

## Akachi Ezeigbo's Perspectives on Children's Literature in Nigeria: Narratology as Scientific Instrument, Morality and Didactics in Analysis

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### 1. Introduction

The dynamics of literature is not only polarized by entertainment as the lay man may pre-conceive. Rather, it is an instrument of literary art that succinctly examines the essence, its forms and prognosis with concrete allusions to what it epitomizes. 'The dynamics of this relationship are such that society compellingly impinges upon the thematic and stylistic choices open to the literary artist to the extent that it can actually determine the success or failure of a work' (*Interrogating Power Relations*..302). Similarly, 'the relationship between society and literature relates to the connections between literature and society in whose context it is produced and whose members it is aimed at. The dynamics of this relationship are such that society compellingly impinges upon the thematic and stylistic choices open to the literary artist to the extent that it can actually determine the success or failure of a work' (Ibid).

Literature encompasses morality in many ways: in teaching and in some of man's domestic activities. Morality is derived from the Latin word "mores" which means custom. Didactic literature, however, teaches morality. Morality is sometimes used interchangeably with ethics which is the branch of philosophy which deals with the morality of human conducts. There are certain actions which all of us would condemn as morally wrong and ought not to be done. For instance, the act of armed robbery, the embezzlement of public funds, bribery and corruption and other related vices. There are certain other actions which all of us would consider as morally right, for instance, kindness, honesty, hospitality and respect for human life. It is in connection with these moral rights and vices that the importance of morality in public life assumes a prestigious pedigree. Men as a social being have both material and spiritual needs. For society to achieve its aim of empowering man for good and transforming society, it must be holistic. That is, it must cater for man's temporal needs and his eternal goals. It must address the needs of his socio-economic, cultural and political as well as his moral life. Moral development is a process of developing acceptable behaviour or patterns of interaction with other people. It is through social development that individual developing appropriate social skills, values, morals for the sustenance of the society (Oripeloye, 3).

*Didactic literature* teaches man who lives in society how to make a constructive use of his reasoning faculty and education to transform for better and live well. An educated man without morals is like a suicide bomber with grenades strapped to his waist. Learning without character or education without morality turns a ruler of a people into the chief looter of the people's wealth. It is morality that checks and moderates the excesses of man and channels his resources away from destructive uses towards the development of society. The point we are trying to make here is that without thinking and acting morality, it may be practically impossible to pursue development in any sphere of human experience if people are egoistic in the pursuance of material development without its complements in morals. This may have therefore been partly

responsible for a disconnect between morality and development in our national life (Ibid). Morality and Didactic vision could be projected from the arrays of social relevance, from this perspective, one would seem to imply that literature has a duty to make the progress of society a cardinal objective, regardless of whatever else it may seek to achieve. It is practically impossible to discuss literature without making reference to society. René Wellek and Austin Warren stress the very close relationship between the two: literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. Such traditional literary devices as symbolism and metre are social in their very nature. They are conventions and norms which could have arisen only in society. But, furthermore, literature 'represents' 'life'; and 'life' is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary 'imitation' (*Interrogating Power Relations..302*).

Our preoccupation in this paper is to attempt a meta-critical analysis of the generations and trends in Children's Literature in Nigeria. We shall do this by examining succinctly Ezeigbo's attempted work on Children Literature and the areas of inadequacies. The theory of narratology is very fundamental to the study and understanding of children's literature. Narratology, which is a science of fiction, is very cogent in the development of the mindset of the younger generations. The handling of the motifs of morality and didactics in fiction helps to re-structure the thoughts of younger people for a competitive future.

## **2. Morality and Didacticism in Nigerian Children Literature: Trends and Prognosis**

Writers over the ages have used their literary works of art to propel societal instruments. According to Aduke Adebayo in her celebrated Inaugural lecture which is entitled *The Nature and Functions of Literature: The Comparatist's Perspective*. She opines that from 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the term Literature has vividly incorporates knowledge, reading and knowledge. She later probes that its applicability to human development is generally called GREAT BOOKS. That is, the works of renowned writers from every branch of human knowledge which are notable for their literary expressions and ideas which the society generally agrees that they deserve to be preserved. Great Books include, for example, the works of Philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Horace and Karl Marx, of literary geniuses like Shakespeare, *Honore de Balzac*, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka (2). It is this idea of great books that inform the readers using morality as didactics in Nigerian children's literature. Great books are those books that are significant to the moral, social, economic and philosophical currents of Nigerians for the sake of sustainable development. Oripeloye comments about what sustainable development should encapsulate, he remarks that 'Sustainable development can therefore be defined as a conscious, deliberate and systematic policy of ensuring the survival of a state in such conditions that the social, economic and political necessities that are imperative for the enjoyment of the good life in the utilitarian sense are immediately available. That is, ensuring the greatest good for the greatest number of people' (2). He continues that:

The idea of sustainable development was formulated in the 1970's by the World Commission for Environment and Development usually called the Brundtland Commission. It was this commission that popularized the concept and ever since has become an indispensable notion in any discussion about national development. Sustainable development is defined as an enduring, remarkable, non-terminal improvement in the

quality of life, standard of living and life chances of the people. It is view as a development that must be capable of surviving generations over a long period of time. Both imply creative responses to social, political and economic affairs in any given literary works of art. Sustainable development can therefore be defined as a conscious, deliberate and systematic policy of ensuring the survival of a state in such conditions that the social, economic and political necessities that are imperative for the enjoyment of the good life in the utilitarian sense are immediately available. That is, ensuring the greatest good for the greatest number of people (3-4).

Writers of children's literature in Nigeria have sustainable development at the back of their minds. Sustainably developing the economy by catching the children young mentally is a way of preparing them for a challenging and competitive society. By projecting moral elements which would teach the children the essence of life could prepare them for an egalitarian worldview. Some stories in Africa cannot be traced to any source other than oral traditions. Many tortoise stories were artificial creations to teach the children lessons and the need to prefer good tenets of life to the negative ones. The Ashanti tortoises' and hare's stories were artificial creations which were meant to stimulate good tidings among all ages of children. The Yoruba and Igbo's conservative use of recurring and reverberating proverbs were re-constructed for surviving the egalitarian Nigerian state. The Extinction of proverbs in Zulu nations and the eradication of bride price in Kenya were directed towards post-modernity. Children's literature in Nigeria also has social function, or 'use', which cannot be purely individual. (*Interrogating Power Relations*, 94) This notion of literature has been vigorously defended in different literary circles as widely dispersed regions of the world: the overt morality of the satire-ridden Augustan Age in England, and the aggressive nationalism of the Harlem Renaissance in the United States and the Negritude movement in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean islands are obvious examples. Due to its repeatedly-tragic history, with its narrative of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, it is perhaps inevitable that modern African literature is highly attuned to the requirements of contemporary African society. S.E. Ogude argues that the history of contemporary African literature is the story of the black man's attempt to re-assert his political rights and defend the integrity of his culture and re-assess his past relationship with Europe and the many political and social institutions which the white man has imposed on the Africans. (3) Gareth Griffiths makes similar claims for the explicit utility of writing in contemporary Africa: Writing is an activity through which the African can define his identity and re-discover his historical roots. This self-defining function of the novel is, for obvious reasons, especially important to writers in a post-colonial situation, especially where their exposure to European culture has led to an undervaluing of the traditional values and practices (301).

### **3. Narratology as Scientific Instrument in Children's Literature**

Mieke Bal's *Narratology* (1985) and Dino Felluga *The Introduction to Narratology* (2002), visualize 'narratology as being dominated by structuralist approaches at its beginning', The duo, in their analyses, continue that 'narratology has developed into a variety of theories, concepts, and analytic procedures'. Narratology is projected as the theory and study of the narratives. Narrative structure and the way they affect our perceptions are examined. In principle, narratology can be referred to any systematic study of narratives,

though in practice the use of the term is rather more restricted. It is because of this restrictive application that it is decided that this theoretical framework be modeled to the study and understanding of children's literature in Nigeria. The word "narratology" is an *anglicization* of the French word *narratologie*" Tzvetan Todorov in his *Grammaire du Decameron* (1969), coins the word, and has been retrospectively applied by many writers. Although a lineage stretching back to Aristotle's *Poetics* may be traced, modern narratology is most typically said to begin with the Russian formalist and in particular with Vladimir Prop's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928).

