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) argues that the paradox the reader can see is that the possibility of using the native language creates a sound of folly in terms like 'a guilty feeling'. But foreign languages generate a crucial positive fostering. Achebe himself, after ten years, describes this fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in African literature. Ngugi adds, the fact that all of us adopted European languages who are the participants in the conference and the generation that followed them agreed that fatalistic logic is a greater or lesser degree. We were guided by it and the question was how best to make the borrowed tongues carry the weight of our African experiment? For example, making them prey on African proverbs and other specificities of African speech and folklore. For this task, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and *Arrow of God* and Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* were often held as providing the three alternative models (Ngugi, 1986).

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1.4 Languages in African Literature

Even though the reputedly countless debates surrounding the use of English in African literature may have ebbed of late, what has remained undeniably is that English has not only helped to raise the profile of African literature both within and outside of Africa, but it has also provided what can be considered continuity in Anglophone African discourse (Andindilile, 2018). The prophecy that continued the use of former colonial languages within the production of African literature should simply cause sterility, as African literature can be best written in indigenous African languages which have no longer materialized. As opposed to a forthcoming ‘demise’, African literature has persisted to flourish no longer in English; however, in different former colonial languages, consisting of French and Portuguese in Francophone and Lusophone Africa, respectively, which can be out of the scope of this work.

1.5 Postcolonial Literature

Neil Lazarus (2004) explains in *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies* before the 1970s that postcolonial studies did not exist as an academic study field. Nowadays, this field has its place all around the international universities. Many facilities regarding postcolonial research have been established not only in the literary field, but also in other fields including culture, history, and so on. Many journals started to peer light on the broad term “post-colonialism” dealing with postcolonial theory and literature (Lazarus, 2004). Nevertheless, this does not imply working on the postcolonial question which did not exist before the 1970s. There has been an existed data on anticolonial movements and leaders. Many journals have been devoted to this issue (Cheriet, 2015).

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The postcolonial literature has advanced in the colonized societies. Resistance, race, suppression of identity, migration, and gender are beginning factors and reasons that caused the arrival of postcolonial literature in addition to many other factors. Response to the imperial European discourse of records, philosophy, anthropology, linguistics, and its representational experiences of writing and speaking are the theories and vital tactics that commenced to emerge after independence. The fact that most of those elites have been well educated and capable of tough European writings that spread their voices aloud paved the way for post-colonial literature to prosper. Post-colonial literature consequently existed as a reactive item, taking its energy from the radical colonial literature to detect the grievances experienced by post-colonial societies (Belouaer, 2020).

1.5. 1 African Postcolonial Novel in English

In the study of *The Postcolonial Liminal Novel in Africa*, Martha Anne Plettner (2000) explains that via postcolonial she implies the new cultural and social case of the sovereign nation after the departure of the colonizing power. Coincident with their postcolonial countries' struggles for identification, the struggle of these novels' 'younger protagonists' to exist and define their identities as they pass through a non-public coming-of-age technique in a postcolonial terrain. In their everyday warfare, simply existing is a challenge due to the fact that all of them feel the delight that comes with beating the chances for survival regardless of the toll their environments and situations take on their bodies and psyches (Plettner, 2000).

1 .5. 2 Postcolonial Theory

Frantz Fanon (1986) emphasized in his book, *Black Skin White Masks*, that colonialism precipitated intense psychic and physical harm to the colonized person's mind and body. Due

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to colonial subjugation, the natives' primary values have been discredited, turning all their preceding thoughts regarding their identities on their heads. The colonial subject became faced with the difficult task of placing strategies of survival back in place after decolonization (Fanon, 1986).

This postcolonial project became great and hard because of the traumatic effect and records of colonialization that protected the colonial educational gadgets that could not be completely erased. It is now impossible to return to a completely virginal nativism. The purity of the pre-colonial nostalgic past cannot be re-established as a good deal as virginity cannot be restored after rape. However, it could be used as a historical guide for the future fate of a way of life (Plettner, 2000). Moreover, any African alive today has turned into a hybrid cultural blend of the pre-colonial traditional past. The introduction of overseas colonial power has resulted in this fact.

Furthermore, Plettner argued that the focus shifted from Second World socialist thought to postcolonial nationalism in the 1980s. Colonial speech and Third World literature became the new literary expressions in which de la Campa **sees** "postcoloniality" as postmodernism's wedge in colonizing literature away from Europe and its North American offshoots. He notices what used to be known as Third World literature being rechristened as postcolonial literature when the governing theoretical framework shifts from Third World nationalism to postmodernism (Plettner, 2000).

1.5. 3 Postcolonial Criticism

Traoré, in her criticism of this period, argues that writers turn themselves to the current presidents of their countries and criticize the poor social circumstances that appeared after the

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announcement of national independence. They emphasize in their novels with various and different style-strategies, exceptionally nepotism, enrichment, nasty agencies, pricey methods of life of the country wide, bureaucratic bourgeoisie, poverty, manners-decay, unemployment, and the destruction of the individual through the deformed capitalist device.

Furthermore, the scenario is alarming for plenty of authors. They represent in their novels human beings who have fought against the colonial regime and turned out to be themselves dictators, tyrants, and exploiters (Traoré, 2010).

1.6 Modern African Literature

Modernization does not imply a new literary form, but rather a re-definition of what it means to be African in any medium after 2000. In his book *Introduction to Contemporary African Literature*, modernization can be limited to works that shine (Mami, 2018).

