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Cultural alienation and exploitation: The immigrant experience in Chimamanda Adichie's "Arrangers of marriage"

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Abstract

*Africans who desire universal acceptability in the Western world find themselves culturally alienated from their African root. This alienation leads to loss of identity and individuality in language, tradition, customs, values, beliefs, food and naming of the African people. Language is a vehicle of culture and it is influenced by culture; and naming gives a person individuality and identity. The loss of one's indigenous name symbolizes his/her complete alienation psychologically from his/her fatherland. This paper observes that the alienated Africans find themselves in the web of multi-dimensional exploitation. Using the post-colonial theory in Chimamanda Adichie's "Arrangers of Marriage", a short story in the collection, *The Thing Around Your Neck*, this paper argues that the desire of the immigrants to be accepted in the American society compel them to relinquish their African identity and culture by abandoning their African names and language; and assuming American ones thereby exposing themselves to psychological cultural alienation which prevents them from achieving cultural identity, personality and individuality. The paper concludes that knowledge of one's language enhances cultural connectivity; therefore, Africans should resist cultural alienation and should rather cherish their values which are not inferior to Western values.*

Keywords: Alienation, Culture, Exploitation, Immigrant

Introduction

Culture is a people's way of life which is transmitted from one generation to another. This transmission which has become an integral part of the people's behaviour instills values into the younger generation. The quest to be universally accepted has compelled many Africans to be culturally alienated from their root. This alienation is either physically or psychologically; the physical alienation is that which the individual is physically uprooted from the African soil. On the other hand, the psychological alienation has to do with the individual's psyche that considers everything African to be inferior, hence the need to change them and replace them with Western ideals. These include names, values, beliefs, food, language and tradition. The African who succumbs to the pressure to be

universally accepted alienates himself or herself culturally from the African root. The cultural alienation exposes the African to exploitation as he or she is neither an African nor an American. The exploitation takes different dimensions such as economic exploitation, sham marriage, blackmail, menial jobs and even sexual exploitation.

Cultural exploitation and alienation in the context of this paper is the deliberate rejection of African values by Africans in the quest for international acceptability. This rejection creates room for the African to be exploited. These issues are discussed using Chimamanda Adichie's "The Arrangers of Marriage", a short story in her collection, *The Thing Around Your Neck*.

The short story is a genre that has suffered neglect by literary critics. More attention



has been paid to the novel. This neglect is worrisome because budding writers experiment firstly with the short story and the easiest place for students to start learning the concepts of analysis and evaluation of a work of art is from the short story. This issue of neglect has been raised by Charles Nnolim thus:

We all have, up to now, neglected the short story as a genre worthy of critical attention, even though there is already a respectable body of short stories written by our most celebrated writers. Whatever the case may be, our critics must be reminded that the short story as a genre is still stillborn on the African literary scene (51-6).

In corroboration of the above outcry, Ernest Emenyonu in an Editorial in *Writing Africa in the Short Story* which he entitled “Once Upon a Time Begins a Story” has noted that “Three decades later, nothing has changed; the critical gap in the criticism of African literature decried by Nnolim remains unaddressed, unfulfilled. If anything, the gap has become wider and deeper”(1).

It is on this note that this paper focuses on the short story. The structure and elements for analyzing both the short story and the novel are generally the same. M. H. Abrams and Geoffrey Harpham in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* note that:

A short story is a brief work of prose fiction, and most of the terms for analyzing the component elements, the types, and the narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well(295).

The concept of postcolonialism

Adichie is a postcolonial writer who seeks to uphold the African ethos through her characters. Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary*

Theory argue that “Postcolonialism seeks to undermine the imperialist subject”(189). They note that “From a postcolonial perspective, Western values and traditions of thought and literature,...are guilty of a repressive ethnocentrism” (188). Postcolonialism is a theory that undermines western values and champions African values.

Using post colonialism, this paper discusses Adichie’s “The Arrangers of Marriage”, a short story in the collection, *The Thing Around Your Neck* and concludes that western values which alienate Africans from their roots should be jettisoned.

Loss of identity in “arrangers of marriage”

Identity is an integral part of culture, and there are several things that give one an identity. They include: language, custom, traditions, beliefs, names and food. In “The Arrangers of Marriage”, Ofodile in his desperation to be acculturated into the American system relinquishes his African name, a name that gives him an identity, to answer Dave Bell. He is oblivious of the fact that by relinquishing his identity, he has been culturally alienated from his root. Chike Ekeopara in *Ethical Order and Stability in Traditional Igbo Society* notes that:

Culture embraces all the values, norms and ethical principles which are put in place by a people to guide its patterns of social relations and interactions in order to ensure order and stability of society (18).

Language is also an aspect of culture. Western society uses language to conquer Africans, hence, the tendency of immigrants despising their language in order to be accepted in the American society. Ofodile inundates his newly married Nigerian wife Chinasa with American clichés that are irritating, after changing his name to Dave Bell. Rose Sackeyfio



in “Diaspora Identities in Short Fiction” argues that “He pressures Chinasa to do the same by assuming a new name, Agatha Bell, and by adopting new behaviours such as speaking only English, and cooking American food. He is critical of immigrants who maintain their ethnic identities...” (108).

Ofodile alienates himself from his culture and root to the extent of being ashamed of his Nigerian delicacy which is cherished by his American neighbour. After relishing the coconut rice prepared by his wife, he goes ahead and buys *Good Housekeeping All-American Cookbook* for her to learn how to cook American dishes, because according to him, “I don’t want us to be seen as the people who fill the building with smells of foreign food”(179). He culturally alienates himself from his roots through changing his name to American name, despising his Igbo language and by being ashamed of his Nigerian food. He tells the wife, “I’m not called Ofodile here, by the way. I go by Dave”(172). He trivializes the matter without realizing that he has alienated himself culturally. He does not only change his first name, but his entire name. “The last name I use here is different, too. Americans have a hard time with Udenwa, so I changed it”(172). He fails in his responsibilities to educate the Americans on the significance of African (Nigerian) names. Chinua Achebe in “The Novelist as a Teacher” prays that God should “help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement”(105).

He imposes his ideology on his wife Chinasa, who cherishes her African heritage and identity. He also changes her name to Agatha Bell, and warns her that, “You don’t understand how it works in this country. If you want to get anywhere you have to be as mainstream as possible. If not, you will be left by the roadside. You have to use your English name here”(172).

By Ofodile’s reckoning, being in the mainstream translates into disconnecting oneself from any trait of African identity.

Exploitation of the African man

Africans (Nigerians) who emigrate to America in search of greener pastures discover that the self-fulfillment they desire eludes them. They work so hard, yet they are paid so little. This amounts to economic exploitation. Ofodile experiences this kind of exploitation as he tells his wife, “Interns are paid twenty-eight thousand a year but work about eighty hours a week. It’s like three dollars an hour”(174). This is a departure from the forty-eight hours a week that is obtainable in Nigeria, but because of his obsession with the American system, Ofodile does not realize that he is being exploited economically.

Ofodile is unaware of the fact that America is an exploitative society that thrives on racism, sexism and inequality in all facets of its social institutions. Aguirre and Baker in *Structured Inequality in the United States* note that, “Unfortunately...American society is intrinsically racist and sexist”(xviii). Many Africans (Nigerians) in search of green card in America get involved in a marriage with American women. This kind of marriage is exploitative in the sense that the marriage is contracted out of desperation. The American women take advantage of the desperation on the faces of these men and exploit them through blackmail. Again, Ofodile is caught in this web. He contracts a marriage with an American woman, but while the marriage still subsists, he comes to Nigeria and marries an Igbo girl. This double standard life boomerangs and he tells his new wife:

The American woman I married to get a green card is making trouble...our divorce was almost



final, but not completely, before I married you in Nigeria. Just a minor thing, but she found out about it and now she's threatening to report me to Immigration. She wants more money(182).

The exploitation is not only through blackmail, but also through financial gratification, the American woman wants to exploit Ofodile financially; firstly, because they are in business, and secondly; because Ofodile has violated the contractual agreement. In trying to justify his actions, he tells his wife:

It was just on paper. A lot of our people do that here. It's business, you pay the woman and both of you do paperwork together but sometimes it goes wrong and either she refuses to divorce you or she decides to blackmail you(183).

Ofodile is a man caught in-between two worlds, in his effort to fit into the two cultures; he suffers from identity crisis and alienation. He is neither here nor there, and Ifeoma Onyemelukwe in "Search for Lost Identity" argues that a man such as Ofodile is "caught between two worlds, two civilizations(Western and traditional African), two value systems"(36). The desire to be accepted in the American society compels many Africans (Nigerians) into this kind of marriages. The American way of life makes them to relinquish their African identity and culture which upholds the sanctity of marriage.

Ofodile vents his frustration on his innocent wife for his inability to achieve his goals. He ridicules and castigates her for not being a virgin as predicted by his mother. He tells her, "I wanted a Nigerian wife and my mother said you were a good girl, quiet. She said you might even be a virgin....I probably should tell her how wrong she was"(184). His action conforms with what Gary Colombo *et al* argue in

Rereading America about frustrated people. They argue that:

Frustrated people may easily strike out against the perceived cause of their frustration. However, this reaction is not always possible because the true source of the frustration is often too nebulous to be identified or too powerful to act against. In such instances the result may be a displaced or free-floating aggression; in this situation the frustrated individual or group usually redirects the aggressiveness against a more visible, vulnerable, and socially sanctioned target, one unable to strike back(568).

Ofodile thinks he could unleash his frustration on Chinasa, his vulnerable wife from Nigeria, but Adichie creates her to be able to resist the imposition of western ideals because she is proud of her African (Nigerian) identity.

Resistance of cultural alienation

Chimamanda Adichie as a post-colonial African female writer creates female characters who resist imperialistic tendencies and uphold the African identity. This is imperative since identity accords one a personality. Ini Uko in *Gender and Identity* argues that:

The human quest for identity as an effectual, essential and authentic person constitutes a natural reaction to the centuries of assault, denuding and impairment that the human being has suffered from various forces of an oppressive and engulfing other or majority(xiii).

Adichie uses Chinasa to resist cultural alienation from the African (Nigerian) ancestry. Chinasa resists the new name her husband has ascribed to



her and states thus: “I never have, my English name is just something on my birth Certificate. I’ve been Chinasa Okafor my whole life”(172). By this action, Chinasa has resisted the western imposition and has carved a Nigerian identity for herself. Katrin Berndt notes that:

Postcolonial discourse has examined the modes of identity formation and the modes of resistance, as well as the impact of language, social structures, and the cultural traditions on these processes. It interrogates the colonial ascriptions, and challenges the disabling images that were forced upon the native population of occupied societies(5).

Through Chinasa, Adichie ridicules Ofodile in the manner in which he adores and cherishes the American system over his African (Nigerian) system, “sneering, as though he was the one who had invented the superior American system”(173). This brings his personality to question as he is doubly alienated both from his African root and the American society which he struggles to fit into.

Again, Adichie creates Chinasa to resist cultural alienation through the use of Igbo language. She is not ashamed to speak her language both at home and outside the home, despite the fact that the husband resents it and impresses on her the importance of speaking the English language in America. He tells her, “Speak English. There are people behind you”(177). Ofodile is ashamed of his language as he considers it inferior and an obstacle to his being admitted into the American society. Sackeyfio in “Diaspora Identities” notes that “In coping with the immigrant experience, her husband Ofodile Emeka has renamed himself Dave, and rejects his Nigerian identity as a route

to success in America”(108). Ofodile considers other nationals who speak their language as failures in America. He slights them thus:

Look at the people who shop here; they are the ones who immigrate and continue to act as if they are back in their countries. He gestured, dismissively, toward a woman and her two children, who were speaking Spanish. They will never move forward unless they adapt to America(175).

Chinasa cherishes her Igbo(Nigerian) identity, that is why she introduces herself as such to Nia, a black American lady who prefers an African name. Chinasa realizes that the husband has culturally alienated himself as she wonders, “Oh, I said and shook my head; she, a black American, had chosen an African name, while my husband made me change mine to an English one”(180). She forms a bond with Nia, because she finds something in her that binds them together – African identity. Sackeyfio notes that Chinasa’s “expectations for happiness and security are ruined by the contradictions and confused identity of her Nigerian husband”(107).

Chinasa makes sure she continuously connects herself to her Igbo(Nigerian) root by speaking the language to herself; she goes further to teach her new found friend Nia the simple ones. She tells us the readers, “we spoke only English now; he did not know that I spoke Igbo to myself while I cooked, that I had taught Nia how to say “I’m hungry” and “see you tomorrow in Igbo”(182). In recognition of this fact, Eve Eisenberg notes that Adichie is “an artist who takes up her pen in order to present a ‘true image’ of African people and the African past in order to contest racist misrepresentations and erasures”(9). Adichie uses Chinasa to resist racial prejudices and the concomitant inferiority complex exhibited by African(Nigerian)



immigrants in America because, she is proud of her Nigerian identity. Berndt notes that, "Identity construction has developed into one of the most vital subjects of research in postcolonial discourse"(5).

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to explore the concepts of cultural alienation and exploitation as they relate to immigrants in America in "The Arrangers of Marriage". Using postcolonialism as a theory, the paper argues that the physical and psychological disconnection of one from his or

her root amounts to cultural alienation, as culture is the totality of a people's way of life which involves traditions, customs, language, beliefs, names and food. This paper however concludes that Adichie as a post-colonial African female writer advocates the return of Africans (Nigerians) to their cherished culture which is in no way inferior to the western culture. Adichie achieves this through her female characters Chinasa(a Nigerian woman) and Nia(a black American woman)

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Exploration of the Theory of Conversational Implicature in the Poems “Coal” and “Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde.

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Abstract

A number of works have been done by scholars on the study and interpretation of Audre Lorde's poems, especially through the lens of literary and critical analysis. However, Lorde's poems have not been analyzed pragmatically. A lot may have been written about Lorde's poetry, but there is absolutely no evidence of a pragmatics study of her work. Lorde is the author of many poems that have been studied in various theoretical dimensions, but none have been done with reference to their pragmatics implications. The problem which this research recognizes, therefore, is that Lorde's poems, especially the those under the present study, have not been studied and interpreted using Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature (Cooperative Principle) which comprised the four maxims: the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Manner and Relation. This study seeks to discover the extent to which these maxims could be applied to the reading of these selected poems of Lorde. It also seeks to ascertain the degree to which Lorde's selected poems violate or adhere to these maxims. The study has found that Audre Lorde in some of her poems, violates the maxims as well as adheres to it both in the same breath.

Keywords: Conversational Implicature, Pragmatics, Grice, Poems, Maxims, Cooperative Principles, Audre Lorde, Context

Introduction

Experiences have shown that what people say or write is not always what they actually mean. Quite often, speakers' or authors' utterances or writings mean much more than what they actually literally say or write. For instance, a speaker who sends someone on an errand might say, “If you like, don't come back today.” This statement might have the implied meaning of, “Return as soon as possible or come back very quickly.” This is in line with the view of Jenny Thomas (1995, p. 1) who posits that “people do not always or even usually say what they mean.” He illustrates this with these examples: “it's hot in here.” This statement is open to varying interpretations. For someone who came into a room with the windows shut, this might mean ‘please open the window.’ Or it might mean, ‘Is it alright if I open the window?’ Or ‘You're wasting electricity.’ What someone says at times

can be the complete opposite of what he or she means. Thomas suggests that people can mean something quite different from what their words suggest.

The preceding exposition lays out the problem of meaning in context, specifically how context contributes to meaning. Grice, writing on the same subject, studies a sort of talk-in-interaction, raising questions such as: do speakers mean what they say, or say what they mean? In other words, he studies context-dependent aspects of meaning. We will return to Grice momentarily. Meanwhile the present study seeks to investigate the features of the speech context embedded in the poetic lines in Audre Lorde's poems, arguing that context helps determine which proposition is expressed by a given poetic line. The meaning of those lines can be regarded as a function from a context, including time, place, and possible worlds shared by both poet and



readers, into a proposition, where, as Robert C. Stalnaker (1972, p. 383) argues, a proposition is a function from a possible world into a truth value. In other words, the study investigates aspects of meaning involved in the interaction between a poetic expression's context of utterance and the interpretation of elements within that expression.. An important aspect of Audre Lorde's language use in her poetry is one that takes context into account as an essential part in the construction of meaning.

Returning to Grice, one of his two most influential contributions to the study of language and communication is his theory of meaning, which he began to develop in his article "Meaning," written in 1948 but published only in 1957 at the prodding of his colleague, P. F. Strawson (Wikipedia) Grice further develop his theory of meaning in the 5th and 6th of his William James lectures on "Logic and Conversation," delivered at Harvard in 1967. These two lectures were initially published as "Utterer's Meaning and Intentions" in 1969 and "Utterer's Meaning, Sentence Meaning, and Word Meaning" in 1968, and were later collected with the other lectures as the first section of *Studies in the Way of Words* in 1989. But Grice's most groundbreaking contribution to philosophy and linguistics is his theory of implicature which started in his 1961 article, "The Causal Theory of Perception," and is most fully developed in his 1967 "Logic and Conversation." According to Grice (1967), what a speaker means by an utterance can be divided into what the speaker "says" and what the speaker thereby "implicates." This results in what Grice calls Conversational Implicature.

To conversationally implicate something, according to Grice, is to mean something that goes beyond what one says in such a way that it must be inferred from non-linguistic features of a conversational situation

together with general principles of communication and cooperation. To Grice, a conversational implicature, is, therefore, something which is implied in conversation, that is, something which is left implicit in actual language use. In other words, implicature provides some explicit account of how it is possible to mean more than what is actually said. Grice then goes on to propound his theory of implicature which he calls the Cooperative Principle. The Cooperative Principle, according to Grice is a norm governing all cooperative interactions among humans and it consists of four conversational maxims.

From the foregoing, one could simply ask the question as to why the speakers' utterance can mean different things at different times on different occasions. Another question is how do we interpret what the words actually mean on a certain specific occasion? And why don't people just say what they mean? According to Thomas (1995, p. 1-3), several interesting questions arise from observations. He asserts: "If speakers regularly mean something other than what they say, how is it that people manage to understand one another if a single group of words such as "it's hot in here" could mean so many different things at different times, [in different contexts], how do we work out what it actually does mean on one occasion as opposed to the other? And why don't people just say what they mean? To him, these and many other similar issues are addressed within the area of linguistics known as pragmatics. Simply put, pragmatics is a field of study that shows how language is used to send messages that are not directly related to the additive value of the raw linguistic data of the utterance. Thomas (1995, p. 1-2) posits that "in the early 1980s, when it became common to discuss pragmatics in general textbooks on linguistics, the most common definition of



pragmatics was: meaning in use or meaning in context, in other words, contextualized meaning.

Statement of the Problem

Audre Lorde's writing apparently constitutes a major propelling force in the growth of postcolonial and cultural studies. Several works have been done by scholars on the study and interpretation of Lorde's poems, especially through literary/critical analysis. It is quite obvious that Lorde's poems have not been subjected to a pragmatics analysis. A lot may have been done or said about Lorde's poems, but to the knowledge of this researcher, there is absolutely no evidence of the aspect of pragmatics in this regard. Poems are supposed to be studied and interpreted using suitable apparatuses. Lorde's poems have rich pragmatics implications and potentialities that can be better understood when subjected to a deep contextual analysis. The problem which this research recognizes, therefore, is that Lorde's poems have not been studied and interpreted using pragmatics principles. The need to solve this problem has led the researcher to embark on the study of these poems based on the theory of Conversational Implicature.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to undertake a pragmatics interpretation of Lorde's poems based on the principles of conversational implicature. In specific terms, the study is designed to:

1. Examine the degree to which AudreLorde's selected poems violate or adhere to the Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Manner and Relation.
2. Provide possible interpretation of selected poems based on the violation of Grice's Cooperative Principles.

Review of Relevant Literature in the Field

A pragmatics account of literature makes

it clear that in literary communication we not only have a literary text, but also the emotive effects of literary interpretation which include the needs, wishes, desires likings and feelings of the author. Pragmatics, as we know it, is that level of linguistic analysis which studies meaning in context. Yule (as cited by Osisanwo, 2003, p. 55), asserts that pragmatics is "concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by the listener (or reader)." When one talks about pragmatics, one is simply talking about meaning beyond the linguistic data, that is to say, that pragmatics takes care of the implied meaning of an utterance which could only be inferred within the context.

The pragmatics of literary communication deals with the kinds of problems, such as the kinds of actions accomplished by the production of the literary text (i.e. the poem), the appropriate conditions of those actions, and the relationships between the actions and their contexts (Van Dijk, 1981, p. 13-16). A text induces its interpreter to construct an image, or maybe a set of alternative images. While the image construction and image revision are going on, the interpreter also tries to figure out what the creator of the text is doing — what the nature of the communication situation is all about. For any successful interpretation, then, the reader has to draw up a set of inferences from where the contextual implication can be derived. Understanding and interpreting poetry requires understanding and appreciating of historical and social conditions and ideological factors under which the writers find themselves. Therefore, the pragmatics impact of the poem embraces the totality of the poem, combined with its emotional, intellectual and imaginative appeal (Indede, 2009, p. 107).

Different scholars and critics of literary works have introduced important notions which



either oppose or consent with the theory of pragmatics. Among these critics is Emmanuel Ngara who considers literary works as communicative utterances produced by the author and received by the reader (or hearer), especially when the poem is read aloud. He clearly maintains that a poem is not like everyday speech in that it is patterned in order to give its communicative effects a greater impact. He goes further to say that the impact of a poem could be derived from the totality of the poem, from the weight of its message combined with its emotional, intellectual and imaginative appeal (p. 14-15). These views intelligibly coincide with Van Dijk's (1981, 246-247) who observes that not only are the structures of literary texts important, but also their functions as well as their conditions, their production, processing and reception. The fact remains that poor attention to cognitive analysis of literary communication can bring about poor insight into the emotive effects of literary interpretation which involve our needs, wishes, desires, likings and feelings.

H. P Grice was the first scholar to make a distinction between what the speaker says and what he implies. The idea of "say" is closely tied to the words actually uttered and their ordinary meanings, but more so it includes all the references and predictions that result from that utterance, and whatever force, direct or indirect, it might have (Martinich, 2008, p. 508). It is important to note that most of the poems displayed by the composers are metaphorically expressed. Metaphorical meaning is therefore not explicit in utterance. In line with this, John Searle (1969, p. 502) differentiates speaker's meaning when he utters words from sentence and expression meanings. For the poet to communicate using metaphorical, ironical, and allegorical sentiments, there must be principles according to which he is able to have more than

one meaning, or something different from what he says, whereby the reader using them can understand what he or she means.

This paper is designed to comprehend the pragmatics of the poetry of AudreLorde. The study, therefore, employs the Cooperative Principle developed by Grice whose Conversational Implicature is central to the discussion. Even though Grice's fundamental explanations deal with natural conversations, one should not neglect the fact that the general display of his approach to discourse gives room for the analysis of literary texts. The conversational strategies in literature and more so in poetry as will be discussed in this study invite an open-ended world in which the reader acts creatively, just like the author, if both of them have to share the meaning and meet communication goals (Indede, 2009, p. 108). The literature review in this study is designed to accommodate the pragmatics analysis of poetry of and critical works on AudreLorde

In her essay entitled "A Pragmatic-Stylistic Analysis of Robert Frost's Poem *'the Road Not Taken,'*" DyahRochmawati attempts an analysis of Robert Frost's poem, *the Road Not Taken* from the perspective of pragmatics and stylistics. He asserts that a pragmatics account of literature assumes that in literary communication we do not only have a text, but also the emotive effects of literary interpretation involving needs, wishes, desires, likings and feelings of the author by using Grice's Cooperation Principle. Rochmawati's analysis does not include any pragmatics analysis of Audre Lorde's poetry, and so creates a gap that needs to be filled.

Florence Indede (2009) in her article entitled "The Pragmatics of Kiswahili Literary Political Discourse" attempt a pragmatics analysis of Kiswahili literary political discourse using Grice's Cooperative Principle. She bases



her analysis on the following poetic texts: Chembe cha Moyo by Alamin Mazrui, Sautiya Dhiki by Abdilatif Abdala and Jiho la Ndani by Said Ahmed Mohamed. She maintains that her article employs the Cooperative Principle developed by Grice whose Conversational Implicature is central to her discussion. She argues that the interpretation of meaning requires high level of application of the Cooperative Principle by both the reader and the author. Indede avers that the poetic dialogic understanding of the author's theme or message involves recognizing his rationale for using an utterance in context. Indede's analysis, as in Rochmawati's, provides a robust pragmatics analysis of selected Kiswahili political discourse poetry, but once again no reference to diaspora poetry in general nor to Audre Lorde's poetry in particular. Hence, there is an existing lacuna that my study will address.

The reviews that follow are purely literary and critical analyses with no evidence of pragmatic reading of Lorde's poetry. In her brilliant essay, "Living on the Line: Audre Lorde and *Our Dead Behind Us*," Gloria T. Hull avers that Lorde's seemingly essentialist definitions of herself as black/lesbian/mother/woman are not simple, fixed terms. Rather, she argues that they represent her ceaseless negotiations of a position from which she can speak. Hull proffers examples of these ceaseless negotiations to the effect that almost as soon as she achieves a place of connection, she becomes uneasy at the comfortableness (which is, to her, a signal that something critical is being glossed over) and proceeds to rub athwart the smooth grain to find the roughness and the slant she needs to maintain her difference-defined, complexly constructed self. Secondly, Hull focuses specifically on Lorde's poetry volume *Our Dead Behind Us* which she suggests is in constant motion, with

poem after poem enacting a series of displacements. Third, Hull zeroes in on the cover of *Our Dead Behind Us* which consists of "a snapshot of the last Dahomean Amazons," and "three old Black women in draped clothes," superimposed upon a sea of dark and passionate South Africans at a protest demonstration. This image, Hull contends, projects Lorde's membership in a community of struggle which stretches from ancient to modern times, speaking into exclusionary space a transcendent black woman power "released/from the prism of dreaming." . . .

Rachel A Dudley (2006, p.16-39) follows suit in her equally illuminating article ("Confronting the Concept of Intersectionality: The Legacy of Audre Lorde and Contemporary Feminist Organizations,") by asserting that Audre Lorde is one of many women to criticize second wave feminism for overlooking issues of intersectionality. In specific terms, she critically examines the ways in which Lorde introduced intersectionality into feminist discourse and how feminist organizations embrace this concept today. The question Dudley poses is this: have feminist organizations confronted the concept of intersectionality within their work; in other words, do they account for the multidimensionality of women's lives while fighting for economic, political and social equality; and do they see inter-sectionality as a central tenet of feminist organizing. All these questions, argues Dudley, bring us closer to an understanding of how concepts deemed important by a small group can become permanently relevant within feminism and by extension within society.

Robina Josephine Khalid (2008, p.3-4) in her essay ("Demilitarizing Disease: Ambivalent Warfare and Audre Lorde's '*The Cancer Journals*,'") presents literary criticism for the



1980 nonfiction work *The Cancer Journals* by Audre Lorde and offers a discussion of the power and difficulty surrounding the issue of breast cancer for women in general and Audre Lorde in particular. She describes in detail how the disease ravages the body and Lorde's physical and psychological struggle against it. Khalid focuses on Lorde's nonfiction work, *The Cancer Journals*. There is absolutely no reference to pragmatics.

Consuelo Rivera-Fuentes, a Chilean poet, activist, and lecturer (in "*Sister Outsider: An Enduring Vision: Embracing Myself, My Sister and the 'Other,'*") reflects on and reacts to Audre Lorde's critique of racism within lesbian communities. Her purpose is to honour and rescue Lorde's wonderful insight into the power of words when uttered and shared by women, as well as her ideas about differences and connections that exist between black and white feminisms. Grounded in her own experience of alienation and racism in the European context of Women's Studies, Rivera-Fuentes then asserts that Lorde's insistence on a 'sisterhood' embraces the 'other' and ourselves at the same time.

Pracheta Bakshi (2014, p.8-13) (in "Audre Lorde's Exploration of Her Multiple Selves in Her Biomythography *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*") argues that Eurocentrism, or to be specific, Eurocentric feminism has always disregarded the female experience of the "Other"—be it the socio-political context or the philosophical undercurrent or the mythological projections of African. Therefore, Bakshi asserts that Audre Lorde in her life writing has radically endeavoured to explore her multiple selves, her radical female subjectivity, insisting that the African Orisha, i.e. the androgynus, ambiguous, trickster, mythological figure is re-invoked in her writings, especially in her poems

and her "Biomythography." Bakshi then concludes by saying that Lorde has successfully established her Afro-centric female identity by discarding the Graeco-Roman mythological tradition as a totalizing telos.

Eric SipyinyuNjeng ((2007, p.23-36) (in "Lesbian Poetics and Poetry of AudreLorde") makes an ontological diagnosis of lesbian experience. Using Audre Lorde as a prime example, Njeng argues that for Lorde, lesbianism is natural, liberating, political and ultimately creative. Lesbianism is natural because, for Audre Lorde, it springs from the primal desire for the mother. Viewing heterosexuality as oppressive, lesbianism frees the woman from the inexorable strictures of patriarchy. Politically speaking, Njeng contends that even heterosexual women can and do resort to lesbian acts when they are asphyxiated with patriarchy.

The literature review gives vital insight into the pragmatics analysis of poetry and others that focus specifically on the critical interpretation of Audre Lorde's writings, especially her poetry. The literature review shows that no research has been carried out to pragmatically interpret and analyze Audre Lorde's poetry. This observation has provided a fresh impetus for the researcher to continue the study so as to fill the existing lacuna.

Methodology

In this work, pragmatics principles, specifically, Grice's Cooperative Principle which include the four Maxims, have been applied to the study of Audre Lorde's selected poems. The method involves the analysis of Lorde's poems using Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature to see how the maxims could be applied to a reading of meaning in the two poems.



Design of the study

The study is a pragmatics analysis of Audre Lorde's poems. The design the researcher employs is analytic survey. Analytic survey or what is known as cross-sectional study involves the testing out of two hypotheses. The first is ascertaining if Lorde in these poems violates the four maxims of Grice; and the second involves whether she adheres in this poem to the four maxims of Grice. The target population or the sampling group comprises the poems, "Coal" and "Hanging Fire." It is involved with the collection and analysis of these poems with special reference to its pragmatic implications in relationship to the explanatory variables.

Population for the study

According to Nworgu (2006, p. 94), a population refers to the "limits within which the research findings are applicable." In other words, a population has to do with the elements to which the results or the outcomes of investigation are generalizable. The population for this study is, therefore, Audre Lorde's poems under this study.

Sampling

Sampling is the selection of some members or elements from the population for actual investigation. This selection is necessitated by the impracticability of studying the entire population in most cases (Ohaja, 2003, p. 20). In this work, the "Coal" and "Hanging Fire" are selected since all the poems of Lorde could not be handled in a study of this nature.

The selection is based on the fact that these poems invariably cut across the major sensitive areas of societal life such as race, politics, education, economy and religion. Purposive sampling technique is used to do the selection. Purposive sampling technique simply means the selection of specific elements for research investigations. According to Nworgu (2006), "in purposive sampling, specific

elements, which satisfy some predetermined criteria, are selected."

Instruments for Data Collection

The researcher makes use of documented poems of Audre Lorde, especially those that concern race, politics, religion, education and economy. Also used are some published and unpublished materials on the activities of public and private organizations. Library material

Analysis

"Coal"

In her essay "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," Lorde argues that poetry, as a revelatory distillation of experience, provides the illumination by which people scrutinize their lives and give substance to their unformed ideas. She also believes that each woman's being holds a dark place where her true spirit grows hidden, forming a reservoir of creativity, power, and unexamined and unrecorded feeling. Lorde has written that the woman's place of power within each of us is neither white nor surface; it is dark, it is ancient, and it is deep. It is not surprising, then, that one of Lorde's most frequently anthologized poems is "Coal," with its final two lines independently declaring "I am black because I come from the earth's inside/now take my word for jewel in your open light." This self-assertion and her awareness of the power of words are not merely themes but a necessity and a way of living for Lorde. In form, "Coal" is a discussion of the many different forms that Lorde's words can take, "colored/ by who pays what for speaking." Lorde's imagery is as skillful as ever, as in such phrases as "singing out within the passing crash of sun," an "ill-pulled tooth with a ragged edge," or "seeking like gypsies over my tongue/ to explode through my lips/ like young sparrows bursting from shell." The words that she analyzes, however, are both servant and served. The phrasing she employs seems to imply



that Lorde herself is trapped by her words: “Some words live in my throat/breeding like adders . . ./ Some words/ bedevil me.”

One of Lorde’s principal themes concerns her reaction to racist attitudes and acts; her response to racism is, in a word, anger. Lorde lived with that anger for her entire life; and she once remarked that it “has eaten clefts into my living only when it remained unspoken, useless to anyone.” For Lorde, the expression and use of anger is not destructive, but rather suggests the strength through which she can transform rage at racism into triumphant self-assertion.”

Audre Lorde’s “Coal” is full of metaphors. The metaphors give more strength to the meaning of the message. It is also a means of explanation when there are no other words to explain. Metaphors are also used to describe a condition in an exploded and exaggerated way. Lorde first starts off with describing herself as a natural element that exists within the earth itself—coal. Coal starts off as one element and changes through the course of time depending on where it is located and what treatments it is exposed to. It may start off as a worthless chunk of earth, but when the conditions are right, the coal has the possibility of turning into a valuable diamond. So the speaker is saying that there are some things that are closed but can be opened, just like coal. Another example in the poem is the perfect combination of sounds that make words that can make or break the situation. There are words and thoughts that boggle your mind in a good way. Then there are words that make you cringe and think bad thoughts. Lorde’s metaphors are also alive and fun. This makes the poem interesting and easier to read. “Others know sun/Seeking like gypsies over my tongue/ To explode through my lips like young sparrows bursting from shell” is an example of a metaphor that brings the reader in with strength. The use of

imagery of coming into the world and dancing in the sun has positive effect on the reader. Use of words is like a diamond, if the cut is correct and held into the light, it will shine with great brilliance. But if cut poorly, there will be a dull shine that is not pleasing. This is easily applied to diction used in poetry.