Due to the origin of the term, it has a strong association with the structuralist quest for a system of formed description that can usefully be applied to any narrative. This aim has not, however, characterized all work that is today described narratological. Percy Lubbock's groundbreaking work on point of view, *The Craft of Fiction*, is a case in point. Jonathan Culler argues that the many strands of narratology are all united by recognition "that the theory of narrative requires a distinction between :Story" - sequence of actions or events, conceived as independent of their manifestation in discourse and 'discourse', the discursive presentation of narration of event". Jonathan Culler admits that the distinction in narratology is originally proposed by the Russian formalists who used the terms *Fabula* and *Sjuzhet*, but a succession of other pairs has perceived what is essentially the same dichotomy for example *histoire/ discours* *histoire/recit*, *story/plot*) *The Pursuit of Signs* (1981:189). To a certain extent, the designation of work as narratological or otherwise may have more to do with narratives, stories, autobiographies and sociolinguistics. According to William Labov, narratology lends credence to conversational analysis, discoursed analysis that deal with narratives arising in the course of spontaneous verbal interaction (190). However, constituent analysis of the type where narratives are considered to be the basic units of narrative structure could be included in the interpretation of Children narratives. Emma Kafalenos attempts the classification and relevance of narratology to contemporary fiction. This contemporary classification facilitates the taxonomy of fiction and the development of *fabula* and *Sjuzhet* in literature.

More importantly, narratology would enable mature readers and critics examine the structure of children writings, their cultural artifacts and the ordering of time and space in narrative forms. This is because narratologists love to categorize and to taxonomize, which have led to a plethora of terms to explain the complicated nature of media in our lives (television, film, fiction), narratology is also a useful foundation to have before one begins to analyze popular culture (62). Children narratives show popular culture about the people from their personal effects to their public functioning and to their civic responsibilities of obeying their parents and keeping children's rules of abiding by instructions. Roland Barthes' original thinking provides an alternative way of thinking about narrative plot-he refuses to be bound by traditional factors. Algirdas Greimas provides us with a hyper-structuralist approach to narrative form; all these features are strong forces that aid the application of narratology to the investigation of children's writings (Kafalenos, 45).

*Sjuzhet* is that aspect of narratology that celebrates the historical relevance in children's literature. It is expedient to know that the plot of the narrative must follow a definite historical epoch in the writing. That is why a narrative that does not have any historical antecedent which the child can lay hold on to teach morality in society is said to have failed drastically. Similarly,

*Fabula* is the content of the story and the storyline through which the plot of the narrative is hinged upon. Every narrative, to be overt, must encapsulate both the *Sjuzhet* and *Fabula*. Some critics observed that the *technical* is also imperative because it enables us to know the degree of time involved in the actualization of the plot and the real life which is demonstration in reality. The *Discourse*, however, celebrates the totality of the movements in the narration. It involves, in analysis, characters and characterization in time and space. Both the *intradiegetic* and *extradiegetic* narrators contribute to the gospel of morality and the didactic nature of children's literature by either narrating in overt form through the persona or through the omniscient parallel the message of hope, struggle, respect and love among the children of all ages.

### **Akachi Ezeigbo: Children's Literature in Nigeria, Prospects and Problems**

Akachi Ezeigbo is a Professor of African Literature at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. Her works cut across creative and critical works. She attempts a survey into the prospects and problems associated with children's literature in Nigeria. She aligns herself with the positions of many renowned scholars such as Emeyonu and Nnolim the *Iroko* of African Literature. In many submissions she agrees and disagrees with some of their positions. It is worthy of emulation that Ezeigbo, probes into what children's literature encapsulates, she opines that 'the literature under discussion concerns pre-adolescents – children between 7 and 12 years' and this 'genre of children's literature include folktales, fiction, drama, poetry, pictures books, fantasy, and fairy tales. The most popular in Nigeria seem to be folktales and fiction though some poetry collections and plays have been produced for children' (*50 Years of Children's Literature in Nigeria: Prospects and Problems*, 1). Basically, Nigeria borrowed a leave from Europe. Children's literature in Nigeria is almost similar to the type generated from other parts of Africa. After independence, there is an urgency to develop the genre in order to make it more colorful. Ezeigbo sheds more light on the scenario:

*Children's literature is a literary genre which caters to the interest of children, though many books in this category are enjoyed by adults. Children's literature was first imported to Nigeria from Europe, specifically the United Kingdom and later from the USA. Before Nigerian children read books written by Nigerians, they had read the classics from Europe – the famous folktales and fairy tales collected and popularized by the German academics, the Brothers Grimm, and the Danish author and poet, Hans Christian Anderson. Other famous children's authors are C.S. Lewis (British), Mark Twain (American), Enid Blyton and so many others including the renowned contemporary British author, J.K. Rowling who wrote the famous and best-selling Harry Potter books. There is no doubt that writing for children has been a serious business in the West for decades if not centuries. Indeed reading material for the young and the production of it are viewed with all seriousness in the West. Can we say the same about Nigeria? How has children's literature fared in Nigeria since independence? (2).*

To explain further how Children's literature developed into full fledged study, Ezeigbo crystallizes the trends of the movement beginning from the 50's to the present day. She observes significant changes that best explain tenacious changes which influence the teaching of morality among the Nigerian children, however:

*It will not be wrong to argue that Nigerian children's literature developed under the influence of the Western models. Cyprian Ekwensi was one of the first to write for children and adolescents. Bernth Lindfors stated in his seminal book, Folklore in Nigerian Literature, that early in his literary career, Ekwensi was not only influenced by Western juvenile books but also borrowed from classics like Treasure Island, and that this influence is clearly seen in the book, Juju Rock, written in 1950 but published in 1966. Ekwensi brought out other significant titles like The Drummer Boy (1960), The Passport of Mallam Illia (1960) and The Great Elephant Bird (1965). Other famous children's authors who wrote for children between the 1970s and 1980s and some of their titles include Chinua Achebe: Chike and the River (1966) and The Drum (1977); Mabel Segun: My Father's Daughter (1965) and My Mother's Daughter (1985); Flora Nwapa: Emeka-Driver's Guard (1971) and Mammywater (1979); Eddie Iroh: Without a Silver Spoon (1981) and Dan Fulani: Sauna and the Drug Peddlers (1986). More contemporary prolific children's authors, from the 1990s till date include Anezi Okoro, Olajire Olanlokun and Ifeanyi Ifoegbuna (both died recently), Naiwo Osahon, Dapo Adeleke and Uche Peter Umez. There are many others that cannot be listed for want of space and time. (Ibid).*

It is pertinent to note that Ezeigbo's analysis did not follow the line of the application of children's fiction to the world of science. That is the inadequacy of her presentations. However, science of fiction analyzed from the above mentioned texts within the past fifty years motivates a clearer study of the psyche and the state of the minds of the Nigerian child. The science of fiction is of paramount interest to the narratologist because this notion gives the Nigerian child a clue into his historical artifacts (*Sjuzhet*) and the content of the plot (*Fabula*) of the fiction. The fiction, therefore, is a celebration of imaginative instincts illuminated philosophically and practically. Ezeigbo's emphasis on 'sexes' gives her paper more literary prominence. She asserts that both male and female author of children's literature create protagonists and antagonists from both sexes. With the emergence of female writers of children literature, there is a revolution in female protagonists propelling one message or the other. This motif is of reckoning interest to the narratologist as he tends to taxonomize and demonstrate new phenomena in time and in space. It is a motif of discourse in *technical*. Let us demonstrate this in Ezeigbo's conception:

*Unlike in adult literature where the male gender appears to dominate the literary canvass, there is an appreciable balance in the number of male and female authors of children's literature. Apart from veterans like Flora Nwapa, Mabel Segun and Buchi Emecheta, some other women also wrote for children. Undoubtedly, women have been in the forefront of producing books for children. In fact more women seem to write for children than men. The advantage of this development is that more and more girl children are given agency as protagonists in contemporary children's literature unlike in the 1960s and 1970s when most protagonists in children's storybooks were boys. In an article published in Nigerian Female Writers (1989) – edited by Henrietta Otokunefor and Obiageli Nwodo – Charles Nnolim observed that Flora Nwapa, Ifeoma Okoye, Charry Onwu and Teresa Meniru were “among the group of Nigerian women who are devoted to promoting and encouraging literary awareness in Nigerian children and adolescents” (105). This statement, though correct, is an understatement, for there were other women writing at the time that Nnolim seemed unaware of their existence.*