In his book, *Andindilile* (year) explains how the emergence of modern African literature coincided with the increasing use of the novel format as a literary genre for expressing African speech, as well as the use of foreign languages in African literature, both of which were greatly influenced by the colonial meeting. Furthermore, these two factors aided many African writers in developing a counter-speech against defaming colonial writings, particularly in imperial adventure fiction, and contributed to the rapid growth of modern African literature from the mid-twentieth century into the format we know today. Moreover, because of how these works of literature developed in Africa, some consider these factors, particularly the language constituent as a maladroit result of colonialism that should be

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dispensable completely, especially as primary tools of African literary expression (Andindilile, 2018).

Even Ngũgĩ's personal early literary works written in English remain African literature. The works using some writers published in English stay part of the method of countrywide illustration. The application of the plural shape 'African literatures' attempts to cope with a number of the problems inherent in referring to African literature in its singular form. After all, it has remained debatable for the reason that the 1962 historical convention of African Writers of English Expression held at Makerere university college in Kampala Uganda, while trying to define African literature uncovered the limitations of coming up with a 'neat' definition of African literature. In this point, Michael Chapman (2003) observes that 'the plural shape African Literatures' reminds us 'that Africa is some distance from homogenous in language, culture, religion, or the approaches of modernity. The plural form embraces many elements in any other case left out all through the de-colonization days whilst the singular pan-Africanist concept remained the norm (Ibid.).

1.7 The Criticism of Modern African Literature

The written discourse in African and colonial languages emerged to join the already mounted orature. Consequently, African-authored texts took the number one position in literary discourse. subordinated different modes of expression, especially orature—the main shape of expression for most African people. Even then, the written literary discourse sees neo-African literature as nothing other than 'a commodity' and a "recent invention"—which, as aptly noted, no longer represents a hiatus in terms of African experience (Andindilile, 2018).

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1.8 Modern African Novel

In most novels, urban existence is predominantly described by the fact that most people live in the country. This statistic reflects the growing urbanization trend in many African countries. On the other hand, it is clear that there are conflicts in the literature, such as strong old religious notions and behaviors. Modernization traits have an adverse impact on people (Traoré, 2010).

Different books present the collision of traditional and contemporary ways of living life, especially regarding the relationships between women and men. For instance, the polygamy and the obedience policies are installed concerning girls. The tradition is particularly strict with girls and represents an effective oppression technique. Because of this, many of the novel's heroines wreck consciously or spontaneously with its guidelines. This truth alerts us that African women develop a brand new self-assurance and they want to adapt themselves now, not to vintage traditions (Ibid.).

1.9 The Criticism of African Fiction

In the last fifteen years, the literary landscape has been strewn with quite lovely fictions of failure, as Africans grapple with the new abuses of neocolonial regimes and seemingly inexorable international processes. The Congolese author, Sony Labou Tansi, like his compatriot Henri Lopes, has given us compelling pictures of dictatorship. Labou Tansi's comic and almost delirious fables expose not only the corruption and savagery of these dictators but their frailty and insecurity. Ngugi's fictions (*Petals of Blood*, *Devil on the Cross*, and *Matigari*) signal the greed for wealth and strength unleashed by "independence" and the betrayal of Kenyan peasants and employees by leaders who collaborate with worldwide

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capitalism. When they do not vie with it, these fictions cross over into the absurd and turn away from the realism that characterizes many first-generation narratives that focused on colonialism. Ngugi has recommended that writers invent new forms commensurate with a new and deeply worrying reality (Julien, 1995).

Conclusion

The purpose of Chapter One was to view African stories from the colonizer's or the colonized's perspectives by providing a set of definitions and theories. Chapter one also sought to explain the development of modern African novels. African scholars have participated in criticism since the seventies. There are no theories that apply exclusively to African literature. Criticism itself is not completely visible as analysis.

Chapter Two

Gabriel Okara's

The Voice: A Literary

Review

Chapter Two

Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* : A Literary Review

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2.2 The Literary Analysis of *The Voice*

2.2.1 Plot

2.2.2 Characters

2.2.3 Themes

2.2.4 Style

2.3 Criticism of African Literature

Conclusion

Chapter Two

Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* : A Literary Review

Introduction

African writers, who wrote in English were often accused of addressing themselves to a Western audience and, to some extent, were engaged in a debate between the West and the Western interpretation of Africa is that they were sending a message to both the colonizer and the colonized. They were trying to reform African ideas about the African experience but they were also trying to reform European ideas about the African experience by using the language of the colonizer to express their ideas. This happened during the Negro movement in Africa. Francophone Africa was an attempt also to give positive value to African culture and Europeans realized that Africa had culture and local traditions and that Africa was able to produce high-quality literature often based on the same premises that Europeans were using.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics, Okara's literary endeavor in addition to themes in his writing and the literary analysis of *The Voice* will be discussed, as well as the plot, characters, themes, and style.

2.1 Okara's Literary Endeavour

An African icon, Okara is regarded as the unsung, unfabled father/founder of modern African literature in English. From translations of Ijaw traditional poetry into English in the 1940s, he progressed to publishing his verse in English carrying the West African Ibo culture with it (Ramasubbaiah,2019).

He is referred to as the Nigerian Negritudist for his involvement in the Francophone-led intellectual movement, rose to prominence in 1964, after the release of his famous debut novel *The Voice*, a language experiment in which he translated Okara directly from the Ijo (Ijaw) language, imposing the Ijo form on the English language to give literal expression to

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Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* : A Literary Review

African ideas and images. The novel created an allegorical landscape within the forces of traditional Africa (Durosomo,2019).

