

ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES IN AN ERA OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND CYBERCULTURE: 2ND LEAD PAPER PRESENTATION

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1.0 Introduction

The Chief Host, the Vice Chancellor, Professor M.K. Othman; the Host, the Dean, Faculty of Arts, Professor Bishir Sallau; the Convener, the Head, Department of English, Dr. Christopher Nwabudike (my dear brother from another womb, pioneer colleague of FUDMA, and my special brother-in-law), thank you for bringing me back to my root, Federal University Dutsin-Ma where I started my academic career. I am delighted that I am coming back to the great citadel that gave me the platform to nurture my academic dreams. LONG LIVE FUDMA! The indefatigable Local Organizing Chairperson, Professor Amodu Jonah (my teacher and my 3rd PhD supervisor) and the entire team, thank you for choosing me to handle this academic assignment. The distinguished keynote speaker, Professor Tanimu Abubakar, one of my silent academic mentors, thank you sir for standing by me in my ABU days. When the going became too tough, God raised you for me and you and Professor Liman cannot be forgotten in my academic journey. My fellow Lead paper presenter, Professor Rabi Ibrahim Abdulsalam, thank you all for the opportunity. Members of the press, esteemed delegates both physical and virtual participants, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming to this auspicious academic gathering.

It is a profound honour to stand before you today to deliver this lead paper on a theme that is not only timely but transformative. 'English and Literary Studies in an Era of High Technology and Cyberculture'. This enchanting theme compels us to rethink the foundations of our discipline, interrogate our pedagogies, and reimagine the future of language, literature, and scholarship in a world

increasingly shaped by digital technologies. Otherwise, very soon, there would be no students to teach physically in the classroom. It is pertinent for us to revisit some definitions of the key terms even though we may be familiar with them. We will focus on 'high technology & cyberculture' only.

High technology (often shortened as hi-tech) refers to advanced, sophisticated technology that uses cutting-edge scientific knowledge and innovation to perform complex tasks more efficiently than traditional methods. (Galbraith, 1967). It also involves modern, highly developed tools, machines, or systems that rely on advanced science, engineering, and computing. It uses advanced scientific research, involves complex systems or digital processes, often innovative and rapidly evolving, requires specialized knowledge or skills to develop or operate, improves speed, accuracy, efficiency, or intelligence with such examples as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, Robotics and automation, Bio-technology and genetic engineering, space technology and satellite systems advanced medical equipment (e.g., MRI scanners, robotic surgery), Nano-technology, High-performance computers and quantum computing. And in contrast, since there is high technology, there is also low technology, which relies on simple, traditional tools (e.g., manual farming tools). Medium technology involves some mechanization but less sophistication e.g., basic industrial machines or any manual equipment that requires much human effort, yet low productive outcomes fall in this category.

Cyberculture on the other hand refers to the social, cultural, and communicative practices that emerge from the use of digital technologies and the internet (Levy, P. 2001). It is the way people think, behave, communicate, create meaning, and form identities in online and digital environments. The key elements are online communication tools such as social media, emails, chats, emojis, and memes and the digital communities like virtual groups, forums, and gaming

communities. Another type is the online identities which include avatars, usernames, digital self-presentation, digital norms and values which inform such acts as netiquette, online ethics, cancel culture. Digital creativity includes memes, fan fiction, digital art. Virtual economies use crypto currency and online marketplaces. Cyber language considers slang, abbreviations, hashtags, etc. The lists are inexhaustible as technology daily evolves new ideas and remodelling of old ones.

There are huge examples of cyberculture especially as more Apps are being developed and each App has its operational mode, which informs new form of communication and other related cultural norms of use and usages. All Apps are developed to adapt or adopt a particular way of life, which includes or excludes users. For example, when Facebook emerged, there was nothing like Instagram. After some years, Instagram emerged with different features and system which are quite different from Facebook. Social media culture trends on platforms like X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Memes, online gaming and e-sports communities, Remote work and virtual classrooms. Influencers and Content-creators also have their culture. We also have online activism and hashtag movements. Cyberculture therefore, is the study of how digital technologies shape human culture, social interaction, language, power relations, and identity in cyberspace.

