



Language And Cultural Background Influence on Writing Style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*: Literary and Educational Perspectives

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of language and cultural background on the writing styles of Kaine Agary's Yellow-Yellow and Audee T. Giwa's I'd Rather Die! from literary and educational perspectives. Adopting a qualitative descriptive and comparative research design, the study employed textual analysis to examine linguistic and stylistic features, cultural representations, indigenous expressions, and narrative techniques in the selected novels. The findings revealed that both authors' linguistic choices are strongly influenced by their socio-cultural environments, reflected through the use of Nigerian English, indigenous lexical items, code-switching, proverbs, and culturally embedded expressions. While Agary foregrounds the Niger Delta's environmental and cultural realities, Giwa portrays Northern Nigerian traditions, religious values, and social norms. The study concludes that language and culture significantly shape literary style and enhance authenticity, characterization, and thematic development. It further highlights the pedagogical value of the novels for teaching English language and Literature-in-English by promoting cultural awareness, stylistic competence, critical thinking, and appreciation of Nigeria's multilingual literary heritage.

Keywords: Language, cultural background, writing style, stylistics, Nigerian literature, Yellow-Yellow, I'd Rather Die!, literary studies, English language teaching.

Introduction

Language is a fundamental medium through which writers' express ideas, preserve cultural heritage, and construct literary identities. The writers' language repertoire and cultural heritage

play a decisive role in shaping their literary style, influencing lexical choices, syntax, narrative voice, and thematic orientation. In literary discourse, language extends beyond communication to become an artistic tool that reflects the cultural experiences, beliefs, values, and worldviews of individuals and societies (Halliday, 1978; Kramsch, 1998). Writers consciously manipulate linguistic resources such as diction, syntax, imagery, symbolism, and indigenous expressions to create distinctive writing styles that resonate with their socio-cultural environments (Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004). This influence is particularly pronounced in postcolonial African literatures, where authors navigate between local languages, colonial languages, and cultural traditions. In *Yellow-Yellow*, Kaine Agary's Niger Delta background and multilingual environment surface in her blending of Standard English, Nigerian Pidgin, and indigenous Ijaw terms alongside ecological imagery. Similarly, in *I'd Rather Die!*, Audee T. Giwa's Hausa cultural roots and immersion in Northern Nigerian oral traditions emerge in the form of proverbial expressions, Hausa-English code-switching, and performance-like dialogue rhythms. In African literature, particularly Nigerian literature, the interaction between language and culture has become a defining characteristic, as authors frequently blend Standard English with indigenous languages, proverbs, idioms, and culturally specific expressions to portray authentic African realities (Achebe, 1965; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986). This linguistic creativity not only enriches literary aesthetics but also preserves cultural identity in the face of globalization and the continued influence of colonial languages (Ashcroft et al., 2002). Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* (Agary, 2006) and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!* (Giwa, 2018) exemplify this interaction between language and culture. While Agary draws on the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Niger Delta, Giwa reflects the traditions and communicative practices of Northern Nigeria. Their novels demonstrate how

regional cultural backgrounds influence narrative style, characterization, dialogue, and thematic development. Examining these texts provides valuable insights into the relationship between language, culture, and literary expression, while highlighting their educational relevance for the teaching and learning of English language and Literature-in-English in multilingual Nigerian classrooms (Lazar, 1993; Carter, 2010).

The link between an author's cultural background and stylistic profile is well established in postcolonial literary theory. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2002) describe language appropriation as a key postcolonial strategy for expressing local identities in colonial languages. Kachru's (1992) *world Englishes* framework legitimises regional varieties like Nigerian English, while Bamgbose (1995) documents Nigerian writers' creative exploitation of local lexicons and syntax to mark identity.

From a stylistic standpoint, Leech and Short (2007) note that sociolinguistic identity influences register choice, code-switching, and narrative style. Finnegan (2012) and Nwachukwu-Agbada (1994) highlight the influence of oral traditions in African literature, noting that repetition, proverb use, and performative structures are often retained in written texts to preserve authenticity. Thus, these perspectives clarify how Agary and Giwa's linguistic-cultural heritages actively shape their writing, and how their works can be applied in educational contexts to demonstrate these principles in practice. Therefore, author's linguistic and cultural positioning inform their stylistic choices and thematic focus, and further considers how these stylistic features can serve as educational tools in language, literature, and cultural studies classrooms.