Together with Chinua Achebe, Okara was nominated as an ambassador for the Biafra cause in 1969. He attended the historic African Writers Conference held on June 1, 1962, at Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda, along with Chinua Achebe, Rajat Ngugi, Block Modisan; Bitek, Bernard Fenlon, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, and others(Creighton, 2018).The poet, novelist, and playwright made his mark on the African literary scene as one of the pioneers. *The Voice* is one of his greatest works of African fiction and is no less famous than Chinua Achebe. However, its lyrical quality and linguistic creativity compare it to other pioneering works. The novel is characterized by its innovative narrative quality in its language and awareness, which makes it stand out as literature with a distinct identity (Ibid).

2.2 The Literary Analysis of *The Voice*

A literary work is always directly or indirectly concerned with man, especially men in society. It depicts a person in his environment. It helps to understand his behavior. It is part of the human being in the sense that it contributes to the ways humans use to explain the kind of life they lead in their community. *The Voice* novel contains many narrative elements human-like, this helps to understand the message. This holographic approach is coupled with a clear linguistic overlap that gives the novel its originality. The novel is titled *The Voice* which refers to humans and means Okolo in the Ijaw language. Okara uses his mother tongue not only for the title of the novel but also for the name of his main character who speaks on behalf of his fellow citizens who cannot (Raimi,2014).

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Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* : A Literary Review

2.2.1 Plot

Is a special linguistic technic that, Okara used, different words in the English language in the novel are not easily understood by normal English speakers and writers, which means a very tuff kind of language and not so easy to get into one meaning in one side. (Lindfors,1965).

Okolo is a young man, who is despised by his people, for daring to think for himself and ponder the meaning of life. By being insightful and ruminative, he makes enemies virtually everywhere he goes including at nearby Sologa, where there has been a major change with the switch to autonomy and the way he framed his hometown Amato, the so-called blind loyalty of a strong man. Where the idea of the hero Okolo is not embraced by a tragic ending, In the end, Okolo and a woman known as a witch called Tuerre were killed. This may surprise many, but the hostility that traditional leaders led by king Izongo had toward Okolo, who was ultimately just a young man (Khotseng,2008).

This is a novel written in what might be dubbed African English, over the years some pundits described what author Okara does here as an experiment. What is clear is that if the prose puzzles many Eurocentric readers most authentic Africans would find it convincing and powerful. Many African phrases from the mother tongue are rendered directly into English which might conflict with Westerners. But aside from the language, it is a simple interesting story (Ibid).

2.2.2 Characters

In *The Voice* novel one of the strengths of Okara's style that eluded its critics is the idiosyncratic features of the character's names, the characters representing these ills being

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Chief Izungu Dr. Abadi, and the Elders. Izongo seeks oppression and is therefore dangerous, and the leader Izongo is assisted by sages and his messengers. The Elders are the direct collaborators of Izongo. After a meeting with their leaders, they announce the decision taken. When Okolo must be captured, they tell the messengers to go and look for him. They are considered members of the Izungu government. The chief concern of the sages is to defend the new order against their enemies. Enemies are all people who want to conflict with their interests. They defined their lives with the life of the Absolute Leader Chief Izungu (Goodley,1976).

Okolo's basic wisdom was not adopted. Here, it is audible. but, the pursuit of his goals understandably exacerbates everything around him, a lost idea that no one had in this changing world and its , as the yoke of colonialism, has been abruptly thrown off , and people are not yet fully aware of the extent of the resulting delusion. Freedom, how different tyranny was imposed. You do not need to define Okolo more precisely. It's meant to be a vague concept because it involves so much. His absence is perhaps best defined by his absence: whatever world Okolo moves in is lost (Ibid.)

2.2.3 Themes

Okara distinguished himself through his creative presentation of themes of colonialism, racism, and the fear of losing one heritage which consumes most African writers of his time, he also incorporated themes of cultural crisis, selfishness, loss of innocence, and honest versus false expression in his poems such as Once Upon a Time Although readers cannot find these topics directly in the texts, they are an integral part of them (Joseph,2022).

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Gabriel Okara conveyed his social vision and aesthetic goals in *The Voice*, he also highlighted themes of light and darkness, corruption and morality decadence, hypocrisy, materialism, truth, integrity, etc. that form the axis that revolves around the meaning of the text. He also built this novel on the duality of essence and existence, Okolo in many things he felt his existence, but in many, he did not feel the essence of this existence, he believes in the philosophy of existence that searches for the essence of things and from it he made his hero a searcher of the truth and essence of life, and he followed the style of Shakespeare in his plays, which his hero bid farewell to life for the sake of the idea of struggle and sacrifice. The novel is very expressive of the real suffering of the individual in his African society(yeibo,2016).

2.2.4 Style

Okara adopted the simple folklore style in writing *The Voice* novel, known as folk literature, or oral traditions. Folklore depicts the way main characters manage their everyday life events, including conflicts or crises. Simply, folk literature is about individual experiences from a particular society, Okara's style of writing produces a variety of English in which idiom and syntax are radically altered (Vakunta,2011).