2.0 The State of English Language in the Hi-Tech & Cybercultural Age: English, Linguists & the Literary Scholars?

Statistics has shown that English continues to remain as the world leading language. This extant fact has raised a lot of scholarly attention especially since the 1985 Kachruvian Three Concentric Model. The model culminated into the World Englishes, which is premised on three approaches, the Inner, Outer and the Expanding Circles upon which he explicates the spread, the depth and the domains of use. Odebunmi (2017:17) explains that Kachru's model is followed by the international context of world Englishes and the implications of the spread for the circles in terms of linguistic and cultural properties.

He emphasized that the model described and prescribed concerns to theoretical and applied linguistic concepts such as ‘interference, errors, speech community, the native speaker and the ideal speaker-hearer ability. Kachru’s model has raised concerns among linguists and there have been so many criticisms which have revamped other views. The concern of this presentation is that Kachru’s model covertly or overtly did not capture cyberspace as one of the parameters that has spread the world Englishes. However, linguists are to revisit the model to include the cyberspace as another domain that is growing the English language because 80% of interactions on the cyberspace and technology is in English (see).

Extant works have shown that English plays three major roles in Nigeria, official, L2 and lingua-franca. Thus, any Nigerian on social media who wants to be heard by a larger audience uses English. In recent time, most social media users are keen about large followers, and this has placed the prestige status of English language much higher. The picture below informs the status of English language among the exoglossic languages.



Picture 1

The above pictorial is also another indication of the point being raised in this section. In the present treaty, the fact remains that English language continues to be the language visibility of technology, cyberspace, social media platforms and the internet and various discourses that the cyberculture has brought to the world. It remains the language of wider audience of the cyberspace, which is a great opportunity for an English linguist as h/she has a lot to explore in terms of research attribution and contribution to knowledge. Scholarly works such as Crystal (2004), avers that 'there is already a widespread popular mythology that the Internet is going to be bad for the future of language - that technospeak will rule, standards be lost, and creativity diminished as globalization imposes sameness. According to him the reverse is the case as the Internet is in fact enabling a dramatic expansion to take place in the range and variety of languages and is providing unprecedented opportunities for personal creativity. The Internet has now been around long enough for us to 'take a view' about the way in which it is being shaped by and is shaping language and languages...'. And as a matter of fact, technology has helped to grow language the more. Rotimi (2010), affirms that 'with the growth and advancement of digital communication technology over the past decade and the advent of modern telecommunications and the Internet, the structure of human behaviour and social interaction has been redesigned'. Faleke et'al (2024) corroborate with ibid that the human presence on cyberspace outnumbered that of the physical space in the 21st century as all kinds of human engagements is prevalent'. For example, cyberspace is a hub for most commercial, industrial, economic, spiritual, political, educational, etc., activities and other forms of innovations. In all these activities language is actively involved, and English language takes the lead.

English language remains the number one exoglossic global language in this era. It still maintains its prestige status globally. It continues to be the language that pulls large crowd of likes, share, love, reels, etc., in this age on social media. In Nigeria for example, because of the colonial history, English plays three functional roles- official,

second language and lingua franca and these have entrenched into the way we use the social media. We would therefore consider the scholarly works of Kachruvian (1985) Concentric circle as obsolete and the same goes for the rest that cropped up out of criticism of 1985's work. This is because technology has helped to grow the English language than it was some decades ago. This beckons that the English linguists have so much to do in terms of investigating language in use in two areas: the cyberspace and the terrestrial space.

Cyberculture has influenced linguistic disciplines in a novel area which gives a linguist the opportunity to explore language use in various ways and I refer to them as new forms of language such as emojis, acronyms (lol), code-switching/mixing. Another is discourse styles, which include informal language use, multimodal resources, rapid communication. There is Pragmatics sense such as online im/politeness, trolling, face-threatening acts. Sociolinguistics is a new social norm. Phonology includes so many accents, known/unknown pronunciation of words, Stylistics has variation of language use and usage, and Discourse Analysis has variant forms of Communication. Cyberculture reflects how humans adapt technology into daily life. The multimodality features of the cyberspace the oral speech of users are commonly detected and accents are easily identified, which is a good opportunity for phonologists and sociolinguists to explore accent variation and language variation in variant variables, especially as the space is a visa free access, people from all walks of life unveil their talents with no age limits. In picture two (2) is a boy whose video went viral, he is actively campaigning for President Tinubu's 2nd term. He passionately put his idea into lyrics and presented it in his own accent in an adulterated peculiar English with unknown accent, where '*continuity*' is acoustically realized as '*kontonity*', love as '*lof*', etc., all these linguistic features are not to be avoided by English linguists. Thus, Hi-Tech and cyberspace have paved a new door in a new era for linguists

to explore. It is an era of talent hunt, where English takes the lead and remains language to communicate membership.