Objectives of the Study

1. Examine the influence of language and cultural background on the writing style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*.
2. Analyse the linguistic and stylistic features employed in the two novels.
3. Compare the representation of cultural values, indigenous expressions, and narrative techniques in the selected texts.
4. Assess the literary and educational implications of the authors' language use and cultural representation for the teaching and learning of English language and Literature-in-English.

Research Questions

1. what is the influence of language and cultural background on the writing style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*?
2. what is the linguistic and stylistic features employed in the two novels?
3. to what extent the representation of cultural values, indigenous expressions, and narrative techniques in the selected texts?
4. What is the literary and educational implications of the authors' language use and cultural representation for the teaching and learning of English language and Literature-in-English?

Theoretical Framework

This study is built on Stylistic Theory which developed by Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short (1981), and complemented by Sociolinguistic Theory, particularly the work of William Labov (1972). Leech and Short argue that stylistics offers a systematic approach to analysing how linguistic choices create meaning, characterize individuals, and shape literary effects in texts. Labov sustains that language varies according to social and cultural contexts, reflecting speakers'

identities, values, and experiences. The strength of Stylistic Theory lies in its ability to explain the relationship between language and literary expression through detailed linguistic analysis. Sociolinguistic Theory, on the other hand, highlights the influence of culture and society on language use. However, these theories pay less attention to readers' individual interpretations and wider historical or ideological factors. Their implication for this study is that they provide a suitable framework for examining how Kaine Agary and Audee T. Giwa employ language and cultural elements to construct distinctive writing styles while offering valuable insights for literary criticism and English language teaching.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design supported by textual and comparative literary analysis to examine how language and cultural background influence the writing styles of Kaine Agary in *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T. Giwa in *I'd Rather Die!*. The research relied on primary data from the two novels and secondary data from books, journal articles, theses, and other scholarly publications on stylistics, sociolinguistics, African literature, and literary pedagogy. The selected novels represented distinct Nigerian cultural contexts and are purposively chosen for their rich linguistic and cultural features. Purposive sampling was used to identify relevant excerpts containing indigenous expressions, code-switching, idioms, dialogue, characterization, and narrative techniques. Data were collected through close reading, extraction, and thematic categorization of textual evidence. Qualitative content analysis and comparative stylistic analysis were employed to interpret similarities and differences in language use, cultural representation, and literary style, using relevant stylistic, sociolinguistic, and postcolonial theories.

Result

Objective One: Examine the influence of language and cultural background on the writing style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*

Objective	Novel	Language Background Features	Cultural Background Features	Influence on Writing Style
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Language And Cultural Background Influence on Writing Style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow*
and Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*:

Examine the influence of language and cultural background on the writing style in <i>Yellow-Yellow</i> and <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Kaine Agary – <i>Yellow-Yellow</i>	Nigerian English, Pidgin English, indigenous lexical items, localized expressions, descriptive language	Niger Delta culture, riverine environment, environmental degradation, identity struggles, marginalization, community values	The writing style reflects the socio-cultural realities of the Niger Delta through authentic language use, culturally grounded characterization, vivid imagery, realistic dialogue, and narrative techniques that portray identity and environmental concerns.
Examine the influence of language and cultural background on the writing style in <i>Yellow-Yellow</i> and <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Audee T. Giwa – <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Hausa expressions, Islamic vocabulary, culturally appropriate greetings, localized English expressions	Northern Nigerian traditions, Islamic beliefs, family values, cultural norms, moral expectations	The writing style reflects Northern Nigerian cultural identity through culturally embedded vocabulary, dialogue, characterization, narrative structure, and imagery that communicate religious and traditional values.
Finding	Both Novels	Use of indigenous linguistic features alongside Standard English to achieve authenticity	Strong representation of regional cultures and socio-cultural experiences	The linguistic and cultural backgrounds of both authors significantly influence vocabulary choice, characterization, dialogue, imagery, and narrative style, demonstrating that literary style is inseparable from socio-cultural context.