The English used in this novel is not standardized but domesticated English that constantly suggests the presence of another tongue. This double viscidness is the quality that makes his fiction unique and challenging to the uninformed reader, the more so because Okara believes that there should be a Nigerian or West African English that we can use to express our ideas, and thinking philosophy. it dawns on the non-African Anglophone reader that the writer has relexified and domesticated the English language to make it carry the weight of his Ijaw language and culture(Holmes,1987).This style of writing stems from the need to solve an

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immediate artistic problem: that of rendering African concepts, thought patterns, and cultural peculiarities into a European language English(Ibid).

2.3 Criticism of African Literature

Multilingualism can be defined as the purposeful and savy reproduction that whitewashes one language (in this case English) for features from another(in this case Ijaw) , and the theoretical problem is how non-ijwo readers deal with these perfectly translated features, as they construct or negotiate the meanings of the text. Criticism of African literature has typically awarded authorship, a source-based aesthetic, or a text-based aesthetic to a reader-dependent aesthetic, whereby an examination of Okara's *voice* helps to clarify the critical consequences of such privilege (Scott, 1990).

African literature has been subjected to all kinds of critical scrutiny for its character, nature, and originality of being, and it may indeed be safe to declare that no other literature in the world has witnessed the kind and weight of controversial questioning as the African study is lit. This critical debate was particularly prevalent in the field of prose genre, being the only genre imported from Europe which thus led to a fundamental difference in the thematic and stylistic preoccupations of Western and African critics (Achebe, 1963).

However, the ideal can only be achieved through the propagation of a sublime and growing linguistic expression rather than the ordinary, culture-based expression of the general public. It shows that in contrast to Western literary knowledge, Semitic African literature is largely based on the successful exploitation of cultural raw materials and ordinary experiences of people. One aspect of this literary project is the domestication of English for effective expression of African culture in the selected novels of Okara, Achebe, and Tutuila. The

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English presented in this novel is not a normative language but rather a domesticated language that constantly refers to the presence of another tongue, this also shows to the non-African-speaking reader that the writer re-hybridized and domesticated the English language to make it bear the weight of his Ijaw language and culture. This writing style stems from the need to solve an immediate technical problem; It is the transformation of African concepts, modes of thinking, and cultural characteristics into a European language (Ibid).

The literary artist of Africa had a variety of interests and had to take advantage of the plurality of impetus and he has constantly adjusted his selection according to his changing environment, early African writers attempted to counteract the distortions and projection of the African image by some of their European counterparts. Their efforts gave credence to the fact that each writer chooses the most appropriate means to explore his creative vision. In examining African literary genres, evidence for language experience lies in the fact that Africans do not use English as well as native speakers do. The discursive tools of the African language and society are its property and a legacy of its cultural heritage, to capture the African linguistic flavor, the English language must be flexible and designed to allow the presence of idiomatic and rhetorical components. The process of domesticating English language resources to work in diverse settings in Africa has created diverse discourse situations (Echeuro,1992).

The functional evaluation of any work of art must be based on an examination of the language of the text because the text can only be achieved through the use of language and its interpretation within the situation. The situation itself is what Halliday (1978) refers to as the medium in which the text lives and breathes. The price of the universal language must be prepared to pay for it to be subject to many kinds of use. The African writer intended to use

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the English language in such a way that his message was best served without changing the language to the extent that it is valued as a medium (Anohu, 1990).

Conclusion

Representative positions to be used as a literary medium and discussion through a selective analysis of *The Voice* by Gabriel Okara. Because his approach was systematic, broadly comprehensive, and sustained, Okara explores a variety of possible directions of nativization for creative purposes. Moreover, the decolonization of English is the character of a particular society whose shape and ethos are both distinctive and new to the reach of English.

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Introduction

African literature and novels, modern and traditional, were characterized by their appearance as well as their characterization, starting from the precolonial period to the postcolonial and modern ages. African literary works were also influenced by modernism and traditional debates.

The rise of the modern African novel is the result of the creativity and the living experience of the African writer. Schreiner explains that the application of the term modernism in discussing Anglophone South African literature has its basis in the concept that modernism as cultural production exists in a dialectical relationship with the geopolitical and economic structures of modernity (Schreiner, 2017). The reason why modernism emerged in South Africa in the nineteenth century as a foundational and enduring mode of literary expression is directly associated with the imperialist means by which the area was included in the capitalist world system (Ibid).

Traditions are a contrasting concept to modernism that authors may incorporate into their novels. Isabel Caldeira says about it: They may choose to revive traditions to give back to communities a sense of belonging and identity (Caldeira, 2016). *The Voice* by Gabriel Okara, which includes the two concepts, and many writers consider it a creative experiment novel, needs to be considered more. In his introduction to *The Voice*, Ravenscroft explains: “I share this view.” Nevertheless, “*The Voice*” has not had the kind of recognition it deserves”. (Okara, 1964, p. 4).

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3.1 Local Traditions in Gabriel Okara's *The Voice*

The writer employs traditional rules to emphasize the subject of traditions and attempts to explain the relationship of language and identity to psychic and cultural forces. In Okara's *The Voice*, which takes place in the village of Amatu In African postcolonial communities, in which imperialism has been replaced by a blind fealty to the leaders, this has been one of the strongest traditions in an African country that recently won independence. Ostensibly, there has been a great change with the shift to self-government. The local traditions' images, such as the blind loyalty to the leaders and the acceptance of unjust judgment and slavery in collective, are all summed up in Okara's saying: "No one in the past has asked for it." (Okara, 1964, p.24).

Okara used oral traditions, which are written down, normally in the form of storytelling, so they can inform us a lot about the society and those who originated them and allowed history to be stored.