Picture 2

3.0 The Evolution Story

Every era has its own story to tell. The world we live in is not static but dynamic. Its dynamism comes with new ideas of innovations to mark the era. This part of the presentation traced the evolution of linguistics from antiquity to cybage. Where each era had a remarkable impact in the field of linguistics. Though there were many criticisms, accusations, dislikes as we have in our own time but tracing back into history, we can testify that they were remarkable indeed. This study identifies seven (7) periods of remarkable linguistic change. The first era is known as the ancient era which birthed language Study as shown in table 1.

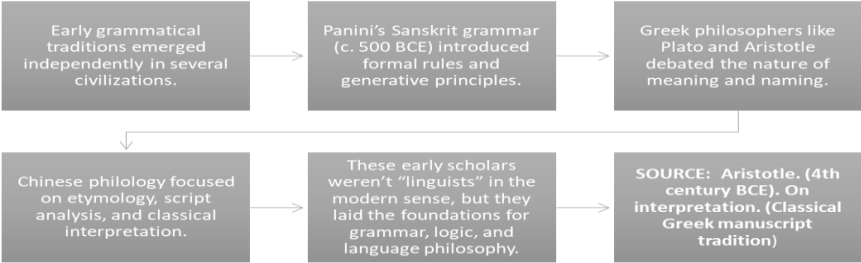


Table 1 (ChatGPT, generated)

The second era is known as the medieval era. This era marks the preservation and codification of Arabic linguistics, advanced phonetics, morphology, and syntax. Scholastic Europe studied Latin grammar and universal grammar ideas. It was an era where language standardization began and brought about religious and administrative growth. The era focused on preserving sacred texts and establishing rules for “correct” language. Then the third period marked the renaissance period. The Renaissance Period is said to be the enlightenment era that marked the comparative and curiosity discovery of language families through global exploration. Comparative philology emerged to trace relationships between languages. Proto-Indo-European reconstruction began with scholars like Sir William Jones. Language became a tool for understanding human history, migration, and culture.

The fourth era took place in the 19th Century. The era was a landmark of scientific linguistics. There emerged the *Neogrammarian* movement which insisted on systematic sound laws where Historical linguistics matured into a rigorous discipline and phonetics laboratories appeared with early recording technologies. The era also transformed linguistics into a science with testable hypotheses. Early Mid-20th Century era is known as a new dawn in the field of linguistics. It marked

the formulation of structuralism and the formalism approach as seen in table 2 below.

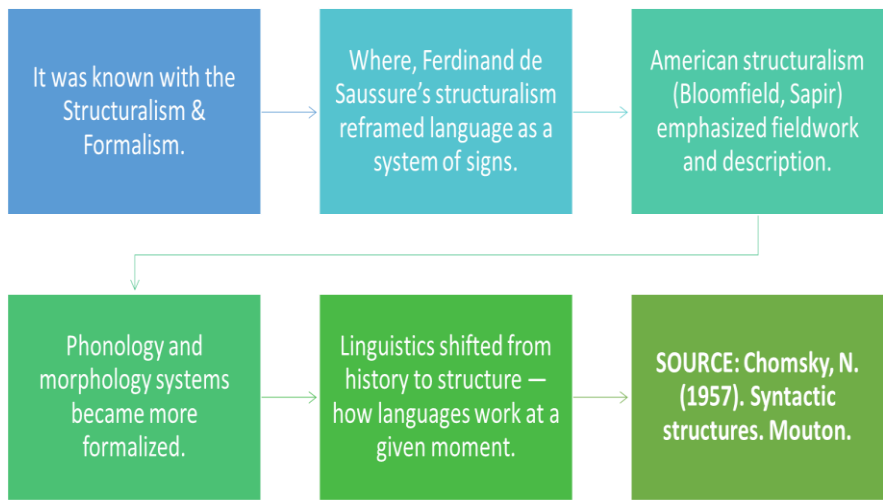


Table 2 (ChatGPT generated)