Audre Lorde organizes “Coal” into five separate sections. Each section emphasizes an aspect of race and gender, which the poem demonstrates. The poem as a whole carries Audre Lorde’s perspective and experience as a black lesbian as she works for political equality. According to Beverly Threatt Kulii, author of *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, many of Lorde’s poems in *Coal* are also an indictment of an unjust society that allows women to be treated unfairly, sometimes brutally, and this acknowledgment by Lorde intensifies her plea for cooperation and sisterhood among women. “Coal,” the poem that lends itself to the book’s title, is a reflection of Audre Lorde’s personal relationship with society and herself as she understands them.

This poem is from later in her life. The idea of the title is a reflection of the imagery of the poem. “Coal” is one of Lorde’s less formulaic poems and is written in the first person, free verse and spoken in the voice of the poet. The racial context and content of this poem as well as the personal pleas found throughout make it reflective more of a prayer than a dramatic monologue. Its purpose is to create the image of the progression from the darkness of the coal to the illumination of the diamond that is held within. This also shows Lorde’s life story as she struggles with her own self-image and discovers her power within her. The poem is composed of three stanzas, much like the body of a standard letter. It contains a short opening and conclusion, and the focus or the discovery occurs in the body



or middle stanza.

In the poem, the speaker creates an extended metaphor of herself as a piece of coal, also establishing herself in the power of love and self-acceptance, which is portrayed as openness and diamonds. The speaker states, "Some words are open like a diamond/on glass windows." Furthermore, the speaker describes her passions and emotions, "Others know sun/ seeking like gypsies over my tongue/ to explode through my lips." The idea of the coal/ diamond relationship becomes clear with the illusion to creation in that "I am black because I come from the earth's inside/ take my word for jewel in your open light." While this line supports the creation of diamonds through fire and coal, it also reinforces the metaphor of the coal as darkness in that it references the coal coming from inside the earth, while reinforcing the light and pure imagery that is found in the diamond.

This poem functions much like the book as a whole. It uses perspective to create a better understanding of an individual and that individual's growth and realizations of self-worth: in this poem's case, the poet and her realization that she and her works are worth something because they are true and pure and should not be discounted because of her skin color. The poem, as a whole, portrays the struggle with social acceptance and self-value. The poem is saturated with the metaphor of coal as a representation of blackness. It is the symbol of a person's blackness, which comes from within the nurturing earth, and it is an essence that provides fuel and a substance that becomes a diamond of identity. In other words, coal is an assertion and celebration of blackness. Like a child coming from her mother's womb, like diamond from coal and like words coming out as sound, she emerges from her black self; she comes from earth's inside. Our true self is not colored, just like

diamond, it only shines. She goes on to explain and name words and how some words feel like an ill-pulled tooth with a ragged edge, and how some words feel like the crashing of the sun, how some words bedevil her.

These multiple imageries indicate her personal struggle as a black woman and how society with its power names someone black or white, and judges them and ties them to their origin of being. She delivers a perspective to create a better understanding of an individual and that individual's growth and realizations of self-worth. Because of her black color she is no less, her true self is as pure and beautiful like diamond which incidentally emanates from black coal. Even though society's labeling makes her angry, yet she loves herself all the same. In doing that, she celebrates her marginalized identity.

According to critic Sagri Dhairyam, "Coal" . . . is, widely read to be affirming an unself-conscious Black essence. . . . The controlling metaphor of coal, staple fuel, celebrates "the total black, being spoken/From the earth's inside," which becomes in its idealized form, the jewel, diamond . . . The poem's final visionary lines . . . claim their political identity precisely through an empowering biologism. . . . For Black American poets it means a call to a poetics of Blackness which emphasizes the role of the poet as activist and leader and the role of poetry as an expression of an intrinsically Black vision.

Grice's Maxims of Quantity and Quality to Audre Lorde's "Coal"

With respect to the origins of diamond that emanates from the depths of black earth, the poet seems to provide accurate account of how diamonds are extracted from the earth: "How a diamond comes into a knot of flame/ As a diamond comes into a knot of flame." But the over-emphasis of that process of extraction in



stanzas one and three seems to have provided too much information about that natural process. In that sense, the Maxim of Quantity is being violated. But there is a justification for that intentional violation since it enables the poet-speaker to lay emphasis on the nature of the extraction which results in something profoundly beneficial beyond the fundament of the black earth. In other words, the poet-speaker's intention is to make the strongest statement ever on the extractable end product of the black earth. The end result is that the statement "how a diamond comes into a knot of flame" both violates and adheres to the Maxim of Quantity.

In other words, through its repetitiveness it makes the strongest statement about the extraction of diamond from the black earth, but at the same time seems to give redundant information. This redundancy is given its markedness by the line "An ill-pull tooth with a ragged edge." The redundancy (that is, giving too much information is also discernible in the statement: "I/ Is the total black, being spoken/ I am black because I come from the earth inside." All of these repeated statements are an attempt by the speaker to emphasize the truth-value of blackness.

The speaker in this poem has always been honest both with herself and with the rest of the world and has always called it the way it is. Her basic honesty does not lend herself to saying what she believes to be false or saying something for which she lacks adequate evidence. Blackness is integral to the depths of the earth's inside. Also diamonds come from the very centre of the earth's inside. These are all truisms, and therefore, the statements adhere to the Maxim of Quality.

Grice's Maxim of Relation and Manner in Audre Lorde's "Coal"

The very first stanza of the poem "Coal" introduces a problematic and that

problematic has to do with the complicated relationship between coal as a natural or mineral resource and the feminine self "I," on the one hand, and diamond and sun, on the other. This complicated relationship precipitates difficulty of reading the real intent of the speaker, and this fact raises the question of relevance, but on closer examination, there seems to be a linkage between all of those elements mentioned. The colour of coal is black, the speaker admits that she "is the total black" and the diamond that comes from the earth is encased in black earth. Diamond is the jewel of the earth and known around the world as a jewel of a woman's beauty. Taken together, therefore, elements that began as having no relation with each other turn out to have quintessential co-ordinance. All of them emanate from a deep black essence, as natural as ever. The speaker confirms this quintessential co-ordinance by asserting in the last stanza that: "I am black because I come from the earth's inside/Take my word for jewel in your open light." So the poem adheres to the Maxim of Relation, even though, that element of relevance appears to have been initially compromised.

The meaning of the poem does not manifest easily; it is complicated by some incomprehensibly difficult expressions which do not lend themselves to easy interpretation. For instance, speaker says, The stub remains: An ill-pulled tooth with a ragged edge, Some words live in my throat, Breeding like adders. Others know sun, Seeking like gypsies over my tongue.

The whole thrust of the poem is about the speaker's blackness. These five lines make understanding difficult to attain. The question about one's blackness, one's



heritage and pride in that heritage is clear enough. What is not so clear, brought on by the expression itself, is the relationship between one's blackness which is celebrated in stanzas one and three and the "ill-pulled tooth with a ragged edge" with "some words [living] . . . in my throat/breeding like adders." That is an unnecessary obscurity and prolixity which calls into question the whole notion of brevity and relevance. This fact leaves the reader racking her brain as to what the speaker's intent is, and what she discovers is that without that second stanza, the meaning of the poem becomes supremely clear. It is a meaning anchored in one's ethnic heritage and unalloyed pride in and dignity of that heritage. So what it means is that the speaker violates the Maxim of Manner.

"Hanging Fire"

"Hanging Fire" by Audre Lorde concerns an African American girl who is experiencing growing pains and facing much insecurity about herself that have been bothering her. The speaker feels that people need to pay attention to her, because her mother is absent from her life. The girl needs this attention to fill the void that her mother has created by staying in the bedroom with the door closed. In each stanza, there is a refrain line, "and momma's in the bedroom/with the door closed" which repetition underscores the aloneness of this poor teenage girl, showing her mother as either callous or noncommittal in assisting her daughter through her struggles. The main problem in this poem is that the girl is growing up and she becomes insecure and very emotional because of this transaction. To make matters worse, the girl's mother is very distant from the girl and she feels like she is facing her insecurities on her own.

This poem can relate to the average

teenager who is growing up and facing many problems with their insecurities. The poem was probably written to connect to the teenage reader, or to inform parents that teenagers face problems as they grow up and need support. All teenagers have insecurities and problems like when the girl states "My room is too small for me... the one/wearing braces." Some teenagers face their insecurities all by themselves because they isolate themselves from others, but sometimes like in the girl's case the parent or parents do not interact with their children, and there is this cold distance. The meaning of the poem inheres in the title of the poem. "Hanging Fire" may be a reference to the insecurities and nightmarish thoughts which the girl entertains about herself and the self-doubt that seems inexorably to hang directly over her head. The fire burns her metaphorically and every time she has these nightmarish thoughts of herself the fire drops and burns her budding confidence. The girl needs someone to lean on and help her put out the fire over her head, but sadly enough no one is paying attention, not even her own dear mom.

It is as if she needs her mother to put out the flames, but the mother doesn't care a hoot about her daughter's pain or is merely lackadaisical. The poem implies that almost every teenager has some type of fire hanging over their heads and in their consciousness; it burns them until someone else can help put it out. The fact that her mother couldn't give a damn represents to her the greatest betrayal. When the girl laments "and momma's in the bedroom with the door closed," it symbolizes that the speaker's mother is not paying attention to the speaker. Although that is the symbolic message, it is unknown what the mother is actually doing in the bedroom. It seems that the father is absent, and the speaker is an only child living with a mother who doesn't support her. The speaker and her



mother could have money issues and could live in a bad neighborhood which could influence or spark some of her insecurities. The mother could be ill and stuck in the bedroom because she cannot get out of bed. Another explanation that could go along with the bad neighborhood would be that the mother is a prostitute, and she is just trying to raise money for her family. The real reason why she is in the bedroom with the door closed is not told, but some things can be implied. At first glance, the poem may appear to have no serious purpose other than a girl whining about her life, but as we go deep, this fourteen-year-old girl is making a distress call, calling for help as she goes through adolescence.

She needs care, love, and somebody to listen to her. The repetitive lines of 'and momma's in the bedroom with the door closed' indicates that she is in a desperate need of her mother to show some support and help her navigate her adolescence. She also complains about being excluded from the all-important Math Team despite the fact that her grades were better than some of the boys'. The complaint about the exclusion points up the gender bias in the school system when the girl was in school. The poem also stresses the importance of parental role in the growing up of a teenager. On the emotional side, the poem is serious as the girl insistently complains about her life, suggesting that she needs somebody urgently now to assist her in her growing pains. She is afraid to grow up because she has no role model and no support.

This girl is definitely experiencing anxiety, confusion and frustration in a situation where she has no leverage. The line in the third stanza "suppose I die before graduation they will sing sad melodies" shows that she is lonely and feels utterly different. The poem has an interesting simple structure consisting of three stanzas. The language is simple and easy to

understand probably because she is just a fourteen-year-old girl and she wants us to understand in the simplest way what she is going through. We identify with the girl both sympathetically and empathetically because we can relate it to ourselves since we were at some point in our lives fourteen-year-old girls (and boys).

In conveying her distress, the poet-speaker employs a number of symbols or symbolic inscriptions. The first, "and my skin has betrayed me" suggests that she is different and that difference points to her blackness, and reminds us of a point in time when black people were often isolated from the rest of white society, when they felt unaccepted. In the line "suppose I die before graduation [and] they will sing sad melodies" shows that she is so lonely, sad and dejected. "And momma's in the bedroom with door closed" repeated several times symbolizes the need and hope that someday her mother will open the door to her heart in every situation which she faces. Aside from the symbolic, there is the rhythmical. For instance, the poem has a slow rhythm mimicking a person in a disconsolate condition.

Grice's Maxims of Quantity and Quality to Audre Lorde's "Hanging Fire"

The speaker opens up about the pains of growing up in a home apparently without caring and without motherly love and warmth. In opening up, she bares her heart without holding back anything. In that sense, she exhausts her emotional burden, telling us almost everything about her life's experiences without divulging her innermost secrets. The overall impression is that she supplies information about her predicament without divulging her innermost secrets but at the same time without holding back aspects of her experience that would ensure our emotional empathetic involvement. To that end, the speaker



adheres perfectly to the Grice's maxim of Quantity. That is to say that the speaker gives the information as required. She doesn't say too much nor too little about her adolescence and so stays within the limit of Gricean principles.

With respect to the Gricean Maxim of Quality, the speaker's candour is unquestionable. The element of personal account introduces an intimacy that makes her story believable. And because many of the readers have also gone through similar pains of growing up through adolescence, they tend to believe the speaker. And because they believe her, they are comfortable with her story and do not perceive any disingenuousness about her pleas for help and understanding. Since adolescence is a universal experience, the reader is able to easily identify and even empathize with the speaker by placing themselves in her shoes. That kind of intimacy only comes from a feeling of someone you trust and what she utters. Because of apparent absolute believability between speaker and reader, there seems no way that the speaker would be making a false statement, even a false assumption. In reference to the second proviso of the Gricean Maxim of Quality, because of the autobiographical nature of the speaker's narrative, she tells it like it is without manufacturing it. Everything she says, she backs up without equivocation, without doctoring. Everything she rants about, she has experienced it. That is the greatest evidence anyone can adduce in support of one's story. Therefore, the speaker adheres to the Maxim of Quality.

Grice's Maxim of Relation and Manner in Audre Lorde's "Hanging Fire"

When it comes to the Gricean Maxim of Relation, this poem makes a perfect case. Every circumstance the speaker cites is germane to her growing pains as an adolescent; every adolescent anywhere in

the world can identify, sympathize, and empathize with the speaker, and will see in the speaker's narrative of her predicament a neat reflection of her own growing pains. In other words, there are no digressions, no obscure expressions, no prolixity; everything that needs to be there is there; every fragment of her adolescent life is there woven together neatly and discretely. These fragments speak of pain, alienation and maternal neglect. The pain of rejection, the agony of being continually ignored by her mother "with the door closed" repeated three times in the poem, and the notion of being discriminated against on account of gender, all of that has left a searing mark on her memory and psyche. Therefore, the speaker resists the temptations of digression and so, adheres to the Gricean Maxims of Relation and Manner.

Conclusion

This study has been an attempt to read Audre Lorde's selected poems as conversation between speaker and listener in terms of the speaker's intent beyond the literal level of meaning, in other words, the implied or pragmatics meaning of what the speaker says and the extent to which the listener understands the context of meaning. What the researcher is saying is that to understand Audre Lorde in her poetry, especially in the poems selected, one must go beyond the semantic or literal meaning of words, concentrating instead on the contextual level of meaning, in other words, the inference that listener and the reader construct. In Lorde's poetry, especially the ones under the present study. The researcher has incorporated conversational implicature of Grice by adopting the Cooperative Principle, specifically the four Maxims



which underpin the general rules we follow in conversation.

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L'immigré Africain face aux problèmes de la polygamie en Europe à travers *Casse pas ton balai* d'Eugene Mpundu

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Résumé

*L'une de ces valeurs qui fait l'objet de ce travail n'est autre que la polygamie que les immigrés africains exportent dans leur territoire d'accueil. La pratique de cette polygamie est souvent en contradiction avec les lois matrimoniales européennes. Un Français par exemple, ne peut pas prendre deux ou plusieurs femmes à la fois. C'est ainsi que les immigrés Africains, voulant vivre cette tradition polygamique, sont confrontés à des problèmes juridiques qu'Eugène Mpundu nous fait savoir dans son roman intitulé *Casse pas ton balai*. L'approche sociologique développée par Ravoux Rallo et Helene Potelet est utilisée pour souligner le point de vue de notre romancier.*

Mots clés : Immigré, Polygamie, Tradition

Introduction

L'immigration est aussi vieille que la société dans laquelle nous vivons aujourd'hui parce que les hommes se déplacent toujours d'un milieu à un autre, d'une communauté à une autre à la recherche d'un mieux-être. Aujourd'hui, les mouvements des personnes continuent à une échelle plus grande et internationale et on constate que ces déplacements viennent plus des pays pauvres vers les pays riches. C'est le cas évident des immigrés africains vers les pays européens. Ces déplacements s'accroissent aujourd'hui chez les jeunes africains à la recherche du travail partout en Europe. En plus de ces déplacements et de ces implantations dans les pays de l'Occident, les immigrés africains y vont avec leurs cultures. Ils y exportent également leurs coutumes, leurs traditions, leurs idées, leurs convictions socio culturelles et religieuses. C'est le cas de Mamadou, le héros de *Casse pas ton balai*, un roman du Congolais Eugène Mpundu qui a trois femmes et part en France avec deux en pensant d'y faire venir la troisième dans un pays où les lois interdisent la polygamie.

Il faut souligner que l'homme est un être culturel et que partout où il va, il y va avec ses

valeurs culturelles. Il cherche à y vivre comme il vit dans son pays d'origine, il cherche toujours à y recréer les atmosphères socio culturelles qui lui permettent de se sentir chez lui. C'est pour cette raison que, Mamadou, polygame convaincu, ne s'est pas empêché d'emmener ses femmes en France.

L'auteur et ses œuvres

Eugène Mpundu est né à Kinshasa, la capitale de la République Démocratique de Congo. Il a fait ses études primaires et secondaires à Kinshasa où il obtient son Baccalauréat. Il part plus tard en France dans les années 1980 pour poursuivre ses études tout en travaillant. Il vit toujours en France où il travaille dans une banque. *Casse pas ton balai*, publié en 2010 par l'Harmattan, est son premier roman.

De quoi s'agit-il dans l'œuvre ?

Casse pas ton balai, œuvre écrite par le Congolais Eugène Mpundu retrace l'histoire du jeune immigré africain Eugène. Il est le personnage narrateur qui se penche sur son passé de travailleur immigré. Il a quitté l'Afrique particulièrement Kinshasa dans la quête de trouver une meilleure condition de vie en France. Tous les jeunes veulent tenter leur chance en Europe, un milieu souvent considéré comme terre



d'accueil où ils peuvent réaliser leur rêve. Arrivé là, la vie n'est pas du tout rose, les travaux réservés aux immigrés sont durs et mal rémunérés. Eugène trouve enfin du travail aux Vins de France, une usine qui produit du vin.

Dans l'usine, notre héros étudie les mœurs de ses compatriotes. Par exemple, les cas de Mamadou. Ce dernier est marié à trois femmes au pays avant de venir en France. Il emmène premièrement sa première femme. Il contourne les lois françaises et y emmène sa deuxième femme. Eugène a enfin tout fait pour emmener la troisième épouse, une jeune fille presque du même âge que la fille aînée de sa première femme. Les deux premières femmes se révoltent et rejettent la troisième femme qu'elles appellent la gamine. Les lois françaises ne tolèrent pas cette union polygame. C'est ainsi que la première femme quitte le foyer conjugal pour aller vivre ailleurs. Les enfants grandissent et deviennent plus exigeants.

Le salaire de Mamadou ne suffit plus pour couvrir les dépenses. Il n'arrive pas à envoyer de l'argent à ses parents au pays. La charge lui devient très lourde à cause de la polygamie. Il a tout fait pour trouver un studio à la « gamine ». Mamadou n'arrive pas à subvenir convenablement aux besoins de sa famille.

Par ailleurs, le personnage narrateur, Eugène qui a commencé comme balayeur dans l'usine est nommé au poste d'exploitation informatique. Il sort de la misère. Un ouvrier africain de l'usine Fabrice, a eu un accident de travail et est paralysé à la suite, ceci pour dire que les travailleurs immigrés africains sont exposés à toutes sortes des risques au travail. D'après le héros narrateur, l'Europe n'est pas un Eldorado comme on le pense. Il n'y a plus de travail en Europe. Les travaux que les immigrés africains faisaient auparavant tel le balayage de rue, le ramassage des poubelles ainsi de suite sont

maintenant revendiqués par les Blancs.

L'approche sociologique

La sociologie se définit comme une branche de la discipline des sciences humaines qui s'occupe des faits sociaux en tant que tels, de leur structuration et de leur destruction. Les progrès de la science sont intimement liés à ceux de tous les autres domaines de la vie humaine. Précisons d'emblée que l'approche sociologique s'inscrit dans les principes de la sociologie de la littérature, celle-ci se préoccupant, selon Ravoux Rallo (82) toujours de trouver les moyens de corréler des textes littéraires avec des faits sociaux. Notons d'ailleurs que la sociologie de la littérature comprend ce qu'on peut qualifier d'interne et d'externe. Du point de vue interne, la sociologie de la littérature consiste à envisager essentiellement le texte romanesque et il se révèle, d'abord, que le roman est le reflet de la société ; en deuxième lieu, la structure romanesque et surtout le roman réaliste est un dédoublement de la structure sociale ; troisièmement, le roman est un instrument de la transformation sociale. La sociologie de la littérature du point de vue externe, cherche à définir la place de l'écrivain dans la société ainsi que la littérature comme production, c'est-à-dire comme activité socioéconomique.

Ainsi qu'Hélène Potelet (157) le souligne, la critique sociologique s'appuie sur le contexte historico-social qui donne naissance à une œuvre. L'approche sociologique prétend saisir l'écrivain et ses écrits pour les insérer dans le contenu social qui seul permet la saisie précise et valable du sens littéraire. Le livre n'est donc nullement une chose sacrée issue d'une profondeur mystérieuse et insondable. Cette démystification de la littérature est due aux entreprises du matérialisme historique, autrement dit, les études scientifiques des phénomènes sociaux, à la base fondée par Marx et Engels en réaction contre la



tradition qui voyait dans la littérature uniquement une inspiration mystérieuse, personnelle, divine, soutenue par l'idéologie bourgeoise qui ne voulait pas que l'écrivain se mêle des questions d'ordre social. Le but même de la sociologie de la littérature est de mettre fin à cette insuffisance méthodologique en insistant sur la primauté du social, a fin d'avoir du fait littéraire une vision complète.

La sociologie de la littérature

De ce point de vue, on saisira facilement que l'approche sociologique privilège l'examen du texte littéraire dans un contexte aussi bien historique que social. Elle cherche à établir une corrélation entre l'œuvre littéraire et la société qui la produit. Dans la société concernant l'arrière-plan des facteurs historiques et sociaux qui influencent l'écrivain, on se rendra compte alors que la littérature fait partie intégrante de la vie sociale et politique d'un peuple. D'après Ravoux Ralloo (82), lorsqu'un auteur écrit son texte, il ne le fait pas hors de sa situation historique ; son écrit est bien ancré dans son temps, dans son milieu, dans son historique.

L'histoire de la littérature africaine est, dans ce cas, l'histoire de l'expérience sociopolitique de l'Afrique. Elle explique au lecteur de la littérature africaine, l'origine sociopolitique à partir de laquelle les écrivains africains ont produit leurs œuvres, d'où notre penchant vers l'approche sociologique dans de ce bref travail.

L'histoire de Mamadou, le héros de l'œuvre

Mamadou est l'un des personnages africains de l'œuvre. Le personnage narrateur est Eugène ou Gégène, ce nom se rapproche étrangement de l'auteur Eugène Mpundu. Le héros narrateur parle des autres personnages qui sont ses collègues d'usine et après parle de lui-même à la première personne du singulier.

Oui, c'est moi comparé à la majorité de mes compatriotes, de

penser que je n'ai pas beaucoup parlé La plupart de ceux que je croyais m'enviait (91)

Il faut aussi comprendre que le roman est divisé en 12 chapitres et chaque chapitre porte le nom chacun de ses collègues dont il leur parle. Le premier chapitre est intitulé Mamadou. Ce Mamadou est le personnage qui emmène ses trois femmes en France, il est décrit comme un personnage docile qui obéit à tous les autres d'après le narrateur (7).

Le personnage est présenté comme le nègre type du temps colonial qui dit oui à tous les autres Blancs. Il veut plaire à ses patrons en acceptant tout parce qu'il ne croit pas qu'il puisse trouver un travail que celui qu'il a trouvé aux Vins de France. C'est un personnage sans problème et qui ne peut poser de problèmes à aucun de ses patrons. Le bon nègre, c'est l'Africain qui craint le Blanc et le prend pour son maître supérieur en toute chose. Son travail aux Vins de France constitue à nettoyer les éléments mécaniques de la chaudière et d'effectuer de menues réparations sur les chaînes de productions (8). Il fait ce travail avec tout le respect qu'il faut parce qu'il ne veut pas le perdre, c'est d'ailleurs ce dénuement qui va jusqu'à la condescendance qui pousse un jour Mamadou à poser un acte au moment d'un incendie dans l'usine. Au lieu d'attendre le service des pompiers, Mamadou se précipite dans la fumée pour éteindre le feu :

La fumée s'épaississait de plus en plus. Mamadou repéra rapidement d'où elle émanait. Il éteignit la flamme qui se développait et fermait... qui alimentait la petite machine en feu. Son apparition éberlua les camarades. Il sortit noir, suffocant, titubant, et cria c'est bon, je l'ai éteint (9)

Ce geste héroïque vient seulement du respect que



Mamadou a pour les Blancs, mais ce respect lui a obtenu une promotion. C'est à cause de cette promotion qu'il a décidé d'emmener sa troisième femme en France, une décision qui a causé des problèmes dans la vie conjugale et financière du personnage. L'argent lui devient insuffisant pour satisfaire ses besoins domestiques. Notre analyse montre ici que Mamadou est l'Africain qui prend le Blanc comme une race supérieure qu'il faut toujours respecter comme un petit dieu. Il est aussi l'un de ces Africains qui aiment vivre toutes les valeurs culturelles de leur milieu d'origine dans le pays d'accueil.

Le pays d'accueil et ses lois sur le mariage

L'immigré qui quitte son pays d'origine est chargé de sa culture, des idées, des coutumes, des lois qui régissent sa communauté. Il est un être culturel, un agent socioéconomique, un citoyen ayant intériorisé les lois de son pays. En venant s'installer dans son pays d'accueil comme immigré, il doit avoir affaire avec les lois de ce pays. Le personnage narrateur d'Eugène Mpundu (92) nous donne ici ses difficultés à s'accommoder des lois de son pays d'accueil en France selon lesquelles :

Ce ne fut pas facile pour moi de vivre dans un Etat de droit, je n'ai pas l'habitude. J'ai des règles que je n'étais pas censé ignorer comment s'y retrouver dans les labyrinthes de lois et dans les méandres des règlements divers et variés (92)

Ici, notre héros est confronté aux forces contraignantes des lois de la France. Il a des difficultés à vivre ces lois et à les respecter, car, celles-ci ne sont pas conformes à son pays, par ailleurs nous savons que l'Africain a ses propres traditions, ses coutumes et ses lois sur le mariage.

Comme Busari Lasisi le souligne

KASUJOF, l'Afrique est un continent où la polygamie est encouragée, par ailleurs, en Europe, plus précisément en France, le mariage est contrôlé par des lois spécifiques interdisant la polygamie.

Mamadou s'infiltré étrangement dans cette culture en y emmenant ses trois femmes, ceci étant une infraction d'après les lois françaises :

Il avait fait venir sa troisième épouse mais les choses devenaient compliquées. Les toubabs ne voyaient plus d'un bon œil la polygamie et il ne savait pas trop comment faire pour obtenir les papiers, selon lui, les assistants sociaux montèrent la tête de sa première épouse, la seule reconnue par l'Etat Civil au point qu'elle refusa de vivre sous le même toit que la dernière, la plus jeune, à peine plus vieille que sa fille aînée (10)

La monogamie garantit les droits de la femme et permet à celle-ci de jouir de ses droits matrimoniaux. C'est pour cette raison que la première femme de Mamadou sévie a été reconnue par l'Etat Civil, l'institution qui s'occupe du mariage et des affaires matrimoniales. Les assistantes sociales veillent sur les lois et orientent les femmes africaines qui sont victimes de la polygamie de revendiquer leurs droits sur le sol français (90). Jetons un coup d'œil sur ce que dit Jean Paul Goureutch concernant la polygamie en France, Selon lui, « il s'agit d'un mode de vie importé du pays d'origine et contraire à la loi française sur le mariage » (120)

L'immigre africain et son besoin de vivre sa culture

On remarque que la culture africaine ne



se cache pas. C'est une culture très flamboyante qui s'extériorise facilement dans l'habillement, la musique, la danse et la nourriture. Les Africains vivent également en groupe solitaire. En arrivant en Europe, ils aiment reproduire cette vie pour se sentir encore en Afrique qui est surtout marquée par la chaleur dans les relations contrairement aux rapports européens qui sont froids comme l'expérimente Samba Diallo cité par Kester Ogembi Echenim :

Samba Diallo arrive en France pour poursuivre ses études de philosophie, constate une certaine froideur sur les plans du contact physique et des rapports humains (214)

Cette froideur n'existe pas dans les rapports humains en Afrique. C'est la chaleur entretenue dans les liens de solidarité, de convivialité, de famille qu'on veut transporter en France ou en Europe. Par exemple, Fabrice, un personnage camerounais dans le corpus a trouvé sa femme, une camerounaise qu'il avait rencontrée dans une soirée organisée par la communauté camerounaise (28). Il est à noter que les immigrants africains se rencontrent entre eux à l'étranger pour créer des moments d'ambiance caractéristique. Ce qui est contraire à la chaleur africaine même quand Eugène est allé en France, c'est au nom de la solidarité africaine selon laquelle :

Le lendemain matin se téléphonai à Mongali. La chaleur de sa voix me rasséréna. Il me fournit aussitôt les indications pour aller chez lui et me rapprocha d'avoir dépensé l'argent en prenant une chambre dans un centre d'hébergement alors qu'il aurait pu dormir chez lui (103)

Sans la solidarité africaine, Eugène ne peut pas être logé avant d'attendre les jours meilleurs où il pourra voler de ses propres ailes. Il faut reconnaître qu'en dehors du côté positif de ce besoin de vivre sa culture africaine à l'étranger, il y a aussi le côté négatif qui n'est autre que la polygamie. On comprend bien que ce n'est pas toutes les cultures qu'il faut importer dans un pays d'accueil, mais la culture étant une force qui s'impose aux comportements de l'homme, certains immigrants se sont vus dans l'obligation de reproduire cette culture polygame à l'étranger. D'autres immigrants imposent à leurs filles de marier des hommes choisis par leurs parents.

Les conséquences de l'importation de la culture polygame

L'importation de la polygamie en Europe cause des conséquences qui se situent au niveau culturel et juridique.

Le choc culturel

On remarque généralement que tout ce qui est étranger est étrange. Tout ce qu'on n'a jamais vu, entendu manger et qu'on n'a jamais fait paraît toujours étrange. Dans l'histoire de la rencontre des cultures, l'autre paraît toujours étrange dans sa manière de parler, de manger, de se comporter, de se marier. On sait que les rapports entre le monde blanc et le monde noir n'ont pas été faciles en termes de cohabitation. Ces sentiments d'étrangeté, de bizarreries, de contradictions qui apparaissent entre deux personnes ou deux mondes de cultures différentes constituent ce que nous appelons choc culturel. On est sous le coup de choc en voyant pour la première fois ce que l'autre fait. On remarque dans les habitudes et les comportements des Blancs à l'égard des repas de Mamadou d'où vient cette question « c'est quoi ces cochonneries que tu manges ? » (8)

Les Blancs, en voyant les repas de

Mamadou sont en choc culturel parce que les repas de Mamadou ne correspondent pas à leurs repas. Ils se demandent si l'on peut manger de pareilles choses. Calixthe Beyala dans *Les honneurs perdus*, a fait mention de ce choc culturel où l'un des personnages français a vomi lorsqu'il apprend qu'il vient de manger la viande de crocodile chez l'un de ses amis africains.

Par ailleurs, l'Européen ne comprend pas comment un homme peut se marier à plusieurs femmes simultanément. Quant à ce qui concerne la polygamie, les Blancs se demandent comment Mamadou satisfait ses trois femmes sexuellement la même nuit car il leur a dit qu'il le fait. Les Blancs choqués, lui posent la question « Tu les satisfais toutes les trois dans le même lit ? » (8). Notre héros devient un objet de moquerie à cause de sa culture polygame. La culture de l'autre paraît étrangère et à la suite, source de moquerie comme l'exprime les collègues blancs de Mamadou « Trois épouses pour lui tout seul » (8).

Une fois à l'usine, l'une des collègues jumelles françaises, Pauline n'ayant jamais vu de près un noir, demande à Eugène si elle peut toucher ses cheveux (87) parce qu'elle n'a jamais compris comment on peut être noir. Elle pose aussi des questions sur les Noirs en Afrique, comment les Africains vivent dans les cases (88). Ce qui choque peut aussi être source de haine. C'est pour cette raison que les immigrés africains sont haïs par un des anciens Présidents français qui a une manière caricaturale des sentiments de choix culturels. Il s'agit cependant des propos de Jacques Chirac rapportés par Jean-Paul Gourevite (1998 :120), des propos qui parlent des foyers polygames des immigrés en Afrique.

L'infraction de la loi matrimoniale

L'infraction est le fait de violer les lois d'un pays. Du moment où l'immigré africain importe en Europe sa culture ou sa famille

polygame, il est automatiquement en situation d'infraction. En France et dans les autres pays européens, il est formellement interdit d'épouser plusieurs femmes simultanément. Dans *Casse pas ton balai*, le cas de Mamadou nous intéresse car il a ouvertement importé cette culture polygame en France et il commence à avoir des problèmes.

Le problème des immigrés africains c'est qu'ils savent qu'ils sont en situation d'infraction en emmenant leurs femmes dans les pays d'accueil. Le cas de Mamadou est révélateur, seule sa première femme est reconnue par les lois françaises et elle a pu bénéficier des papiers. Cela explique que quand on vit dans un pays autre que le sien, on doit nécessairement se confronter aux lois et règlements du pays d'accueil. Faisons allusion à une déclaration dans *Forum Francophone* selon laquelle :

L'ordonnance de 2 novembre 1945 définit les conditions d'entrée et de séjour des étrangers en France. Cette ordonnance a été modifiée par la loi no 93-1027 du 24 août 1993 qui interdit la délivrance d'un titre de résidence à un ressortissant étranger vivant en situation de polygamie par les lois des régularisations discrètes opérées par la préfecture ou le Ministère de l'Intérieure (2)

Il faut comprendre ici que la France a décidé le système de regroupement familial qui consiste à permettre aux immigrés d'emmener leurs familles en France. Mais seulement ce sont les premières épouses des hommes qui sont reconnues comme l'est le cas de Mamadou. Les autres femmes qui arrivent après sont en situation irrégulière. Une autre loi qui frappe le polygame selon *Forum Francophone* (2), est que sa carte de résidence ne lui sera plus renouvelée. Au moment de renouvellement, il serait attribué une carte de



séjour, cette dernière force les polygames à sortir des liens polygames. Aujourd'hui d'après *Forum Francophone*, la loi encourage une sortie volontaire de liens polygames d'où :

Le gouvernement souhaite donc favoriser un processus de sortie de régime matrimoniale polygame par l'accès à l'autonomie des épouses. Cette autonomie signifie que les épouses qui quittent leur conjoint soient en mesure d'assumer les contraintes spécifiques, nées de la décohabitation, cela suppose, notamment, de les aider à exercer leurs responsabilités parentales et de les inciter à intégrer les dispositifs de formation et d'accès à l'emploi
(2)

La décohabitation est l'autre nom du divorce régularisé par des immigrés avec des enfants victimes de la séparation de leurs parents. Cette loi va dans le sens d'encourager cette décohabitation en interdisant l'obtention de la nationalité française aux foyers encore

polygames. Cela veut dire que la situation dans laquelle se trouve Mamadou ne lui permettrait jamais l'acquisition de la nationalité française.