Djénéba Traoré, in her book, *African Literature from the Oral Tradition to Current Trends*, states: "The modern-day literary trends in Africa, are characterized by their sharp criticism of the present-day neocolonial situation in African countries." (Traoré, 2010, p.20). The authors emphasized the loss of cultural values as well as the variety of positive aspects of tradition. It appears that, evidently, literature reacts very actively in nations in which social and political contradictions end up worse (Traoré, 2010).

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3.1.1 Folklore and Myth

One of the local African traditions in general, even though the colonizer tried to impose his language and different lifestyle rules on the natives of the land. Focusing on the presentation of myth and folklore in the novel, it can be said that despite the influence of the colonizer's language, religion, education, and way of life on the natives of the land, the colonized have their own staunch notions and beliefs, which are not forgotten. In the novel *The Voice*, as the messengers set forth towards Okolo's house, they converse with each other:

“First Messenger: My right foot has hit against a stone. Second Messenger: Is it good or bad? First Messenger: It's bad.” (Okara, 1964, p.24).

Foremost among the prose forms in African literature is the myth. Like myths everywhere, African myths typically explain the creation of the universe, the activities of the gods at the beginning of creation, the essence of all creatures, and the nature of their relationship with each other. Next in importance is the legend, intended to enhance the listener's understanding of the constitution of the universe. The epic and African legend has a lot in common because both are about heroism. The folktale, another prose form, is usually reserved as a means of 'nighttime entertainment (Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). In *The Voice*, Okara says the following: “The embers move and glow like a new appearing sun or a going-down sun.” (Okara, 1964, p.33)

3. 1. 2 The Confession

It was also believed that if a person committed a crime and did not confess to it, then the person would face disaster in the near future-either by the wrath of the clan's deity or

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unnatural events. In the novel, when Okolo is accused of having sheltered the betrothed girl, Ebieri, he is asked to swear and invoke God (Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). In *The Voice* (1964), Okara states the following:

Hear O Amadosu! Something has fallen on my head which I do not know how to remove. If I did the thing which they are putting on my head, shown in the usual manner. Things of the ground, also, hear and the dead also hear! (Okara, 1964, p. 109)

3. 1. 3 The Witch

The woman branded a witch, called Tuere, and this is one of the characteristics of religious traditions in Africa; Turaki (1999) asserts that religion is the continual participation in traditions (myths and rituals) passed on from one generation to the next (Beyers, 2010). In *the Voice*, Gabriel Okara uses the following:

“I keep no one. Why should I any of you keep who called me a witch and have kept me away from the town? Why should I any of you keep? leave me alone .” (Okara, 1964, p. 29)

Moreover, another speech in the novel is as follows: “Is it you who speak thus” said Tuere.” Is it you , Seitu? It was you who first called me a witch and then others followed you to call me a witch. Now you say nothing followed you to call me a witch.”. Okara adds also:

“When did your belief in the powers of witchcraft finish in your inside?” (Okara,1964, p. 30).

In the novel, when Tuere keeps to herself and does not flirt with boys though she has a hunger-killing beauty, the people of Amatu consider her ‘a girl of strange behavior.’ Furthermore, they openly label her a witch after her mother and father died within a few weeks of each other, and after each young man who proposed to her died one after the other

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(Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). As in a traditional society, a non-conformist was considered an outcast, and so did the people of Amatu consider Tuere: “They then from the town drove her”(Okara,1964, p 33).

3. 1. 4 Woman's Chastity

Okolo is exiled, and he undertakes the long journey to Sologa. One day, on board the canoe, he sits next to a young woman who is being brought to the capital by a mother for her son, covering her with his raincoat when it begins to pour. There is then considerable debate and concern about whether he touched her inappropriately when hidden from view like that though both the girl and he insisted he did not (Hinde, 2019).

It is one of the different old traditions in Africa; chastity. Gabriel Okara gives this concept its own part. He states the following:

It refers to his earlier experience on the river journey in the opposite direction when his kindness in sheltering the girl bride under his raincoat during the storm was interpreted by her mother-in-law as a piece of immorality. (Okara, 1964, p. 5).

Furthermore, Okara adds: “And next to Okolo on his left-hand side, a girl sat, she rested her on his shoulder, sleeping. She must have killed sixteen years” (Okara, 1964, p. 59).

3. 2 The Power of Traditions in Izongo’s Character

In the village of Amatu, which is typical of traditional African societies, which were ruled by a group of elders, men of status and power whose decisions ruled the clan. The elders came one by one to Chief Izongo’s house, and when they had sat in a semi-circle facing Chief

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Izongo, Izongo called them each by their praise name, as is usually done at gatherings (Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). And when something was to be discussed between Izongo and the elders, it ran like this:

“Izongo : Yes. I am lightning. Nothing stands before lightning. What is yours? Second Elder: You are asking me? I am Water.Izongo: Water! Second Elder: Yes! I am Water. Water is the softest and the strongest be.” (Okara,1964, p. 38)

Indeed, as Michael Andindilile points out in his book, the Anglophone African novel is a cross between a European invention, the novel, and African oral traditions, orature (Andindilile, 2018). On the other hand, Okara adds more about chief Izongo (1964) and states the following :

So Chief Izongo spoke at the gathering f Elders and the Elders, in their insides, turned these spoken words over and over and looked to see the path they would take to avoid this stinking thing. they turned over the spoken words and sent messengers to Okolo to ask him to cease forthwith his search for it. (p. 24)

The continuing use of English in Nigeria’s national discourse allows the language to serve as a vehicle for transcribing and assimilating beliefs and values of disparate organizations, creating for this multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multireligious nation an environment conducive to the emergence and sustenance of an Anglophone literary-linguistic continuum (Andindilile, 2018). Such traditional elements can be represented in Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964):

Tuere turned and faced Chief Izongo and the crowd, her inside smelling with anger . Doesn’t shame fall on your head, you man without a chest, for saying you want to burn a woman’s house down to the ground ? if you are a man be with a strong chest, come and take him, she challenged standing straighter than

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straightness. As she finished speaking thus with her breathing not reaching the ground because of her smelling anger, Okolo suddenly spoke from her side *The Voice* (Okara, 1964, p. 36).