The sixth era is captured as ‘late 20th century’, an era that unveiled the Generative & Cognitive Revolutions, their focus is on *Mind, Meaning,* and *Society*, which was spearheaded by Noam Chomsky and Labov respectively. Chomsky introduced generative grammar, proposing an innate language faculty, which birthed Psycholinguistics, the discipline that explores how humans acquire and process language. Labov unveiled Sociolinguistics, the study of language variation and social identity. The era also introduced Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis and expanded the study of meaning beyond sentences. It was an era that contributed to the understanding that Language has cognitive, social, and communicative attributes. It could be recalled that Pragmatics as it were faced great opposition, where it was regarded as the ragbag in which all recalcitrant data are stored before it was finally

accepted on the linguistic map. Today, it has become the corner stone that the builder's rejected.

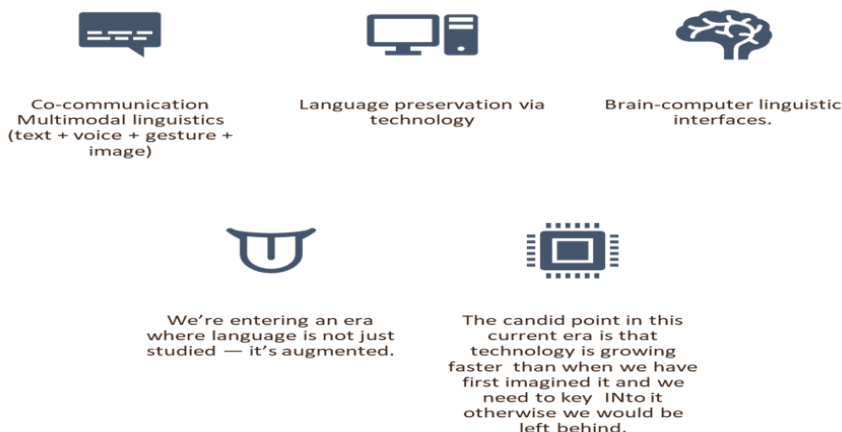
The seventh era marked the 'Cyber Age'. This is where things exploded and this is where we are! This era marks the digital, computational, and AI in linguistics. The age that introduced Computational linguistics which uses algorithms to analyse and generate language through Natural Language Processing (NLP) that powers search engines, translation, and chatbots. Corpus linguistics was introduced into the linguistics map, a discipline that uses massive digital datasets to study real-world language use. Machine learning language models (like ChatGPT,) learn patterns from billions of words. The era birthed Digital Sociolinguistics which studies online communication, memes, emojis, and internet dialects and the introduction of Cyber-semiotics which explores meaning making in virtual environments. The cyber age marks the first time machines participated in language creation and not just analysis. It is interesting to note that each of this era contributed immensely to the development of language of which all the lexicons were first initiated in English and then coined into other languages, for example, 'www' abbreviation known as 'World Wide Web' has many coinages in the world languages. All Apps are designed in English language orthography.

3.1 The Cyber Age: An Overview

The 21st Century is known as 'Cyber Age' which is revolutionized in AI. It focuses on Digital language, computation, Algorithm and AI. It is an era that transforms linguistics more radically than anything before it. The Key developments in Language study are Computational linguistics that is algorithms for analysing language. Natural Language Processing (NLP), which focuses on machine translation, speech recognition, and chatbots. Corpus linguistics which concerns itself with massive digital datasets that reveal real-world

language patterns. Machine Learning & neural networks. The models learn language statistically from billions of words. Digital sociolinguistics: studies online language, memes, emojis, internet dialects. Multimodal linguistics: combining text, audio, images, and gestures. AI language models: systems like meme participate in language creation, not just analysis. Its contribution to linguistics is that linguistics becomes computational, data-driven, and integrated with artificial intelligence.

The Emerging Future of linguistics is bright! We foresee a massive growth in the discipline, where Brain-computer linguistic interfaces with AI-human collaborative communication. The preservation of endangered languages through technology Real-time translation and augmented communication tools. We are entering an era where language is not only studied but it is cocreated with machines (Bender, E. M., & Lascarides, A. (2019)). This is summarized in table 3.



