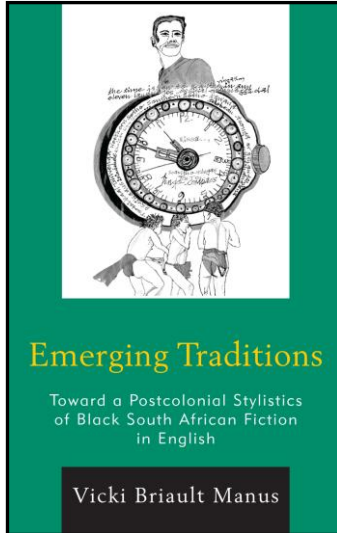


# LEXINGTON BOOKS

## EMERGING TRADITIONS: TOWARD A POSTCOLONIAL STYLISTICS OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN FICTION IN ENGLISH

By Vicki Briault Manus



“Briault’s comprehensive study of the socio-linguistics of black South African writing, firmly grounded in historical and political change, is nothing short of groundbreaking. Innovative and well-written, it traces stylistic devices through insightful discussions of African orature, indigenization, and creolization of European languages. Illuminating, and a pleasure to read.”

-- Zoë Wicomb, Emeritus Professor, University of Strathclyde, and author of *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town* (1996 (1987)) and *David's Story* (2000).

### ABOUT THE BOOK

The monograph explores the linguistic impact of the colonial and post-colonial situations in South Africa on language policy and on the stylistics of fiction in English by indigenous writers. Where does English stand in the multilingual spectrum of South African languages? How does local "worldly" English relate to Global English, in the South African context? After a sociolinguistic overview of South Africa from prehistoric times until the present, there is an appraisal of the Language Plan enshrined in the new South African constitution, and of how delays in implementing it impinge on the development of black South African English and the nine new official languages.

Six chapters track black South African attitudes toward English from the arrival of British missionaries in 1795 until the present—attitudes which have influenced how indigenous authors “indigenize” their writing, innovating and subverting stylistic conventions, including those of African orature, in order to bend language and genre towards their own culture and objectives. Each chapter shows how a given historical period is reflected in linguistic and literary developments, as illustrated by a few significant writers and works. Each ends with a case-study where the text chosen for the period is subjected to detailed stylistic analysis and appraised for the degree of indigenization or other linguistic or socio-historic influences on style.

At the heart of this innovative, tentacular approach to apprehending stylistics—the “postcolonial stylistics” of the title—is the linguistic focus on indigenization of English inspired by Chantal Zabus' book, *The African Palimpsest: Indigenization of Language in the West African Europhone Novel* (2007, [1991]). The conclusion reappraises the original hypothesis—that the specific characteristics of South African literary production, including styles of writing and magical realism, can be related to the political, social and economic context—and discusses the place occupied by English in the cultural struggle of the formerly colonized peoples of South Africa.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vicki Briault Manus is associate professor at the University of Stendhal Grenoble 3, France.

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