3.3 A Voice in the Wilderness

Okolo means "the voice" in Ijaw, but in Okara's novel, it is a voice in the wilderness, a voice of wisdom and meaningful dissent, heard by no one except Tuere, the alleged witch, and Ukule, the cripple, both of whom are symbolic extensions of Okolo's identity and predicament in Amatu. Obiechina argues that *The Voice* is perhaps the sublimation in the prose fiction of Okara's poetic visions of his mission through literary creativity to reform and purify society. But he sees Okolo more as a poet-reformer than as a Promethean political revolutionary (Ashaolu, 1979).

Okara drives Okolo to attack the Nigerian politicians. when he addresses Izongo and Abadi and says:

“While a complex meaning for it does emerge clearly and it is ultimately a moral meaning connected with the value of an individual's life in relationship to the lives of his fellow- men” (Okara,1964, p. 7).

Through the protagonist's actions, Gabriel Okara gives different sides of modernism in his novel: “Whom are you fighting against?... Are you not simply making a lot of noise because it is the fashion in order to share in the spoils. You are merely making a show of straining to open a door that is already open.” (Okara,1964, p. 44).

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Pointless to say, the people of the local town—following the chief’s lead and direction, find Okolo as a threat to the new law. The complaints of Chief Izongo, the leader of the old rules about Okolo in Gabriel Okara (1964), are the following:

Chief Izongo rose one morning, the morning that made the seventh morning since from the town he drove Okolo, and spoke with his inside and agreed with his inside to celebrate his freedom from Okolo. So he agreed with his inside, but he also with his inside became free of the voice of Okolo like the voice of a mosquito which had driven even sleep out of their eyes. (p.91)

Okolo, as a composite character, can be seen either as a particular individual or as a representative thinking man; even, perhaps, as an artist in society. In an interview conducted by Bernth Lindfors in 1973, Okara declares that the predicament of Okolo was the predicament of any intellectual, young or old, who had the courage to speak up (Ashaolu,1974).

Ashaolu (1974) explains that many people were forced to merge with the crowd, and if one didn’t do that at that time or even now, well, the forces that were raised against him would submerge him just as Okolo was submerged in the river. Given the assertion that *The Voice* is consciously written to reflect this authorial vision, it would seem that one needs to pay close attention to the symbolism of the characters and their actions and dialogue in order to grasp fully the meaning of Okara’s *The Voice*. This will facilitate one's appreciation of the novelist's technique of highlighting the predicament of the social reformer in a predominantly corrupt society .

Furthermore, the use of different human body parts like “eyes”, “hands”, and “chest” can be seen in the novel. The manner of beating Okolo is found in the novel in the following:

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“Okolo and the men fell to the ground. Hands clawed at him, a thousand hands, the hands of the world.” (Okara, 1964, p. 15).

Okolo ultimately resigned to his fate. He ponders the meaning of life, finding satisfaction in his own conclusion, and resolves to keep his inside as clean as the sky. However, he recognizes that his purity poses too great a threat to those seeking or grasping for a meaning of life elsewhere (Hinde, 2019). Okara states in *The Voice* (1964):

Yes, each one has a meaning of life to himself. And that is perhaps the root of the conflict. No one can enter another’s inside. You try to enter and are kicked out the door. You allow another to enter your inside and see everything in it, you are regarded as one without a chest or as one who nothing knows (Okara, 1964, p. 7).

3.4 Okolo’s Search for Truth

In his introduction, Arthur Ravenscroft begins “Okolo's musing about relationships between human beings, and the effect that one man’s words and actions can have on the lives of everyone who has known him.” (Okara, 1964, p.6). Also, there is miles of this conviction approximately. The interdependence of human beings upon one another is important to Okolo's quest for it inside the story, and to his inclined sacrifice of himself for the sake of truth and integrity.

Okolo is the young man who was mocked and despised by the people for daring to think for himself and contemplating the meaning of life. Okara, in his novel, shows his attempts in different ways: “So he started his search for *it*. And this stopped the Elders from slapping their thighs in joy because of the coming thing” (Okara, 1964, p. 23)

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Curious parallels have been drawn between Okolo, the central character in *the Voice*, and several other literary characters. For instance, Sunday Anozie sees Okolo in the light of Hamlet, seeking to get to the “bottom” of things but having to run his head against the wall constituted by the usurping King Cladius. He also identifies *The Voice* thematic echoes from Conrad's *Victory* and claims that the tragedy of Okolo is comparable to that of Axell Heyst (Ashaolu, 1974). Eustace Palmer likens Okolo to Christian in Eustace Palmer likens Okolo to Christian in Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which is a Christian allegory, and in Man in Armah's *The Beautiful Ones* novel.

who are not yet born because all these characters in their search for salvation. The main character, Okolo, is conveyed principally as a person who is in search of “it”. This is a quality or value which is never clearly defined but which is associated in a passage that presents his thinking on the subject with a sense of the meaning of life:

So Okolo for three days and three nights sitting with his knees drawn up to his chin, talked in his inside and in the end agreed with his inside that everybody has or ought to have a purpose apart from bearing children and the sweetness of one's inside in the word is fulfilment of that purpose. (Okara, 1964,p. 112).