Conclusion

Les immigrés africains comme tout autre immigré, sont des êtres culturels qui cherchent toujours à vivre leurs cultures dans leurs pays d'accueil. La polygamie est l'un des aspects que nous avons étudiés dans la vie des immigrés africains en Europe. En important cette culture polygame à l'étranger, ils sont en infraction comme nous l'a exposé Eugène Mpundu dans *Casse pas ton balai*. La France, en tant que pays de régime monogame, reconnaît seulement la première ou une seule femme de l'immigré, les autres sont en situation d'irrégularité. Les polygames ne bénéficient plus de carte de résidence ; ce qui doit les encourager à sortir de la polygamie pour opter pour la décohabitation qui n'est autre que le divorce. Cela veut dire que la polygamie a pour conséquence en France la séparation définitive des conjoints si l'on veut être intégré dans la société française et bénéficier de l'acquisition de la nationalité française.

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Form and Content: An Analysis of Helon Habila's *Measuring Time*

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Abstract

This paper undertakes a pragmatylistic analysis of Helon Habila's Measuring Time, focusing on some foregrounded lexical and pragmatic features in the novel. Using 15 purposively selected utterances of characters in the novel based on the depiction of foregrounded lexical features and three further extracts manifesting the use of presupposition and implicature as analytical tools for explicating the meanings communicated during exchanges in the fictional world of the novel, the paper shows that Habila utilises lexical repetition and parallelism as a foregrounding scheme for capturing experience and situating the major characters, their actions and their psychological states at various stages of the novel. It also shows that the exchanges between major characters in the novel are characterised by tension and agony, exhibiting a predisposition to violence arising from the unfavourable political climate and personal failures. The paper demonstrates the author's preoccupation with various aspects of the horrendous life lived by Nigerians in post-independence Nigeria and concludes that Helon Habila's Measuring Time is a documentation of leadership failure.

Keywords: pragmatylistic, lexical repetition, *Measuring Time*, horrendous life

Background to the Study

This paper undertakes a pragmatylistic analysis of Helon Habila's *Measuring Time* (2006), one of the epochal novels that have earned the novelist fame as an important new literary voice on the African continent (see Anyokwu 2008, Tranter 2008). From a literary perspective, it seems clear that *Measuring Time* is a novel informed by the new historicist consciousness, albeit within a critical realist framework (on new historicism and critical realism, see Barry 1995, Bressler 2003, Udentia 1993 and Webster 1990). Since criticism, whether literary or linguistic, involves interpretation and evaluation, the pragmatylistic framework should prove illuminating in showing how form and function interrelate in constructing the novel under study as a literature of change in the face of social fragmentation and despair, in contrast to the socialist, realist or materialist practice of neutralising the distinction between form and content owing to an overriding concern with the sociology of literature. Wales (1991:288) notes the tendency in Marxist criticism to neutralise the form-content dichotomy "in its concern to unearth the historical and ideological assumptions of thinking of dominant social

classes", while Bressler (2003:184) says of new historicists, in particular:

They continue to call for a reawakening of our historical consciousness, declare history and literature must be seen as disciplines to be analysed together, place all texts in their appropriate contexts, and believe that while we are researching and learning about different societies, we are simultaneously learning about ourselves, our own habits and our own beliefs.

This study shows the value of linguistic analysis to literary texts with a view to reinforcing the enduring and integral place of linguistic stylistics in contemporary practice (see Fowler 1996, Catano 2004, Kolawole 2003, Ayeomoni 2004 and Jaafar 2014). The study is further hinged on the argument that if, as Leech and Short (1981) submit, the goal of stylistics is the study of language as used in literary texts with the aim of relating it to its artistic function (Ayeomoni 2004:177), this can perhaps best be accomplished in a pragmatylistic framework, particularly as language use is always nurtured and textured by a set of interrelated and mutually reinforcing



pragmatic mappings, defined in Lawal (2003:153) as the linguistic, situational, psychological, social and cosmological contexts respectively. Ayodabo (2003:13) reinforces this view when he posits that style is really only definable in terms of the operations carried out by the producers and receivers of texts, and that it may not be out of place to say that pragmastylistics “is derivable from the pragmatics of discourse which deals with the systematic relations between structures of a text and its context.”

Pragmastylistics

In his definition of pragmastylistics, Owolabi (2010:13) submits that it is “a concept that x-rays the interface of context and choice.” In his view, this is because, from a morphological perspective, pragmastylistics involves “pragmatics” and “stylistics”, hence, he argues that pragmastylistics is unique in combining the two fields. Pragmastylistics is also referred to as pragmatic stylistics by a number of scholars (see Black, 2006; Clarke, 2009). Clarke (2009:5) posits that pragmatic stylistics is not a well-defined term. He nevertheless considers it as the application of ideas from pragmatics to the stylistic analysis of literary and non-literary texts. In his view, pragmatics, in turn, can be understood in a number of different ways, or in a very loose, general way which encompasses other definitions. This means that pragmatic stylistics, understood as linguistic pragmatics applied to stylistic analysis, could refer to any of a number of different approaches depending on which ideas about pragmatics are being applied.

Salvadore (2003:1) posits that consideration of linguistic variation is inherent in pragmatics, especially where such variation relates to contextual factors, an area where it frequently converges with work on stylistics. He adds that scholars are now showing interest in style within the framework of the contributions made by pragmatics, especially with the incorporation of work in speech act theory and the study of politeness or metaphor and irony from the perspective of relevance theory, all of which, taken together, “have ushered in a new and explicit label for this area of discipline:

pragmastylistics.” As Roshmawati (2012:2) contends, pragmatic stylistics is part of the manifestations of linguistic stylistics. This variety of stylistics, he avers, shows the meeting point between pragmatics and stylistics, that is, how pragmatic resources such as performative and speech acts can be employed to achieve stylistic effects. Pragmatic stylistics is thus viewed as a two-in-one theory of text analysis which focuses on the effects of contexts on the text.

In a similar vein, Galiṭa (2011:36) notes that research in the field of stylistics comprises all linguistic means of expression of subjectivity (phonetic, morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic), while pragmatic research focuses on speakers’ usage of language depending on their mood, the time and place of the utterance and any other matters that may influence the process of communication. Thus, as Verdonk and Weber (1995:13) point out, a pragmatic model of meaning, applicable in stylistic analysis, will investigate the meaning of language in relation to a context of use and users. This is why Abushihab (2015:110) submits that analyzing a text according to the principles of pragmatic stylistics means approaching the text’s meaning and the intention of the producer. However, to this writer, pragmastylistics is simply stylistics with a pragmatic focus; that is, a systematic explication of both the formal and contextual aspects of a text geared towards shedding light on the resources used for conveying meaning in it, including not only the language but the various backgrounds (social, ideological, psychological, etc.) that inform it.

Speaking on the pragmastylistic method, Achoeah and Adelodun (2013:109) observe that the use of insights from pragmatics and stylistics in the analysis of a variety of texts across disciplines is widespread. Pragmastylistics then represents an interface between the two fields of investigation. It may be noted that while pragmatics is concerned broadly with intended speaker meaning (Yule, 2004:127), that is, how to make invisible meaning visible through contextual tools such as inference, presupposition, implicature, among others, stylistics is a systematic account of the resources



used in projecting meaning in a text, whether literary or non-literary, from the perspective of linguistics. That is to say that whenever you are doing pragmastylistics, you are simultaneously doing stylistics and pragmatics.

It is important to note that pragmastylistics, which is primarily a discipline informed by the stylistic method, is distinguishable from literary criticism even in its explication of the context or background of a text, since the conclusions which the pragmastylistician makes derive from linguistic analysis, with the analyst employing pragmatic tools such as inference, presupposition, mutual contextual beliefs, implicature, speech act theory, phatic tokens, (im)politeness and facework theory, among others, in his or her explication of meaning. Nevertheless, whether or not pragmastylistics encroaches on the artistic component of literature is perhaps not a useful question, since stylistics itself is complementary rather than antagonistic to literary criticism, a discipline which is devoted to the artistic component of a work and which relies on intuitive judgment. Thus, in his study of dramatic texts from the pragmastylistic perspective, Feng (2002:1) states that the theory of pragmastylistics of drama views pragmatics as a perspective on the dramatic text, employs linguistics as the source of analytical tools, examines the dramatic text (both dialogue and stage directions) as the object of study, advocates the visualization of the dramatic discourse for the full appreciation of the play text, and treats inference drawing as the central task for the purpose of identifying the linguistic features that contribute to the aesthetic values of the dramatic text.

Furthermore, Hickey (1993:578) says that pragmastylistics is stylistics but with a pragmatic component added to it. He claims that in studying the stylistic potential of a language or of a particular construction, or in analysing a specific text, pragmastylistics pays special attention to those features which a speaker may choose, or has chosen, from a range of acceptable forms in the same language that would be semantically, or truth-conditionally, equivalent, but might perform or achieve different objectives,

or do so in different ways. In other words, the choices are seen as determined by the desired effects (expressive, affective, attitudinal, etc.), by the communicative qualities aimed at (clarity, effectiveness, etc) and by the context or situation itself (what is already known and what is new, relationships between speaker and hearer, the physical distances, etc). Again, utterances with the same, or virtually the same, meaning may differ in their linguistic form and situational appropriateness, and these differences may have either stylistic or pragmatic explanations. As Hickey (1993:578) argues, with a seemingly psychological goal:

Pragmastylistics thus involves the study of all the conditions, linguistic and extralinguistic, which allow the rules and potential of a language to combine with the specific elements of the context to produce a text capable of combining specific internal changes in the hearer's state of mind or knowledge. It distinguishes the abstract theoretical meaning or semantic import of a sentence or text from its usage or effectiveness in a specific situation and from what the speaker means or intends to achieve by using it.

Helon Habila

Born in Kaltungo in the defunct Gombe State, Nigeria, in 1967, Habila read Literature-in-English at the University of Jos, Plateau State. After his graduation, he worked with **Hints**, a romance magazine and the **Vanguard** newspaper. In 2000, he won the Muson Poetry Prize, while in 2001, he won the Caine Prize for African Writing. Habila also won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for New Writing in 2003. Following the publication of *Waiting for an Angel*, his first novel, Habila was appointed a writing fellow at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. He was the first Chinua Achebe Fellow at Bard College (2005), a William B Quattron fellow at the University of Iowa International Writing Programme and the John Farrar Fellow at the 2003 Bread Loaf Writers forum. Co-editor of the British Council's *New*



Writing with Lavinia Greenlaw, Habila has published only three novels to date, but he has a large collection of poems and short stories to his credit. He is currently an associate professor at the George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, USA, where he lives with his family. He published his third novel, *Oil on Water*, in 2010.

Synopsis of the text

As a novel, *Measuring Time* has a very broad scope. It is an epic ambition to tell the story of a village from its conversion to Christianity by white missionaries, through periods of political machinations and power struggles, to the present day (Tranter, 2008). The novel, told in indirect style, relates the story of a set of twins, Mamo and La Mamo, born to a philandering and uncaring father, Lamang, in Ketu, a Northern Nigerian village. Although the twins have similar names, their personalities are quite dissimilar. A sickle cell patient and a bookish and highly introspective individual, Mamo is an awkward invalid who tries to measure up to his brother La Mamo, who is very strong and bold but less intelligent. Told by their aunty Marina that their father had always been in love with Saraya, his village mistress, even while married to their mother, the twins whose mother, Tabitha, died in childbirth, are united in their hatred for him. The Lamang twins start out as starry-eyed idealists infused with a heroic vision of their place in Africa and, lacking parental love although in a wealthy home, they decide to join the army to realise their heroic quest.

However, the plan suffers a setback when, on the way to the city, Mamo suffers an anaemic crisis and has to return home, leaving his cousin Asabar and La Mamo to continue with the quest. While La Mamo roams various parts of the African continent fighting for odd causes, Mamo becomes a history teacher at the village secondary school, having dropped out from the university at 200 level owing to an anaemic crisis, and he soon engages in a passionate love affair with Zara, the estranged wife of a young philandering military officer, while Lamang, his father, engages in local politics, feeding the villagers and providing television viewing

entertainment. Surrounded by lustful and scheming widows, Lamang gains wide popularity with his idea of 'reverse osmosis', a solution to the drought in his community, but his fortunes begin to nosedive when this idea is stolen by a political rival, ultimately resulting in a stroke and eventual demise.

For Mamo, whose fortunes seemingly rise as his father's plummet, history and biography become pastimes for filling the void in his life, but he soon finds that he is being manipulated by the *waziri* (vizier), a palace chief who invites him to write a biography of the local emir (king) for sadistic reasons. Thus, although his fortunes seemingly rise as he mingles with the military top brass and royalty following a journal article in which he attempts a re-writing of local history, Mamo begins to realise why he must foil the wily *waziri*'s schemes, and that the money voted to sink wells in the village for the common good has been shared by members of the palace who are willing to offer him a share of the loot. However, for her part, unable to secure the custody of her son following a divorce suit she instituted against her husband, Zara, Mamo's lover, abandons Ketu and reunites with Themba, a university friend, in a contractual marriage of convenience in order to do charity work, but returns to Ketu a forlorn woman when the latter begins to demand conjugal rights against the agreed plan.

Books, and sometimes girls, provide some fillip as Mamo watches time ticking away in his hourglass, aware that the end may come any time, and that Zara's loss is irreplaceable: "Why do I go on flagellating myself over something I knew I had lost a long time ago? For surely from the moment she told me she was going to South Africa with a former friend I knew I had lost her. This was time to let go. (pp.244-5)." Mamo is, however, not alone in the losing world: having witnessed the horrors of war, La Mamo loses his heroic quest and returns home to Ketu, only to lead a revolt against the palace and get killed by the police, leaving a pregnant Liberian refugee wife, Bintou, behind. Unable to secure parental support over her divorce and separation from her oppressive husband, Zara runs amok, while Aunty Marina, who has been



battered and infected with syphilis by her estranged husband, becomes morose at the loss of Lamang, La Mamo and others; and the entire community, plagued by drought, a corrupt royal institution and sectarian crisis, becomes divided and disappointed. Yet, there is still a stubborn air of hope in the land, as Mamo wanders around: “On the way back the hills in the distance loom large and black from brush fires that ceaselessly burn away the harmattan dried leaves. Above the hills the clouds have thickened, brushing the surface of the hills. **The rain will fall today.**” (page 322; emphasis mine).

Measuring Time is thus an affirmation of the resilience of the human will, a bildungsroman (developmental) novel which, on the one hand, captures the historical evolution of a community over a 100-year period and, on the other hand, the physical and psychological development of Mamo and La Mamo with the attendant progression from innocence to experience (Anyokwu 2008:23). Anyokwu (2008: 24) adds that like most modernist writers, “Helon Habila seems to fix his gaze on the revolting underbelly of human nature and the inescapable horror of the human condition”, while Tranter (2008:2) adds that “Habila’s work is ambitious in scope and the theme it tackles: politics, corruption, colonialism, coming of age, education, history and love.”

Lexical repetition / parallelism in *Measuring Time*

In *Measuring Time*, lexical repetition and parallelism are predominant. This can be seen right from the first paragraph of the novel (p.13):

*They had decided a long time ago to make life hard for their father. He had broken their mother’s heart, and though the twins had not been born then, some women in the village still hum the song, popular many years ago, about Lamang’s philandering before and after he had married their **mother**. The song, a ballad that grew in detail and complexity with each rendition in the moonlit **village** square, called Lamang the “King of*

Women/Owner of ten women/In every village from/Keti to the state capital.” The refrain described how **women** stood longingly on their doorsteps as he passed, and how mothers locked up their daughters at 8:24night to save them from “the handsome ravisher,” and ended with the lines: **Mother** sighing with **longing/ Daughter** sighing with **longing/**

*Ah, King of **Women**, show some mercy.*

As can be seen from this extract, the novel, which begins with tracing the background of the relationship between the Lamang twins around whom the novel is built and their emotionally estranged father, manifests the use of lexical repetition right from this first paragraph. The lexical items *mother*, *daughter* and *women* are all co-hyponyms of the superordinate item, *female*. It would be observed that while lexical items such as *mother*, *song*, *daughter*, *women*, *village* and *longing* are repeated in this extract, there is also the lexically parallel items *song/ballad/refrain*. In the novel, this trend of lexical repetition continues in an attempt to reinforce the participants, ideas events and experiences (social, psychological, economic, cultural and political) encountered by the discourse participants in the fictional world of the novel. Consider the following from different parts of the novel;

Part Two:

1.) *After the closure of the school Mamo found himself with time on his hands and without much means of using it apart from taking long **walks** in the afternoon. He took **walks** not only to kill time, but also to avoid his father’s constant looming presence in the house, and the inane laughter of the widows whenever they came to visit. A few times he had contemplated going to his uncle and asking for a small loan to enable him get a place of his own, a modest room somewhere, but he knew this wasn’t the time to ask Iliya about a loan, so he took his long **walks**. (p.117). (Nominal: repetition of walks to indicate a*



method for killing time and avoiding certain responsibilities).

2. ...he was... constantly **shifting** in his seat as if **plumping** the cushion with his buttocks, **leaning** forward, then back, then sideways to whisper to the Mai.(p.124). (Verbal parallelism, with the **ing** forms in plumping/shifting used to indicate the Waziri's restlessness in the presence of the Mai, who is not aware that he is being conned by the Waziri who has invited Mamo to write a biography of the Mai without his knowledge).

3. Last week, Zara had finally turned up in Ket, looking **exhausted**, **defeated**.(p.141) (Adjectival parallelism: de-verbal adjectival form used to indicate Zara's weakened state after she fails to secure custody of her son).

4. The first two days, they didn't step outside the house: they **ate** and **slept** and made **love** and read and **made love** and **ate** and **slept** and made **love** again. (p.143) (Nominal/verbal: repetition of love, sleep, ate and made indicating monotonous action).

5. The police, they attacked them. They said that they found them with ballot papers...and...now two of the boys are dead...and they said Asabar might not last the night, **shot**, he was **shot** (p.175). (Verbal: repetition for emphasis with a tinge of sorrow. Here, aunty Marina indicates the outcome of a plan to rig election).

Part Three

6. We wanted to go on foot with the refugees sneaking across the **border** but the French workers helped us because they now have another camp across the **border** where it is safe so we went with them as their assistants which we are in reality and now we are here safe and it seems as if all the **fighting** and the **killing** that have been the major part of my life since I left home has been only a dream(p.195). (Nominal: repetition of border because the speaker, La Mamo, is a soldier fighting across different borders in Africa; and **fighting**, the main activity involved in military conflict; and killing, the result of fighting).

7. But I am not too worried because one of the doctors said when I get the glass **eye** it will look like a real **eye** and nobody will know..(p.196).

(Nominal: repetition of eye because, in this context, it is an item that has been lost in war)

8. It was not the dull ennui he had felt after La Mamo's departure; this was fire, it burned. It was **anger**, **anger** that she had left him for another person (P.197). (Nominal: repetition of anger to indicate the effect of the broken relationship with Zara on Mamo's mind).

9. Mamo wondered what kind of Waziri the vizier was---his shifty eyes, his **repulsive**, **serpentine** demeanour all screamed evil, but so far he had been nothing but the opposite. A sheep in **wolf's clothing**; or a **wolf** in **wolf's clothing** (p.199). (Nominal/Adjectival: parallel adjectival items **repulsive** and **serpentine** indicating a phoney character; nominal items **clothing**, **wolf** and **sheep** repeated in a semantic inversion to indicate that the Waziri is a very evil person, as Mamo assesses his character).

10. The Mai continued to stare, his eyes growing **duller** and **duller** (p.213). (Adverbial: **duller** repeated to show a seeming lack of interest by the Mai in the people around him).

Part Four

11). Come on, secretary, I know the **people**, I represent the **people**. It is my work to know the **people**. (p.281). (Nominal repetition).

12) Mamo was conscious that he looked **tired** and **haggard**(p.286).(Adjectival parallelism: **tired** and **haggard** describe Mamo's exhausted state).

13). La Mamo **descended** the stairs and **headed** past the kitchen toward the chicken coop (p.287). (Verbal parallelism, indicating action in a certain direction).

14). Let's go **inside**, ' Mamo said. They went **inside** (p.288). (Adverbial repetition).

15). But today the drama group had centre **stage**...As usual, the **stage** was the concrete platform in front of the church (p.316). (Nominal repetition).

As the above examples show, repetition cuts across nominal, verbal, adjectival and adverbial classes in *Measuring Time*, although the nominal and verbal categories are higher. Thus:

Nominal	Verbal	Adjectival	Adverbial
border	made	possible	lower
love	ate	amateur	inside



silence shot
grief waited
eyes prayed
anger break
wolf
clothing
money
people
hills
stage

The repeated lexical items are negative in meaning in the context in which they are used. While the verbal items *made*, *ate* and *slept*, relating to feeding, sexual activity and indulgent rest, may seem to signal pleasure, this is negated by the realisation that the lovemaking is perfunctory and merely escapist, and that it does not stop the breaking up of Mamo and Zara, who both profess love for one another. Again, the constant lovemaking, eating and sleeping are the main activities in the two central characters' lives only because their source of livelihood, the village school in which they used to teach, has been closed down by the government. Nominally, the items *wolf*, *grief* and *anger* are significant. Mamo is deceived by the Waziri, a member of the local traditional council, into making the Ketii villagers to contribute money for sinking boreholes for the common use, but the money is embezzled, and, with the ruthlessness of a wolf, he even threatens to deal ruthlessly with members of Mamo's family because he would not be part of the plan to bring the local ruler, the Mai, into disrepute so that he (the Waziri) could take over.

Measuring Time, a novel of anguish and stubborn hope in the face of adversity, is built around lexical repetition. Since it is developmental novel which captures the historical evolution of a community and the physical and psychological development of Mamo and La Mamo from innocence to experience to demonstrate an affirmation of the resilience of the human will, the author's use of lexical repetition helps to situate the major characters, their actions and their psychological states at various stages of the novel.

Presupposition and Implicature in Measuring Time

Presupposition, in my view the basic assumptions made by speakers/writers concerning the listeners/readers in relation to the topic based on assumed common ground, is classified by Osisanwo (2003:86) into semantic presupposition, the logical relations that hold between sentences and pragmatic presupposition, which relates to "the conditions required before a speech act can be suitable for a given context." With regard to implicature, Borg (2009: 2) notes that two very different elements combine to make up the total signification of an utterance in the Gricean theory; the fundamental divide between what is said and what is implicated (implicature). Using the relevance theoretical paradigm, Carston (2004:2) submits that the conceptual content of an implicature is supplied wholly by pragmatic inference, the view adopted in this study. In *Measuring Time*, presupposition and implicature are tools of meaning negotiation. As would be discovered in the text, the exchanges between the lower characters and officialdom are characterised by tension because of the disparity in access to social and democratic facilities. But so are the exchanges among the lower class characters themselves, meaning that the tension in the novel is comprehensive and total. Consider the following extracts:

Extract 1

"You mean the money, the fifteen million that was raised for drilling wells so that the people could get water, was shared and nothing is left for the original project?" Mamo asked. The Waziri's smile slipped, then returned. "Not all the money. Did you think we forgot about you, our talented scribe? Ha-ha. No. You will give me your account number, and I will put in something for you."

"How much?" Mamo asked.

"Let's say a hundred thousand naira? You deserve it. But the book must be finished soon. It is very important."

"But what of the people? Don't they get anything at all?" (*Measuring Time*, page 281).

"Common, secretary. I know the people, I represent the people. It is my work to know the



people. Do you think they don't know how these things are done? They do. And do you know what---I am sure you didn't realise this before---this money shared by the Mais, it will eventually find its way back to the people. These same people will come to the palace with their list of problems, medicines for their children, school fees, hunger, and do you think we can turn them away empty handed? Never. So in the end, the people benefit more than anyone else.” (Measuring Time, p.281).

Extract 2

“...You are not the only ones affected, so don't feel victimised,” came the confident voice through the wall. “The country is going through a phase of change. No more private schools.”

“But we are not a private school,” Iliya shouted angrily.

“Please do not raise your voice to the honourable commissioner for education,” another voice said.

“But we got this letter from your ministry just a month ago telling us we are not being reviewed...” (Measuring Time, p.165)

“That is not important. Forget about the letter, things have changed now, no more private schools. From now on, education will be handled by the government only. Our children are our future, we can't take chances with our future.”

“You don't understand, Mr Commissioner....”

‘Honourable’

‘What?’

“You must address me as Honourable Commissioner for Education, or Honourable Commissioner, or simply Honourable, but not Mr Commissioners. We must respect our public officers.” For the first time, the voice was raised a pitch higher. Zara's mouth fell open. Mamo could imagine the expression on his uncle's face.

“Honourable Commissioner for Education...”

“Go on.”

“Let me point out that this is not a normal school. It is a special school; started by the community, to help dropouts, to give them another chance. If you close down this school...”

“I have made my point clear, I hope, Mr Headmaster. We are not closing down this school or any other school. We are taking them over and

improving them; we are turning them into model schools. If you have any complaints, please write to my office and you will be attended to.” (Measuring Time, p.165).

Analysis

The extracts above illustrate the conflict in the novel. In Extract 1, an exchange between the hero, Mamo and the Waziri, a member of the traditional council in Keti village, implicature and presupposition are at play. The Waziri who, together with his superiors, has embezzled the money contributed by the Keti villagers for building wells, labours to rationalise this fraud to Mamo, the palace scribe who mooted the idea of sinking boreholes in the first place. When Mamo asks: ‘You mean the money, the fifteen million that was raised...was shared and nothing is left for the original project?’ (p.281) the Waziri processes his concern as a request and thus derives the (infelicitous) implicature that he is requesting for his own share of the loot. Hence he says: “Not all the money. Did you think we forgot about you, our talented scribe?” and then proceeds, from this premise, to deliver categorical imperatives: “You will give me your account number, and I will put in something for you.”

Having processed the pragmatic presupposition that the Waziri thinks that he can be bought over through a deposit into his account and, by extension, conscripted fully into the corrupt Keti traditional cabal impeding social progress and making life difficult for the masses, Mamo plays along by asking “How much?”, which the Waziri processes as a genuine request for money rather than a sarcastic comment on the fraudulent council. Thus, the Waziri puts forward a figure (N100,000) but Mamo probes him further, asking if the poor members of the community would get anything from the bargain. This utterance, which the Waziri appropriately processes as a complaint, leads him to say “Common, Secretary, I know the people,” since Mamo has implicated that he is not concerned with their welfare.

The presupposition inherent in the marker “common,” namely that what follows is a



rejection of a premise and a signaling of disagreement is, in conjunction with the nominal, contextually formal and hence socially distant item, secretary, pragmatically marked. Put another way, it may be rendered as “Let’s be reasonable, Secretary,” indicating the Waziri’s exasperation with Mamo. “Common, Secretary” is therefore a relevant marker of a tense and combative cognitive state, however momentary; a point in the discourse where the non-deployment of the more intimate and hence socially close “Mamo” signals conflict. Thus, partly as a defensive, face-saving strategy, the Waziri proceeds into an elaboration of a warped logic by which the people would end up being the beneficiaries of the looted funds, but only annoys Mamo, who rejects the offer of a bribe and accuses him of deceiving the villagers.

Similarly, Extract 2 is characterised by tension. Uncle Iliya, the headmaster of the Ketu community school, a school set up through donations from members of the community, is in a hot exchange with the state commissioner of education who is in the village to announce that the school will be closed down by the government, and the exchange is overheard by Mamo and Zara, members of the teaching staff who are also lovers. Iliya, the brain behind the school, expresses displeasure with the plan, which has a political undertone, but is challenged by the commissioner who considers him disrespectful. In his argument with the commissioner, Iliya premises his objection on the fact that the school, being a special institution whose continued existence has just been affirmed a month previously by the commissioner’s office, should not be closed down. However, the commissioner is concerned more with the threat to his positive and negative face (he has been referred to as a *Mr.* rather than *honourable* and his plan is being resisted) and tells him to “forget about the letter because things have changed now.”

Notably, the commissioner processes Iliya’s complaint as being based on the pragmatic presupposition that he (the commissioner) is bound by the promise made in the letter his office had written a month earlier, indicating that the

school was not being reviewed; and that failing to do this would be tantamount to a breach of trust. The commissioner however rejects this implicated premise, which leads to the implicature that his integrity is not guaranteed in that context, and hence he appeals to a change in circumstances: “*The times have changed now.*” Interestingly, Iliya’s use of the presumably respectful “Mr Commissioner” is interpreted as a marker of disrespect by the commissioner, who rejects the attributed thought that he is an ordinary “Mr” rather than a “Honourable” and vigorously contests that designation in an attempt to educate the bellicose head teacher on proper etiquette given the social distance between him and the principal. Thus, he conveys his displeasure through an indirect rebuke: “*We must respect our public officers.*”

However, although Iliya applies the preferred designation without challenge after the initial surprise (‘What?’), he gets no reprieve and, worse still, has his inferior social status further confirmed by the commissioner who refers to him as “Mr Headmaster”. However, on a higher plane, the implied reader generates the implicature that the commissioner is snobbish, petty and rude, since respect is earned and is not a one-way traffic. Notably, he is seen as a character who is more concerned with his social leverage than the future of a community, being a mere undertaker in the intense power play in the novel. In this regard, the narrator’s representation of Mamo’s thought on the encounter is revealing (*Measuring Time*, p.165):

Although he didn’t say it, Mamo knew that his uncle was aware of the real reason the school was being closed down. The school was being used as a pawn in the battle between Lamang and his former party, the Victory Party. Elections were only days away and this was a direct warning to Lamang whose relentless campaign for his new party was beginning to get a following, and any villager who might be tempted to vote against the ruling party, to think twice.”



In general, the exchange between lower-status characters and officialdom in *Measuring Time* is characterised by tension arising from the establishment's lack of social responsibility. Where injustice is challenged by the oppressed, however politely, the response by officialdom is negative and violent. However, interpersonal communication between members of the lower characters in the two novels is just as marked by tension, as the shown in Extract 3 below:

Extract 3

"It won't work. We can't marry, it won't work. Not so soon after my divorce, and you...you have so much on your mind, your father's death, and your brother....I have so much on my mind too. If we don't lay our ghosts to rest, we will only make each other sad. I'd rather be sad alone somewhere alone than to be here and drag you down. I love you, Mamo. I do, but we need time alone..."(p.191)

"But there might not be another time," he said. "You might finally fall in love with your friend. He sounds like a saint. And maybe I will meet someone..." (p.191)

She shook her head, not looking at him. "I don't know, maybe you are right. But all I know is that I need things from a different angle, with more clarity; right now, I can't see at all. Sometimes I feel as if I'm losing my mind. If not for you, if not for the time we've had together, I don't know what I'd do. I have to go, I do..." (*Measuring Time*, p.191)

Extract 3 is an exchange between Mamo and Zara. Zara, who professes passionate love for him, claims that she cannot marry him because the minds of them both are preoccupied with different things. In reality, however, she is the main impediment to the marriage, as she is quite unable to get over the loss of custody of her son to her philandering, ex-husband, George, a military officer, and is bitter with her mother for being indifferent to the agonies she went through in her former marriage and opposed to her decision to seek a divorce. Interestingly, however, Zara utilises the pronominal 'we' rather than 'I'. Since there is no reason to suppose that she is being deliberately uncooperative in the exchange, the use of 'we' can be seen as

signalling a rejection of the thought which she attributes to Mamo, namely that he thinks that marrying her would be okay despite the burdens on his mind. Zara thus implicates a parallel tormented psychological state between her and Mamo, and that she cares so much for him that she would not want to weigh him down through marriage. Despite this strategy, however, the implied reader is able to infer her selfishness and unwillingness to share her burdens with Mamo despite professing love for him. This is especially tragic since Mamo is a sickle cell patient who craves all the love and care that he can get, and regards Zara as a vital essence of his existence.

In the extract, Zara communicates her rejection of Mamo's proposal through a rather long series of excuses about her recent divorce, her need to go somewhere else (which she eventually does as the novel progresses) and think properly about her situation, his (Mamo's) concern for his twin brother who has not been home since age 15, his (Mamo's) loss of his father (*"You have so much on your mind, your father's death, and your brother..."*), and so on. To her, having different burdens about a failed relationship in one's mind presupposes that one cannot be happy in a new relationship. In doing so, however, she implicates that she is really the problem, because Mamo, for instance, does not dwell on his losses and does not crave a different environment to "clear" his head. However, although Zara introduces a seeming mitigating strategy, *"I love you, Mamo"* and *"If not for you, if not for the time we've had together"*, he is unimpressed by her grounds and thus appeals to time: *"But there might not be another time."*

In the discourse world of the novel, the implied reader knows that Mamo dropped out of university at 200 level because of his anaemic crisis and that Zara is a university graduate. However, the difference in social status is not the reason for Zara's rejection of his proposal and hence life in the village. By craving for a place where she can see things *"from a different angle,"* Zara implicates that she is bored with life in the village, particularly as the community school to which she devoted much energy after her sad marriage and departure from the state



capital has been closed down by the government for political reasons. Thus, her mental agony also has to do with the corollaries of the duplicitous and violent political climate in the novel.