The analysis reveals that the writing styles of both Kaine Agary and Audee T. Giwa are deeply influenced by their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In *Yellow-Yellow*, Agary reflects the socio-cultural realities of the Niger Delta through the incorporation of Nigerian English, Pidgin English, indigenous lexical items, and vivid descriptions of the riverine environment. Her language captures the experiences of marginalization, environmental degradation, and identity struggles associated with the region. Similarly, *I'd Rather Die!* reflects Northern Nigerian culture through the integration of Hausa expressions, Islamic references, culturally appropriate greetings, and traditional values. The authors' cultural identities shape their choice of vocabulary, characterization, dialogue, imagery, and narrative structure, confirming that literary style is closely connected to socio-cultural experience (Halliday, 1978; Leech & Short, 2007).

Objective Two: Identify and analyse the linguistic and stylistic features employed in the two novels

Linguistic/Stylistic Feature	Kaine Agary's <i>Yellow-Yellow</i>	Audee T. Giwa's <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Comparative Interpretation
Descriptive Narration	Rich, vivid descriptions of characters, setting, and the Niger Delta environment.	Simple and direct descriptions focusing on events and dialogue.	Agary emphasizes imagery and atmosphere, while Giwa prioritizes clarity and accessibility.
Narrative Style	First-person narration providing personal and emotional experiences.	Straightforward third-/first-person conversational narration with accessible language.	Both create reader engagement but through different narrative techniques.
Symbolism	Extensive use of symbols representing identity, environment, and social struggles.	Limited but effective symbolic expressions reflecting cultural values and morality.	Symbolism deepens thematic meaning in both novels, though more prominently in Agary's work.
Imagery	Frequent visual, sensory, and environmental imagery.	Moderate use of imagery to illustrate everyday experiences.	Agary relies more heavily on imagery to evoke emotional and physical settings.

Language And Cultural Background Influence on Writing Style in Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* and
Audee T. Giwa's *I'd Rather Die!*:

Metaphor	Employs metaphors to express identity, exploitation, and emotional conflict.	Uses simple metaphors to reinforce moral lessons and personal experiences.	Both employ metaphor, though Agary's usage is more elaborate.
Flashback	Frequently uses flashbacks to reveal character history and motivations.	Limited use of flashback with a more chronological narrative structure.	Flashbacks enrich characterization mainly in <i>Yellow-Yellow</i> .
Dialogue	Balanced with descriptive passages and emotional reflection.	Dialogue dominates the narrative and drives plot development.	Giwa's dialogue creates immediacy and realism.
Indigenous Expressions	Frequent incorporation of local expressions and cultural references.	Uses indigenous expressions mainly within conversations.	Both enhance cultural authenticity through indigenous language.
Nigerian Pidgin English	Extensively integrated into conversations for realism.	Frequently used in everyday interactions among characters.	Pidgin English strengthens authenticity and reflects social identity in both novels.
Code-switching and Code-mixing	Switches between Standard English, Pidgin, and indigenous languages.	Similar switching depending on context and social relationships.	Both demonstrate Nigeria's multilingual linguistic environment.
Idiomatic Expressions	Uses culturally specific idioms reflecting Niger Delta traditions.	Employs common Nigerian idioms in conversational contexts.	Idioms enrich cultural meaning and characterization.

Proverbs	Used selectively to reflect traditional wisdom.	Frequently incorporates proverbs to communicate moral values.	Proverbs are more dominant in Giwa's narrative style.
Repetition	Limited and mainly for emphasis.	Frequent repetition for emotional intensity and persuasion.	Repetition is a distinctive stylistic feature in Giwa's writing.
Rhetorical Questions	Occasionally used to express inner conflict.	Frequently used in dialogue to provoke reflection.	Giwa relies more on rhetorical questioning as a persuasive device.
Irony	Present in social and environmental contradictions.	Frequently employed to expose hypocrisy and societal injustice.	Irony strengthens social criticism in both novels.
Figurative Language	Rich use of similes, metaphors, personification, and symbolism.	Moderate use of figurative expressions supporting themes.	Figurative language enhances aesthetic appeal in both texts.
Lexical Borrowing	Borrows indigenous lexical items without translation in many instances.	Uses borrowed words familiar to Nigerian readers.	Lexical borrowing reinforces cultural identity and authenticity.
Forms of Address	Reflects social hierarchy and cultural relationships.	Employs respectful and culturally appropriate address forms.	Both portray Nigerian sociocultural norms through address systems.