3. 5 Cultural Disagreement

Okolo, no doubt, is the summation of the bits and pieces of the alienated personae of Okara's poems; he is, indeed, a transformation of these poetic identities into an almost mystic and visionary “voice” calling out to mankind, but falling on deaf ears. But, contrary to Anozie's contention, Okolo does not emerge as a man of two cultures: the traditional African and the Western European who, like the persona in Okara's “Piano and Drums,” is equally lost in the “labyrinth” and “complexities” of their musical artifact (Ashaolu, 1979). We cannot

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even identify the central dilemma of Okolo, if any, as how to strike a balance between what is and what ought to be (Ashaolu,1979).

One would think that Okolo is obsessed with the internal call to transform his society's social and spiritual decadence into what he calls "moral rectitude," rather than the mission of striking a balance between the two. The mode of conflict, which Anozie's argument suggests, has no place in the novel. To identify the predicament of Okolo with cultural conflicts, as the critic has done, is to misunderstand Okolo's inside voice and its function in the novel. The critic's allegation of Okara's poverty of art and vision would seem to be an unfair devaluation of the novelist's skill in creating a highly symbolic character who represents an ideal. This ideal is attainable (Ibid).

3.6 The Experience of Gabriel Okara's in Presenting the Living Reality

Okara, a modern African writer, with his novel *The Voice* shows real-life cases. Djénéba Traoré states in his book *African Literature from the Oral Tradition to Current Trends*:

Situations that appeared after the country's wide independence. The writers emphasize in their novels, in unique ways, especially nepotism, enrichment, nasty groups, pricey ways of life, as well as poverty, manners-decay, unemployment, and the destruction of the individual through the deformed capitalist system (Traoré, 2010, p.19).

In African literary writing, however, Gabriel Okara, as a modern African writer, translated straight from the Ijo (Ijaw) language, so he immersed the Ijo linguistic rules into English in order to give literal expression to African thoughts and pictures. Moreover, the

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experimentation of Gabriel Okara in his novel creatively creates a symbolic image, in which the forces of traditional African culture and Western materialism fight: “Some of the townsmen said Okolo’s eyes were not right, his head was not correct. This they said was the result of his knowing too much book” (Okara, 1964, p. 23).

The writer formulates, notwithstanding, an alternative perception of African modernity through a creative forging from the furnace of the African cultural experience, an experience which includes many-sided, having sprung from the encounters with alien cultures and religions and problems inner to the practice of the indigenous cultural thoughts and values themselves (Caldeira, 2016).

As black writers in America and the Caribbean struggled to express themselves in the language of those who enslaved them, black African writers experimented with various approaches to communicating the experience of colonization and the feeling of their traditional cultures in European languages. A number of the most well-known West African writers working within the English language include Gabriel Okara, considered one of the founders of modern African literature. Gabriel Okara shows the experience of the English language in *The Voice* by the following: “If my left foot hits something as I walk, it’s a warning to be [...] He always speaks of change” (Okara, 1964, p. 35).

The Voice is perhaps the sublimation in the prose fiction of Okara's poetic visions of his mission through literary creativity to reform and purify society (Ashaolu, 1979).

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3.6.1 Words in *The Voice*

Some words such as “chest” and “eyes” are used for people who flow with the tide, people unable to take a stand. They seem to have given up morals and values for the trinity of gold, iron, and concrete. Everybody who is inside is filled with money, cars, and concrete houses (Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). Tuere challenges the people of Amatu in the following manner: “Doesn’t shame fall on your head, you man without a chest, for saying, you want to burn a woman’s house.” (Okara, 1964, p. 36).

3.6.2 Ijaw Worldview

In the novel *The Voice*, instead of using words like “soul” or “spirit,” Okara uses the word ‘inside’ and ‘shadow’. He avoids the former in order to convey an essentially Ijaw worldview. In his book *Post-Colonial Novel-Narrative of Colonial Consciousness*, Juneja states:

“In English, words like ‘inside’ are connotative of digestive system [...] but in the novel *The Voice*, Gabriel Okara solves this problem by building up these concepts of ‘inside’ within the novel itself.” (Juneja, 1995, p.126)

Okara molds the English language to bring out the local flavor, and the thinking and speaking habits of the people. Some of the words seen in the novel are “caring-nothing”, “know-God people”, “knowing-nothing footsteps”, “making-people”, “handsome day” and “never-happened before things.” There is dominance in terms of the use of figures of speech in the novel, such as metaphors, similes, and personification (Eve & Jeyachandra, 2017). In *The*

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Voice, Okara infuses local flavor into the English language in ways such as the following:

“Shuffling feet turned Okolo’s head to the doors” (Okara, 1964, p.40).

Conclusion

Chapter Three highlighted the differences between modernism and traditions in Gabriel Okara’s *The Voice*. Okara shows traditional rules through the first king of traditions, Chief Ozongo. The writer uses the blind fealty of the locals and their daily life and Okolo, the protagonist, shows how modernism exists through his experimentation in *The Voice*.