However, Mamo's concerns about Zara transcend the marital angle: she has indicated that she is going to South Africa with Themba, a male university friend who runs an orphanage. Thus, Mamo's "But there might not be another time. You might finally fall in love with your friend. He sounds like a saint. And maybe I will meet someone," communicates the implicature that he is feeling jealous ('He sounds like a saint,' looks like a pragmatic invitation to Zara to confirm if he, Mamo, lacks certain qualities which Themba possesses) and that he disapproves of her plan, as it would mean the greatest loss for him. In this context, the utterance, "Maybe I will meet someone" pragmatically presupposes Mamo's uncertainty about a post-Zara romance, and implicates his regret about the potential loss of the emotional security that she offers. Significantly, Zara is unsure that she will find happiness in her new endeavour: "She shook her

head, not looking at him. "I don't know, maybe you are right." Eventually in the fictional world of the novel, the South African experience fails because Themba starts demanding sexual dividends from her. Zara returns to Ketu, but suffers a mental breakdown, which is foreshadowed in her admission to Mamo that "Sometimes I feel as if I'm losing my mind. If not for you, if not for the time we've had together, I don't know what I'd do. I have to go, I do." p.191).

Conclusion

From the analysis undertaken in this paper, it can be concluded that *Measuring Time* is a novel of pain, psychologically and socially. Since the emotional misfortunes of the lead characters in the novel, particularly Mamo and Zara, are partly influenced by the unfavourable political climate in the text, the verdict which seems to emerge is that Nigeria's post-colonial leadership provides a climate for worsening personal woes and hence is an abysmal failure.

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Content and Techniques in Contemporary Nigerian Spoken Word Poetry

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Abstract

Over the years, spoken word poetry has been largely relegated in favour of written poetry. Spoken word poetry, poetry whose origin can be traced to oral tradition, is fast becoming a favourite of the youths. This paper investigated the content and techniques in Dike Chukwumerije's "Okwesilieze", "The Revolution has no Tribe" and Titilope Sonuga's "Icarus" and "Take back the Night". The selection of these poets was informed by the fact that they are not only headline spoken word poets but they also organize workshops, seminars and events where they mentor and teach young aspiring poets. This paper investigated their poetry in light that their works will greatly influence the poetry of their protégées. The paper investigates the content of the poems and poetic techniques employed in them. The study reveals that the content and form of the studied poems are inspired by everyday experiences. The study concludes that the realistic and simple nature of its content and form has made spoken word popular among the Nigerian youths.

Keywords: Nigerian poetry, contemporary "oral" poetry, spoken word poetry.

Introduction

The tradition of Nigerian spoken-word poetry is deeply rooted in oral tradition. Ushie (2001) confirms this when he traced the beginning of Nigerian poetry to oral tradition in various Nigerian cultures. Eleveld (2003) defines spoken word as "poetry designed to be performed in front of an audience" (p. xiii). Spoken word is becoming a force in Nigerian contemporary literature.

Although the term "spoken word" was not popular until the twentieth century, the quest to develop poetry primarily for performance dates back to ancient times when poems like Homer's "Odyssey" was recited for entertainment. Poetry was later fused into theatrical events where forms such as ode were accompanied by music. Years later, oral poetry birthed a variety of forms and styles. For example, chants were incorporated into church sermons, hymns etc. Even when these varieties became very popular, the greater influence of page/written poetry converted many listeners to solitary readers.

Contemporary "Oral" Poetry: Spoken-word poetry

In the 20th Century, there emerged poets who renewed the earlier emphasis of poetry on sound. Basil Bunting and Louis Zukofsky (cited in Makin, 1999) noted that there is a need to link

poetry with drama and other performing arts. According to them, this would give back to poetry its earlier life and popularity. It was these campaigns that saw proliferation of such poetry and the term 'spoken word' poetry was, therefore, coined in the 1980s to describe live audio recordings of poems. Spoken Word is poetry that has been written to be performed and is based on the interaction between the performer and the audience. When Spoken Word is performed it gives a greater insight and a humanised experience which forces the audience not only to engage in the content of the poem but also the person behind the words. Spoken Word uses the technique of storytelling and its tone is conversational and dialogical in nature. Spoken Word combines poetry with theatre and movement to create a dynamic and engaging experience which draws the audience into the world of the poet.

The speech act, and its performance, allows the spoken word poet to employ devices not found on the page. The poet modulates his voice through the use of volume, accent, intonation, pitch and other speech mechanism devices, music is not left out. The poet's body is another device he uses to intensify his poetry. His dressing, gestures and body language also contribute to the success of his performance.



These devices are the distinguishing features of spoken word poetry. All these do not diminish the words of the poet, it instead enhances them.

As old as spoken word is, it has been reinvented in a new and more dynamic form as practised today. The poets of spoken-word poetry are drawn from all walks of life unlike the traditional oral poetry which is rendered by highly trained professionals. Another difference between these two is the venue of performance. Spoken-word poetry is typically performed in public places for the pleasure of all while traditional oral poetry is performed in festive environment for the elites.

Somers-Willett (2009) affirms that it is the performative quality of spoken word poetry that differentiates it from straightforward oral communication. She also notes that the appreciation of spoken word poetry does not involve only hearing but, in fact, all of the senses, with the poem's enactment becoming more important than its recitation. Somers-Willett (2009) takes the position that spoken word poetry functions both in writing and on stage.

Regardless of its roots in oral tradition, some scholars also see certain beginnings of modern spoken word poetry in the 19th century, when public recitation of poems by performers other than the author enjoyed widespread popularity. However, the most important movements that advanced the development and globalization of spoken word poetry were the Harlem Renaissance, the Beat Generation, Russell Simmons's Def. Poetry and Slam poetry. As Hall (n.d.) writes, "while each of these movements emerged from its own historical context, both transformed popular understandings of poetry". The term spoken word serves as an umbrella term for a variety of oral performance-oriented poetry practices like dub poetry, slam poetry, hip hop poetry, Def poetry and performance art. It also has strong ties to post-modern performance, and monologue theatre, as well as jazz, blues, and folk music. In a basic sense, Spoken Word is a rhythmic poetry. It is performed enthusiastically, rather than just read plainly.

The 21st Century with its technological

advancement and new social realities facilitated the globalization of spoken word poetry as it spread from texts and anthologies to a wider audience through public performances, television, radio and online transmissions and social media. Besides going to libraries and bookshops to access poetry, one may now use his/her internet-enabled computers and phones to not only download and upload favourite poems but also participate by commenting on these videos.

Also, over the years, there have been an increasing number of 'spoken word' poetry venues, events and festivals in Nigeria. It is in such venues that a paying audience gathers to listen to various poets as they perform their poems. These usually mammoth gatherings of poetry enthusiasts sit for hours as they relish performance after performance from different poets and other 'open mic'. Examples of such 'spoken word' poetry events in Nigeria are WORD UP (Spoken Word Poetry and Soul Music Event), War of Words (Slam Poetry Competition), Word Up Talk Series (a Seminar/Workshop on the Business of Spoken Word Poetry in Nigeria), Freedom Hall: Night of spoken words, Goethe Institut Lagos, Night with Stars Lagos, Book Jam and Poetry Slam, Night of the Spoken Word, Rouge Poetry, Lagos International Poetry Festival, and online site: www.wordup411ng.com etc.

Contemporary Nigerian Spoken Word Poetry: Content

The content of Contemporary spoken word poetry just like its written counterpart, Contemporary Nigerian poetry, reflects the realities of the Nigerian people and its commitment in restoring order in the society. Contemporary poets in Nigeria are known as lamenters. They lament the deterioration of the Nigerian society and the indifferent attitude of its people. Their poems elucidate the failures of the country and its leaders. This makes the

In "**Okwesilieze**" (an Igbo word which literally means, "He is supposed to be king"), Chukwumerije satirizes the economic situation of Nigeria. Beginning from the title of the poem, "Okwesilieze", Nigeria is described as a country with the qualities of greatness but is not great. It



is common knowledge that Nigeria is said to be the “giant of Africa” but in reality smaller countries like South Africa and Ghana are economically more stable. It is this aspect of Nigeria that the poet ridicules in the following lines:

Today, I saw a mysterious thing
A thing that vexed me to my very soul
I saw the black man dressed like a king
But crouching in the shadows with a
begging bowl

The lines above make it clear that Nigeria’s show of wealth is only superficial. Nigeria is only “like a king” but in reality is poor and in debt “with a/begging bowl”. While Nigeria is ‘begging’, ‘his children were starving’.

Chukwumerije believes that Nigeria is a country so richly blessed with natural resources. However, he wonders why the Nigerian people have chosen to suffer. He exposes the foolishness inherent in the Nigerian situation that Nigeria has everything but they are not aware of it. They have an abundance of food: “His children were starving in the fields of/cassava”. They have medicine “Dying of sickness palm kernel could/cure”. The oil extracted from the palm kernel nut could serve medicinal purposes. It is applied all over the body to prevent cold and pneumonia. One can drink it to protect against or neutralize the effect of poison. It is also used to lubricate the rectal passage in children who are constipated. Nigerians are “Homeless” when they have “rock and timber” with which they can build a home.

Nigeria is a land filled with young, strong, intelligent and vibrant individuals whom it can use to build a great nation but these individuals are on the streets searching for work with many turning to a life of crime. This has contributed to the crippling of the economy of the society. The following lines describe Nigeria’s human recourses:

But lying in the dust, crying at my feet,
His leg were sturdy like the Iroko
His forest were rich and teeming with
game
His muscles rippled like the proud
Zambezi

I told him, “Get up”, but he said, “I
amlame”

The poet identifies the source of black man poverty and it is none other than the “a fat man” with whom he share a bed. Here the poet expresses how hopeless the situation of Nigeria is. There are people who have taken the “treasure” of the nation for their own. These are people it trusted so much that they share a “bed”. The poet also identifies the solution to the problem of Nigeria. However, he is optimistic that Nigeria will able to “get up”:

But he was sharing a sleeping mat with
poverty

His poverty is a fat man with bulging
stomach

Lying on his back side, beside a pot of
treasure

This knowledge was all he seemed to
lack:

That he could get up and make his own
future.

Chukwumerije’s **“Revolution has no Tribe”** can be read as his call to the Nigerian people to rescue Nigeria from its current state as seen in “Okwesilieze”. In “Revolution has no Tribe”, the poet makes it clear that everything that happens to one person Nigeria, happens to all. To him Nigeria will only get of the wood when everybody unities:

Do you know that poverty is not an
Ijawman?

He will not spare the rest of us and
afflictonly the Ishan

He will step over the river and come
across the border

So, when the drums sound let everybody
answer.

Be it a man-made problem “corruption” or natural problem “HIV/AID”, the poet is optimistic that Nigeria will conquer all as long as “everybody/answer” when the problem arises. It is the duty of the citizens to save their country since “if the boat capsizes every one of us/ will go under. So let no say “I am an Iroko” or “I am an Obeche”, meaning that we are from different ethnicity, because “when the forest is burning” it will not ask the type of tree you are. Likewise

when problems befall Nigeria, all its citizens will suffer irrespective of their tribes: Our differences will not prevent us from/ perishing together.

Titilope Sonuga's "**Icarus**" is named after a Greek mythological figure who flew too close to sun and melted the wax which holds his man-made wings together, he fell and drowned in the Aegean Sea. "Icarus" laments the nonchalant attitude of people toward those who have been burnt to death. The poem opens with the poet narrating an event which happens in the past:

I saw a man on fire
a gasoline soaked rubber tire around his neck
arms failing like he was trying to fly
but I was too young to differentiate
the horror from spectacle

This image is quite common in Nigeria where instead of handing over thieves to the police authorities; they are set ablaze on the streets as a spectacle and warning. The poet's personae here is too young to understand the situation, all she sees is a man being burnt alive by his fellow man. This scene not only horrifies her but she is also surprised that nobody wants to help, "nobody brought water?" "Shhh, don't look at it" is what she is told "we'll be past this soon". And she moans "how life went on around him".

The poet is disappointed at people's indifference towards incidents of plane crashes: "we shield our eyes from the flames/but our country is on fire". She likens an airplane to "wings made only of feather and wax", an image which reflects their fragility. "...greed mouths continue/ to blow on embers" on airplane after airplane and all that is done are:

...cast another prayer to God
...plan another memorial
another tribute song
another cautionary tale
another reminder to do better next

After that, life goes on. No one remember the families of the crash victims, "a 3 year old /who will never know her mother/whole families wiped out in one swoop". Attempts were not made to investigate the cause of the crash. All will be forgot:

our memories will betray us yet again

it will tell us
"Shhh... don't look at it
we'll be past it soon"

Then there is the "sound of exploding church" which also becomes normal, "another Sunday morning" by the Boko Haram terrorist group and the killing of Christians by the Muslims. When all these tragedies are summed up, it's become "our legacy".

Sonuga's "**Take Back the Night**" is a poem inspired by an international event and a non-profit organization, Take Back the Night. The organization's goal is to end sexual assault, relationship and domestic violence in all forms. The event which began in America in the 1970s has gone globally. Hundreds of events are held in over 30 countries annually. The event began as a way to protest the violence women experience in the night and its purpose is to speak out against this violence and to create community awareness as a preventive measure against future violence. Within the context of the event, the word "night" means to express the fear that many women feel in the night.

African women, in general, have been brought up to believe that she is worth nothing and that every bad thing that happens to her is entirely her fault. It is this ideology that Sonuga's "Take Back the Night" attacks. Night time has its own advantage and beauty but to a woman, it is a nightmare. Night time stirs the feeling of fear in a woman:

She becomes an unarmed soldier
in a wide open battle field
in a war she never asked for
"She" has been brainwashed into being
afraid of the night "from the day she
entered the world". From childhood, rules
have been" drilled into her head"
Don't talk to strangers
Do not enter their car
Never leave your drink unattended

Unfortunately obeying these rules will not guarantee that a woman will not be attacked in the night. Whether the rules were observed or not, the woman is always found guilty of instigates the attack:

They will ask you how short your skirt



was
Did you smile a little too wide?
Hold his gaze a little too long?
Maybe your body was saying yes
even when your mouth whispered no
In this poem, Sonuga exposes the most
painful truth about sexual violence against, they
sometimes perpetuate by someone we know and
trust:

This is the simple truth
Sometimes strangers are not strangers
at all
They are our brothers
a friend
a friend of a friend
a good Samaritan

In the above lines, Sonuga laments that not only
should one be weary of strangers but also of a
family members and friends. It is extremely
frightening to realize that one is not even safe at
home. The situation is pushed to a new extreme
when Sonuga educates that violence do not
necessarily happen in strange and distance places.
They happen:

on the same route we take every single
day
around the corner
from our front door
inside our own homes
where shadow turns friends
into predators

This poem is therefore Sonuga's way of
sensitizing women on the need to be weary of
both friends and foes.

Poetic Techniques

Due to its intended oral transmission
nature, the form of spoken word poetry is
influenced by the needs of its audience especially
considering the fact that they may be hearing it
for the first time. Unlike the written poetry where
the reader is at leisure to flip the pages back and
forth, when listening to a spoken word poem, one
has to get everything while it is in progress.

1. Storytelling: aware of the above condition,
majority of spoken word poets are forced to be
somehow "prosaic" in their poems so that their
listening can follow the flow and easily get the

message. This technique, enjambment, allows
one to continue the sense of a line over to another
line beyond the metrical unit. This allows the
stream of meaning and thought from one line to
another. Though this tends to make the poem
prose-like, it is necessary for the poems
intelligibility.

Chukwumerije's "Okwesilieze" and
"Revolution has no Tribe" exhibits this prose-like
structure. Sample from "Okwesilieze":

Today, I saw a mysterious thing
A thing that vexed me to my very
soul
I saw the black man dressed like
a king
But crouching in the shadows
with a begging bowl
His children were starving in
fields of cassava
Dying of diseases the palm
kernel could cure
Homeless in a land of rock and
timber
"Why are you begging?"- He
said, "I am poor"

When the lines are joined, the poem reads as
follows:\

- Today, I saw a mysterious thing/ A thing
that vexed me to my very soul/I saw the
black man dressed like a king/ But
crouching in the shadows with a begging
bowl/His children were starving in fields
of cassava/ Dying of diseases the palm
kernel could cure. / Homeless in a land of
rock and timber/"Why are you
begging?"- He said, "I am poor"

From Sonuga's "Take Back the Night":

Somewhere a woman
Is taking an inventory of herself
of breasts
of hips
of thighs
her eyes are scanning the streets
doing the mathematics
of how many hurried steps
she will need to take
to arrive home intact

When joined:



- Somewhere a woman/is taking an inventory of herself/of breasts/of hips/of thighs/her eyes are scanning the streets/doing the mathematics/of how many hurried steps/she will need to take/to arrive home intact

Sonuga's "Icarus":

I once saw a man on
fire
a gasoline soaked rubber tire around his
neck
arms flailing like he was trying to fly
but I was too young to differentiate
horror from spectacle
so I asked my mother
why
with all the people that surrounded him
nobody brought water?
She was navigating a different kind of
spectacle
in the bumper to bumper traffic
that lay before us
she told me
"Shhh, don't look at it
we'll be past this soon"

Once again, the pseudo-poetic lines can be joined to read as:

- I once saw a man on fire/ a gasoline soaked rubber tire around his neck/ arms flailing like he was trying to fly/ but I was too young to differentiate/ horror from spectacle/so I asked my mother/ why/with all the people that surrounded him/ nobody brought water/? She was navigating a different kind of spectacle/ in the bumper to bumper traffic/ that lay before us/she told me/ "Shhh, don't look at it/ we'll be past this soon"

It is therefore wise to conclude that the above lines defy the traditional sense of poetic lines as rhythmic and thematic units. A continuous reading of the poems will make them sound like a narrations or storytelling.

2. Figures of speech: although spoken word poets diction is relatively easy to understand, compared to the written poetry, it still employs some figure of speech to help in create clear and concrete images.

- a. Metaphor: In "Okwesilieze", Chukwumerije uses the metaphor of a "black man" to represent Africa. When a "black man" is "dressed like a king" it becomes easier to see that it is Nigeria that is being described here. Nigeria is the only African country described in sure manner, with the title "giant", but does not deserve the title. In "Revolution has no Tribe", the trees "iroko" and "obeche" are used to represent the strongest/highly regarded and the weakest/cheap. This image helps the audience to understand that everybody is needed for the revolution.

Sonuga also employed metaphors in her poems. In "Icarus" where she mourns the death of people in the hands of fire, she used the image of the burning thief to represent the intentional burning of a criminal. The image of "Royal Jordanian Airlines, 171..." is used to represent the unintentional burning of innocent people. Finally, she used the image of the "exploding church" to refer to the intentional burning of innocent people. In "Take Back the Night", "night" connotes danger and violence.

- b. Simile: Chukwumerije and Sonuga made use of simile in their poems to create concrete images which their audience will be able to visualize. In "Okwesilieze", Chukwumerije used the simile "dressed like a king" to create the image of how expensively the "black man" was dressed. Sonuga's "Icarus", "arms flailing like he was trying to fly" creates a mental picture of how the man ran frantically around beating his body, trying to put out the fire.

3. Repetition: this is a technique used expressively in spoken word poetry. The repetition of words, phrases, or image helps to hold a particular thought or image throughout the poem. It can also help extend a thought or image beyond its original meaning. The purpose of this technique is to help the writer make a point or exaggerate a point. This feature is shared by all



the poems studied in this paper. In Chukwumerije's "Okwesilieze", "Today, I saw a mysterious thing" and "I saw the black man dressed like a king" are both repeated four (4) times. In "Revolution has no Tribe", "Do you not know that" and "So, when the drums sound, let everybody answer" are both repeated four (4) times. And the structure "Do not say...when the forest is burning" is repeated twice. "Shhh, don't look at it/we'll be past this soon" is repeated twice in Sonuga's "Icarus"

Conclusion

In recent years we have witnessed the exponential growth of spoken word poetry in popular culture. In this paper, the following observations were made: both contemporary Nigerian spoken word poetry and contemporary Nigerian written poetry cannot be separated from the events of its time. The poets studied in this

paper use their poems to comment and correct some fundamental issues germane to the Nigerian society. However, their approach differs from that of their written counterpart. The spoken word poetry because of its oral nature gives the poems a conversational tone. The content of the poems are approached from a general perspective so that even an audience with a primary school leaving certificate can appreciate the poems. This approach is necessary because the audience are not disposed to make research on the content of the poem while it is being performed. The poems are presented in very simple diction to facilitate easy and fast comprehension of words. Where metaphors and similes are used, they are not cryptic. Repetition is used not only to make emphasis but also to aid remembrance as a spoken word poem when performed cannot be redone.

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Assessment of Interruption and Overlapping among Igbo and Sesotho people in Intercultural Discourse

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Abstract

This study investigates the discourse style – interruption between the Igbo and the Sesotho residing in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The study was motivated by the way in which people from different linguistic background engage in interactions and observable differences in accent, interpretation of meanings and misunderstanding, code-switching, competition for the floor based on individual linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This study explores interruption and overlapping among the Igbo and Sesotho in interactions. The theoretical framework employed is that of conversational analysis as established by Garfinkel (1967), and developed by Sachs, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). The data for the study was collected through recordings of interactions in different contexts (shop, hospital, church, home and among friends). The results from the study show that during the intercultural communication between the Igbo and the Sesotho people, interruptions and overlapping are not determined by age, educational background, gender, but by the relationships between the interactants, and the context of the interaction.

Key words: Conversation analysis, turn-taking, interaction, interruption, and overlapping.

Introduction

A turn in conversation is usually defined as uninterrupted sequence of speech by one speaker. It is the time when a speaker is talking, and there tends to be an avoidance of silence between speaking turns (Yule, 1985:108). In conversation, there is no limit to the length of a turn, but follows the principle of the adjacency pair. However, according to Grice (1975) with regards to cooperative principle, the speaker rather should not talk too much. Each move in a conversation is essentially a response to the preceding talk or what has been discussed earlier and an anticipation of the kind of talk which is to follow. In formulating the present turn, speaker shows understanding of the speech of previous turn and reveals expectations about the next turn to come. A knowledge of the previous talk leads to correct reactions and this actually shows that the interactants maintain an awareness of the turn exchange.

Turn-taking is the skill of knowing when to start and finish a turn in a conversation and when to allow others to take their turns. However, interruption is viewed as an unsuccessful turn transition, which results in a breakdown in the turn exchange system (Livingston, Flowers, Hoder & Ryan, 2000: 236).

According to Coates (1986:99), interruption is a violation of the turn-taking rules of conversation. That is, the next speaker begins to speak while the current speaker is still speaking, at a point in the current speaker's turn that could not be defined as the last word. Bonvillain (2003:201) asserts that interruption is the violation of a current speaker's rights, right to hold floor. Interruption breaks the symmetry of the conversational model. It prevents the current speaker from finishing his or her turn or gaining the subsequent turn for himself. In the words of Tannen (1991:189), "interruption is a hostile act, a kind of conversational bullying, where the interrupter is seen as a malevolent aggressor, and the interruption of an innocent victim, as well as an intrusion, trampling on someone else's right to floor, and an attempt to dominate the other". Overlapping on the other hand is a breach of turn in conversation. It is a simultaneous talking by participants which may include sentence initial overlap or simultaneous starts wherein both participants begin talking at the same time (Livingston *et al*, 2000:236). Bonvillain (2003:201) notes that overlapping is an error of judgement in transition and timing to the next turn. However, overlapping is not always disruptive like interruption, as the addressee can



laugh, which shows that it did not in any way interfere with the current speaker's turn. It is disruptive only when it interferes and stops the current speaker's turn (Holmes, 2008:386).

According to Tannen (1985:207), one function of overlap is that it enables a listener to show understanding by talking at the same time as the speaker: by loud exclamations of understanding, by finishing sentences with or instead of the speaker, which shows that the listener knows where the sentence is going; hence, has been a good listener. In formal settings, such as seminars, meetings or conferences, the occurrence of interruption and overlapping is very minimal because, in these kinds of contexts, the turns are often organised in such a way that everybody is allowed to speak only with the permission from a moderator, who allocates, monitors and control turns. This minimises the frequency of interruption and overlapping.

For the purposes of this paper, "interruption" implies violation of the interrupted party's speaking rights, or at least an attempt at such violation. If there is no such (attempted) violation, there is no interruption. The problem of identifying actual occurrences of interruption can be illustrated by examining the data. The primary aim of this study is to examine conversational environment in which interruption and overlapping responses occur, and attempt to show evidence indicating the critical function of these responses in naturally occurring conversation, as well as revealing the reasons why people interrupt or overlap in interaction.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed by this study is conversational analysis (C.A). It grew out of the ethnomethodological approach established mainly by Garfinkel (1967), and which was developed by Sachs, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), who argued that the activities of daily life and ordinary interactions of speech were important to study. Conversational analysis is the study of talk in interaction, both in formal and informal contexts. It studies natural conversations, especially with a view to determine the participants' methods of turn-

taking, constructing sequences of utterances across turns, identifying and repairing problems in conversation, and how conversation works in different conventional settings. Conversational analyst attempts to describe the orderliness, structures and sequential patterns of interaction in both institutional and casual conversations. A sociolinguistic study of C.A is however, interested in analysing the structure of talk, explaining how people manage the rules of ordinary everyday conversation at each level of their talk. Conversational analysis equally studies the structure and organisation of human interactions, with a more specific focus on conversational interactions. One of the strengths of C.A is that it works with extended samples of real conversation (Fairclough, 1989:11). In other words, conversation analysts study natural interaction on the assumption that spoken interaction is characterised with turn-taking, conversation dominance, interruption and overlapping. According to Wilson (1991:22), the concern of conversation analysts' is with the way participants construct their interaction turn by turn over its course to accomplish an accountably coherent exchange. The human interactants continually display their ideas to one another in the course of interaction and their own understanding of the topic of interaction.

Conversational analysis has focused on the organisation of conversational interactions on the analysis of its endogenously generated sequential opportunities and constraints. These are observed to operate turn by turn within conversations across diverse occasions, different participants and distinct languages (Boden & Zimmerman, 1991:8). The analysis of conversation is made possible and easier by transcriptions of recorded conversations or interactions (Tannen, 1984:36). This implies that, the analysis of verbal interactions requires a method of written representation (a transcription system). Regular spelling conventions are often not sufficient for representing conversation, although intonation can be partly reproduced using punctuation and stress mark (Renkema, 2004:161). In the transcriptions, words are written as they are pronounced to be analysable



with focus on different conversational styles (Tracy, 2002:86).

Previous Studies

Various scholars have worked on conversation analysis. Among them are; Livingston et al (2000), Bilmes (1997), Cerný (2010), and Zhao (2010). Interruption and overlapping are all form of simultaneous talk during conversation. Livingston et al (2000) did experimental analysis of interruption during conversation for three children who stutter. Their purpose was to analyze the effects of interruption on stuttered speech. Using three participants, a clinician experimenter interrupted the participant's fluent speech or stuttered speech; and simultaneously began speaking with the participant; instructed the participant to interrupt the clinician-experimenter; and finally, controlled the conversation so that there was no interruption. Pre-, post-, and continual base rate measures were collected with both the clinician-experimenter and the participants' mother. The major finding was that only 2 of the 11 (18%) conditions of increased interruption, actually slightly increased any of the three participants' stuttering. The results show that all three participants demonstrated at least one decrease in stuttering with these manipulations. The study relates to the present study with focus on interruption. However, Livingston et al's study varies from the present study because their study was experimental, the participant had speech defect and the study involved only one context, while the present study was not only intercultural but assessed varied contexts.

Cerný (2010)'s research was on interruptions and overlaps in doctor-patient interaction. The study made use of transcribed and annotated medical interviews of selected 50 medical interactions, with the total extent of text amounting to 34,376 words from the *British National Corpus* of 2007. Out of 50 medical encounters, comprising 5525 turns (34,376 words), 290 interruptions was recorded. 168 (58%) instances could be classified as doctor-initiated, 122 (42%) as patient-initiated. 34 (12%) cases belong to the category of neutral interruptions, 199 (68%) interruptions display

relational rapport, 43 (15%) are competitive interruptions, and 14 (5%) interruptions display relational power. The study revealed that both interactants are very active interrupters, with slight dominance on the part of the doctor. This study and the present work studied interruptions made by medical personnel and their patients. However, while Cerný's study focus only on doctor patient interactions, and the data used was retrieved from *British National Corpus*, the present study made use of interaction in five different contexts, and the data was gotten from the researcher herself.

In another study, Zhao (2010) conducted a study focusing on the analysis of gender differences in interruption based on the American TV series *Friends*. The aim of the study was to find out the different conversational styles among male and female speakers, based on the six protagonists in the American TV series *Friends*. The focus of the study was on the phenomenon of interruption, its frequency and function in same-sex conversations compared to mixed-sex conversations. The video materials and transcripts were used for the analysis, to be able to account for every word, and sentence, the gestures, facial expressions, body languages and some other signals which are necessary to identify the interruptions and their functions. The duration of all male conversations, all female conversations and mixed-sex conversations are calculated, as well as all useful numbers of interruptions. There are thirty-one cases of interruptions identified in the nine episodes randomly chosen. The cases are analyzed based on the three functional categories of interruption - competitive, cooperative and neutral. The study shows that men initiate more interruptions than women; men interrupt women more than reverse; both men and women are more inclined to interrupt women and both of them are more inclined to be interrupted by men. The results also show that the interruptions are more initiated between opposite sex speakers than between same-sex speakers. The study further shows that men and women use the equal numbers of competitive interruptions. In the aspect of gender difference in cooperative interruptions, the results



show that men initiate more such cases than women. Power and domination were shown in the findings, but with minimal difference in number because the characters in the study according to the author were friends. This study like the present work studied interruption with focus on same-sex conversations compared to mixed-sex conversations. Zhao (2010) study differs from the present study in that the present study went further in assessing interruption between two groups (Igbo and Sesotho) with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Similar to Zhao (2010) is the study of Chera (2014), who investigates interruptions presented in *Modern Family* Season 1 series using conversation analysis approach. The objectives of the research were to identify the types and functions of interruptions spoken by the characters in the series. The sources of the data were the videos of the six episodes of *Modern Family* Season 1 and their transcript. The data were collected by selecting dialogues conveying interruptions after the author had watched the video and matched the transcript with the video carefully. The results show four types of interruption: simple, overlap, butting-in, and silent interruption. From 57 interruptions found in the chosen series, simple interruption has the biggest number of occurrence. The smallest number of interruption's type is butting-in interruption. The characters seldom do butting-in interruption because they give a chance to the interrupter to deliver his/her message. From the study, there exist three functions of interruption: Cooperative, intrusive, and neutral interruption. Cooperative interruption is divided into agreement, assistance, and clarification, while intrusive interruption consists of disagreement, floor taking, topic change, and tangentialization. The most appeared function is disagreement and the last is clarification. Most of the characters take turns immediately and interrupt to show rejection, contradiction, or disagreement. Clarification only occurs once because the characters understand the speaker's intention most of the time. Chera (2014)'s work was on interruption just like the present study, but focused on the types and functions of

interruptions spoken by the characters in the series. The present study however made use of real life interactions and identify the occurrences of interruptions and the motivations for them.

Nwoye (1998) studied mix gender interactions of participants who are fluent speakers of Igbo and English. The study focused more on gender issues. The data of the study was recorded conversation of two groups (one group are co-workers in a grocery shop, and another group are three professional couples connected as friends and neighbours). The results revealed that Igbo men interrupt women more and at the same time successfully maintain new topics than woman. Nwoye illustrates the dominance of men in interruption with an example, where an attempt by a woman to change a topic was unsuccessful; her attempt was resisted by the man with interruption (Nwoye, 1998:101). Nwoye's work is more close to the present study in that it assessed interruption among Igbo mix gender interactions. However, while Nwoye focus was on only the Igbo (male and female) who were fluent both in Igbo and English, the present study made intercultural assessment of interruption.

The literature reviewed so far indicate that not much has been done in interruption among the Igbo people. More so, none of the reviewed works focused on the Igbo and another language group showing that no scholarly work has been done with focus on this topic to the best of the researcher's knowledge. It is this gap that the present study intends to fill to stimulate further research in other areas of discourse style.

The Methodology

The data for the study was collected through recording of natural interactions in five different contexts: shop, a hospital, and a church, among friends and at a family dinner. The recorded interactions was used to assess the occurrence of interruption and overlapping in the interaction of Igbo and Sesotho people, the gender that interrupt more, as well as the reasons for interruptions. The recordings were fully transcribed and the relevant information are extracted and presented in this paper. According to Tannen (1984:36), transcriptions of recorded interaction or conversation make the data easier to study. The study was conducted in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The



target population of the study was the Igbo and Sesotho people. A total of seventeen (17) people participated in the study (three at the shop, four in the church, four at home, two at the hospital, and four with friends). Ten were female while seven were male. With regards to their age, the participants were between twenty four to forty five years of age, with exception of two children (between the ages of five and eight) who participated in the home interaction.

The research site is Bloemfontein. It is the provincial capital of the Free State, and a home to two tertiary institutions: University of the Free State and Central University of Technology, Free State. Until 1994, the city was the sole Judicial Capital of South Africa. It remains the seat for the Supreme Court of Appeal (formerly the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court) and is, therefore, generally regarded as the Judicial Capital. These institutions attract people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds of South Africa and beyond to Bloemfontein (which include Igbo people).

Data presentation and analysis

The data for the study which were collected through recorded interaction were presented in this section, and the analysis of the data follow.

The results show that the Igbo people interrupt the Sesotho people more than the reverse during communication. For instance, in the church recording¹, a total of 89 interruptions were recorded, with the Igbo participants interrupting 72 times in comparison with 17 times of interruption by the Sesotho participants. But there is need to point out here that while the Igbo man was represented in this context (church), the Sesotho man was not represented.

On the gender that interrupts more, although the gender of the participants is not well represented, the results show that men interrupt women more. Using the church recording as an example, the man (the Igbo) has a total of 45 interruptions in

comparison to 44 interruptions recorded by the three women participants. On who interrupts more among the Igbo and the Sesotho women, the results are a bit tricky. If the church recording is used for assessment, the results show Igbo woman interrupting more, with a total of 27 interruptions in comparison to 17 interruptions by the two Sesotho participants. The reason for the Igbo woman interrupting more than the two Sesotho participants may be attributed to the level of her education (she was a post-graduate student), the first Sesotho lady, referred to as “B”, was an undergraduate student, while the other Sesotho lady, referred to as “D” was a sale’s girl. In addition, the Igbo lady’s exposure to English was more (as English was the only means of communication she used often with different people around her) than those of the Sesotho participants, who use their language (Sesotho, a dominant language in Bloemfontein) on a daily basis and only use English when they meet people who do not share a common language with them.