*Space and time does not allow me to provide the names of all these enterprising female writers who wrote in the years following independence as well as a list of their numerous books. However, some of them must be recognized and they are Remi Adededeji, Christie Ajayi, Audrey Ajose, Martina Nwakoby, Ifeoma Okoye, Helen Ofurum, Mary Okoye, Anji Ossai, Helen Obviagele, Rosina Umelo and Rosemary Uwemedimo. The successors of these matriarchs of children's literature since the 1990s include Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo, Promise Ogochukwu, Nnedi Okorafor, Anuli Ausbeth-Ajagu, Olamide Bamtefa, Ore Olunloyo, Anthonia Ekpa, Jane Agunabor, Chinelo Ifezulike, Pamela Udoka, Rosemary Uche and a host of others (4-5).*

The equal representation of 'sex' in literary art underscores maturity and distinct portrayal of gender balance. 'The onus of gender is celebrated by Nigerian male actors. Studies have shown that both male and female populations in Nigeria now want a gender sensitive writing that propels good economy. People should be gender sensitive and the scientists "gender construents" in the words of Francis Enemuo (Ogunyemi, et al, 92). Ezeigbo did not only buttress the framework of gender inclusion in her critical works, she also includes this in her criticism. Dynamism has, therefore, constitutes the framework of Ezeigbo's projection in her study of children's literature in Nigeria. She either uses 'children' as an independent variable in a study or as a dynamic force in other studies. Her trilogy: *The Last of the Strong Ones* (1996), *House of Symbols* (2001) and *Children of the Eagles* (2002) assuage various roles to women as daughters for female gender and for children's development in general. According to Nwachukwu- Agbada:

*Although Children can be read in its own right and understood on its own terms, it is still necessary to point out that the novel is the last of Adimora-Ezeigbo's trilogy of fictions centred on the generations of Umuga women spanning over a hundred years. Preceding this novel are *The Last of the Strong Ones* (1996) and *House of Symbols* (2001). The three novels are interrelated, featuring major characters, largely females, who belong to the same genealogy but who represent different prongs of the battle against patriarchy. Thus it is the same 'war of the sexes' running over generations, each generation faced with its challenges. In other words, it is 'herstory' told in three eras of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial settings.*

Nwachukwu- Agbada continues that:

*In *The Last of the Strong Ones*, Ezeigbo depicts the centrality of women in the core of Umuga traditional existence before the coming of kosiri (the white man). What could better prove that than the fact that at this time, the four daughters of Umuga – Ejimnaka, Onyekaozuru, Chieme and Chibuka – through their activism became members of "Obufo" (custodians of the ancestral staff, ofo), which was largely a male prerogative? In *House of Symbols* a daughter of one of the four "strong ones" called Ugonwany (Eaglewoman) is both the matriarch and the protagonist. As the author speaks of her, "Eaglewoman is a solid rock that gathers moss. Around her, green and yellow moss blossoms in a thick furry mass at all seasons [...] People obey her and dance to her tune" (House, 99). With respect to *Children of the Eagle*, Eaglewoman is still around but having lately aged, has retreated, enabling her four daughters to prowls about as it were. When Amara, one of the four Okwara daughters, learns that the concrete markers on the disputed land involving their family and the Umeakus may not be*

*erected until a male child of the Okwara family is present, she roars: "Here is my mother – as old, if not older than Pa Joel and here are my big sisters and I, yet you want us to wait until my kid brother returns home or until we send for our cousins before you erect the boundary markers on the disputed land. It doesn't make much sense to me." (88).*

In Nigeria, children's literature is culminated from the oral tradition of the people. It also embodies the natural folktales, folklores of the people at different times. Most writings blend the science of fiction with the folkloric tradition of the people to form significant information. In Nigeria, the government approves Children's fiction not only on teaching and moral grounds, but on the principle of ideology. In China, the government would not want the children to learn anything that would not promote communism and socialism in their minds. Education, thus, in China points towards the promulgation of communism and socialism. Similarly, in Nigeria, the political class encourages stories that develop the minds of the children to be subservient to the existing system-obedience to law and order. However:

*The base is the economic (materialist) structure, the main foundation with the forces of productions on which the superstructural edifice and as its apparatuses of aesthetics (literature), philosophy, religion, law, politics and customs, among others rest. The superstructure utilises these elements which it is constitutive of to further its ideological hegemony over the proletarian class or to advance its thesis of ruler-subject dichotomy. Thus, ideology is a moderating instrument for the legitimisation of economic domination, state violence, hierarchised social space and above all sexual discrimination (Nwagbara, 4).*