Picture 3

3.2 The Digital Turn and the Humanities

We now live in a world where digital acceleration has become the defining force of the 21st century. The humanities once perceived

as slow, reflective, and text-bound now find themselves at the crossroads of innovation and disruption. The rise of cyberculture has reshaped how humans communicate, create, and consume meaning. English and Literary Studies, traditionally anchored in print culture, now operate within a multimodal, hypertextual, algorithm-driven environment. The digital revolution has expanded the boundaries of what counts as a “text,” who counts as an “author,” and how meaning is produced and circulated. This moment demands not nostalgia, but critical adaptation. This view prompts the first big question: *How can we rethink language in a High Technological Age?* This is made possible on the fact that English has become ***Global Digital Language***. We are lucky to have English as the leading language in the digital age. English has become the lingua franca of the internet, dominating social media, artificial intelligence, digital publishing, and global communication. Key transformations include Digital Englishes—the emergence of new varieties shaped by texting, memes, emojis, and online communities. Algorithmic influence—search engines, autocorrect, and predictive text now shape how people write and speak. AI-mediated communication such as chatbots, virtual assistants, and automated translation tools are redefining linguistic competence.

It then means that linguists must now study online discourse communities (language variation) Machine-generated language, digital pragmatics, multimodal communication, i.e., text + image + audio + emoji and any other semiotic resources. The politics of language are embedded in algorithms, cross cultural digital linguistics which include digital cuisine, digital fashion communication, and digital health communication. The field is expanding, not shrinking. Thus, we need to include all these in our curriculum. For example, digital translation/interpretation needs our immediate attention. Picture 4 reflects errors in translation from Yoruba to English.



Picture 4

I have gathered over fifty data of Yoruba BBC Facebook discourses, and I have noticed from the data that there are lots of translation errors. It should be known that this is a serious challenge that is meant for Nigerian linguistics to solve. This era has made every speech community to be on their toes solving their linguistic problems. The source language is in interrogative form. The target language does not have the same structure; thus, it cannot adopt a direct translation method resulting in error. English linguists can collaborate with Yoruba linguist to develop software that can handle the translation problem identified.

4.0 Literature in the Age of Cyberculture

This presentation will not be sufficient if I fail to include literary studies in the Hi-Tec and Cyberage era as there is a lot of non-linguistic information to draw from it. Literature in the digital age has assumed additional/different meaning. Literature is no longer confined to printed novels, poems, and plays. Today, it is digitally sensed as digital literature, hypertext fiction, interactive storytelling, video game narratives, social media storytelling such as Twitter fiction, Instagram poetry, Fanfiction communities, AI-generated creative writing, etc. These forms challenge the traditional literary theory and demand new analytical tools.

Time and space will not allow me to explain all the types of literature in digital age mentioned above. I will only explain 'Fan fiction'

also known as '*fanfic*' which refers to stories written by fans using characters, settings, or worlds from existing books, films, TV shows, games, or celebrities, rather than creating entirely new ones. It is creative writing by fans who expand, reinterpret, reimagine or imagine alternative stories based on an original work.

- i. The main features of fan fiction are:
- ii. it is written by fans, not the original authors.
- iii. It uses pre-existing characters or fictional universes.
- iv. It is often shared online (blogs, forums, fanfic websites).
- v. It explores "what if" scenarios, missing scenes, or alternative endings.
- vi. It sometimes focuses on romance, adventure, identity, or social issues (especially marriages).

The common types are Alternate Universe (AU) here characters are placed in a different setting or time. Another type is Canon-compliant which fits within the original storyline. Fix-it fic is the type that rewrites disliked plot events. Crossover type combines two or more fictional worlds. Self-insert type is the one that a writer includes himself/herself as a character, examples are story imagining, where an alternative ending is given to a story for example, 'Things Fall Apart', a romance between characters who were not paired in the original story and a modern-day version of a historical or fantasy character.

The two pictures below are the two scenarios of story I came across on Facebook. They have similar titles, the settings were different but same plot with similar themes on default marriages. The protagonists are women and the antagonists are men. The catharsis and the denouements were the same, which is *death*. The nemeses were on the antagonists, and they ended with the same expression of '*karma*'.

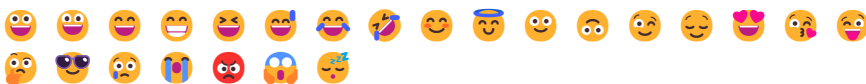
These are the stories that are of public interest. It could be included in the curriculum.