From the five recordings, it was discovered that the participants rarely interrupt one another during interactions. For example, in the recorded interaction in the hospital context (between the patient and the nurse), the researcher recorded only eight interruptions out of a total of 78 turns. “A”, an Igbo female patient interrupted “B” just twice, while “B”, a Sesotho female nurse interrupted the patient (A) six times. This was probably because the nurse was the authority in that context, and she used her position as a nurse to take charge of the interaction: to make inquiry and to give suggestions and advice. The examples of these interruptions in the hospital context are shown in the extract below (see transcription keys for the symbols used):

¹ Most of our examples are taken from the church recording. This is because, the duration of the recording is longer than other recordings; it has different discourse features explored by this study, and more participants are involved. However, it has its limitation; the Sesotho man is not represented.



Example 1

- A: Am fine ... [hei ...but am not really fine.
B: [Mnh I am sister Hat ... I am sister Hatane mme.
A: [OK.
B: [I work at mutual hour clinic mme

Example 2

- B: Do you have [any other pain?
A: [eh! Not only that one, you know, ... the joints, my ... all my joints. To climb the stair-case ... is difficult for me. I struggle a lot to climb the stair ... steps.
The reasons for interruption vary from one scene to another, and from one person to another. The interruption in example one comes from the nurse who may probably think that they (the nurse and the patient) have not done proper (or enough) introduction of each other before the main business (medical check-up). “A” thinks that “B” has finished her turn and so she wants to take over, meanwhile “B” continues talking, which results in the overlap, but “A” drops-out for “B”, probably because of B’s position as a nurse and the person in authority. In example 2, another interruption is noticed, this time from “A”. Here, the nurse (B), with her position asks the patient if she has other pains apart from the one she has in her chests, but before she finishes the question, the Igbo patient interrupts her. The interruption here shows that the Igbo patient knows what the nurse wants to ask her before the nurse finishes because she is attentive and follows their previous dialogue or what Chera (2014) calls co-operative interruption (specifically assistance).

In the church recording, the interaction starts with a leader of the programme, taking turn to read the daily scripture reading to be discussed afterwards. The discussion has 89 interruptions and 14 overlappings among the participants out of 681 turns. In most cases, before one person finishes his or her turn, another person interrupts. Each of the four participants in the church interaction interrupts at one point or the other. The four people that participated in the Bible studies’ rate of interruptions differ. The person that interrupted most was the Igbo man, with a total of 45 interruptions. The reason for interrupting more than other participants could be his role as “co-ordinator”, his age (the oldest among the interactants) and probably his gender (male). The motives of the interruption vary: to support the current speaker, to object to the current speaker’s opinion, to ask or to answer questions, as well as to give an example on the issue at hand. The extracts below show examples of interruptions that occurred during the church activity:

Example 3

- A: But, tell mm! Just ... tactically understand it. It is very easy to tell a lie, but it is ... very ...very hard not to tell another lie on [top.
C: [Yes, that is what I was saying, that is what I was saying that lies [multiply
A: [Mm, Mm! ... yes that is what I was saying, mm.
C: And, once you tell one lie [you try to tell another one to [cover.
A: [mm! [To cover that [one
B: [And, and another one to cover the former one.
C: So, ee ... when you want to tell a second lie, it is ... easier, it is easier because you, you want to cover that, you can now you know say

Example 4

- C: That ... all the ... miracle ... all the things that Jesus done in this world was not recorded, that these things are record for us to belief.
A: You can never record [everything.
C: [Everything that is [what I’m saying



A: [Is John that went [even further
C: [Yeah ... You cannot record
everything not how he breath, how he slept, how he woke up, how he ate
D: Yeah

Example 5

B: My understanding ... we are ... gods because we are from [God ...

A: [Because that is what

Example 6

A: But, tell mm! Just ... tactically understand it. It is very easy to tell a lie, but it is ... very ... : very hard not to tell another lie on [top.

Am: [Yes, that is what I was saying, [that is what I was saying that lies multiply

A: [Mm, Mm! ... yes that is what I was saying, mm.

C: And, once you tell one lie [you try to tell another one to [cover.

A: [mm! [To cover that [one

B: [And, and another one to cover the former one.

Sometimes, people interrupt a person as is shown in the examples below:

Example 7

B: Whatever you do

D: What you are doing

C: The feature of born again in [you

B: [Mm

A: [Mm

Example 8

C: They don't believe. They know Jesus but they don't believe that Jesus is the son of God [that Jesus is God.

B: [OK

A: [Mm

All the interruptions as observed from the extracts above occurred as the listener either wanted to support the current speaker on the issue at hand; or to complete what the speaker was saying. This shows the cohesion in the interaction as well as the attentiveness of the listeners in responding accordingly. In interaction, if the first part of a saying or a proverb is said by a current speaker, it is expected that the listeners should finish or complete it if s/he is attentive and knows it. In addition, the extracts show that interruptions are not always disruptive; supporting or completing what current speaker is saying or about to say is not meant to be negative, but encouraging the person and showing that s/he has the same opinion with you.

In the recording among friends, the discourse feature identified is more of turn-taking than interruptions. The interactants took their different turns to talk, one at a time. The study recorded only five interruptions from 98 turns in the interactions. The Igbo man interrupted twice, while the Sesotho lady interrupted three times. One of the interruptions noted in the conversation is shown below:

Example 9

A: Now, is gonna² give me problem. I don't want problem here.

B: Bring him is a problem? No, [problem

² Gonna means "going to"

A: No, [is a big problem! When he comes here, he will want this and that.
Then, I don't like that.

From the above extract, it is observed that "A" is telling "B" that bringing her child to the shop is a problem; while "B" is trying to convince her that it is not a problem, but she interrupts, showing how she opposed her child being in the shop. During interaction, especially among friends, the turns at talk and how the participants interrupt are not pre-meditated.

During the conversation in the shop context, the researcher noticed both interruption and overlapping, although, the interruption in this context is minimal, compared to the church recording. The pattern of talk here is that one person speaks at a time. In this context (shop), a total of 39 turns, one interruption and one overlap were recorded. The cases of interruption and overlapping are shown in the example below:

Example 10

B: Charger or [what?

A: [Face face³

B: [Charger?

A: [Face

During the transaction, there seem to be a mutual interaction which was more of turn than interruption between Sesotho lady and the Igbo man. Example 11 shows the only two places in which interruption and overlapping occurred in the short interaction recorded in the shop context.

Interruptions were also recorded during the conversation in the home context. A total of nine interruptions were recorded by different members of the family from 77 turns. Examples of such interruptions are shown in the extracts below:

Example 11

A: The thing ... I ask for the ... that part I didn't understand [(?)

D: [is keeper?

A: For me it was good. The people that sponsor us came...

D: They did?

A: Yes, the people that sponsor us, the people that pay your daddy

D: [Daddy!

A: [They came, look at our work and they were very happy.

Example 12

A: This [is

B: [Eh

A: Design something

B: (?)

A: What you should have done is ...

D: Oh!

A ... by the time they come back, you would have ... because I don't know what, what solvent they use in ... to dissolve it

D: I forgot to wash it [in the school

A: OK [in the water ... for the allowing it (?)

³ "Face" is a part of a cell phone. If the body of the cell phone wears-off, this part is used to replace the original part.

Conclusion

Interruption is not always negative or disruptive according to Coates (1986:99). It is negative if it disrupts the conversation, or when the interrupter is strongly against the opinion of the current speaker and interrupts with aggression. But from the recorded interactions, especially from the church recording, it is evident that interruption is a common discourse feature among the interactants, and most of the interruptions recorded are positive, in the sense that it supported the current speaker's opinion, or and helped to complete the statement of the speaker. The interruptions were not pre-meditated and their frequencies differed from one participant to another and from one context to

another. The way the participants are involved in interruption are not, in any way, peculiar to one group.

As for the gender that interrupts more, the study shows that men interrupt more (that is, Igbo men interrupt Igbo women more, the same was also obtained from Sesotho participants). This confirms the study conducted earlier by Nwoye (1998). In intercultural discourse, where one group's gender interrupts more than the other group's gender, effective communication between the people involved might be affected, especially when the two groups involved are in inter-marriage. Lastly, the study reveals that the issue of dominance in interaction cannot be attributed to any group or gender.

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Appendix: Key to transcription conventions

[Bracket connecting lines show overlapping or interruption speech. Two people [talking at the same time. Taking over speech when the speaker has not finished.

... Pause

(.....) Silence

[?] Indicates transcription impossible, or inaudible segment

/word(s)/ within slashes indicates uncertain transcription

Word(s) underline indicates emphatic stress.

CAPS mark very emphatic stress

.Marks sentence final falling intonation (end of the sentence)

, Marks phrase-final intonation (more to come)

? Yes/No question, rising intonation

(brackets) words in brackets are used for comments on quality of speech and context.

!Marks high pitch on word

! Marks low pitch on word

“ ” quotation opens and closes.

Les défis écologiques et le développement humain : Une étude de *Gouverneurs de la Rosee* de Jacques Roumain

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Résumé

*La survie de l'homme dépend de sa protection de son environnement, et surtout de la terre. La négligence écologique peut donc avoir des conséquences dangereuses sur la vie humaine, sur la flore et sur la faune. Diverses recherches ont démontré des relations qui existent entre le déboisement, la sécheresse et la misère. Beaucoup de gens dépendent presque totalement et directement des forêts pour leur survie. Dans ce cas, tout phénomène de déboisement est source possible de misère pour l'humanité, car, quand la terre se fait déboiser, voire exposée à l'érosion assez souvent, elle devient stérile. Telle était la condition d'Haïti à l'époque du roman *Gouverneurs de la rosée* de Jacques Roumain. L'Haïti a subi des décennies de turbulence, et, même à l'heure actuelle, des séismes y persistent. Pour un pays qui a été loué pour avoir su faire face jadis aux blancs colonisateurs, pendant l'époque de l'occupation pour les chasser hors du pays, c'est une ironie d'avoir le niveau de pauvreté qui s'y trouve actuellement. Voilà l'image que Jacques Roumain impute à Fonds-Rouge de son roman. C'est un village en proie à la sécheresse, aux rivalités entre habitants, à la haine, et aux désirs pour la vengeance. Manuel, le protagoniste du roman, s'est donné comme tâche, dès son retour à sa terre natale, de transformer la mentalité de son peuple, pour mettre fin à la division de la tribu, à la misère et à la haine, produits amers de la sécheresse. Au cours de sa mission, il est assassiné par un ivrogne qui s'est fait son rival (à son insu) dans son amour pour Annaïse. La leçon qu'on peut y tirer saurait bien informer les futurs chercheurs surtout dans les pays désavantageux du tiers-monde, quelles mesures prendre pour aider le développement humain, face aux défis écologiques.*

Mots clés : déboisement, environnement, sécheresse, réconciliation.

Introduction

Gouverneurs de la rosée de Jacques Roumain, un livre romanesque publié posthume et pris comme un chef d'œuvre de l'auteur, a été nommé le plus beau roman des Antilles. Parmi les plus de vingt thèmes du roman, on remarque les défis écologiques comme origine de la sécheresse qui ont causé les conflits fraternels et la misère qui rongeaient les habitants de Fonds-Rouge, le village d'Haïti où se situe le texte.

Les Haïtiens sont parmi les nègres transportés au Nouveau-Monde et déposés aux Antilles après la libération des esclaves pendant la traite esclavagiste. Mais jusqu'à présent, la pauvreté s'y est toujours bien installée. Les habitants de son roman, étant analphabètes, ne font que cultiver la terre pour avoir des denrées alimentaires. Autrefois, avant l'événement de la sécheresse, ils mangeaient à leur faim, ignorant les dégâts écologiques qu'ils infligeaient aux environnements par les incendies et les déboisements. Ils faisaient leur "coumbite", ce système coopératif de travail l'un pour l'autre qui

les réunissait en bonne amitié. Et puis la sécheresse s'est installée, amenant la misère. La survie devient le souhait de tous ; certains quittent le pays pour aller chercher des meilleurs pâturages ailleurs.

C'est au cours de cette condition que deux habitants, Dorisca et Sauveur se livrent à un conflit au sujet d'une parcelle terrienne. Sauveur tue Dorisca à coup de machette, il meurt à son tour en prison. Ce malheur divise les habitants en deux camps ennemis, avec une soif pour la vengeance, ajouté à la misère causée par la famine qui les rongeaient. Au milieu de tout cela, revient Manuel, le neveu de Sauveur, de son séjour de quinze ans de sarclage dans les plantations de Cuba. Voulant employer ses expériences du syndicalisme remporté de Cuba, il fait une tentative d'une réconciliation entre les deux parties divisées des habitants, ce qui lui coûte sa vie. Mais Manuel qui en connaissait l'écologie, avait pu découvrir la source de l'eau avant son assassinat à la main de Gervilen, le fils de Dorisca. Son sang a coulé



comme sacrifice de récompense. Il meurt, emportant un consigne qu'il avait donné à sa mère de ne pas révéler la cause de sa mort aux autorités qui exploitaient déjà les pauvres habitants. Ce consigne est pour éviter un recommencement de l'histoire de Dorisca et Sauveur ; mais surtout pour sauver l'eau. Avant sa mort, Manuel avait montré la source d'eau à Annaïse, sa fiancée. Cette dernière finit par y conduire les habitants ; ainsi la mort de Manuel va réunir les habitants qui vont arroser la plaine et mettre fin à la misère. Sa mort va éteindre la sécheresse, et l'amitié va se réinstaller à Fonds-Rouge.

L'intérêt de ce travail est de rallier les jeunes gens de notre pays à une sorte de 'coumbite' comme l'a fait Manuel. Les efforts collectifs donneront toujours des solutions pour améliorer le niveau de vie ; après tout, l'avenir du pays appartient aux jeunes gens. Cette étude sera réalisée à travers la critique marxiste du travail, car nous remarquons que Jacques Roumain partage la même philosophie que Marx, surtout en travail commun et dans les idées de la religion. Les questions seront donc :

1. Quelles sont les conséquences des défis écologiques sur le développement des habitants de Fonds-Rouge de Jacques Roumain ?
2. Quelles leçons y a-t-il pour nos jeunes gens, face au niveau du chômage au Nigéria ?

Les réponses à ces questions formeront le corps de ce travail.

Les défis écologiques à Fonds-Rouge.

Selon les philosophes, il n'y a pas de fiction pure qui n'a pas un bout de réalité. Ainsi, *Gouverneurs de la rosée* de Jacques Roumain est peut-être basé sur la réalité sociale de l'époque où vivait l'auteur, et sur la situation écologique d'Haïti qui n'a pas d'ailleurs beaucoup changée actuellement. Selon *Le Nouvelliste* et al, les séismes des magnitudes différentes ont dévasté l'Haïti depuis 9, novembre 1701, fréquemment jusqu'au 12 novembre 2016, avec des conséquences vraiment désastreuses chaque fois. Appart les séismes fréquents, l'Haïti est dit d'être une terre livrée à toutes sortes de violences, y

inclut violence envers l'environnement nature et l'environnement culture. Cependant le pays dépend seulement des produits agricoles pour leur survie. L'agriculteur qui a besoin de la déforestation, peut bien se décrire comme "violence envers l'environnement nature et culture", car il faut défricher et incendier les forêts pour avoir assez d'espace pour la culture. En raison de la déforestation et le déboisement, la terre perd sa fertilité ; la sécheresse et la famine en résultent. Tel était le cas à Fonds-Rouge décrit par Jacques Roumain à cette époque, quoique les habitants qui étaient surtout des petits exploitants agricoles analphabètes ignorent les causes de leur souffrance, et de leur misère.

Les défis écologiques au niveau mondial

Microsoft Encarta Dictionaries définit le terme écologie comme une science qui étudie l'être humain et son environnement. Or, les recherches par Drique et al montrent que, « sur le plan mondial, la planète est en surchauffe, et que l'environnement est dans l'état de dégradation avancée sous l'effet de l'activité humaine ». Selon ces chercheurs, 'la fertilité des sols décline de façon inquiétante, mettant en danger l'accès à l'alimentation, à l'eau potable, aux soins essentiels de l'humanité'. Ils ajoutent que 'les défis écologiques universels incluent : a. l'érosion de la biodiversité, b. les dérèglements des écosystèmes, c. transformations des terres, d. acidification des océans et d. appauvrissement de l'ozone stratosphère' (16). On dirait donc qu'il y a une mésentente terrible entre l'homme et son environnement puisque son pain quotidien n'est plus assuré. Steward nous informe aussi que l'écologie culturelle décrit à quel point l'homme est modelé par son milieu naturel. D'après lui, "l'environnement conditionne pour beaucoup les hommes qui l'habitent, notamment dans le fonctionnement des sociétés qu'ils mettent en place", autrement dit, tel environnement, tels habitants. Cette description va de paire avec le cas des habitants de Fonds-Rouge de Jacques Roumain, car ils languissent dans le manque dû à leur environnement misérable.

Les conséquences des défis écologiques aux habitants de Fonds- Rouge.

Dès le début du roman, nous retrouvons



Délira Délivrance, la mère de Manuel, qui nous peint l'image de la souffrance causée par la sécheresse. Le roman s'ouvre donc sur les lamentations du sort de Fonds-rouge. La vieille Délira Délivrance dit "nous mourrons tous, les bêtes, les plantes, les chrétiens vivants...et la poussière coule entre ses doigts comme un chapelet de misère." (1). Son mari, Bienaimé, lamente aussi que "la terre est dans la douleur, la terre est dans la misère." (14). Leur fils, Manuel, à son retour le lendemain de ces lamentations, observe : "les habitants (de Fonds-Rouge) déchiffrant dans les rides de l'écriture implacable de la misère.. ils sont pieds-nus, et dans les déchirures de leurs hardes rapiécées, on voit la peau sèche et terreuse." (46)..

On voit bien que cette image des habitants n'est nullement celle du développement ; la vie est plutôt statique et insupportable. Damus explique que "si les habitants avaient pondéré leurs actions anti-écologiques, ils n'auraient pas vécu cette situation de misère qui touchait aussi bien les animaux que les plantes" (5). La vie à Fonds-Rouge était si dure que quelques habitants quittaient le pays pour aller se nourrir ailleurs, surtout ceux qui avaient des relations hors du pays. Les habitants par leur ignorance voire abus de leur terre, se sont attirés la misère. Manuel, à qui l'auteur a confié la profession d'ethnologue, est déçu de l'état de choses dès son retour à sa terre natale. Il lamente que :

La terre est comme une bonne femme, à force de la maltraiter, elle se révolte ; ...vous avez déboisé les mornes, la terre est nue et sans protection, ce sont les racines qui font amitié avec la terre et la retiennent. Ce sont les manguiers, les bois de chênes, les acajous qui lui donnent les eaux des pluies pour sa grande soif et leur ombrage contre la chaleur de midi... sinon, la pluie écorche la terre et le soleil l'échaude...c'est le nègre qui abandonne la terre et il reçoit sa punition : la sécheresse, la misère et la désolation. (43)

L'auteur Célestin, lamente que : "la soumission de la nature aux fins égoïstes conduit aux antagonismes destructifs pour l'homme, comme l'illustrent les rivalités entre les clans Dorisca et Sauveur..." (3)

Les effets des défis écologiques sur le développement humain

Les mêmes défis écologiques à Fonds-Rouge voire en Haïti, existent en quelques sortes dans plusieurs pays du monde ; peut-être pas de la même ampleur (car l'Haïti a une topographie qui lui dispose aux séismes) mais assez turbulents pour ralentir le développement de leurs communautés. Les pays du tiers-monde en sont les victimes. Il y a par exemple, les incendies industriels provenant des gaz polluant, émis pendant la fabrication des produits industriels. Ces gaz causent la pollution végétale qui empêche la croissance des plantes, tuant aussi des arbres. Ajoutée à l'incendie industriel est l'exploitation minières par des propriétaires des installations pétrolières qui sont censées utiliser la richesse de leurs produits pour assurer le développement des zones de leur travail. Malheureusement, ces zones sont mêmes appauvries car les sous-produits qui sont jetés dans les fleuves tuent la flore et la faune, rendant stérile l'environnement et ralentissant le développement du peuple.

L'inégalité sociale

Avec tous les dégâts cités, ce n'est pas surprenant s'il ya les inégalités socioéconomiques mondiales, car les zones qui sont mal affectées par les défis écologiques, surtout les pays en développement qui ne sont pas industrialisés en souffrent. C'est ainsi parce qu'ils dépendent entièrement de la culture pour leur survie. Les jeunes gens quittent le pays en masse ; le pays perd ainsi ceux qui sont mieux placés pour contribuer au développement de la communauté. D'après les Rapporteurs, "les inégalités sociales entre le pays et les individus sont renforcées par les tensions environnementales." Voilà d'ailleurs ce qui était à l'origine du conflit Dorisca-Sauveur à Fonds-Rouge : la tension provenant du partage terrien s'est reflété au mécontentement et par conséquent au conflit incontrôlé, et au meurtre.



Tous les aspects de la société sont donc mal affectés, surtout par la sécheresse qui est la plus désavantageuse : la santé des enfants et des vieillards est au risque car ce sont les plus faibles de la société. Puis la faune et la flore aussi, car, lorsque les sources de l'eau sont tarées, les poissons et les animaux qui dépendent de l'eau meurent, ainsi que les plantes, comme Délira de Fonds-Rouge avait bien remarqué. Même les industries ont besoin d'assez d'eau pour faire fonctionner leur machines.

L'exemple de Manuel

Mais il n'y a aucun problème sans solutions. À Fonds-Rouge de Jacques Roumain, Manuel, le héros christique, a pu, par son sang qui a coulé, réunir les habitants dans la réconciliation. Tout comme un vrai marxiste, Roumain lui fait rallier les habitants dans une "coumbite" - ce travail dont la rémunération (dans le cas présent) est l'arrosage des plaines de tous, pour mettre fin à la sécheresse ; c'est aussi pour semer une nouvelle vie sans rancune à Fonds-Rouge.

D'après Célestin, Roumain donne comme cause des rivalités entre les clans, l'individualisme et la défense des intérêts particuliers en voulant partager des terres qui sont censées être un bien commun. C'est là l'esprit marxiste de l'auteur qui fait qu'il condamne la domination de l'homme sur la nature, et favorise "une régulation de l'environnement naturel à des fins collectifs humanistes". (3).

Manuel est assassiné au cours de sa mission, mais il avait choisi l'intérêt public au détriment du sien ; voilà pourquoi il a donné la consigne à sa mère de ne pas révéler la cause de sa mort. Donc le roman se termine sur une note d'espoir ; il faut que l'intérêt général s'empporte sur l'intérêt personnel car sans l'unité, il n'y aura pas de progrès dans un pays. Thésée et al, opinent que "Manuel parvient à instiller au village, un esprit de démocratie, participative, dialogique, solidaire". (27)

Les défis écologiques et développement humain au Nigéria :

Le chômage et l'immigration des jeunes.

Chez nous au Nigéria, par exemple, nous souffrons d'une sécheresse psychologique qui se manifeste au chômage qui abouti à toutes sortes

de crimes, y inclut le viol, le vol-à-main-armée, l'enlèvement, les meurtres rituels, les crimes financières, les incendies criminelles, et j'en passe. À l'heure actuelle, il y a la disette au Nigéria dite provenant des changements climatiques ; la plupart des familles ne mangent plus à leur faim ; le coût de la vie monte du jour au lendemain et on ne peut plus acheter grand-chose avec le peu d'argent dont on dispose ; c'est là la sécheresse socio-économique aussi, puisque les riches et les politiciens deviennent plus riches, tandis que les pauvres citoyens languissent dans la souffrance et dans la misère. Nos jeunes gens émigrent aux pays où ils croient trouver des meilleures situations, telle l'Afrique du Sud, la Malaysia, Les Etats-Unis, et les pays Européens, et même aux certains pays de l'Afrique d'Ouest, des fois sans papiers valables. Puis, dans ces pays, ils subissent des sorts pires encore que leur situation au Nigéria ; certains sont tués clandestinement, comme c'était le cas récemment en Afrique du Sud. D'autres qui ont de la chance se soumettent à faire des travaux domestiques inférieurs, au nom de survie, les tâches qu'ils n'auraient jamais accepté à faire au Nigéria. La plupart des jeunes Nigériens qui résident aux pays étrangers préféreraient y mourir plutôt que de rentrer faire les mêmes travaux au Nigéria. Chez nous, les jeunes voudraient des emplois dans des bureaux ; or, ces places sont déjà remplies, d'où le chômage actuel.

Les efforts déplacés et l'insouciance de nos leaders

Autrefois au Nigéria, chaque gouvernement du jour avait essayé, par plusieurs moyens, de résoudre les défis des inégalités sociales sans succès. Il y a eu des programmes tels que : 'Operation Feed the Nation', (OFN), 'Better Life for Rural Women', 'Structural Adjustment Programme', (SAP), 'War Against Indiscipline' (WAI), le soi-disant 'rebranding', pour ne citer que ceux-là. Toutes ces 'histoires' n'ont abouties à rien de valable car à mesure que les gouvernements changeaient, on jetait les idées de l'ancien pour propager quelque chose de bien différent, ainsi gaspillant l'argent du trésor public. Il faut noter, d'ailleurs, que c'est dans les coffres de l'Etat que nos leaders prennent l'argent



dont ils se livrent au pillage, les impôts et les contributions que paient les pauvres fonctionnaires pour la gérance de notre pays et qui sont censées les servir comme pension vieillesse de la Sécurité sociale pendant leur retraite. Voilà pourquoi un pays comme la Malaysia à laquelle le Nigéria fournissait des ressources jadis, est actuellement beaucoup mieux placée, elle mange à sa faim, tandis que le Nigéria languit dans le manque.

La religion comme défi sociopolitique/économique

La religion cause beaucoup de problèmes au Nigéria et ralentit le développement du pays, surtout dans certains États au nord du pays. Bien que ce travail ne soutienne aucunement l'athéisme de Jacques Roumain, voire de Manuel, nous croyons qu'on peut tirer quelques leçons de l'exemple de Manuel ; ce dernier a su se servir du tact en se soumettant aux rites religieux de son peuple, avant de changer la mentalité des habitants en les ralliant pour la "coumbite". Il avait d'abord pris des mesures vraiment pratiques pour découvrir la source d'eau car il croit comme il dit que « l'homme est le boulanger de la vie ». Ainsi, au Nigéria, on a besoin des Manuels pour conscientiser les gens, surtout contre l'assujettissement de leur jeune génération à l'analphabétisme-forcé au nom de la religion. Après tout et selon Keita, « Dieu existe pour tous les hommes de la terre et leur a recommandé la recherche du savoir utile » (3). Les jeunes gens du nord doivent être mieux occupés que de s'engager dans des émeutes, des bombardements, et en maudissant l'instruction, tout au nom du chômage.

La leçon tirée des Gouverneurs de la rosée, face au chômage au Nigéria.

On lance un appel à nos leaders de prendre assez de mesures pour fournir des solutions valables aux problèmes des inégalités sociales et des crimes qui en résultent. Or, notre pays est doué des espaces énormes pour toutes sortes de culture. Récemment, on met l'accent sur l'élevage des escargots, des poissons et de volaille, ainsi que l'exportation de charbon, des coquilles des noix de palme, de l'huile de palme, et des noix crues de cajou. Ces produits n'ont pas

besoin de ni le déboisement ni l'incendie des forêts pour être réalisés. Voilà une zone jusqu'ici négligée en ce qui concerne la culture. Grâce à quelques chercheurs, l'exportation est devenue de plus en plus rentable, au fur et à mesure que le marché avance. De nos jours, due à la faillite au marché de l'huile comme ressource principale du pays, on commence à mettre l'accent sur l'agriculture ; il faudrait que nos leaders encouragent nos jeunes gens, en les fournissant tout l'argent et les ressources nécessaires pour entreprendre les élevages et les exportations mentionnés au dessus. Cela aidera sûrement à réduire les taux de crimes prévalent chez nous à l'heure actuelle, car, si les jeunes gens sont profitablement occupés, ils n'auront pas le temps de penser aux crimes. Il faut aussi noter que ce n'est pas assez de fournir des ressources aux jeunes ; c'est conseillé de surveiller et contrôler l'usage pour qu'il y ait des résultats positifs.

L'éducation écologique pour les citoyens

C'est aussi conseillé d'entreprendre une éducation des Nigériens en ce qui concerne le déboisement et l'incendie des forêts pour au moins minimiser les défis écologiques, car il n'y aura pas tellement de développement là où la plupart de la population est appauvrie. On avait commencé le reboisement aux zones arides du nord du pays, mais, avec le changement du gouvernement, cette affaire est devenue classée et ces zones souffrent toujours de la sécheresse, tandis que l'argent voté pour le reboisement était empoché par les politiciens.

Les inégalités entre les riches et les pauvres causent toujours les crimes déjà mentionnés dans ce travail. Or, le marxisme a horreur d'une société inégalitaire, voire capitaliste. Nos politiciens ont rendu capitaliste notre pays Nigéria, ce qui donne notre souffrance actuelle. Nous faisons appel aux "Manuel" pour nous aider à combattre la situation. Selon le grand Einstein, cité dans l'article de Keita, "le monde ne sera pas détruit par ceux qui font le mal mais par ceux qui le regardent sans rien faire". (4)

Conclusion

Tout comme Jacques Roumain a proféré une solution aux défis écologiques à Fonds-Rouge, le monde doit aussi se rallier pour



résoudre, une fois pour toute, les défis écologiques mondiaux. Certes, il y a eu des colloques et des séminaires conviés par plusieurs organisations de chercheurs pour discuter et suggérer des solutions à ces problèmes. On a aussi pris certaines mesures comme solutions dans surtout les pays développés ; néanmoins les problèmes persistent, surtout aux pays en développement des noirs. Or, tant qu'il y a l'inégalité parmi les pays du monde, il y aura toujours les immigrants illégaux qui iraient commettre des crimes aux pays développés pour avoir leurs gagne-pain. Soit on les met toujours en prison soit on les tue lorsqu'ils sont attrapés, mais nous savons que ce n'est pas une solution au chômage qui les pousse aux crimes.

Comme le remarque les Rapporteurs « le mouvement écologique du Gouverneurs de la

rosée est un aspect du roman qui doit être mis en évidence et sa pédagogie environnementale doit être mise à profit pour concevoir ce qui pourrait constituer une éducation à l'environnement dans le contexte socio environnemental de Haïti et ailleurs. (23). Roumain est dit d'avoir été politiquement engagé dans le parti communiste quand il a écrit cet ouvrage ; ses messages s'appliquent au monde entier, surtout que l'homme cause tant de dommages à la terre ; "un monde où", d'après l'auteur Célestin, "l'eau devient une ressource rare et où la division règne au sein des peuples".

Nous croyons que le Nigéria et les autres pays en développement devraient profiter du conseil des Rapporteurs pour minimiser les effets des défis écologiques dans les pays, ce qui aiderait le développement des habitants.

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Les pratiques anti-démocratiques des impérialistes français en Afrique à travers *Monné, outrages et défis* d'Ahmadou Kourouma.

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Résumé

Les études sur les tendances anti-démocratiques des impérialistes français en Afrique ont généré des diverses opinions académiques et ainsi au développement des activités littéraires d'une manière significative parmi les écrivains francophones africains. Les études antérieures ont examiné les exploits thématique et stylistique de Kourouma surtout dans son premier roman (Les soleils des indépendances) et son quatrième roman (Allah n'est pas obligé) avec peu ou aucune attention sur les tendances anti-démocratiques des impérialistes français en Afrique dans Monné, outrages et défis. Ainsi, cette communication, regarde la perception d'Ahmadou Kourouma sur les forces impérialistes et leurs collaborateurs noirs dans le continent hétérogène africain afin de mettre en relief les effets socio-économique et politique de l'administration coloniale des Français en Afrique. Comme notre donnée, Monné, outrages et défis est spécifiquement sélectionné à cause de son rapport par le sujet. La première raillerie de ce discours colonial est d'abord intra diégétique, et perceptible à travers le sourire moqueur du griot Djéliaba. Le griot semble avoir compris la supercherie de cette mission civilisatrice. Il utilise l'humour sarcastique pour se moquer des deux lois de la recherche du confort et de l'argent à travers lesquelles les colons veulent civiliser tous les habitants du royaume. Kourouma dénonce les impérialistes et condamne leurs tendances anti-démocratiques. En conclusion, les exploits littéraires d'Ahmadou Kourouma ont influencé l'orientation culturelle et linguistique de beaucoup d'autres écrivains francophones africains.

Mots-clés: Impérialistes, politique, économique, Ahmadou Kourouma.

Introduction

La littérature africaine moderne, grâce à l'éducation occidentale, est plutôt une réponse à la situation sociopolitique postcoloniale. Dans leurs œuvres littéraires, les écrivains africains mettent à jour la réalité de la vie quotidienne africaine afin de montrer le changement d'une période à l'autre. Parmi les écrivains francophones africains, Kourouma occupe une position indispensable en fonction de sa contribution à la littérature en particulier et à la culture des Noirs en général. Ses œuvres romanesques, parmi d'autres genres littéraires sont classiques dans les domaines académique et culturel. C'est à travers ces œuvres littéraires qu'il révèle son idéologie par rapport aux événements politique, économique, religieux, éducatif dans sa société malinké et en Afrique par extension. Pour lui, la gloire de la race noire continue d'être un mirage si les leaders africains ainsi que les sujets ne s'unissent pour combattre

l'analphabétisme, le chômage, la pauvreté héréditaire, les maladies et surtout les conflits et guerres. Dans le contexte des œuvres d'Ahmadou Kourouma, la trahison des leaders africains consiste en la rupture avec les comportements qui défavorisent le continent africain, tant sur le plan socioculturel et politique. A travers ses œuvres romanesques, Kourouma propose un avenir brillant basé sur les systèmes éducatif, économique et politique compatibles à la culture africaine, dirigé par les hommes africains. L'écrivain africain contemporain s'intéresse au présent de l'Afrique mais ce faisant, il ne perd pas de vue du passé du continent aussi. Ahmadou Kourouma a cette impulsion d'éclairer tout d'abord le domaine avec son roman historique.