The 'ideology is a moderating instrument' in the development of children literature to a large extent. Salient themes were also discussed by writers of children's literature to subscribe the development of certain ideologies in the mindset of the children. These themes which include obedience to constituted authorities as stated above could be rendered in songs, folk stories and in the written form. Ezeigbo is particular about this when she states that:

*Most children's books are didactic, and some moral lessons are incorporated in the narratives, but the morals are better when they are implied rather than explicit or overt. On the other hand, some writers could go to the other extreme, as Nnolim observed in his study of Teresa Meniru's children's books: "Neither honesty nor morality nor honour nor hardwork nor healthy cunning, is preached by Meniru" (107). This too is unacceptable in children's books. However, the works of some of the masters are there to show the best way to write for this level of readers. Emenyonu observed that the stories which Chinua Achebe recreated from the oral tradition are "models both in their message and artistic devices. He has provided a challenge for African writers especially of the younger generation to expand the frontiers of African oral heritage to accommodate new insights and new creativities" (Emerging Perspectives on Achebe, 439). Commenting on Nwapa's style in Mammywater, Emenyonu remarked that "she has a good ear for good dialogues" (Emerging Perspectives on Nwapa, 601). In his assessment of Mabel Segun's Olu and the Broken Statue (1985), Funso Aiyejina commended "the unobtrusive manner in which the writer's didacticism is sublimated within the story" (134-135). What is required,*



*therefore, is skill and imagination in the crafting of books for children.*(50 Years of Children's Literature, 7-8).

Attention is shifted from personal evaluation to collective assessment in her criticism of other scholars. The narratological instrument emphasized here underscores the *fabula*. The content can only preach certain message which will manifest in the 'overt'. This is axiomatic in the case of Terese Meniru's children's book as echoed by Ezeigbo. The children's message is an intrinsic phenomenon that is predicated on the extrinsic. The inner message emphasizes the external by propelling specific factors to be maintained by 'the younger generations'. Children's literature in Nigeria is a product of evolution. Evolution in the sense that many recurring changes have been projected beginning from the 50's when the epoch was imported to Nigeria. The array of narratology which enables a concrete study of the fiction is of paramount interest to the people. Helen Chukwuma, Ernest Emenyonu, Charles Nnolim and Chidi Maduka in many presentations of women, children fiction did not pay heed to the narratological instrument and its applicability to the narrative art. Ezeigbo, though, more contemporary attempts to trace the trends and prognosis of children's literature in Nigeria, moves towards the psycho-sociological perspective without recourse to narratological analysis. J.O.J Nwachukwu – Agbada probes on the social relevance of sexes in children and women relationships in literature. While Luke Eyoh attempts the archetypal and social realism in such art Iniobong Uko concentrates on the importance of children to nation building. Thus, the negation of narratological analysis in children and women literature in Nigeria has led to the plethora of sociological analysis of literary works beginning from Amos Tutuola's fiction to Chinua Achebe's writings and to more contemporary writings. Narratology as a science of fiction is structured to examine three earlier mentioned: *Sjuzhet*, *fabula* and *technical*. These features are all embedded in the collective memory of the people because these elements would demonstrate scientifically how morality and didactics are interwoven to form congruence. The import of society and the scientific implications are underscored succinctly.

## **5. Recommendations and Conclusion**

African literature is undergoing development in writing and in worldview. From being a weeping literature to being educative and resourceful, many evolutionary factors with regards contemporary motifs were illuminated in African literary canon. During the Eurocentric times when writers celebrate Europe, many inadequacies were recorded. With the emergence of Lindfors, Emenyonu and Nnolim in the African literary landscape, attention have been shifted from ordinary assumptions to concrete African realism. The development of children literature becomes of great interest to all in Nigeria. The study attempts a cursory presentation of Ezeigbo's perception on children's literature in Nigeria with a meta-critical evaluation of relevant sections. It visualizes narratology as contemporary scientific instrument of morality and didactics. The study envisages that the future would be brighter if too many sociological assumptions give way to narratology. Narratological evaluations of African works, children works and others are significant instruments which lend axiomatic credence to vertical and horizontal relevance in African nationalism.

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