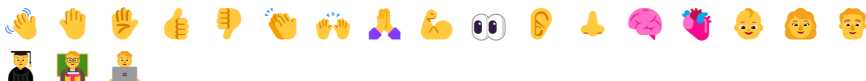
Picture 5

There are also neo-discursive acts known as emojis/ stickers. These are another exciting form of communicative acts that cyberculture has brought. Odebunmi (2016) explicates that “high technology introduced the WhatsApp smiley emoji. According to him they considerably modified the nature of pictorial and emotional participation in online chats. He defines emoji as ‘small, stylized ideograms or often times smileys that originated in Japan. In recent time there have been other types of emojis and stickers They have exactness in meaning and context bound when used. It has the tendency to pragmatically obey the cooperative maxims. Here are different types of emojis with examples:

😊 Smileys & Emotions



👤 People & Body



Animals & Nature



Food & Drink



Activities & Sports



Travel & Places



Objects



Symbols



Flags

GH NG US GB CA ZA FR JP CN

 Romantic / love emojis

 Funny / playful emojis

 Academic / study emojis

 Spiritual / religious emojis

 Professional / formal emojis

 Trendy / social media emojis

(ChatGPT generated) Picture 6



Picture 7

Who are the readers in the cybercultural age? The reader has become a user in cyberspace the reader is no longer passive. They click, scroll, choose pathways, and sometimes co-create the narrative, meaning becomes non-linear, participatory, and networked. This shift requires us to rethink concepts like authorship, narrative structure, and textuality.

4.1 Teaching English in a High-Tech World: Pedagogy Implication for Nigeria Scholars

Teaching English in a high-technology world requires Nigerian scholars to reconceptualize pedagogy in ways that integrate digital tools with established linguistic and literary traditions. The proliferation of online platforms, artificial intelligence, and multimedia resources have transformed how language is accessed, produced, and interpreted. Consequently, English teaching must move beyond text-centred approaches to include multimodal literacy, critical digital literacy, and collaborative learning practices. Nigerian scholars are thus challenged to design curricula that reflect global communicative realities while remaining sensitive to local linguistic ecologies, including the interplay between English and indigenous languages. This shift also necessitates a redefinition of the teachers' role—from a primary source of knowledge to a facilitator who guides learners in navigating diverse digital texts,

evaluating online information and engaging in meaningful virtual communication.

The pedagogical implications further extend to issues of access, equity, and professional development within the Nigerian educational context. While high technology offers innovative opportunities for teaching and learning, disparities in infrastructure, internet connectivity, and digital competence among both teachers and students must be addressed to avoid deepening educational inequalities. Nigerian scholars must therefore advocate for inclusive strategies, such as blended learning models and the use of low-bandwidth technologies, to ensure wider participation.

In addition, continuous professional development becomes essential, enabling educators to acquire digital pedagogical skills and adapt to evolving technological trends. Ultimately, effective teaching of English in this context depends on a balanced approach that harnesses technological advancements while critically engaging with their limitations and socio-cultural implications. The classroom has expanded beyond physical walls. Effective teaching now integrates: Learning management systems. Digital annotation tools, Online discussion forums Virtual classrooms AI-assisted writing tools and Multimedia resources must be included in the curriculum planning. Students today are digital natives, and our pedagogies must reflect their realities. There are so many opportunities for both teachers and learners. Some are the increased access to global texts, collaborative learning across borders, real-time feedback, exposure to multimodal literacy, democratization of knowledge. Some challenges are digital divide, plagiarism, misused AI, information overload, decline in deep reading, ethical concerns around data and surveillance, and our task is to balance innovation with critical awareness of the human involvement.

Thus, the following can be areas of focus in the cyber era, which ranges from text mining to analysing large corpora, some examples are Corpus linguistics, Stylometry, Digital archiving, Network visualization and Computational linguistics. In analysing them one can focus on any of these areas in large corpora perspectives, studying language pattern, authorship attribution, preserving text, mapping character/thematic links and modelling language behaviour.