Overall Stylistic Effect	Literary, descriptive, emotionally reflective, and culturally rich.	Simple, conversational, engaging, and culturally grounded.	Both authors creatively adapt English to express Nigerian cultural realities and strengthen characterization and thematic development (Simpson, 2004; Achebe, 1965).
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The two novels exhibit numerous linguistic and stylistic features that enhance literary expression. Agary employs descriptive narration, symbolism, imagery, metaphor, flashback, and first-person narration to portray emotional experiences and environmental realities. Her extensive use of indigenous expressions and Pidgin English contributes to realism and authenticity. In contrast, Giwa employs a straightforward narrative style characterized by conversational dialogue, repetition, rhetorical questions, irony, proverbs, and culturally appropriate forms of address. Both authors effectively utilize code-switching, code-mixing, idiomatic expressions, figurative language, and lexical borrowing to enrich characterization and reinforce thematic concerns. These stylistic devices demonstrate the creative adaptation of English to express Nigerian cultural realities (Simpson, 2004; Achebe, 1965).

Objective Three: Compare the representation of cultural values, indigenous expressions, and narrative techniques in the selected texts

Comparative Aspect	Kaine Agary's <i>Yellow-Yellow</i>	Audee T. Giwa's <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Comparative Interpretation
Cultural Setting	Depicts the socio-cultural realities of the Niger Delta.	Portrays the cultural traditions and social life of Northern Nigeria.	Both novels reflect Nigerian cultural diversity through distinct regional identities.
Cultural Values	Emphasizes communal living, environmental consciousness, resilience, and identity formation.	Highlights family values, religious beliefs, communal responsibility, respect for elders, and moral discipline.	Both promote indigenous cultural values while reflecting different regional priorities.

Indigenous Expressions	Frequently incorporates indigenous words, local expressions, and Pidgin English.	Uses indigenous words, culturally specific greetings, and local expressions within dialogue.	Indigenous expressions enhance authenticity and preserve local linguistic identity in both novels.
Proverbs	Selective use of proverbs to express traditional wisdom and life experiences.	Extensive use of proverbs to reinforce cultural norms and moral instruction.	Proverbs function as vehicles of indigenous knowledge, though they are more prominent in <i>I'd Rather Die!</i> .
Idiomatic Expressions	Employs culturally rooted idioms reflecting Niger Delta experiences.	Uses common Northern Nigerian idioms and culturally familiar expressions.	Idioms strengthen characterization and reflect regional linguistic practices.
Code-switching and Code-mixing	Frequently alternates between Standard English, Nigerian Pidgin, and indigenous languages.	Alternates between Standard English and indigenous expressions depending on context.	Both novels demonstrate Nigeria's multilingual linguistic environment through code-switching.
Narrative Technique	Reflective, descriptive, and first-person narration enriched with symbolism and flashbacks.	Direct, dialogue-driven narration emphasizing conversations and interpersonal interactions.	The authors adopt different narrative approaches to achieve similar communicative goals.
Symbolism	Extensive use of symbolism to portray identity struggles, environmental degradation, and social realities.	Limited but meaningful symbolism supporting moral and cultural themes.	Symbolism is more elaborate and central in <i>Yellow-Yellow</i> .