Aujourd'hui, les écrivains africains ne sont plus obsédés par le néo-colonialisme, mais plutôt par l'avidité, la corruption, le régime totalitaire, la violence, l'élitisme et l'incompétence des leaders africains. A la suite de



ces faiblesses dans la société africaine, les écrivains africains sentent qu'ils vivent dans une atmosphère d'incertitude, d'urgence, et de frustration. Se voyant comme porte-parole des masses populaires sans voix dans la société, ils ont recours à l'écriture puisque, comme Miller (2002: 20) l'a noté, les gens voient le monde à travers les œuvres littéraires qu'ils lisent. La pitié qu'il ressent en tant qu'écrivain est stimulée par les souffrances du peuple. Ce sont ces souffrances qui prolifèrent la manifestation de son amour et de sa haine tels qu'ils sont dépeints dans ses œuvres. C'est un romancier qui maintient la relation affective avec le peuple.

Le roman francophone africain

Le roman francophone africain est issu de la littérature africaine d'expression française. C'est un genre créé par le contact entre la tradition orale africaine, la langue française et la littérature. D'après Mortimer (1990:1):

The francophone African novel, like its Anglophone counterpart, came into being because of dramatic political, social, and cultural transformations on the African continent; it is a product of colonialism.

Sans aucun doute, cette remarque nous donne une idée concrète de la nature hybride de la littérature africaine d'expression française, la naissance que Laditan (2004: 81) a appelée «une Fourcade culturelle» car pendant une longue période après cette naissance, le français est resté la seule langue d'expression. Ainsi, la publication de *Batouala* en 1921, *l'Enfant noir* en 1953, *Climbié* en 1956 et de *l'Aventure ambiguë* en 1961 s'est conformée énormément aux règles linguistiques françaises.

Ces écrivains ont reçu beaucoup de louanges, comme pionniers du français raffiné, de la part des maîtres coloniaux parce que l'écrivain africain d'après Mateso (1986: 91) devait être «une preuve vivante de l'efficacité de la politique linguistique française». Dans les années 60s, Sembène Ousmane a continué avec le style envisionné de Ousmane Socé *Karin* en 1935 dans lequel beaucoup d'expressions wolofs sont

évoquées. Plus tard, les écrivains comme Jean-Marie Adiaffi dans *La carte d'identité* et Mariama Bâ dans *Une si longue lettre* les ont suivis. Dès lors, beaucoup d'écrivains africains ont abandonné l'ancien modèle. La nouvelle génération d'écrivains comme Sony Labou Tansi et Calliste Beyala dans le monde francophone, Wole Soyinka et Chinua Achebe dans le monde anglophone ont introduit plus d'originalité et de créativité dans leurs écritures. Ahmadou Kourouma a poussé plus loin ce style que des critiques ont appelé «disalienating the French language» (Adebayo 2000: 72), «Negritization of French language» (Laditan 2002: 78), «Linguistic decolonization» (Laditan 2002: 79), «l'hybridité linguistique» (Ayeleru 2002: 68), «process of decentering or total subversion of the French language» (Adebayo 2000: 75) en employant les différentes techniques narratives comme:

Transgression, integration,
transliteration, transposition,
deviation, word coinage, and the
mixture of levels of language and
code-mixing. (Adebayo 2001: 74-75).

Aujourd'hui, on entend les néologismes comme le fra kongo, le fra malinké, le fra yorouba et ainsi de suite. De tous les écrivains classiques mentionnés ci-dessus, figure énormément notre écrivain ivoirien Ahmadou Kourouma par sa francité, la voie suivie par beaucoup de jeunes écrivains africains d'expression française.

Selon Zabou (1991) Kourouma, forgeant la langue de la littérature africaine est une tâche rigoureuse exigeante plus d'un sérieux. C'est ainsi que les écrivains africains arrivent à effectivement représenter leur africanisme dans les langues européennes empruntées et qu'ils restent toujours africains après les exercices. Un écrivain africain s'exprimant en français se fait face particulièrement à une situation sérieuse, parce que celui qui doit s'exprimer dans la langue d'autrui, se trouve dans un double dilemme; dilemme de l'acte captivant d'écrire et celui d'aliénation. Par conséquent, les critiques situent un écrivain correctement selon la position prise par tel écrivain vis-à-vis du double dilemme. L'acte d'appropriation la langue d'une autre



personne va de la simple insertion des expressions lexico-syntaxiques africaines à la subversion total des éléments structuraux d'autres langues. Pour Kourouma, cité par Ajayi (2010:17), l'acte de chercher une expression pour les pensées et les sentiments, à travers un médium authentique n'est pas un acte banal. C'est à travers une conviction approfondie pour l'originalité du style et pour l'efficacité du message comme il nous laisse voir ci-dessous:

le langage que je suis arrivé à le saisir dans sa totalité. Voilà comment j'ai été amené à écrire et à faire des recherches au point de vue du langage en fait. Je voulais être authentique. (Ajayi, 2010: 17)

Le style de Kourouma a été un objet de discussions chez plusieurs critiques par rapport à l'originalité de ses romans. Il y en a qui a comparé la créativité et l'originalité du style de Kourouma à celle de Amos Tutuola avec la conclusion que *Les soleils des indépendances*, qui dans le contexte et avec des moyens différents, peut être considéré comme l'équivalent en français de l'œuvre de Tutuola.

Résumé de *Monnè, outrages et défis*

Roman historique et politique, *Monnè, outrages et défis* montre les origines d'un problème, une fracture. C'est un roman dans lequel l'auteur engendre une perplexité en multipliant et en brouillant les choix narratrices et les consciences des personnages romanesques. Djigui, roi centenaire pétri, comme Fama, de certitudes traditionnelles a lui aussi la bouche pleine de proverbes et de métaphores. La région de Soba dont Djigui est roi est un "monde clos à l'abris de toutes idées et croyances nouvelles" (p. 20). C'est un monde où le savoir traditionnel était encore homogène. C'était une société arrêtée, les sorciers, les marabouts, les griots, les sages, tous les intellectuels croyaient que le monde était définitivement achevé et ils le disaient. C'était une société castrée et esclavagiste dans laquelle chacun avait, de la naissance à la mort, son sang et sa place. La religion donnait des explications satisfaisantes à toutes les graves questions que les

habitants pouvaient se poser et les gens qui n'allaient pas au delà de ce que les marabouts, les sorciers, les devins et les féticheurs affirmaient: la communauté entière croyait à ces mensonges." Chacun croyait comprendre et savait attribuer un nom à chaque chose. On croyait posséder le monde, le maîtriser. C'était beaucoup" (p. 20).

Le centenaire affiche vis-à-vis du savoir occidental une ignorance méprisante dont témoigne le récit savoureux de ses essais d'apprentissage du français (231-232), soldés par 'est posé quand un échec retentissant. La supériorité que la lecture confère au savoir occidental se voit relativisé: Djigui a accès au livre grâce à une femme lettrée, Moussokoro, "sa préférée" qui interroge régulièrement sur la conformité de ses décisions avec les préceptes du coran. Elle a réussi à l'examen de récitation du livre (p. 131) et lit le coran (p. 150). Ainsi l'écrivain fait mentir l'image d'une Afrique sans écriture, peuplée de femmes ignorantes.

Le monologue dominant dans *les soleils des indépendances* est remplacé dans ce roman dialogique par un nombre de voix diverses et souvent discordantes. La voix Djigui porte-parole de traditions et de l'expérience interprète assuré des signes du monde est souvent atteinte par le doute. La voix du griot rassure mais participe au mensonge généralisé en inventant l'histoire officielle (p. 190). La voix de l'interprète, unique passeur entre les deux savoirs, tente d'accommoder des connaissances occidentales rudimentaires à la source malinké, "Nous", voix collective du peuple de Soba, gavé de mensonges contradictoires, ne sait plus à quel saint se vouer. Le seul savoir qui reste au peuple, c'est l'amer constat d'une frustration.

La dénonciation de la nouvelle classe politique africaine

Dans *Monnè, outrages et défis*, l'émergence d'une conscience nationaliste africaine s'opère avec l'appui idéologique du communisme et des partisans de l'impérialisme capitaliste français. L'attitude de certains représentants de la nouvelle classe politique africaine est ouvertement critiquée par les instances narratives. Dans le contexte de la guerre froide, cette critique met en cause la posture de



l'élite nationaliste africaine soutenue par le marxisme, tout comme elle déprécie le discours nationaliste et pro- français du jeune chef Béma. Dans le rapport dialogique qui les relie, le nationalisme et le communisme sont associés dans la même évaluation critique. Le discours nationaliste et pro-occidental est représenté dans l'univers du roman par le personnage de Béma, le cinquième fils du roi, et les membres de son parti, le P.R.E.P. La nomination de ce dernier comme successeur de Djigui Kéita par l'administration coloniale française est contestée et dénoncée par les parents du jeune prince:

- Eh bien! Je choisis. Je te maudirai. Nous prierons, le roi et moi, contre toi. A deux nous saurons anéantir ce que nous avons réalisé à partir du néant. Ton pouvoir deviendra une case vide. On peut réussir en dépit des malédictions de son père, mais jamais avec celles de la femme qui pendant neuf longs mois t'a porté.
(p.153)

A peine entamée, la carrière politique du descendant du vieux roi est placée sous le signe de la malédiction; en faisant des bénédictions et protections familiales, Béma se prive du soutien du roi et traduit son allégeance à l'autorité coloniale française. Ce qui constitue une atteinte aux valeurs et aux coutumes africaines. Dans une société fortement marquée par la soumission à l'ordre traditionnel, le geste de Béma suscite la méfiance des Soba au moment de désigner le représentant de Soba à Paris, et au-delà, sur sa légitimité. Sur ce point, l'attitude de Béma est commandée par son ambition débordante. Son allégeance aux «Toubabs exploitants forestiers et négociants du Sud » pour le poste de député de Soba confirme cette inclination. Durant la campagne électorale, le narrateur insiste sur ses diatribes xénophobes à l'encontre des non-musulmans (« les cafres », « les incirconcis », les non- incisées », « les ennemis du Tout- Puissant ») considérés comme des traîtres, c'est du moins le sens de cet extrait:

Malinkés, (...) On vous a menti et trompé. Il n'y a pas de querelle

entre membres de même tribu qui vaut que l'on préfère pour le pouvoir et la force un étranger à un coreligionnaire. Les côtiers comme un seul homme ont voté pour leurs frères. Le député, c'est le pouvoir et la force, c'est le guide et cela ne s'offre jamais à un étranger; l'étranger qu'on fait roi méprise ceux qui l'ont fait monter et enlève aussitôt l'échelle par laquelle il a été hissé au sommet. (p.236)

Vaincu à l'élection au poste de député de Soba par un « sudiste », l'instituteur Touboug, les propos du chef Béma traduisent à la foi sa frustration et son autoritarisme. Dans le contexte de guerre froide naissante et de la lutte contre le communisme, Béma appuyé par certains journaux françaises met en cause les partisans du R.D.A et leurs soutiens communistes dans les émeutes qui secouent la ville:

Un commandant communiste fait tirer sur les adversaires du député communiste à Soba: 13 morts.
(p.245)

Le but recherché selon le narrateur mêlé aux habitants de Soba est de : « *montrer que certaines mains étaient rouges : celles du commandant Héraud, du député Touboug et celles des députés communistes français.* » (pp.245-246)

Pour le chef Béma et ses alliés français, le communisme est dépeint comme l'ennemi de « *Dieu, de la religion, de l'ordre, de la famille et de la liberté* ». (p.246) A l'opposé donc des valeurs qui constituent le socle culturel des Malinkés. Dans la foulée, le discours de Béma dénonce la suppression des travaux forcés obtenus par ses rivaux « communistes », ainsi que les libertés récemment octroyées menaçant selon lui l'ordre, la morale et la stabilité de la colonie:

Nous les Nègres, nous sommes comme la tortue, sans la braise aux fesses nous ne courrons jamais : nous ne travaillerons pas, ne paierons jamais nos impôts sans la force. Il faut immédiatement monter dans les villages, montrer la force, recréer la peur : les Noirs



ne reconnaissent pas une arme
cachée dans son fourreau. »
(p.247)

Par ces propos, le chef Béma critique la politique menée par son rival, le député Touboug soupçonné de faire le lit à « la barbarie communiste ». Cette critique est renouvelée par le narrateur omniscient lorsque ce dernier reproche au nouveau député ses pratiques tribalistes et autocratiques :

Touboug, une fois député, se préoccupa de sauver du sous-développement ceux de sa famille, de son village et de sa tribu. Dans le parti unique, il soutint que ceux de Soba ne méritaient pas la liberté de vote parce qu'ils ne savaient pas se départir de la solidarité tribale, n'arrivaient pas à transcender leur appartenance tribale. (p. 237)

Dans cet extrait, le projet égalitariste et humaniste de l'instituteur lors de la campagne électorale contraste donc avec les dérives tyranniques que relève le narrateur. Sont dénoncés ici les dérapages et abus d'un certain nombre d'intellectuels et de nationalistes africains qui une fois parvenus à des postes de responsabilité politique ont progressivement sombrés dans la dictature des partis uniques. L'attitude violente du chef pro- français Béma est aussi dénoncée par le narrateur. Son discours est rejeté par une majeure partie des habitants de la colonie dont le vieux roi Djigui Kéita:

Les commissionnaires de Béma (les collecteurs et les ex-recruteurs) qui montèrent dans les montagnes ou se perdirent dans les pistes de brousse pour recueillir des adhésions libres n'eurent pas plus de succès. Leurs tournées ne furent pas faciles : personne n'assistait aux réunions et, plus grave, ils furent mal accueillis, même trois fois lapidés, alors qu'on croyait que tout le pays était soumis et résignés... (p.256)

La mise en place de sa formation politique, le P.R.E.P, se fait dans un climat de terreur pour les habitants de Soba, contraints d'adhérer au parti de Béma désormais unique après l'arrestation des dirigeants du « parti anti-français »; ce qui suscite la révolte du narrateur:

La méthode! ...La méthode! ...
Qu'en dire? Rien. Ceux de Soba comme tous les Africains développements et la famine, ils se construiront des villas de rapport, entretiendront de nombreuses maîtresses, planqueront de l'argent en Suisse et achèteront en Europe des châteaux où ils se réfugieront après les immanquables putschs qui les chasseront du pouvoir
(p.257)

Cette longue tirade du narrateur intervient comme une dénonciation des nouveaux dirigeants politiques africains dont les « méthodes » de gouvernement se révéleront désastreuses pour l'Afrique; la pensée du narrateur même si elle déborde le cadre du récit est une allusion à peine voilée à « l'échec », souvent évoqué, des indépendances africaines et de ses nouveaux « maîtres ». Au moment où la colonie de Soba sombre dans l'agitation anti-française, les propos quelque peu désabusés du narrateur soulignent la falsification de l'histoire par ces nouveaux dirigeants:

tous ceux qui moururent en mâles sexués furent oubliés. Ce furent les autres, ceux qui résignèrent et épousèrent les mensonges, acceptèrent le mépris, toutes les sortes de monnew qui l'emportèrent, et c'est eux qui parlent, c'est eux qui existent et gouvernent avec le parti unique. On appelle cela la paix, la sagesse et la stabilité. (p.276)

A la veille des indépendances africaines, l'attitude de la nouvelle classe politique noire est sévèrement dépréciée par le narrateur omniscient; dans cette période transitoire qui la voit émerger, la lutte pour « le pouvoir et la force » que relatent les derniers chapitres du roman concourt au



discrédit de cette élite politique et suscite la méfiance du narrateur et des colonisés de Soba. Quoi qu'il en soit, le discours de la nouvelle classe politique africaine à la veille des indépendances est traversé de conflit et de contradiction. Dans le contexte de guerre froide, les dirigeants africains sont sommés de « s'aligner » pour l'un des deux camps en conflit, compromettant d'emblée les indépendances à venir.

On peut aussi voir ce scénario dans *Les Bouts de Bois de Dieu* de Sembene Ousmane, où on voit quelques-uns des hommes qui jouent le rôle de traître, se cachent pour travailler avec les patrons blancs en sortant très tôt et rentrant tard le soir. Contre eux, ils ont recruté des commandos, et ceux-ci ne se gênent pas pour les rosser sérieusement les déserteurs, les "renégats" comme les appelle quelqu'un lors des réunions publiques.

La critique de l'impérialisme occidental

La critique de l'impérialisme occidental dans l'univers du roman est focalisée sur la colonisation française. En tant qu'expression symbolique de la « volonté de puissance » et de la domination occidentale, le système colonial est évalué négativement par les instances narratives et par une partie de la jeune élite politique noire. Le discours de ses représentants officiels est traversé d'ambiguïtés, de contradictions et de mensonges. Au début du récit, l'avance des troupes du général français Fadarba est vécue avec angoisse à Soba et dans le Mandingue. La méfiance et la crainte que suscite la colonne européenne sont rendues par le terme « Nazaras », (le terme est une déformation phonétique du vocable français « Nazareth », ville d'origine de Jésus-Christ et du christianisme; mot qui désigne dans cette région les « blancs chrétiens ». Ainsi, les propos du premier messenger à Soba à la cour du roi Djigui Kéita traduisent sans doute cette inquiétude :

Le maître griot pinça les cordes de sa cora et (...) expliqua que Fadarba et ses hommes étaient des Français; les Français, des Toubabs chrétiens, des nazaréens, des Nazaras. Les Nazaras

s'avouaient les ennemis de l'islam; c'était des impurs. Leur contact, comme celui du porc et du chien, faisait perdre la pureté rituelle... (p.19)

Dans le jugement critique du griot messenger et aussi, pour une large part des gens de Soba et du Mandingue, les « Français » sont perçus comme des êtres maléfiques, des « ennemis de l'islam » qu'il faut combattre. Mais la victoire et la conquête de ces territoires par l'armée de Fadarba donne le coup d'envoi de l'exploitation et la « mise en valeur » de la colonie, autrement dit la colonisation. La mise en œuvre de ce système repose pourtant sur un certain nombre de justifications qui s'avèrent souvent contradictoires. Ainsi, la colonisation est présentée aux yeux du roi Djigui comme un moyen de « faire gagner de l'argent à tous les Nègres » (p.57), ce qui en réalité se révèle inexact, puisque cet argent promis sert non seulement à payer les impôts mais contraint les colonisés à la servitude. Très vite, la colonisation apparaît dans le récit comme un système autoritaire, contraignant et brutal. L'instauration des « travaux forcés », des « réquisitions », ou des « prestations » par les autorités françaises dissimule pourtant avec les propos de l'interprète des colonisateurs lorsque ce dernier réclame qu'il n'y a « pas un esclave dans un pays conquis par la France. » (p.53). L'autoritarisme de ce système est même annoncé sans tact par ce même traducteur aux habitants de Soba : « Les Blancs sont bons. Qui sous un arbre dira le contraire verra la foudre fendre l'arbre ». (p.55)

Ces propos indiquent clairement l'absolutisme du discours impérialiste; l'homme blanc est assimilé à une divinité devant inspirer la crainte et la terreur chez les populations soumises. De même, la brutalité et la violence aveugle de ce système sont contenues dans « les besognes de la civilisation » qu'énonce le porte-parole des officiers français au sujet des tirailleurs:

Vous serez les mieux nourris, les mieux logés, les mieux payés. Vous pourrez arracher aux autres



indigènes leur nourriture, leurs bêtes et leurs femmes. Ce ne sera pas un péché : Allah pardonne les fautes commises par les hommes qui ont les armes et le pouvoir. (p.61)

En légitimant les actes de violence des tirailleurs, le discours des autorités françaises tranche une fois encore avec la bonté et l'humanisme qu'elles prétendent incarner et transmettre aux habitants de la colonie. Cette duplicité rejaillit dans une critique de l'impérialisme occidental et capitaliste. Au sujet des tirailleurs, le narrateur note les ambiguïtés du système colonial français dans la scène du retour des anciens combattants au lendemain de la première guerre mondiale. La célébration de leurs exploits, du « combat pour la liberté de la France » est jugée excessive au regard des souffrances et des privations endurées par les populations locales:

On fit de ces rares chanceux, sauvés des Allemands par Allah seul, des gardes- cercles, des infirmiers, des interprètes; bref, des privilégiés qui avaient droit aux porteurs, aux hamacs, aux éventreurs, mangeaient du poulet, des œufs, et couchaient avec les plus belles femmes du pays. La France leur était reconnaissante pour leur bravoure au feu. Elle honorait en eux la mémoire des coreligionnaires qui avait péri pour la liberté et la gloire de la France. Pour quelle cause donc avaient péri les morts des chantiers et des exploitations agricoles? (p.84)

Le mépris affiché pour les « morts des chantiers » (morts aussi au nom de la grandeur économique de la France), relégués dans « le néant et l'anonymat » de l'histoire, et la glorification des mérites des anciens combattants suscitent l'indignation du narrateur. Comment comprendre que la France acclame les « défenseurs de la patrie en danger » et ignore les bâtisseurs de « l'œuvre civilisatrice » française. Autant de contradictions qui poussent le vieux roi Djigui Kéita à renoncer à la collaboration avec les autorités coloniales; en suspendant la construction du train et les prestations, puis en

décidant de reprendre la guerre interrompue quarante ans plus tôt. Des réactions qui apparaissent davantage comme des actes de résistance symbolique et dérisoire plutôt qu'une remise en question radicale de l'hégémonie française à Soba, au regard de la faible autorité du souverain malinké et de sa vieille garde.

A la faveur des événements survenus en Europe et des réformes politiques engagées par la France au sein de ses colonies (la création de poste de député pour l'assemblée constituante), une classe politique noire émerge à Soba. Cette ouverture politique sert de prétexte à une partie de cette classe politique africaine pour dénoncer les injustices faites aux colonisés. C'est l'exemple du parti du R.D.A de Houphouët et de l'instituteur Touboug, soutenu par Djigui Kéita et son fils Kéléigui, et dont le projet est de demander « *la citoyenneté française pour tous les indigènes* » et de supprimer « les travaux forcés des Toubabs qui vident les villages, des travaux forcés qui tuent... ». La victoire provisoire des partisans du R.D.A et la suppression des travaux forcés crée une effervescence politique et revendicatrice chez les populations de Soba; des troubles éclatent et conduisent à des manifestations d'hostilité à l'égard du pouvoir colonial et de son allié local, le chef Béma.

Ces manifestations relatées dans la narration interviennent dans un contexte marqué par la guerre froide; le conflit idéologique qui oppose le communisme au capitalisme en Europe (et en France) s'étend jusque dans la colonie de Soba. Le soutien affiché du « groupe communiste à l'Assemblée nationale française » au député de Soba (l'instituteur Touboug) et à ses partisans illustre la contestation de l'ordre hégémonique et impérialiste français. Au cours d'un grand meeting, le député Touboug dénonce « les méthodes policières dignes des nazis appliqués par des français à d'autres français » et exige « la libération des prisonniers et la cessation des arrestations arbitraires ». La sanglante répression qui suit la fin de cette réunion démontre également la brutalité des autorités françaises et leur détermination au maintien de l'empire comme nous l'indique cet extrait:

Dans les premiers villages investis,



les militants furent arrêtés, puis envoyés dans le camp de Soba où ils furent déshabillés et battus jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient publiquement renié le parti. (...) Chacun remettait sa carte du RDA, le capitaine les assemblait, en faisait un autodafé. (pp.252-253)

Pour réduire la « réaction » communiste à Soba, l'administration coloniale soutient le parti du chef Béma qui lui est favorable, en dépit des exactions et des mensonges de ce dernier. Le refus du vieux roi de cautionner la manœuvre dilatoire de son fils est à lire comme une dénonciation ultime de l'impérialisme occidental. Sa mort « physique » apparaît alors comme un rejet du système colonial qui a eu raison de lui, tout comme elle influence la révolte des habitants de Soba:

Après son enterrement, nous répliquâmes. La répression une fois encore ralluma la révolte : nous les démunis, nous reprîmes encore les armes. Mais pour ne pas entretenir d'autres mythes, disons tout de suite que le soulèvement se termina chez nous par un nouvel échec. Échec total, sauf le dernier « non » que nous soupîrions avant de mourir les doigts crispés sur nos fusils de traite, les dents serrées sur les injures de nos monnew. (pp.275-276)

Dans ce deuxième roman de Kourouma, le discours impérialiste de l'Occident capitaliste à travers sa représentation institutionnelle, la colonisation française, est jugé négativement par les instances narratives. Si son instauration n'a soulevé que peu de résistance (facilitée il est vrai par la démagogie du roi Djigui Kéita), son hégémonie est contrariée, contestée au sortir de la seconde guerre mondiale par l'émergence du communisme dont le projet théorique séduit une partie de la jeune élite politique noire de Soba regroupée au sein du R.D.A. La fin du roman est marquée par un climat d'extrême tension, de troubles socio- politiques et de brutalités policières. La mort du héros, dans un geste presque suicidaire, vient renforcer la méfiance à l'encontre du pouvoir colonial dont les visées hégémoniques contrastent avec les revendications

de la nouvelle classe politique africaine.

Conclusion

Dans le roman, Kourouma se sert des mensonges pour donner à la méthode de la mission civilisatrice ('le dit' des colons) des acceptions qui lui sont tout à fait contraires mais qui correspondent aux réalités de la colonie de Soba. L'ironie situationnelle lui permet de montrer que contrairement à ce que soutiennent les partisans de la théorie de la mission civilisatrice, la colonisation a en fait permis à l'Afrique de contribuer au rayonnement de la France. L'objectif de la colonisation, tel qu'annoncé par les colons et railleusement transcrit dans l'imaginaire de Kourouma, est de faire passer l'Africain d'une mentalité improductive, facteur de pauvreté et de misère, à une autre propice au développement socioéconomique. Il s'agit en fait de créer en l'Africain le besoin " quasi inexistant" d'évolution et de mieux-être et du " confort ". Cette nouvelle mentalité lui serait inculquée par l'introduction de l'argent dans son système de valeur: "Comme le besoin d'évoluer n'a jamais existé dans la tête du Noir, il faut l'amener à vouloir la civilisation, à rechercher l'argent plus que le gibier, plus que l'amitié et la fraternité, plus que les femmes et les enfants, plus que le pardon d'Allah" (*Monné* 58).

L'instauration de cette nouvelle économie de la progression implique que l'Africain ait une conception de la vie progressant au-delà de la satisfaction de l'instinct de survie (symbolisée par le gibier), qu'il passe plus de temps à travailler plutôt qu'à consolider les relations sociales (amitié et de fraternité), et qu'il compte plus sur le travail que sur la fatalité ou l'intervention divine " d'Allah" pour améliorer son sort. Kourouma est un analyste lucide de tous les maux qui rongent la société africaine. Son œuvre restera comme l'une de celles qui ont contribué à conscientiser les hommes sur les difficultés du continent noir à se construire son destin. Courageux, l'écrivain ivoirien n'avait pas la peur des réseaux de domination qui sévissent en Afrique, et oppriment les intellectuels et les masses africaines. Et comme tout écrivain qui dérange, il s'est éloigné du monde pervers et parfois absurde africain et a fini sa vie en exil,



comme beaucoup d'autres Africains. Tels sont contre des pouvoirs totalitaires.
ainsi le sort et le drame de tous ceux qui luttent

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Style in Selected Headlines of Niyi Osundare's Columns in Newswatch

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Abstract

This study examined 86 headlines in the columns of Newswatch by Niyi Osundare which had been relatively underexplored. The aim was to determine their functional significance based on their peculiar stylistic choices. The study adopted the qualitative method and subjected the selected headlines to general stylistic approach. The findings revealed that the headlines exploit alliterations to reinforce the main points raised. Two types of nominal groups featured prominently in the headlines: the modifier plus head and head plus qualifier types. They were employed for effective description so as to maximize information and minimize space. Neologism foregrounded the headlines in order to underscore the import of the news story. Allusion provided clues about the contents of the news story. Whereas colloquialism indicated informality between Osundare and readers; through lexical ambiguity, the headlines induced readers in order to make them hold the different interpretations in mind as well as give the interpretations equal serious meaningful value. Idioms served for rhetorical effects and to provide imagery in order to enhance the message communicated. Deliberate misspelling of word was pressed into satirical function. These stylistic devices, undoubtedly, formed the selections which Osundare makes from the resources of language within the genre of newspaper reporting; and they functioned collaboratively to make the selected headlines informative, indicative and persuasive.

Keywords: Columns, Headlines, Newswatch, Style

Introduction

'Headline' is one of the most unique characteristics of newspapers. It is a kind of discourse associated with the written press, and is regarded as one of the most innovative aspects of journalistic writing (Crystal, 1987). Headline is a word, phrase, or sentence printed at the top of a newspaper column which explains briefly what its content is all about. It is similar to headings or titles of a piece of writing that serves to provide readers a clue of what the subject matter of the column is all about. According to Folarin (1997), headline serves as a means through which the most significant point in an editorial is presented succinctly. As one of the most widely read parts of a newspaper, it "grades and indexes the news to tell the reader the importance of the news article and whether it is meant for him/her" (Folarin, 1997: 17). Equally, Van Dijk (1998) opines that headlines are informative for providing readers with the information contained in the text; and also persuasive for inducing them

to read the whole text. In the same vein, Gattani (2005) validates this point when he states that headlines are informative because they give a good idea about the topic of the news story; indicative for addressing what happened in the editorial and finally eye-catching for attempting to capture the interest of the reader by telling them what the news story is about, in a cursory and fascinating manner.

Also, headlines are characterised by density of information and restricted range of sentence structures. They stress the prominence of the news story, summarise it and make the tabloid page striking (Folarin, 1997: 17). From the preliminary discourse, we can validly conclude that newspaper headlines receive the most attention from readers owing to the indispensable roles they play in journalistic writing.

All fields have a specialised language features which are most noticeable at the various strata of linguistic description. Such specialised



use of language is not unusual in the field of journalism which has continued to receive attention from linguistic practitioners. Scholarly efforts have been made to study the complexities of language used in newspapers headlines. Some of these include Taiwo (2004, 2007&2015), Khodabandeh (2007), Sander (2014), Ehineni (2014), among others. The field of journalism and by extension newspaper reporting is distinguished by a broad range of linguistic diversities that are divergent from any other area of language study. Newspaper reporting employs disparate varieties of language styles and newspapers headlines are not exempted as they are also written in an exceptional style that is different from other genres.

This study explores style in selected headlines of Niyi Osundare's columns in *Newswatch* which have been relatively underexplored. The aim is to identify the selections which Osundare makes from the resources of language within the genre of newspaper reporting in order to determine his style within the genre.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of 'style', a complex phenomenon, has been delineated from numerous perspectives. With particular reference to language, it refers to a "perceived distinctive way of expression in writing or speaking" (Wales, 2011: 397); and may also be construed as the manner in which language is used in a given "context, a given person, for a given purpose" (Leech and Short, 2007: 9). In essence, style is the way language is used to express thought. The study of style has been approached from different perspectives. These include style as choice, the man, deviation, conformity, and situation. On style as choice, it is axiomatic that language offers its users with more than one choice in a given situation.

Consequently, there are a variety of choices available to a writer in any given situation (Wales, 2011), which is why style as choice provides the creative writer the opportunity to make choices from the repertoire of language. So, he either makes choices or allows such choices to be made for him (Lawal, 2003: 28). However, style as the man stresses the

distinctiveness of every writer; and that of situation is hinged on the assertion that context influences the language choice of a speaker or writer in any given situation (Finch, 2002). In addition, while style as deviation refers to violation of rules or conventions associated with linguistic structure (Wales, 2011: 110); that of conformity stresses the observance of rules, conventions and regulations that guide the use of language (Carter and Nash, 1990). The concept of style is central to this study because its emphasis is to explore its bearing in the column headlines selected for enquiry.

As a matter of fact, critical observation shows that the language used in newspapers headlines tends to be creative as headlines need to convey in concise form the most salient point in a news article (Folarin, 1997). Since headlines crafting relies heavily on the creative use of language owing to the need to abridge the news story and make the tabloid page more arresting, the concept of choice has been a major style in journalism as it relates to the writing of headlines.

Analytical Approach

The present study adopts the general stylistic approach. Crystal and Davy (1969) emphasise that the stylistic approach seeks to examine language patterns in order to discover from the widespread of linguistic attributes common to English as employed on every possible instance. According to them, the levels of analysis are phonetics / Graphetics, Phonology / Graphology, Grammar / Lexis and semantics. The headlines of Niyi Osundare's columns are studied and analysed along phonology, syntax and semantics parameters.

Methodology

Data for this study comprised selected columns of Niyi Osundare, a Nigerian columnist and social critic. The columns were contributed to *Newswatch*, a Nigerian weekly news magazine, published by Newswatch Nigerian Communications Limited. Eighty-six (86) column headlines (published between June 1986 - February 2003) were examined along the different levels of linguistic description: phonology, syntax and semantics in order to



determine the stylistic devices used in their configuration.

Linguistic Analysis of the Selected Column Headlines

The study draws insights from style as choice seeing that its focus is to explore the selections which Osundare makes from the resources of language in the configuration of his headlines. The linguistic analysis of the column headlines is conducted from the syntactic, sound and lexico-semantic angles of language description as captured below.

1.1 Syntactic Features in the Column Headlines

1.1.1 The Group Structure

The syntactic analysis begins with the group structure with specific focus on the nominal group (henceforth, NG). A group is the rank in the lexicogrammar between clause and word. It functions in clauses and is composed of words. The NG is one of the three main categories of groups recognised by systemic functional linguistics (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). The constituents of the NG in English comprise the modifier (m), headword (h) and qualifier (q). The modifier and qualifier are discretionary constituents while the headword is the only mandatory constituent in the structure. The constituents *m*, *h*, *q* are the elements of structure whose particular configuration (*h*, *mh*, *hq*, *mhq*) will form the configuration of any given NG.

A close study of our corpus (see appendix) reveals that the *mh* structural type has thirty-four frequency of occurrence. This structure is followed by the *hq*-type with thirty-three frequency of occurrence. Next to this is the *mhq*-type which appeared seventeen times. The least NG used in the headlines is the *h* structural type. However, one would expect that the *mhq* structural type, which seems to be the most complex because it has both the pre and post-modifying item(s), would be the predominant NG type used in the headlines seeing the opportunity it provides Osundare in other genres (like poetry, plays, autobiography etc.) to effectively communicate his artistic vision. On the contrary, the reverse is the case with the choice of NG types used in configuring the headlines.