It should be noted that Gabriel Okara employs a language experiment in which he translated directly from the Ijo (Ijaw) language, imposing the Ijo form on the English language in order to give literal expression to African ideas and images. The objective behind the overuse of those contradictory themes in *The Voice* is to highlight the writer’s own ideas and thoughts towards the authenticity of his country.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study revolved around the experience of Gabriel Okara in Nigeria. It traced African literature from the post-colonial period to the modern African era. It also represented a first step towards exploring Okara's creations and contributions to African literature, by translating the original language (Ijow) into English, or what we called (domestication), i.e. preserving the authenticity of the mother tongue.

Moreover, Okara sheds light on the themes related to the contradictory terms prevailing between tradition and modernity, by investigating two important characters in the novel, the hero Okolo and his constant search for truth or so-called (virtue) and his deterrence by his opponent Chief Izungu, who seeks the opposite (blind loyalty). Previous chapters sought to define the concepts of "modernity" and "tradition" in African literature, specifically in *The Voice*, and explained how the two are related in one way and separated in another. When the novel and its characters come under scrutiny, traditional norms can be touched upon in the authoritarian leader and the daily life of the locals, while modernity is traced in the heroic character, Okolo.

This study aimed to explain the contradictions between the two topics of modernity and the corresponding tradition in terms of their compatibility. We tried to explore the connections and differences between them as well, and to show the writer's goals in his use of modernity and tradition in the novel, which was not random. The main objective of this study was to reveal the domestication of the English language to effectively express the African culture in the selected novel. It is reasonable to conclude that African literature has its own roots in oral traditions and the culture of the people. It should be noted that the linguistic resources of this cultural environment are rich enough to bear the weight and depth of people's

experiences and visions. Indeed, this study helped to tie the knot and decipher the symbols between the writer and the reader as a major contributor to African literature. The contradictory use of modernity and tradition adds depth to the novel by an implicit reference to the commonly used idea of good and evil and by highlighting the hero's search for and influence on truth, and the blindness of the villagers, allegiance to Governor Izungu.

We hope that this research work has brilliantly revealed the contradictions between modernity and tradition in the novel and its importance in African literature. Likewise, this study served as a starting point for further related works in the future.

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Résumé

Parallèlement à la vague littéraire post-coloniale en Afrique, la résistance a été reflétée par une variété de techniques et de stratégies, à ce titre, la préservation des traditions littéraires africaines. La présente étude examine en profondeur la représentation des traditions et de la modernité dans *The Voice* (1964) de Gabriel Okara et la raison d'être de l'utilisation de ces aspects contradictoires dans la littérature africaine. Parallèlement à une telle analyse, des informations sur la littérature, la culture et l'histoire africaines sont fournies. De même, les conceptions de la modernité et des traditions sont définies par rapport au contexte africain. Binarisme entre la modernité et les traditions est implicite à bien des égards que la relation entre le chef Izongu et Okolo. L'étude, par conséquent, fournit une analyse pratique de la façon dont le cadre, la langue, le style, les caractères, le statut social et les traditions culturelles sont présentés dans le roman dans le but de comparer le rôle du héros dans le roman en tant que personnage moderne éclairé et les communautés en tant que représentants des traditions et du patrimoine africain. La langue maternelle préserve l'élégance et l'originalité du roman malgré les différentes formes littéraires de l'oralité africaine et celles de la littérature moderne.

Mots-clés : Modernité, traditions, littérature africaine, originalité, oralité africaine.

الملخص

بالتزامن مع الموجة الأدبية بعد الاستعمار، انعكست المقاومة من خلال مجموعة متنوعة من التقنيات والاستراتيجيات، مثل الحفاظ على التقاليد الأدبية الأفريقية. تتعمق هذه الدراسة في تمثيل التقاليد والحداثة في *The Voice* لغابرييل أوكارا (١٩٦٤) والأساس المنطقي وراء استخدام مثل هذه الجوانب المتناقضة في الأدب الأفريقي. إلى جانب هذا التحليل، يتم منح رؤى حول الأدب والثقافة والتاريخ الأفريقي. وبالمثل، فإن مفهوم الحداثة والتقاليد محدد فيما يتعلق بالسياق الأفريقي. الثنائية بين الحداثة والتقاليد ضمنية من نواح كثيرة، على سبيل المثال العلاقة بين الزعيم إيزونغو وأوكولو. ومن ثم، تقدم الدراسة تحليلاً عملياً لكيفية عرض الإعداد واللغة والأسلوب والشخصيات والمكانة الاجتماعية والتقاليد الثقافية في الرواية. بهدف مقارنة دور البطل في الرواية كشخصية حديثة مستنيرة والمجتمع كمثل للتقاليد والتراث الأفريقي. ولإنجاز هذه المهمة، يُختار اتباع نهج وصفي تحليلي. على أمل فهم جوهر الشخصية الرئيسية، التي هي مثيرة للاهتمام واستبطانيه وموحية إلى ما لا نهاية، يُنظر إلى الرواية وفقاً للعدسة التحليلية النفسية. حافظت اللغة الأم على الأناقة والأصالة في الرواية على الرغم من الأشكال الأدبية المختلفة للشهية الأفريقية والأدب الحديث من خلال تحليل الأجهزة والأدوات الأسلوبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحداثة، التقاليد، الأدب الأفريقي، الأصالة، الشهية الأفريقية.