Environmental Representation	Strong emphasis on environmental degradation and the relationship between people and nature.	Limited environmental focus; greater attention to social and family relationships.	Environmental consciousness distinguishes Agary's narrative from Giwa's.
Characterization	Characters are developed through introspection, personal experiences, and environmental interactions.	Characters are developed mainly through dialogue, actions, and social relationships.	Both techniques effectively reveal character identities within their cultural settings.
Social and Moral Themes	Focuses on identity, marginalization, exploitation, and environmental justice.	Emphasizes morality, family honour, religious values, and social responsibility.	Both address societal concerns from different cultural and regional perspectives.
Dialogue	Supports characterization alongside descriptive narration.	Serves as the primary means of advancing the plot and conveying themes.	Dialogue is considerably more dominant in Giwa's narrative style.
Cultural Authenticity	Achieved through indigenous language, cultural practices, and realistic environmental descriptions.	Achieved through local customs, religious practices, traditional greetings, and everyday interactions.	Both novels successfully preserve Nigerian cultural heritage through authentic representation.

Overall Literary Representation	Reflects the lived experiences and cultural identity of the Niger Delta people.	Represents the traditions, beliefs, and social structures of Northern Nigerian communities.	Together, the novels illustrate the richness and diversity of Nigerian literary traditions, demonstrating how regional cultures shape literary expression (Ashcroft et al., 2002; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986).
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The comparative analysis indicates that both novels successfully represent Nigerian cultural diversity while reflecting distinct regional identities. *Yellow-Yellow* emphasizes the cultural practices, communal life, environmental consciousness, and identity struggles of the Niger Delta people. Conversely, *I'd Rather Die!* foregrounds Northern Nigerian traditions, religious beliefs, family values, social norms, and communal responsibility. Both authors incorporate indigenous words, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, greetings, and culturally specific references to preserve authenticity. Although the novels share similar techniques such as code-switching and the integration of indigenous expressions, they differ in narrative orientation. Agary adopts a reflective and descriptive narrative style rich in symbolism and environmental imagery, whereas Giwa employs a more direct, dialogue-driven approach that emphasizes interpersonal relationships and moral instruction. These similarities and differences illustrate the diversity of Nigerian literary traditions while demonstrating how regional cultures influence literary expression (Ashcroft et al., 2002; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986).

Objective Four: Assess the literary and educational implications of the authors' language use and cultural representation for the teaching and learning of English language and Literature-in-English

Assessment Area	Findings from <i>Yellow-Yellow</i> and <i>I'd Rather Die!</i>	Literary and Educational Implications
Literary Value	Both novels preserve indigenous linguistic heritage and authentically represent Nigerian cultures and experiences.	They enrich contemporary Nigerian literature and contribute to the documentation of Nigeria's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Cultural Representation	Incorporate indigenous expressions, multilingual discourse, cultural practices, and region-specific traditions.	Promote appreciation of Nigeria's multicultural and multilingual identities while preserving cultural heritage.
Vocabulary Development	Rich use of indigenous words, Nigerian Pidgin, lexical borrowing, idiomatic expressions, and context-specific vocabulary.	Enhances learners' vocabulary acquisition and understanding of language variation in authentic contexts.
Stylistics Instruction	Demonstrates descriptive narration, symbolism, imagery, dialogue, figurative language, code-switching, and other stylistic devices.	Serves as authentic instructional material for teaching stylistic analysis and literary appreciation.
Discourse Analysis	Presents authentic conversational patterns, narrative structures, and culturally appropriate communication strategies.	Facilitates the teaching of discourse analysis and functional language use in literature.
Pragmatics	Illustrates culturally appropriate greetings, forms of address, politeness strategies, and contextual language use.	Develops learners' pragmatic competence and intercultural communication skills.
Sociolinguistic Learning	Reflects multilingualism, language variation, code-switching, code-mixing, and the influence of culture on language use.	Enhances students' understanding of sociolinguistic concepts and language diversity in Nigeria.