4.2 Cultural Identity

Cyberculture has reshaped users identity formation in such that gender and sexuality discourse diasporic narratives, political expression, youth culture, digital spaces are the order of the day and have become sites of resistance, creativity, and cultural negotiations. Cyberculture has profoundly reshaped identity by enabling individuals to construct, negotiate, and perform multiple selves across digital platforms. In contrast to earlier notions of identity as relatively stable and tied to physical communities, online environments encourage fluid, hybrid, and often fragmented identities. Social media, virtual communities, and digital communication tools allow users to curate self-presentations through images, language, and interactions, often strategically aligned with audiences. This aligns with Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective, which has been extended into digital contexts where identity becomes a continuous performance shaped by visibility, feedback, and algorithmic mediation (Boyd, 2014; Turkle, 2011). As a result, cyberculture promotes both self-expression and self-surveillance, with individuals constantly negotiating authenticity and social approval.

In addition, cyberculture has globalized identity formation by facilitating the rapid circulation of ideas, values, and cultural symbols across borders. Individuals are increasingly exposed to diverse lifestyles and belief systems, which influences how they construct their own identities. This process often leads to the emergence of hybrid identities that blend local traditions with global influences (Castells, 2010). Digital spaces such as online forums, gaming communities, cuisine

communities, business communities, fashion communities, influencers and social networks also provide opportunities for marginalized groups to assert alternative identities and challenge dominant narratives. However, this global interconnectedness may also produce tensions between local cultural expectations and global norms, leading to identity conflicts or cultural dissonance, which language foregrounds the outlooks.

In the Nigerian context, cyberculture has significantly shaped identity, particularly among youth, through the rise of social media platforms such as Twitter (X), Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. Nigerian youths increasingly construct digital identities that reflect aspirations, socio-economic positioning, and cultural belonging. For instance, online trends such as the performance of “soft life” or “hustle culture” reflect shifting values around success, consumption, and resilience in a challenging economic environment (Adeyemi, 2020; Ogbonna, 2022). Furthermore, the use of Nigerian Pidgin, code-switching, and digital slang in online communication demonstrates how language is central to identity performance and solidarity in cyber spaces. Hashtag activism, such as the #EndSARS movement, also illustrates how digital platforms enable collective identity formation and political expression among Nigerian citizens (Ekine, 2021).

Moreover, cyberculture in Nigeria has contributed to the reconfiguration of social, ethnic, and gender identities. Online spaces have provided avenues for the negotiation of gender roles and the visibility of feminist and LGBTQ+ discourses, although these remain contested within the broader socio-cultural environment (Ibrahim & Adamu, 2021). Ethnic and national identities are also reinforced and sometimes contested through digital interactions, as users engage in debates, cultural promotion, and diaspora connections. At the same time, issues such as cyber fraud stereotypes (e.g., the “Yahoo boy” identity) highlight how global perceptions can shape and stigmatize

Nigerian identities online (Smith, 2017). Thus, cyberculture in Nigeria presents a complex landscape where identity is continuously constructed at the intersection of local realities and global digital influences.

The ethical consideration and the philosophical questions to ponder upon is that as technology advances, we must confront: Who controls digital knowledge? How algorithms shape cultural consumption? What is the future of authorship in an age of AI? How does digital preservation challenge the role of the humanities in a data-driven world? These questions require deep philosophical engagement.

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the intersection of English and Literary Studies with high technology and cyberculture has not diminished the relevance of the discipline; rather, it has redefined its scope, tools, and modes of engagement. Digital technologies have expanded the boundaries of textuality, enabling new forms of literary production, circulation, and interpretation across diverse platforms. Consequently, scholars and students are called to move beyond traditional print-centric approaches and embrace digital literacy, multimodal analysis, and interdisciplinary frameworks. This shift not only enriches critical inquiry but also ensures that English and Literary Studies remain responsive to the evolving communicative realities of the twenty-first century.

Furthermore, within contexts such as Nigeria and other parts of Africa, the integration of technology into literary studies presents both opportunities and challenges. While digital platforms democratize access to texts and amplify marginalized voices, issues such as digital divide, infrastructural limitations, and cultural preservation remain pressing. Therefore, there is a need for deliberate pedagogical innovation, policy support, and scholarly commitment to harness technology in ways that are contextually relevant and inclusive. Ultimately, the future of English and Literary Studies lies in its ability

to adapt creatively and critically to cybercultural transformations while sustaining its core mandate of fostering critical thinking, cultural awareness, and humanistic inquiry.

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