Osundare's preference for the *m* and *hq*-types, apart from being structurally less complex, is to condense and make the headlines captivating. From the frequency of occurrence of NG types presented (see appendix), it can be concluded that the *mh* and *hq* structural types of NG are the most commonly deployed in the headlines.

A remarkable point to be made on Osundare's exploitation of the group structure is the varied functions performed by NG in the column headlines. For example, the *mh*-type as in *the real abusers* (1993), *Nigeria's image problem* (1995), *mad times* (1994) and *crocodile tears* (1998) are used for effective description. In *the real abusers*, the functions as a specific determiner; *real* is an adjective and *abusers* is a noun. However, in *Nigeria's image problem*, *Nigeria* and *image* are nouns but have been used as adjectives to effectively describe the headword *problem* in the NG structure. Whereas the adjective *mad* in *mad times* functions as an epithet to describe the headword *time* in the NG structure, *crocodile* in *crocodile tears* is a noun functioning as an epithet to describe the headword *tears*.

The *mhq*-type as in *the real gains of SAP* (1989), *the evil that men do* (1998) and *the distance of power* (1987) are used to maximize information. For example, in *the real gains of SAP*, the functions as a specific determiner; *real* is an adjective; *gains* is a noun and *of SAP* is a prepositional phrase. While the specific determiner functions as deictic element to introduce *gains*, which is the headword in the NG structure; *real* on the other hand is an epithet functioning to modify it. The prepositional phrase is a qualifier serving complimentary role by supplying additional information to the headword. The complimentary role performed by the qualifier aids the headline to effectively increase information. In the same vein, the specific determiner *the* in *the evil that men do* operates to introduce the noun *evil* as the headword and the clause *that men do* as the qualifier in the NG structure.

Also, the *hq*-type as in *Truth of my politics* (2001), *Tears for my country* (2002) as well as the *h*-type as in *Abominations* (1996) and



Home-coming (1989) are used for thematic projection and to minimize space. For example, the noun *truth* in *Truth of my politics* and *tears* in *Tears for my country* function as headwords in the NG structure. Both headwords are succeeded by the prepositional phrases *of my politics* and *for my country* which operate as qualifiers to complement the headwords in the NG structure. The headlines *Abominations* and *home-coming* are single words functioning as the headword in the NG structure. They are used to project discourse themes. As we conclude our analysis on the group structure, it is important to mention that stylistically, the column headlines exploit modifiers (consisting of adjectives) and qualifiers (comprising prepositional phrases and noun clauses) to achieve the aforementioned functions. Whereas modifiers allow readers to identify the headword, qualifiers on the other hand provide extra information about the headword. Overall, the frequent usage of *mh* and *hq*-types of NG is to minimize space.

1.1.2 The Clause

Apart from the group, the clause constitutes another important stylistic feature which Osundare exploits in the configuration of the column headlines. Tomori (1977: 19) defines a clause as “a grammatically coherent linguistic texts that has a verb”. There are two broadest types of clauses, namely, main or independent and subordinate or dependent clauses. These clauses are all ranking clauses which imply that they form a separate rank on the rank scale. Among the various types of clauses recognized, rank shifted clauses (also sometimes referred to as down ranked or embedded clauses) feature prominently in the column headlines. Rank shifting is the process whereby a unit of one rank is moved down the rank scale to serve as if it were a unit of a lower rank as an element within another unit. Some examples from our data (see appendix) include, *Playing for time* (1995), *Wailing for Wilmot* (1987), *Remembering Tukur* (1989) as well as *When government steals* (1993). These clauses are rank shifted because they have the form of a clause, but are really functioning as part of clause constituent.

1.1.3 The Sentence

The choice of sentence types employed in the headlines is explored from the structural and functional perspectives. As regard the structural aspect, the headlines exploit simple sentences consisting of statements and questions. The nominal expressions, *The evil that men do* (1998), *A parable called Mandela* (1990) and *Leave the lawmakers alone* (1999) illustrate statements. These simple sentences are made up of one subject and verb. For example, in *the evil that men do*, the noun phrase *the evil that men* serves as the subject of the sentence while *do* functions as the verb. In the same vein, in *a parable called Mandela*, the noun phrase *a parable* represents the subject, *called* is the verb and *Mandela* is the complement.

On the use of interrogatives, we observe that between the Yes/no and WH-interrogatives, Osundare shows preference for the Wh-interrogative as captured in the following headlines *Where is your tie?* (1987), *Who is afraid of Biwott?* (1992) and *What's that degree worth?* (1987). These interrogatives have different structural configurations. For example, in *where is your tie?*, *where* functions as adjunct, *is* operates as finite verb, *your tie* represents the subject. Also, in *Who is afraid of Biwott?*, the Wh-marker *who* is the subject, *is* functions as the finite verb, *afraid* is the predicate while *Biwott* is the complement. Finally, in *What's that degree worth?*, *what* functions as the complement, *is* represents the finite verb, *that degree* is the subject and *worth* is predicate. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 134), the WH-interrogative serves to “specify the entity that the questioner wishes to have supplied”. For this reason, Osundare exploits them to draw attention to the queries raised in the headlines. His aim is to prompt readers to peruse the news story. For example, the attention of the reader is drawn to the writer's rhetorical use of the nominal expression *What's that degree worth?*. Therefore, he (the reader) is impelled to peruse the news story in order to satisfy his curiosity. Equally, readers who do not know the person addressed as Biwott, would easily want to peruse the editorial in order to discover the personality of Biwott and



what the writer has to say about him.

As regard the functional perspective of the sentence, whereas the simple sentences perform declarative functions by stating facts and providing information; the questions perform interrogative functions by eliciting response from the readers. Unlike In other genres such as poetry, plays and essays where Osundare employs a variety of clauses and sentence types in relaying his artistic vision; his preference for rank shifted clauses and simple sentences is part of his effort to adhere to the style of headline writing which stresses brevity. The foregoing shows the choices from the syntactic codes which Osundare draws upon in the configuration of the headlines. All these contribute towards making the headlines informative and indicative.

1.2 Sound Features in the Column Headlines

We observe instances of the use of alliteration in the column headlines. Jeffries and McIntyre (2010: 36) describe alliteration as a “pattern based on consonance sounds”. They add that it refers to “adjacent words beginning with the same letter” (37). Among the various types of phonological features (alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme) available in the language code, Osundare draws considerably from alliterations. For example, the use of repeated voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ sounds in *Soul and Sale* (2001), the voiced bilabial semi-vowel /w/ sounds in *Wailing for Wilmort* (1987), voiced alveolar liquid /r/in *Robeson remembered* (1991) and the voiced bilabial nasal /m/in *Mayhem in May* (1986) etc. are effective for making the headlines memorable. Alliteration creates aesthetics beauty; give pungency to the point raised as well as aid to achieve an emphatic effect of meaning in the news story.

1.3. Lexico-semantic Features in the Column Headlines

The stylistic devices explored under the lexico-semantic level of linguistic description are neologism, acronym, colloquialism, deliberate misspelling of word, idiomatic expression, allusion and ambiguity. The next sub-section takes on neologism.

1.3.1 Neologism

Neologisms are a lexico-semantic feature

which provides Osundare the avenue to exceed the normal use of the resources of language. In the words of Leech (1969: 42), neologism is described as “the invention of new words”. In the same vein, Wales (2011: 287) says it denotes “a newly invented word”. From both delineations, neologism can be interpreted as a new meaning acquired by an existing word or expression. It results from the tension between what Osundare has to utter and the lexemes to employ in uttering it. In his crave to promote his unique vision; Osundare discovers that the lexemes that exist in the dictionary are already inefficient to transport the weight of his message. He, thus, starts to fashion new ones which serve to draw attention to the news story while also intensifying communicative impact (Adagnonyin, 1999). In fact, a close consideration of our corpus (see appendix) discloses that some words used were newly created. For example, neologism in *Songtime at Centre* (1991) is achieved through coinage where the lexical item *songtime* is derived from a combination of the nouns *song* and *time*. In the same vein, in *Wonder kids and superment* (1986), the neologism is derived from the fusion of the adjective *wonder* and the noun *kid*. Neologism, as used above, aids to foreground the headlines in order to underscore the import of the news story.

1.3.2 Acronym

Acronym is another stylistics device to be discussed. It is a technique of word construction by which lexemes are fashioned from the first letters of a group of word (Wales, 2011: 3). For example, in *The SFEM revolution*(1987), the acronym *SFEM* signifies Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market. Similarly, in *the real gains of SAP*(1989), the acronym *SAP* denotes Structural Adjustment Programme. Whereas ‘FIFA’ in *The FIFA magic* (1995) signifies Federation International Football Association, *NTA* as used in *NTA at 40*(2000) denotes Nigeria Television Authority. Acronyms are employed for reference purposes, as well as to maintain brevity in the headlines. This equally helps to minimize space.

1.3.3 Colloquialism and Deliberate Misspelling

Two other stylistics devices from which



Osundare draws from are colloquialism and deliberate misspelling of word. Colloquialism is seen in the expression *What's that degree worth?* (1987). Observe that the Wh question marker *what* and the verb *is* are contracted to form *What's*, an informal language feature employed to maintain informality. However, deliberate misspelling on the other hand is the conscious misspelling of a word, phrase or name for rhetorical purpose. This is frequently done by swapping a letter with another letter as in *Nigeria Errways* (2001), where Osundare employs *errways* instead of *airways*. The letters *Ai* in *Airways* are replaced with *Er*. This stylistic device, apart from redirecting focus to the misspelled word, is used to satirize Nigeria's poor aviation maintenance.

1.3.4 Idiomatic Expression

Idiomatic expressions provide an important resource for the configuration of the headlines. Idioms are words established by convention as having a connotation not "deducible from those of the individual words" (Douglas, 2004: 293). The following nominal expressions *Crocodile Tears* (1998), *A silver lining* (1994) as well as *Salt to injury* (1995) illustrate the use of idiomatic expression. Since readers are more likely to be interested in the only particular phrase or clause that is crafted with idiomatic expression, this stylistic feature is, thus, employed for rhetorical effects and also to provide imagery in order to enhance the meaning relayed in the news story (Okesipe and Okolo, 2013: 143).

1.3.5 Allusion

Allusion, in the words of Abrams (2009: 11), refers to a "passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place, or event, to another literary work or passage. Osundare uses this stylistic device in a great deal to enhance communicative value. For this reason, we shall be giving it some considerable attention. Some instances of the use of allusion in our corpus include: *The SFEM revolution* (1987), *The Real Gains of SAP* (1989), *June 12 and after* (1994), *A Parable Called Mandela* (1990), *Abacha's Legacy* (1999) and *Who is afraid of Biwott?* (1992). A close study of

these headlines shows that the references made are to reputable personalities and memorable events. For example, in *The SFEM Revolution*, reference is made to the Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market, a second official foreign exchange market that opened in September 1986 and was effective until middle of 1987. This is followed by the Structural Adjustment Programme in *The Real Gains of SAP*, an economic policy introduced by the government in 1986 to improve the wellbeing of Nigerians. In the same vein, the phrase *June 12* in *June 12 and after* refers to the first presidential election held on 12 June 1993 in Nigeria in which the result was a victory for Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola of the Social Democratic Party.

Whereas these headlines illustrate references made to events; reference were also made to persons. In *Who's Afraid of Biwott?* (1992), the reference made is to Nicolas Kipyator Kiprono Arap Biwott who was a Kenyan businessman, politician and philanthropist. Similarly, Nelson Mandela and Sani Abacha are equally referred to in *A Parable Called Mandela* (1990) and *Abacha's Legacy* (1999) respectively. Allusion, apart from helping to provide clues about the contents of the news story, is used to illustrate, expand upon or enhance the subject being referred.

1.3.6 Ambiguity

Ambiguity is lavishly exploited by Osundare in the headlines. Wales (2011: 16) defines an ambiguous expression as one "having more than one interpretation". Ambiguity can be syntactic or lexical. Syntactic ambiguity refers to a linguistic expression that has multiple structural interpretations while lexical ambiguity arises as a result of a lexical item having multiple meanings. Writers can exploit both types of ambiguity depending on the purpose they intend to achieve through their headlines. A close study of our corpus (see appendix) reveals Osundare's use of lexical ambiguity. The lexeme *hard* in *Hard water* (1988) constitutes ambiguity. The lexeme in that sentential context could imply: [a] *difficult to handle* [b] *without sympathy* and [c] *not afraid*. These three denotations are unrelated making the reader to wonder what is meant by the word *hard*.



Similarly, the lexeme *press* in *A Press in Chains* (1994) can be given the following multiple senses: [a] *an act of pressing* [b] *any apparatus for pressing* [c] *a printing press* [d] *newspapers or journalists* [e] *a crowd* [f] *to iron* and [g] *to insist on something*. The occurrence of *chains* in this headline serves to limit the meaning possibilities, which in turn, allows the reader to understand that the *press* being referred to by Osundare is option [e]. Ambiguity in *The spirit of January 85* (1990) is triggered off by the lexical item *spirit* which has the following denotations: [a] *animating or vitalizing* [b] *essence or force that motivates* [c] *a supernatural being* [d] *imaginary creature* [e] *soul* [f] *courage/determination* and [g] *mind or feelings*.

However, if the contextual parameters are brought to bear on the ambiguous lexeme, the meaning will undoubtedly narrow down to the last two denotations (that is, options [f] and [g]). Finally, the lexeme, *winds* in *Winds of revolution* (1986) is ambiguous because it has two distinct meanings such as [a] *air that moves quickly as a result of natural force* [b] *to wrap or twist something around*. In all these examples, context indicates which meaning is most likely in a given instance. Lexical ambiguity, as used above, is not meant to impede the meaning relayed but rather to capture interest as well as make the reader hold the different interpretations in mind and to give them equal serious meaningful value (Wales, 2011: 16).

Conclusion

Studies on Niyi Osundare's columns published in the print media have been conducted from different perspectives. This study has however distinctively investigated the stylistics devices in headlines of Osundare's columns in *Newswatch* in order to determine his style within the genre of newspaper reporting. The study has shown that headlines employ constructive language to relay their contents. Stylistic devices such as the nominal group, rank shifted clauses, neologism, acronym, alliteration, idioms, allusion, and ambiguity aid to foreground the message of the headlines, give pungency to the point raised, achieve an emphatic effect of meaning, capture attention as well as provide imagery in order to enhance the message relayed.

Headline writing involves lot creativity. It is this innovative utilisation of language that motivates and spurs readers to consume the contents in the news story. From our analyses and discussion, it is evident that the identified stylistic devices serve to grade and index the headlines in order to apprise the reader of the importance of the news story and whether they are meant for him/her. Overall, the identified stylistics devices function collaboratively to make the headlines informative, indicative and persuasive as validated by Van Dijk (1998) and Gittani (2005). This study adds to the literature on the study of the language used in Osundare's literary crafts within the genre of journalism and also provides a platform for understanding his journalistic style

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APPENDIX

Nominal Group Structure of the Selected Column Headlines

1. Parable from Koma (hq), 2. Scars of the Season 1(hq), 3. The SFEM Revolution (mh), 4. Names as Idioms (hq), 5. Deep in the Maddening Crowd (hq), 6. Europe's Dustbin (mh), 7. Not Mess Transit (mh), 8. Home-coming (h), 9. Requiem for a Cocoa Farm (hq), 10. The Real Gains of SAP (mhq), 11. Earth Days (mh), 12. The Real Abusers (mh), 13. The Right to Know (mhq), 14. Tale of Two Queues (hq), 15. The Fifa Magic (mh), 16. Nigeria's Image Problem (mh), 17. Angel in the Crowd (hq), 18. Lagos Rains (mh), 19. Crocodile Tears (mh), 20. The Evil that Men Do (mhq), 21. Dear Onyeka Onwenu (mh), 22. The Untouchable (mh), 23. Fuel Fires and After (mhq), 24. The Ogunbiyi Phenomenon (mh), 25. Readers' Tribunal (mh), 26. A Press in Chains (mhq), 27. The Talking Picture (mh), 28. Ants of the Hill (hq), 29. Songtime at the Centre (hq), 30. Untimely Eclipse (mh), 31. Soul on Sale (hq), 32. Wailing for Wilmort (hq), 33. A Titan for all Times (mhq), 34. Remembering Tukur (mh), 35. The Ajayi Phenomenon (mh), 36. The Spirit of January 85 (mhq), 37. A Parable Called Mandela (mhq), 38. Okara's Error (mh), 39. Toni Morrison in Madison (mhq), 40. Robeson Remembered (mh), 41. Song for Enahoro (hq), 42. Ige at 70 (hq), 43. Agony of Remembrance (hq), 44. Wonderkids and Supermen (hq), 45. Inaugural Lecture as Theatre (mhq), 46. The Other Minilla Thriller (mh), 47. Mayhem in May (hq), 48. What's that Degree Worth? (hq), 49. The Teacher and the Song (mhq), 50. Rhythms of Violence (hq), 51. A Silver Lining (mh), 52. The Distance of Power (mhq), 53. The Critic as a Scapegoat (mhq), 54. Once upon a Debt (hq), 55. No-Go Legislatures (mh), 56. A Nation Adrift (mh), 57. Rehoboam's Scorpion (mh), 58. Seasons of Blindness (hq), 59. The Limits of Opportunism (mhq), 60. Language virus (mh), 61. June 12 and after (mhq), 62. Matter of Principle (hq), 63. Mad Times (mh), 64. Limits of Eloquence (hq), 65. Twelve Hearty Cheers (mh), 66. Playing for Time (hq), 67. Salt to Injury (hq), 68. Abominations (h), 69. The Unthinkable (mh), 70. Abacha's Legacy (mh), 71. The Right Honourables (mh), 72. Limits of Demagoguery (hq), 73. Truth of my Politics (hq), 74. Winds of Revolution (hq), 75. Murders, Be not Proud (hq), 76. 60 Minutes in the Cockpit (mhq), 77. Basilica Yamoussoukro (mh), 78. Nigeria's Errways (mh), 79. Tears for my Country (hq), 80. New Year Gift (mh), 81. NTA at 40 (hq), 82. Where is your tie? (hq), 83. Hard water (mh), 84. Who's afraid of Biwott? (hq), 85. Leave the lawmakers alone (hq), 86. Matter of principle (hq).

Nominal Group Type	Frequency of Occurrence
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h	2
mh	34
mhq	17
hq	33

Contextualizing Power Dynamics in Dul Johnson's *Deeper into the Night* and Olusegun Adeniyi's *Power, Politics and Death*

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Abstract

This piece appraises the implication of power in selected Nigerian literatures. It is a comparative inspection of Dul Johnson's Deeper into the Night and Olusegun Adeniyi's Power, Politics and Death. The paper quizzes the validity of both literary and non-literary texts as parameters for expounding the complex relationship between aesthetic activities and the Nigerian context. This proposition proceeds on the assumption that Nigerian history provides the background and material basis upon which both artistic dimensions have been substantially apprehended by these writers. Given these considerations, the study employs New Historicism, one of Poststructuralist theory, as a paradigm for probing both writers' works, especially as it facilitates the foregrounding of such critical parameters as power, resistance, hegemony, as well as subversion, fragmentation to name a few and how these concerns are interlaced in the experiences of the Nigerian people. In this context, through the tenets of the theory, both texts have been deployed within a larger discursive terrain to establish how they constitute arty commentaries on the specific and general dimensions of the Nigerian space. This paper is at once a contention that is firmly drawn in New Historicist discourse, especially given that the boundaries between the literary and the non-literary have been dissolved and as such, both are substantially implicated in each other. Thus, by undertaking a trope in the theory, this study underscores that the chosen literary text (Dul Johnson's Deeper into the Night) exist as associate material of coordinate relevance to the non-literary text (Olusegun Adeniyi's Power, Politics and Death). It is in the fabric of these texts therefore that better kaleidoscopes rooted in Nigeria are fostered.

Introduction

This exploration is a comparative scrutiny of Dul Johnson's and Olusegun Adeniyi's interpretations of the many models of power, its dynamics and how these enthrallments have transformed into an overall narrative for the Nigerian people. Dul Johnson's *Deeper into the Night* and Olusegun Adeniyi's *Power, Politics and Death*, trickle deep into the fabric of Nigerian history to encapsulate the many significant dimensions of power in the society and their implications within the contemporary Nigerian existence. The aesthetic writings of these writers anchor inspiration from the series of crises, militancy and human carnages across the country, especially those relating to Plateau State, Niger Delta and the like. *Deeper into the Night* and *Power, Politics and Death* are these writers' attempts to revision one of Nigeria's most vexing and complicated social problems. By so doing, Johnson and Adeniyi reconstruct vital historical engagements in the nation and the trajectories

such incidents have generated within the landmark of Nigeria's socio-cultural, religious and political subsistence.

Articulating the Vertical Model of Power and the Nigerian Experience

In his genealogy of power, Foucault describes the vertical dimension of power as something possessed by individuals of a specific class (in most political theory), with one person at the apex, operating via negative sanctions. How the elites wield power within and outside its own terrain is the concern of this dimension. From a New Historicist perspective, Heller (1996) summarizes Foucault's vertical vintage of power by glancing at how individuals within a selected class possess and exercise control through the various institutions of government. Invariably, this model centers in one part, how the elites are implicated within the terrain of power and in another part, how the weak are consciously excluded from power in the society. This is possible given that all the various economic,



political and other relevant institutions are fashioned within a socio-political space to further the strength and exercise of influence by the dominant class. Again, this purview is not far off Antonio Gramsci's Ideological State Apparatus (IDA) and how they are deployed to convey domination by those within the terrain of power. This brand of power is usually repressive in a New Historicist sense. From the above, Johnson's perspective on power is thus conceptualized from a perpendicular dimension with the view to re-historicize the various experiences that have characterized the post-independence Nigerian reality on the one hand, and with the intention of probing them on another hand. To a great extent, *Deeper into the Night* is concerned with the conundrums of political power, its strategies and how the dominant group within Nigeria's political space determines and negotiates power. It is also concerned with the way the Nigerian socio-political space is constituted by the discourse of power.

Johnson begins chapter one of *Deeper into the Night* by establishing the operations of power, particularly from the model of sovereignty. He depicts political power from the vertical angle which Foucault refers to as the "macro politics of power" and its implication within the context of a fictional community in the novel. From the vertical or the macro dimension of control, Johnson portrays the complex power relations within the political class. This vista is attained through the narrative voice of Nimfa and Alhaji Dampara Danmatsi. Nimfa who had shown open interest in power, is obsessed about occupying the leadership void in Fatim now Gwangtim, renamed after his father, who had turned down the people's request to serve in the capacity of a modern leader for the community. Nimfa's desperation to become Gwangtim's modern leader is evident even before the death of his father.

Nimfa was quite the opposite. Yet, he was desperate to become a chief, even before his father's death. In his ailing days, Gwangtim had asked Nimfa to oversee the affairs of the community. Nimfa went about everything like a

monarch. A few people complained to his father and Nimfa's close friends told him about it. . . Old Gwangtim had called the elders and told them to make Butko the leader of the community immediately. The community waited for this to happen, but it did not. The elders seemed incapable of going against Nimfa's whims. (11-63).

Against all odds; against his father's choice of a leader for Gwangtim people, Nimfa becomes the ruler of the land. With the attainment of his obsessed goal, Nimfa begins to broker power like a dictator. Using state apparatus to his gains, he becomes one person at the apex operating with negative sanctions. He wields power with a tyrannical and totalitarian disposition. Nimfa's control of power describes the Foucauldian stance on the vertical dimension of power. To Foucault, power in a Marxist sense is limited to a few people (Jessop 2014:5). In other words, there is a limited amount of power in the society which can only be held by one person or a group at a time. Thus, the person or group always exercises power within the confines of the ruling class. In this respect, Foucault's argument is fashioned on the principle that the person wielding power exercises it to subvert and exploit the masses. It is on the basis of this, that the people of Gwangtim expressed their disdain and disenchantment for Nimfa's brand of leadership. While Nimfa is busy orchestrating power in the way he knows best, Alhaji Dampara Danmatsi, the Emir of Karara, schemes a plan to annex Gwangtim as part of his new territory. For "he had watched the village grow from a few huts to over one thousand. As it grew, so did his interest, until interest became obsession. Then, he had asked to see the "head" (11). This is a statement on the kind of contriving of power and tussles obtainable within the political class in Nigeria.

To accomplish the above realization, Alhaji Danmatsi decides to deviously court Nimfa's attention. He increases his visit to Nimfa's palace often bringing with him beautiful and rare gifts. Nimfa views with suspicion Alhaji Danmatsi's gifts to him. Even though he accepts



a few of the gifts, he turns down Alhaji Danmatsi's expensive Turkey mats. To Nimfa, the mat is a symbolic form of hegemony and subversion. To him, it is Alhaji Danmatsi's subtle attempt to woo him into a kind of submission to his wimps and caprices. Nimfa senses from the outset that the mats were a subtle kind of domination that is hegemonic and tries to reject it. For this reason, Alhaji Danmatsi becomes livid and irked. His is irritated for "Nimfa accepted all the gifts, but rejected the prayer mats, to Alhaji's shock and embarrassment. Alhaji Danmatsi felt irritated. His pride was badly hurt"(11 - 12). At this level, Johnson explores how the dominant class negotiates power in Nigeria. In short, the writer sees power as sovereignty. He is interested in the kind of power that occurs within the confines of those at its echelon. In other words, Johnson examines a centralized kind of power and its consequences for the dominant class in Nigeria. For Johnson, power in this sense is possessed or can be possessed by a few people.

In view of this, Johnson confines to Gramsci's state apparatus and its internal mechanisms when he furthered the experiences of the duo in the novel. Using the instruments of the state, Alhaji Danmatsi begins to wax in political strength. For:

With no known root in the land, Alhaji Danmatsi had grown steadily in power and influence. Local chiefs bowed to him, and many literarily worshipped him. His influence with the government had also increased overtime, to the extent that he could threaten to remove a local chief from office at will, if the chief did not do as he wanted (12).

Alhaji Danmatsi's continuous political growth and relevance within Gwangtim community were inspired by his enormous wealth. His strive for power along personal interest paved way for his popularity to the extent that people in the community began to use his "connections" in government and state level. They saw him as a man who wielded so much weight that he moved so freely through the villages of the land as if he was an ancestor spirit. More so, with time "even

the chiefs stopped grumbling and were willing to yield to his authority over them" (13). How the elites, Nimfa and Alhaji Danmatsi, acquire power and the consensual submission of the very people who are dominated is a phenomenon Gramsci (1971) refers to as "hegemony" (30). Hegemony in this sense operates in a way that the dominated consciously and unconsciously acts in accordance to the dictates of the dominant. Thus, Johnson's exploration of Marxist model of power that is predominantly anchored on class domination is an attempt by the writer to show how this dimension of power can be repressive. Johnson embodies in these narrative voices how power operates through representation by law. It is no wonder therefore, to forge the frontiers of power, Alhaji Danmatsi "a man whom Nimfa had crushed not long before, was the same man to whom Nimfa had to seek support for his ambition" (13). The interplay of power between Nimfa and Alhaji Danmatsi in Gwangtim and the twist associated with their relationship are representative of the kind of intrigues and complications enmeshed in the political process and the political landscape of Nigeria.

These intrigues, subtle power play, power tussle and power shifts within the circle of the elites can also be situated within Olusegun Adeniyi's *Power, Politics and Death* which is the writer's front-row account of Nigeria under late president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. The text is an account of the political drama in Nigeria. Such drama within Nigeria political terrain is what Abubakar Aliyu Lima (2019) refers to as "drama staged in the mighty name of partisan politics". Again, such theatrics by some dramatist personas on the stage of absurdity is better branded as "political tragic-comedy" in Liman's words. Thus, power dichotomy is succinctly apprehended in the power struggle between Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and Vice President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Given the tension generated in the Nigerian polity by Yar'Adua's long absence from the country on the occasion of ill-health and subsequent treatment abroad, it was much speculated that a "leadership vacuum" had been created.

With the foregoing, Vice President



Jonathan's political antics to clutch political power became visibly written on the wall. The judicial maneuverings to compel President Yar'Adua to transmit a written declaration to the National Assembly under section sections 5(1) and 148(1) of the Nigerian constitution to enable him, Jonathan, exercise the executive powers vested in the president in the absence of the president became the order of the day. Adeniyi recounts Jonathan's attempts to negotiate a space within power in the absence of his boss, President Yar'Adua, when he got a court pronouncement that the VP could in fact act for the president without any letter from the president. To Adeniyi, it "didn't require any investigation to ascertain the brains behind this whole judicial maneuverings" (199). Clearly, Adeniyi interrogates how power is aspected within the terrain of sovereignty. The capacity of the elites in Nigeria to negotiate control within the space marks the very condition of power. In fact, Greenblatt observes that "power in this context is the attempt by the dominant order to generate subversion for its own use" (8). In other words, Adeniyi's *Power, Politics and Death* is an exploration of how the ruling class in Nigeria subverts and maintains control of power in the society.

It is worthy to note, that Jonathan like Alhaji Danmatsi in Johnson's *Deeper into the Night*, began to grow steadily in power and influence once President Yar'Adua was away for treatment in Saudi Arabia. Many pro-Jonathan rallied around him with deliberate political move to install him as president. This situation was vividly captured by Adeniyi when he averred that "some 41 politicians led by a former President of the Senate, Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, and his deputy, Senator Ibrahim Mantu, called on Yar'Adua to urgently transmit a letter of his incapacitation to the National Assembly to salvage the nation's democracy from danger" (212). The position of the pro-Jonathan group was what John Campbell (2010) described as "elite maneuvering and bargaining"(24), which has become part and parcel of Nigeria's political culture.

In a similar fashion, President Yar'Adua

like Nimfa in Johnson's *Deeper into the Night* viewed with suspicion Jonathan's political move. It is for this reason that the President, his handlers and the pro-Yar'Adua group successfully resisted the idea of the pro-Jonathan group to send a delegation to Saudi Arabia to visit Yar'Adua as well as the motion to invite the CPP Dr. Salisu Banye to come home to brief the Senate on Yar'Adua's condition. Senate President Mark, a pro-Yar'Adua, adeptly ensured that the motion to visit Yar'Adua did not see the light of day. In short, he practically in Adeniyi's words "staved off attempts by some senators citing constitutional points of orders to raise Section 143 (on impeachment for gross misconduct of being away from his duty post for more than 42 days) and 144 (on incapacitation)" (212). By this "elite maneuvering" the Senate President, David Mark, was biding time to truncate Vice President Jonathan's ambition of becoming the president in absence of President Yar'Adua. From the foregoing, Adeniyi like Johnson interrogates the tension associable with the complicated structure of power in Nigeria. The writer is obviously in the know of what Greenblatt succinctly (1982) refers to as the "contradictions within the structure of power" (87). He therefore describes the dominant class in Nigeria as one that is always on the verge of negotiating and exercising power.

Articulating the Horizontal Model of Power and the Nigerian Experience

While there is a kind of power that functions within the vertical terrain, there is yet another that operates within the horizontal. By horizontal model of power, Foucault (1982) refers to the kind of power that can be located within the space of the weak or the dominated in the society. This brand of power is concerned with how the voiceless in the society negotiate and use power especially within their space. In other words, how the powerless negotiate a space within domination is the core of the horizontal vintage of power. On this view, Johnson's *Deeper into the Night* and Adeniyi's *Power, Politics and Death* are the writers' exploration of the New Historicist horizontal model of power, which Foucault refers to as the "micro-politics of



power” (9). These artistic works engage a broader dimension of power beyond the vertical model and the complex relationship that is embedded in it. The texts resort to the horizontal or micro dimension of power to contend that power is not always implicated only in the terrain of sovereignty instead power is distributed throughout social relations.

Schematically, Foucault (1975) contends that “power is a dispersed capillary woven into the fabric of the entire social order” (136). Foucault’s emphasis here is that power within the Nigerian context is expressed through different channels and not necessarily limited to the dominant political class only. In essence, *Deeper into the Night* and *Power, Politics and Death* are Johnson’s and Adeniyi’s attempts at interrogating the different layers of power beyond the boundaries of power as sovereignty, to something more amorphous. By doing so, the writers encapsulate within their works instructive attempts to contest and re-conceptualize the notion of power and how this purview facilitates an understanding of the many influences that have contributed in determining Nigeria’s democratic existence. The texts are therefore, a symbolic affirmation of the complex nature of power, its complexities, and its dynamics and how all these are conveyed in the characters the writer weave in their works.

In *Deeper into the Night*, Johnson draws from the multi-faceted experiences and activities of Mamzhi and the vigilante group he formed in Gwangtim to illustrate how power is always in circulation throughout social relations. Mamzhi who returned from Jos had witnessed series of violence meted out on people in the guise of ethnic cleansing and had also “learnt many things from his involvement in the crisis in Jos, from tactics to hardware manufacture” (159). He brings to Gwangtim his knowledge and experience to establish deadly vigilante groups known to the community as “The Group” a more dangerous arm of the mother group popularly known as “Salvation Army” and a sister group also known as the “Smash Group”. Initially, the responsibility of these vigilante groups was to ward off invaders and any form of security threat

to the community. Mamzhi and the members of these individual groups save Gwangtim on different occasions of grave crises to great admiration. His image “loomed over every house like a ghost. He was feared, respected and worshipped”(142). Gradually, admiration turns into hero-worship by the villagers who were blind to the growing vices that Mamzhi and his members pick with their increasing acquired power. Mamzhi believes that;

These things that are happening are just the beginning. From all indications there will be more wars. Don’t forget that I returned from the city not too long ago. I saw things, and I heard things in the city. I saw plain, naked wickedness; I saw brutality against the meek and weak. There are wicked people around, and we must counter wickedness with greater wickedness, if we must survive. Violence begets violence, and force must be met with greater force.

That is my philosophy (157)

Mamzhi and his group’s philosophy negate the values of the land he claims to protect. Through the mechanisms of The Group, the Salvation Army and the Smash Group, he becomes excessively obsessed with power and becomes even more powerful than Nimfa, the leader of Gwangtim community. He begins to violate the norms and traditions of the land along with his members to meet his whims. Mamzhi’s acquisition and expression of power (as an ordinary citizen of Gwangtim) along with The Group, the Salvation Army and the Smash Group, is in consonance with what Foucault refers to as how the dominated breaks rules and finds a niche somewhere within power. This tendency exemplified in the activities of Mamzhi and his group members ushered room for the havoc, carnage and unavoidable schisms that followed subsequently in the novel.