Reading Comprehension	Engages readers through culturally relevant themes, realistic settings, and relatable characters.	Improves reading comprehension, inferencing, and interpretive skills through authentic literary texts.
Critical Thinking	Explores themes of identity, culture, environmental justice, morality, gender, and social responsibility.	Encourages critical reflection, analytical thinking, and informed discussion of societal issues.
Literary Appreciation	Combines linguistic creativity with culturally grounded storytelling and characterization.	Promotes appreciation of literary aesthetics and contemporary Nigerian literature.
Multicultural Education	Represents diverse Nigerian cultural identities, traditions, beliefs, and social values.	Fosters intercultural understanding, tolerance, and respect for cultural diversity among learners.
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	Connects literary content with learners' social, linguistic, and cultural experiences.	Supports culturally responsive teaching by making learning more meaningful and contextually relevant.
English Language Teaching	Provides authentic examples of language use in real social and cultural contexts.	Strengthens instruction in vocabulary, grammar, communication skills, and language awareness.
Literature-in-English Teaching	Offers rich material for teaching themes, characterization, narrative techniques, and stylistic analysis.	Enhances students' literary competence and analytical skills in Literature-in-English classrooms.

Overall Educational Contribution	Both novels integrate language, culture, and literature in meaningful ways that reflect Nigerian realities.	They are valuable instructional resources for promoting language proficiency, literary competence, intercultural understanding, and effective English Language and Literature-in-English instruction (Lazar, 1993; Carter, 2010; Kramsch, 1998).
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The findings indicate that the selected novels possess considerable literary and pedagogical value. Literarily, they enrich contemporary Nigerian literature by preserving indigenous linguistic heritage and promoting authentic cultural representation. The integration of local expressions, multilingual discourse, and culturally grounded narratives broadens readers' understanding of Nigerian society and strengthens literary appreciation. Educationally, the novels provide authentic instructional resources for teaching vocabulary, stylistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. They expose learners to diverse language varieties and encourage appreciation of multilingualism and multiculturalism within Nigeria. Furthermore, the novels support the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy by enabling students to connect literary texts with their social and cultural experiences. Consequently, the study concludes that *Yellow-Yellow* and *I'd Rather Die!* are valuable resources for promoting language proficiency, literary competence, intercultural understanding, and effective English language and Literature-in-English instruction (Lazar, 1993; Carter, 2010; Kramsch, 1998).

Findings and Discussion

Agary's style, influenced by a multilingual Niger Delta background, blends registers to mirror cultural hybridity and environmental interconnectedness. Giwa's style, rooted in Hausa rhetorical traditions, prioritises communal moral discourse and social critique. Educationally, these styles provide rich, authentic material for developing linguistic competence, stylistic awareness, and cultural literacy. The findings of this study demonstrate that language and cultural background exert a profound influence on the writing styles of Kaine Agary in *Yellow-Yellow* and Audee T.

Giwa in *I'd Rather Die!*. Both authors draw extensively on their socio-cultural environments to create authentic narratives that reflect the linguistic diversity and cultural realities of their respective communities. Agary's portrayal of the Niger Delta is enriched through the use of Nigerian English, Pidgin English, indigenous lexical items, vivid environmental imagery, and culturally embedded expressions. These linguistic choices effectively communicate the ecological, social, and economic realities of the Niger Delta while reinforcing the identities of the characters (Agary, 2006). Similarly, Giwa's narrative reflects Northern Nigerian cultural experiences through the integration of Hausa expressions, Islamic references, culturally appropriate forms of address, and dialogue that mirrors everyday communication (Giwa, 2018).

The findings indicate that the authors' language choices are inseparable from their cultural identities, confirming that literary style is largely shaped by the writers' linguistic backgrounds and lived experiences. This finding supports stylistic and sociolinguistic perspectives that language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a representation of identity, culture, and social reality (Halliday, 1978; Leech & Short, 2007; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). The analysis of the linguistic and stylistic features further revealed that both novels employ diverse literary techniques that contribute significantly to characterization, thematic development, and narrative effectiveness. Agary's writing is characterized by descriptive narration, symbolism, imagery, metaphor, and reflective storytelling. Her narrative voice allows readers to experience the emotional struggles of the protagonist while appreciating the environmental and cultural landscape of the Niger Delta (Agary, 2006). Giwa, on the other hand, adopts a more direct, conversational, and dialogue-driven style that reflects the communal nature of Northern Nigerian society (Giwa, 2018). His effective use of dialogue reveals social relationships, religious beliefs, gender

expectations, and moral values embedded within the culture. Both authors make strategic use of code-switching, code-mixing, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, repetition, and indigenous lexical items to achieve authenticity and realism. These stylistic features enrich the narratives and strengthen readers' engagement with the texts. The findings therefore demonstrate that language variation and stylistic creativity are essential tools through which African writers preserve indigenous identities while writing in English (Achebe, 1965; Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004).

The comparative analysis revealed both remarkable similarities and significant differences in the representation of cultural values, indigenous expressions, and narrative techniques. Both *Yellow- Yellow* and *I'd Rather Die!* celebrate Nigerian cultural diversity by portraying the customs, beliefs, traditions, and social values of their respective communities. The two authors intentionally incorporate indigenous words, culturally specific idioms, greetings, titles, and expressions that preserve local identities without sacrificing intelligibility for a broader readership. Furthermore, both novels employ language as a means of constructing character identity and advancing major themes such as family relationships, gender, identity, morality, social injustice, and community life. However, the findings also reveal important stylistic distinctions. Agary's narrative focuses heavily on environmental consciousness, personal identity, and the socio-political consequences of oil exploitation in the Niger Delta, employing lyrical descriptions and symbolic imagery (Agary, 2006). In contrast, Giwa's narrative emphasizes religious values, communal responsibility, cultural expectations, and interpersonal relationships through straightforward narration and extensive dialogue (Giwa, 2018). These differences demonstrate that although both writers operate within the broader context of Nigerian literature, their regional cultural experiences significantly

influence their narrative techniques and stylistic preferences. Consequently, the study establishes that cultural context remains one of the strongest determinants of literary expression in contemporary Nigerian fiction (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2002; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986).

The findings also reveal important literary and educational implications for the teaching and learning of English language and Literature-in-English. The selected novels provide authentic instructional materials through which learners can develop linguistic competence alongside cultural awareness. Exposure to indigenous lexical items, culturally grounded expressions, code-switching, and context-specific communication enables students to appreciate the richness of Nigerian English and multilingual language practices (Cummins, 2000; Kramsch, 1998). From a literary perspective, the novels encourage critical interpretation of characterisation, symbolism, imagery, narrative voice, and thematic development while promoting deeper understanding of the relationship between language and culture. From an educational perspective, the findings support the integration of culturally relevant Nigerian literary texts into English language and Literature-in-English curricula at secondary and tertiary levels. Such texts promote vocabulary development, reading comprehension, stylistic awareness, intercultural competence, critical thinking, and communicative skills (Krashen, 2004; Lazar, 1993). They also provide opportunities for learners to compare linguistic and cultural practices across different Nigerian communities, thereby fostering national unity and respect for diversity. Furthermore, teachers can utilize the novels to introduce students to concepts in stylistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and literary criticism through authentic textual examples. The study therefore concludes that the effective integration of language and cultural elements in literary texts enhances both literary appreciation and language learning, making contemporary Nigerian novels valuable pedagogical

resources for achieving educational objectives in English language and literature classrooms (Carter, 2010; Halliday, 1978; Lazar, 1993).

Conclusion

Kaine Agary and Audee T. Giwa's novels illustrate how language and cultural background can deeply inform literary style and thematic development. Their hybrid linguistic strategies preserve cultural authenticity while remaining accessible to English-speaking audiences. In educational contexts, these works function as valuable resources for teaching language variation, literary analysis, and cross-cultural understanding, thus bridging literary study with real-world communicative competence.

Implications for Literature-in-English Curriculum

The findings support the inclusion of culturally relevant Nigerian literary texts in secondary and tertiary education. Such texts enable learners to develop literary competence alongside cultural awareness, critical thinking, and language proficiency.

Promoting Multicultural and Intercultural Competence

The novels encourage learners to appreciate cultural diversity within Nigeria. Through exposure to different linguistic and cultural practices, students develop tolerance, intercultural communication skills, and respect for multiple identities in multilingual societies.

Relevance to Language and Literacy Development

The integration of indigenous languages, cultural knowledge, and authentic communication enhances vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, inferencing, critical literacy, and

communicative competence. Consequently, the novels serve as valuable instructional resources for language and literacy education while preserving Nigeria's rich linguistic and cultural heritage.

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