On this breath, The Group along with its sister bodies “had preceded the police and its strength and power was more recognized. In fact, it was as if there was no police at all. The police had therefore, come to fear them as they feared



armed robbers” (167). Mamzhi like the vigilante groups enjoys immeasurable popularity and unbridled control in the land. He begins to take decisions for the community without consulting with the elders and leaders of the land. His blatant disregard for the laws of his people and The Group’s subsequent willful massacre committed on the indigenous people of Gwangtim in the name of sanitizing the land of saboteurs and traitors trigger annoyance in the hearts of the people as they begin to question their growing power and domination. In short, Gwangtim people notice the destructive nature of the activities of Mamzhi, The Group, the Salvation Army and the Smash Group. For they have become “a danger to Gwangtim” (194). Going by this, Mamzhi and his group’s popularity, power and the influence they compel on the police authenticate Foucault’s notion of the centripetal relationship within the structure of power. To Johnson, even the masses have power and can sometimes use it negatively. For this reason, the dynamic relationship within the nature of power is one that is sometimes horizontal and vertical at the same time. This position is what Greenblatt (1982) considers as “the push and pull” within the structure of power or the binary oppositions within the nature of power.

While the suggestions to curb the excesses of Mamzhi and the groups are deliberated upon by the leaders of Gwangtim, some villagers suggested other serious means to nip the powers of Mamzhi, The Group, the Salvation Army and the Smash Group in the bud. In the face of these deliberations, an internal friction begins to play out within the vigilante groups that Mamzhi himself had formed. Laknap who is Mamzhi’s deputy begins to probe Mamzhi’s totalitarian and despotic brand of leadership within the group. Laknap created a faction within the groups with the likes of Binkur, Karnap, and Nanzhi in his support. With this, the relationship within the groups has been fractured.

The emergence of a new faction within the “The Group” as formed by Laknap is a testament to the fact that power is not a reserve of a person or a political class. Power is not static; instead, power is fluid and always in circulation

within the society. Also, the internal crisis within the different vigilante groups above highlights the peak of ideational and philosophical contests occasioned by the quest to acquire and exercise power by the dominated. This instance typifies what Greenblatt (1982) describes as the interplay of power within the class of the powerless. From a New Historicist angle, the sudden schism between Mamzhi and his group members as Laknap, Binkur, Karnap and Nanzhi essentially defines the conflicting character of power and how the voiceless acquire a voice by negotiating a space within domination.

Such power dynamics and its circulation can also be located within the premise of the debates generated in Olusegun Adeniyi’s *Power, Politics and Death*. The text is the writer’s attempt at probing the problematic of militancy in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. In consonance with Johnson’s perspective on the horizontal model of power, Adeniyi argues that power in Nigeria is also relational. In other words, within this dimension, power in Nigeria consists primarily not of something a person has but rather power is a matter of what people do, subsisting in their interactions with other people. Adeniyi captures this in the activities of a popular Niger Delta militant known as Henry Okah and the group he founded known as Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

Henry Okah’s militant activities in this area were initially believed to be a form of protest over the injustices of the Nigerian state against the Niger Delta region. Okah’s MEND claimed it was fighting for a fair share of oil revenue for the residents of the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Gradually this agitation metamorphosed into criminality. Just like Mamzhi in Johnson’s *Deeper into the Night*, Okah began to act against the cause for which his militant group and the like purportedly stood for. Adeniyi avers that: “Okah was already on the security agencies’ wanted list following his alleged involvement in massive theft of arms and ammunitions from the Nigerian Army, whose officers were eager to apprehend him” (63). With his surging popularity and power, Okah had engaged the services of some Nigerian soldiers to supply to him stolen



arms and ammunitions to facilitate kidnappings, hostages and attacks on oil installations in that region. Spear heading the foregoing activities of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) were Henry Okah, the leader of this group alongside his young brothers Charles Okah and Bowei Okah under his chain of command. Within MEND were other factions led by Tompolo, Solomon Ndigbera alias Osama Bin Laden, Wisdom Okorosa and Asari Dokubo who renamed his own faction as Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and subsequently became its leader. In view of this, the groups witnessed spin-offs by radicals who claim they are agitating for independence for the region. The preceding is descriptive of Adeniyi's conviction on how power is completely ubiquitous to social networks. In clear terms, the writer is saying that the masses in Nigeria are as much products of power as they are wielders of it.

Like its sister groups, MEND became a thorn on the nation's flesh. In a show of strength and counter-strength, reports submitted by late Lt. Gen. Luka Yusuf to investigate huge theft of arms at 1 Base Ordnance Depot in Kaduna (1 BODK), revealed that Henry Okah was:

the main source of over 2000 G3 rifles, 600 AK47s and about 40 GPMGs and 2 rocket launchers that were returned to River State government. In fact, Sonny Bowei Okah admitted that he moved 1,800G3 rifles from the OSD for this exchange...The presidency, the SSS and the military have been seriously infiltrated by the militants of Niger Delta. This is a fact gathered from Sonny Bowei Okah and other civilian suspects..." (Adeniyi 2011:64).

From this submission, Henry Okah was not acting alone. His sudden acquisition of military strength and power was aided by insiders within an institution of government responsible for the security of lives and properties of the Nigerian people.

Fundamentally, the foregoing report detailed how arms and ammunitions belonging to the Nigerian Army were sold to some militants,

with the name of Henry Okah and his brother, Charles Okah featuring prominently. One of the accomplices responsible for the supply of such weaponry to the Okahs was the son of a retired Major whose last unit before retirement was 1BODK, where he was quartermaster. This retired major was the conduit for the initial set of weapons sold to the people who were stoking the Niger Delta crisis. Here, Adeniyi debunks the Gramscian notion of power as sovereignty, to describe how power does not operate only within a centralized source but how it flows from the bottom to the top. This relationship between Henry Okah, his brothers, the retired major and his accomplices is what New Historicism dubs as the centripetal relationship of push and pull within the structure of power. To a large extent, the writer depicts how the horizontal and vertical models of power are implicated in each other. He looks at power dynamics at the micro level and how they are interlaced at the macro level.

Largely, Henry Okah began to wield more power and influence on the Nigerian military because subsequent events revealed how more Nigerian soldiers became entangled in the shady business such that "some of the soldiers involved in the theft of weapons actually escorted the stolen arms in uniforms to their destination in Niger Delta" (Adeniyi 2011:63). The theft was staggering to say the least and the crime was properly organized that the investigating team could hardly establish the exact amount of arms stolen due to deliberate false accounting and destruction of stock cards by the perpetrators. In fact, in a show of shame, the major and his accomplices introduced a crafty system which involved daubing the body of the truck containing the weapons with human waste to ward off security men who might want to examine it out of curiosity and suspicion. In this respect, Henry Okah's activities with the Nigerian military are symbolic of the writer's conviction that power is de-centered and plural. The writer appropriates the Foucauldian notion of how power is diffused throughout the social order, constituting individual subjectivities, colonizing the body itself, utilizing its forces while inducing obedience and conformity, to describe how one



man especially from a dominated class, could subject an institution of government to his whims.

Conclusion

Taken overall, *Deeper into the Night* and *Power, Politics and Death* are Johnson's and Adeniyi's ways of focusing on the different histories on power in Nigeria especially from the New Historicist perspective. The juxtaposition of these texts (literary and non-literary) clearly justifies the New Historicist principle that a work of art is not an autonomous body of fixed meaning that should be read in isolation, but represents a diversity of dissonant voices and unresolved conflicts that must be interrogated in relation to other cultural texts (Gallager 2000:5). In a Greenblattian sense, these writers are saying that the cultural and political space in Nigeria are made of divergent groups and as such the experiences of the group at the margins are just as relevant as those of others at the center. For this

reason, these writers deliberately create characters that are symbolic in their depiction of the many layers of power, mainly as found within the post independence Nigeria. Thus, the concurrent reading of *Deeper into the Night* and *Power, Politics and Death* facilitates both writers' attempts at challenging the conventional wisdom on the one dimensional nature of power as found in the circle. Through the New Historicist tenet of co-texting, both writers works attempt to correct the impression that power within the Nigerian polity deals simply with sovereignty and as such it is one dimensional. To these writers, such misconception has contributed in frustrating the understanding of Nigeria's democratic space. To this end, they argue that even though the dominant class in Nigeria negotiates power within its structures, the dominated also negotiate and use power good or bad.

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The Relevance of Language and Literature in National Integration and Development

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Abstract

Language is a means through which human beings express themselves, understand one another, execute programs and projects as well as create problems and equally solve them. The written form of language known as literature helps concretize these expressions and experiences. This study views language and literature as viable instruments for conflict resolution, promotion of unity and oneness among the people and the enhancement of national development at all levels; educationally, politically, economically, socially and culturally. The study employed the survey method and data was sourced through oral interview and written documents. The study posits that, harnessing the skills and resources of language and literature will enhance the proper organization of the human society, thus, eliminating conflicts and other associative prejudices. The study recommends that, individuals and the government should work harmoniously to develop the indigenous languages for onward integration and development of the nation.

Keywords: language, literature, integration, development, conflict resolution

1.1 Introduction

The possession of language by man more than any other attribute, defines the human nature. "Language is at the centre of all things human". It is by means of language that people talk, think, read, write and listen. Language is part of the social structure of our communities; it forges the emotional bond between people; it's the vehicle for literature and poetry. "Language is not part of us; language defines us... it is difficult to imagine much significant social, intellectual or artistic activity taking place without the opportunities for communication offered by language" (O'Grady, Archibald and Katamba, 2011:1).

The integral nature of language in the life of man and his affairs point to the fact, that language represents the force with which the wheels of life are driven. "We live in a world of words" and by words man associates, creates, organizes, mobilizes and advances whatever course he sets his mind on. Thus, the basis for significant advancement in achieving unity and development in the human society is a viable language and vibrant literature. To emphasize the fact that language and its equivalence literature are viable tools in national integration and development is a restatement. Examples abound, of developed nations like Russia, China, Japan, USA etc., whose national language is one of their

very own indigenous language and by it the nation stands developed today.

It is regrettable that the 21st century has caught up with Nigeria still tagged an underdeveloped nation. It is surprising that the nation seems to have everything in place; the man power and natural resources yet no significant progress is recorded. It is sad to note that, citizens of the country have not helped themselves or have the leaders done any better. The country is over fifty years old yet there have been no significant changes in its social, political, educational and technological sectors. The little changes effected by well-meaning citizens are destroyed by corruption and the incessant communal, political and religious crisis that have bedevilled the country for so long.

It is common for a nation that has refused to develop to be saddled with disgruntled citizens who are ready to do whatever it takes to survive because they lack basic necessities of life. Nigeria has over 60% of such crop of citizens. In the midst of such, there cannot be peace or the thought for any reasonable development. It then calls for the nation to have a rethink, do a retracing of steps back to where we lost it. So that corrective measures can be employed to right the wrongs and thus, follow the right path. The nation has to decide with determination to shake off the tag 'underdeveloped nation' to seek to



attain the heights other developed nations have attained. This can only be achieved through persistently educating the citizens for a change of attitude about themselves and their nation. This is where the instrument of language and literature is most useful.

It is through language oral or written that citizens are taught to know, that the difference between developed and underdeveloped nations is not the age of the nation, not dependent on availability of natural resources, not how intellectually sound they are, not their race or colour but the difference is the attitude of the people, moulded for many years by education and culture which is transmitted through language. In other words, people's attitudes are moulded by teaching them the principles of life such as: ethics, integrity, responsibility, determination, love for work, respect for laws, regulations, life etc., when such are imbibed in the lives of citizens, which is possible majorly through language, unity and development can be achieved.

This paper is an attempt to reiterate the relevance of language and literature in achieving the kind of unity, cohesion and development that Nigeria seeks; and not just any language or literature, but the people's indigenous language and literature which are capable of expressing their culture, norms, values and beliefs and predisposes to them certain chances of interpretation. The fact about language and literature in nation building may be obvious but the centrality and relevance of its role may be lost to a people who have an alternative, (English in the case of Nigeria) but which obviously has not attained the nation any plausible height, hence, the need to advocate for the development of our indigenous languages for onward integration and development of the nation.

1.2 Conceptual Review

1.2.1 Language

Language is a "purely non- instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced vocal symbols" (Sapir, 1921: 8). It is a vehicle for cultural transmission. According to Engholm (1965: 15) "language is a key to the heart of a people, if we lose the key, we lose the people. If

we treasure the key and keep it safe, it will unlock the door to untold riches." These riches can be wealth, affluence, knowledge etc., thus, bringing about national development. Olaoye (2013: 748) sees language as "an index of identity which serves as a repository of a people's culture, industry and exploits". Language is the concrete act of speaking, writing and signing.

Language is the only creative property unique to human beings. It is the only road to thinking (Sapir, 1921) which makes human society possible. According to Akindele and Adegbite (2005), it is as a vehicle of culture that language functions as an instrument of human development. Thus, a discussion on national integration and development incorporate language and other cultural resources such as politics, social life, economics, education, science and technology, arts and music (literature). Indigenous languages are treasures of culture and self-identity (Olaoye 2013).

1.2.2 Literature

Literature in a broad sense means compositions that tell stories, dramatize situations, express emotions and analyse and advocate ideas (Edgar and Henry, 1986). It deals with all forms of written productions and oral performances with artistic or intellectual value. It involves all forms of linguistic documentations and communicative artistic performances.

Literature and language are absolutely inseparable. They have a mother daughter relationship where language is the mother and literature is the female offspring. Literature, its existence and functionality therefore depends solidly on language. It uses language to make informative or educational documentations, to dramatize events/situations, express emotions or ideas etc.

1.2.3 National Integration

National integration is the awareness of a common identity among the citizens of a country. It means that though we belong to different castes, religions, regions and speak different languages; we recognise the fact that we are all one. This is important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation. Alexandre, (1968) as cited in Bamgbose (1991:10) opines, "national



integration consist of creating or strengthening within the borders of a country a collective sentiment of belonging together irrespective of individual or subgroup differences". National integration therefore, is the unity and oneness desired and worked for by members of a community, who happens to be coexisting as a result of amalgamation.

1.2.4 National development

National development is a gradual and advanced improvement through progressive changes in the socio-political life of a nation. It is the growth of the nation in terms of internal cohesion, integration, unity, economic well-being, mass participation in the government and educational growth (Olaoye, 2013:748). Such development can be educational, social, political, cultural etc. National development can also be explained as the improvement of national institutions towards the standardization or the betterment of the citizen's life, situations or conditions.

According to Bamgbose (1991:36) "national development is usually described in terms of economic growth, attainment of economic targets, growth rate, increase in Gross National Products (GNP) or Gross Domestic Product (GDP), rise in per capita income, etc". Thus, national development involves a constant and consistent growth towards a complete transformation of every sector of the nation; the economy, social, political, science and technology and education in order to meet the nation's needs and demands.

1.3 Methodology

The study adopted the survey method. Data was sourced through interviews and most importantly documented sources. Respondents were randomly picked from Makurdi town and interviewed. This was for the purpose of eliciting their opinion on whether or not language and literature is relevant to national integration and development. Findings are explained below.

1.4 Literature Review

1.4.1 The Relevance of Language to National Integration and Development

Language as a human means of communication and interaction plays a significant

and pivotal role in national integration and development. As earlier noted, national integration and development are significant changes for the better in the lives of both the citizen and his nation. It is the awareness of a common identity among the citizens of a country that engineers them to work harmoniously with unity of purpose for the improvement of their status as well as that of the nation. It is a feat achieved by conscious determination and hard work through the instrumental help of language.

Language being a potent vehicle of transmitting culture, norms, values and beliefs from generation to generation remains a central factor in determining the overall status of a nation. It is a human element that fosters unity, understanding and development. It is through language that people socialise, foster emotional ties, organise their thoughts, share ideas and mobilise others to chart a course of action.

For any significant advancement to occur in any life or sector of the nation for instance, the economic sector of the nation depends on innovations which are conceived by man through the enabling presence of language. Without the possession of language, man will lack the ability to think and formulate new plans of action; have no means of disseminating neither this knowledge to others nor how to collaborate with them for better success.

Likewise, in the educational sector, knowledge is acquired and taught by means of language. Without language it will be near impossible to acquire knowledge and this will hamper progress and development. The innovations in science and technology whether encoded in complex mathematical symbols, abbreviated jargons, formulas or highly complex sentences depend on language to make sense.

It then holds that, the most basic and valuable possession of man is language because so much of human existence depends on it. With language, man has the capacity for dealing with changes in the environment, to organize his society and face other various emergencies of life. It is arguable that for any nation to make progress or thrive, its science and technology must be well developed. One of the means to



achieve this is through language, in which the concepts are expressed, and not just any language but that which is capable and acceptable by all in the administration and running of the nation's affairs (Yusuf, 2012:898).

In a country like Nigeria where there is high degree of linguistic diversity; there is always a need for the adoption of a linguistic strategy to enhance communicative interaction among the people as well as foster development. Such strategies include: linguistic assimilation, linguistic pluralism, vernacularization and internationalism.

Linguistic assimilation is the belief that everyone regardless of origin should learn the dominant language of the society. Examples can be cited of French in France, English in United States of America etc. Linguistic pluralism is the recognition of more than one language in a society. It can be total (absolute) or partial so that all or only some aspects of life can be conducted in each of the more than one language society. This kind of linguistic strategy takes place in countries like Belgium, Canada etc. Vernacularization is the restoration or elaboration of an indigenous language such as; Bahasa Indonesia in Indonesia, Hebrew in Israel etc. Internationalism on the other hand is the adoption of a non-indigenous language of wider communication as a national language. Examples are English in Nigeria and French in Côte-d'ivoire etc.

Whichever of the above strategies a country adopts, the main essence is to bring the diverse ethnic groups together for the execution of national goals and objectives. However, taking a cue from what obtains in the developed nations like Russia, Japan, China, USA etc., where normal daily routines, including research and development are carried out in their own language as well as all their innovations and technological breakthroughs codified and encoded in their national language; it thus, suggests that, "a nation is best developed by the way the language that best portrays its ideology is used, that language serves as a medium for expression of the entity it represents" (Emeka-Nwobia, 2015:114).

Language is undoubtedly one of the most powerful tools God has given to man. With language man finds his identity, socialises, mobilize his thoughts and people around him to achieve set goals. These thoughts, ideas, experiences are preserved through literature both orally and written and bequeathed to the younger generation.

1.4.2 The Relevance of Literature to National Integration and Development

Literature encompasses all documented records ranging from compositions that tell stories, dramatize situations, express emotions, analyse and advocate ideas to more formal documented records. It involves all forms of linguistic documentations and communicative artistic performance. Literature as an equivalence of language is essentially important to national integration and development. It uses language to reflect or mirror the society, sometimes with humorous and satirical words, or expressions, actions or performances. This helps to reveal societal ills and enhances correction. Olaoye (2013:751) agrees that,

Literature through language warns people of dangerous and anti-social practices, ridicules people of mean and despicable character and criticizes people's evil deeds. Literature in form of good poetry, songs and music especially those philosophical ones which extol good virtues and deride ignoble courses or actions are capable of correcting societal ills.

Literature helps in developing a nation through information, education and the transfer of cherished cultural and traditional beliefs and philosophies from generation to generation. Literature helps us to grow both, personally and intellectually. It stretches our minds and develops our imaginations which by extension help in building our nation. It increases our understanding and enlarges our power of sympathy. It links us to the cultural and religious world of which we are a part.

Through our cumulative experiences in reading, literature shapes our goals and values by clarifying our own identities- both positively



through the acceptance of the admirable in human beings and negatively though the rejection of the sinister. It enables us to develop perspectives on events occurring both locally and globally, and thereby, gives us understanding and control. It is one of the shaping influences of life that makes us human (Edgar and Henry, 1986).

By Olaoye's submission, literature helps educate and form the character of people, thereby making them better citizens and better positioned to chat good courses in the society. In a similar vein, Edgar and Henry concur that, the enlightenment literature avails to people widens the scope of their perception and enables deeper understanding of events, a bases for national integration and development to thrive.

1.4.3 Resolving Conflicts for better integration Through Language

Conflict is a clash or disagreement that is often violent between two opposing individuals or groups. Conflict is inevitable in a situation where diverse ethnic groups coexist. In such a situation, there is bound to be friction, suspicion, disharmony and clash of interest among members of the community. Language and literature can as well be used to resolve such conflicts between groups and bring about national integration, unity, harmony and development.

Language as attests by Jija, (2012:112) "has the characteristics of a double edged sword especially in circumstances of crisis. He quoted Orjime (2002:56) as observing that, the misappropriation of language is a sure way of bringing about disharmony and by extension, underdevelopment but when carefully and democratically used, language brings about cooperation which begets development.

Ironically, conflict brings people together and the resolution of the conflict is done through dialogue with the use of language. As the people interact to find basis for compromise, language is the means of interaction, and whatever resolutions arrived at, such, are maintained, sustained and disseminated to others through language. In essence, every developmental achievement by a people and their nation revolves round the use of language.

1.5 Findings

Judging from the responses of respondents and documented sources consulted, it is clear that, human beings are associative, social and interactive animals and hence their being together becomes fruitless whenever there is no common understandable medium of association or interaction. In such cases there is no hope for meaningful growth and development since there is lack of exchange of ideas, knowledge etc. This can be biblically exemplified when God split the language of the builders of Babel into different tongues that were not mutually intelligible; that caused confusion and hence, an end to their wonderful project.

The Babel incident reveals clearly the power of common language and the danger of non-intelligible linguistic diversities. It is pertinent to note that linguistic uniformity is not only concerned with mere speech, it grows higher to embrace the spirit of mutual agreement and co-existence, unity and oneness. When the speakers of diverse languages are integrated by a common language and their hearts become glued and inseparable, the degree of their exploits becomes unimaginable.

It is true, that all development: social, economic, political, educational, science and technological are all initiated, executed, conveyed and achieved through language. When a viable language, well understood by the people is the means by which information about ideas, discoveries, strategies and innovations are disseminated, effective communication is achieved and plausible heights are attained in the nation's development.

It is also of immense importance for a nation to carry out its affairs and operations using it's indigenous language for the enhancement of unity and development amongst it's people; a language that is their very own with which they formulate their thoughts, understand most, and which best portrays their ideologies. Similarly, literature in its diverse forms unites minds and advances development. For instance, the film industry as a literary theatre is a source of income to all nations and helps to generate revenue to the government for the development of the nations, and Nigeria's Nollywood is no exception.



Through theatre, oral artistic performances and books, literature helps to bring the diverse ethnic groups together. Thus, we see most Nigerians if not all being interested in Nollywood actors and actresses, musicians, comedians and authors of recommendable works because of their tremendous contributions to the nation by their artistic oral and written exhibitions.

We know that education has its foundation on books (writings) and literature is the guarantee for such writing or documentation. Literature concretises the abstract knowledge, interprets our experiences and actions helping us to visualise them. A good piece of literature can be regarded as an authentic mirror image of the people and the society. Literature has thus contributed immensely to educational development in Nigeria and all nations of the world.

Conclusion

Language is very important to human existence. It is at the heart of all things human. It is through language that integration among citizens is fostered and significant development achieved. There is therefore every need to harness the skills and resources of language and literature to enhance the proper organization of the human society, thus, eliminating conflicts and other associative prejudices.

This paper looks at the unifying, integrative and developmental roles language and literature play in a nation and thus, advances the proposition that, for Nigeria to achieve the integration and development she seeks, conscious and concerted efforts in developing our indigenous languages and promoting their literature must be employed. The onus therefore is on the government as a strategic national body to do the needful towards enhancing rapid development and standardisation of the indigenous languages.

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L'influence de la culture dans la traduction

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Résumé

La langue, comme l'on dit toujours, est l'une des formes de représentation de la culture et de l'individualité d'un peuple. La langue d'un peuple est sa culture exprimée en mots. Il est donc inévitable que la culture intervienne dans la traduction d'une langue à l'autre. Au cours d'une activité traduisant, il ne s'agit pas d'un exercice ou on cherche des correspondances des mots dans les dictionnaires pour la langue d'arrivée. Il s'agit plutôt d'équivalence. Une traduction par correspondance ne rend pas le sens exact du texte. En revanche, une traduction par équivalence présente une identité du sens: elle rend le sens contenu dans le texte sans se baser sur les mots. Voilà pourquoi, la connaissance de base des cultures en contact est très importante dans la traduction. L'objectif de ce travail est de montrer comment la culture influence cette traduction

Mots clés : la culture, la traduction, l'influence, la langue.

Introduction

En général, traduire implique à la fois la compréhension du sens d'un texte donné et la restitution des idées principales dans une autre langue. Pour la théorie interprétative de la traduction, élaborée à l'ESIT (Ecole supérieure d'interprètes et de traducteurs) de Paris par Seleskovitch et Lederer (2001), traduire c'est ré-exprimer le sens du message contenu dans un texte. Il ne s'agit pas de convertir une langue à une autre. L'activité traduisant, à notre avis, porte sur le texte à traduire et non sur la langue. Le traducteur ré-exprime toujours le message et non pas la langue. Il comprend, déverbalise et ré-exprime. Pour bien comprendre, déverbaliser et ré-exprimer le message, il faut la connaissance de base des cultures de la langue source et de la langue d'arrivée. Différentes communautés linguistiques ont leurs différents moyens d'exprimer des choses, donc la culture a une grande influence dans la traduction surtout quand il s'agit des langues sans affinité linguistique.

La langue, comme l'on dit toujours, est l'une des formes de représentation de la culture et de l'individualité d'un peuple. La langue d'un peuple est sa culture exprimée en mots. Il est donc inévitable que la culture intervienne dans la traduction d'une langue à l'autre. Notre objectif dans ce travail est de montrer comment la culture influence cette traduction.

La Traduction

La traduction, comme un concept, a connu

beaucoup de définitions. Les théoriciens en traduction ont essayé de définir ce concept de leurs propres façons. Selon Ladmiral (1994:11)

La traduction c'est faire passer un message d'une langue de départ (LD) ou langue source dans une langue d'arrivée (LA) ou la langue cible.

Pour Catford (1965:1)

La traduction est une opération entre les langues, c'est-à-dire un processus de substitution d'un texte dans une langue par le même texte dans une autre langue.

Ici, on parle du même message qui passe d'une langue à l'autre. Cela veut dire que l'effet produit par le message dans la langue de départ sera le même dans la langue d'arrivée, même si les caractères ou les symboles utilisés dans les deux langues sont différents.

Akakuru (2006:1) dit que :

Traduire, sans aucun doute, est le passage d'une langue à une autre. Quelle que soit la nature du texte en question, toute activité de traduction oblige de ré-exprimer un premier message - issu d'un texte en langue d'arrivée. Et cela, en tenant compte des impératifs de la fidélité.

Les théoriciens ont réussi à dire la même chose malgré le fait qu'ils se sont servis de structures linguistiques différentes. Ils sont d'accord sur le point que la traduction a à faire avec le transfert



d'un message d'une langue à une autre. Voilà pourquoi, en exerçant son métier, un traducteur a besoin de deux langues, pour la traduction interlinguale. La première est la langue de départ (LD) qui est la langue originale: la seconde est la langue d'arrivée (LA) dans laquelle le traducteur traduit. C'est à cause de cela qu'on dit que la traduction est le lieu de contact des langues. Si la langue est la culture exprimée en mots, on peut dire, d'une autre façon que la traduction est le processus de substitution d'un texte dans une culture par le même texte dans une autre culture.

La Culture

Le dictionnaire Hachette (juniors) définit la culture comme:

L'ensemble des activités soumises à des normes socialement et historiquement différentes, des modèles de comportement transmissibles par l'éducation propre à un groupe donné.

Soulignons "propre à un groupe social donné". Cette expression veut dire que chaque groupe social a sa manière de s'habiller, de parler etc. La culture embrasse beaucoup de choses comme la nourriture d'un peuple et leur habillement, leur manière de marcher et de parler, leur façon de traiter la mort et de saluer le nouveau né pour citer que cela. Voyons les manières différentes de répondre à la question: Quel âge avez-vous à travers les cultures.

En français - J'ai dix ans. (I have ten years, Emwerem afo iri en anglais et en Igbo littéralement).

Anglais - I am ten years old. (Je suis dix ans vieux/Abum afo iri nka en français et en Igbo Littéralement).

Français	Bonjour	Bonjour	Bonsoir	Bonne nuit
Anglais	Good morning	Good afternoon	Good evening	Good night
Igbo	I boola chi?/1 saala chi?/ Ndeewo	Ndeewo	Ndeewo	Ka chi foo

Les Français disent bonjour ("good day" en anglais) à partir du matin jusqu'à 3:59 de l'après-midi. C'est-à-dire "bonjour" au lieu de "bon après-midi" (littéralement) et "bonsoir" à

Igbo : A gbaram afo iri. (J'ai couru dix ans/1 ran ten years - Littéralement en français et en anglais).

Quand il s'agit de l'âge, les Français s'expriment avec le verbe "avoir" - "to have", à la différence des Anglais qui la font avec le verbe "être" - "to be" et les igbo du Nigeria avec le verbe "courir" - "to run". Voilà que chaque groupe social/culturel a sa façon d'exprimer le même message. Il est donc nécessaire d'avoir la connaissance de base de la culture d'un peuple avant de traduire un texte dans la langue de cette culture. Wuilmart (1990:239), pense que

La culture au sens large du terme, est le résultat bien concret d'une habitude de vie commune qui se manifeste dans la manière de penser, de réagir, et jusqu'aux gestes: c'est un organisme vivant qui pousse lentement et qui se perpétue dans chaque être nouveau qui y naît, qui y baigne, qui y grandit. La langue, c'est en quelque sorte la peau de cette entité culturelle bien concrète.

Wuilmart a essayé de nous dire que la langue est une sorte de peau pour la culture qui comprend presque tous les aspects de vie d'un peuple. La culture est exprimée à travers la langue. En définissant ce terme, on ne doit pas oublier qu'il comporte non seulement la vie sociale, religieuse et familiale d'un groupe mais aussi son système naturel, scientifique, politique et judiciaire. En bref, la culture inclut tout ce qui différencie une communauté d'une autre:

Prenons un autre exemple: la salutation selon les cultures différentes.

partir de 16:00 jusqu'au moment où on veut se coucher; puis bonne nuit. En anglais, il y a un peu de différence, au lieu de "good day" pour le matin et, peut-être l'après-midi, on dit "good



morning" et "good afternoon". L'igbo est totalement différent dans le sens qu'on dit "I boola chi" littéralement dit "avez vous vu le jour?"-ou "ndeewo"(une salutation générale pour toujours). A la place de "bonne nuit" ou "good night", les Igbos disent "ka chi foo''/que le jour vienne" (littéralement). Selon Obinna V. E. (1998)

Les différences d'expression culturelle seront plus grandes entre l'Afrique et l'Europe ou l'Amérique, l'Asie et l'Australie. Si, parfois, il y a des coïncidences, les images, les symboles et les idéologies varient, non seulement à cause des langues, mais aussi à cause d'une combinaison aussi naturelle (d'environnement) que géographique, sociale, politique et philosophique. Il y a donc toujours des perceptions différentes de la vie mais des coïncidences se trouvent là où il y a des similarités environnementales ou géographiques.

La culture et la traduction

La culture affecte beaucoup de méthodes de vie d'un peuple donné. Les proverbes et les environnements affectent la culture et cette partie de la culture affecte la traduction.

(i) Les proverbes

Chaque pays en Afrique dit ses proverbes en utilisant les herbes, les feuilles et les racines de son environnement. Le Petit Larousse illustre (2007:874) définit le proverbe comme « *court énoncé exprimant un conseil populaire, une vérité de bon sens ou d'expérience et qui est devenu d'usage commun* ». Selon Achebe (1958): "Among the Igbos. proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten". « Parmi les Igbos, les proverbes sont l'huile de palme qui fait passer les mots avec les idées ». (*Le Monde s'effondre* p3)

Le proverbe, comme la littérature, reflète la vision de la communauté, l'environnement et la culture générale de la communauté. Chaque communauté a sa façon de dire les proverbes selon la faune et la flore qui s'y trouvent. En traduisant les proverbes, c'est toujours le sens propre qui devrait être visé. C'est-à-dire qu'il n'est pas nécessaire de se servir des animaux ou des choses utilisées dans le proverbe original pour traduire les proverbes parce qu'ils peuvent symboliser des choses différentes dans la langue

(communauté) d'arrivée.

Livinus Eke (1998:12) a observé que chaque communauté utilise les herbes, les arbres, les animaux et les oiseaux prévalant dans son environnement pour expliquer des idées. On ajoutera que les colins et les vallées contribuent à enrichir les proverbes et comment on aperçoit les choses dans une communauté donnée. Eke insiste qu'il est nécessaire de traduire un proverbe par un proverbe. A ce point, voyons certains proverbes dans leurs expressions selon des cultures et des environnements différents.

- a) Français: Il ne faut pas réveiller le chat qui dort.
- b) Anglais: Let the sleeping dog lie.
- c) Igbo: Ka anyi gburu igu tuchie nsi (Recouvrons l'excrément avec les feuilles de palme),

Bien que les proverbes soient des moyens d'expression qui dépendent des langues/cultures différentes, ils ont le même sens. Le proverbe veut dire qu'il ne faut pas commencer à faire ce qu'on ne peut pas mettre sous contrôle.

- a) Français: Qui ne risque rien n'a rien.
- b) Anglais: No venture, no success.
- c) Igbo: Aka aja aja na ebute onu mmanu mmanu.

Ce proverbe veut dire qu'il n'y a pas de magie dans la vie, on doit travailler pour gagner la vie. Dans la culture typiquement igbo ou l'agriculture était la source majeure de gagner la vie, il faut cultiver afin de manger. Voilà pourquoi les mains doivent être sales parce qu'on travaille dans le champ.

- a) Français: Petit à petit, l'oiseau fait son nid
- b) Anglais: A thousand miles start with a step.
- c) Igbo: Nwayo nwayo ka eji aracha ofe di oku.

Ici, les différentes cultures utilisent des symboles différents pour traduire la même chose. Dans la culture igbo, la soupe est toujours mangée en utilisant la main. Donc, quand on mange une soupe qui est très chaude, il faut la manger doucement/lentement. Les Français le comparent à l'oiseau qui, peu à peu mais sans interruption, fait son nid. Pour les Anglais, on le compare au



voyage de plusieurs miles qui commence par un pas. A la fin, le proverbe veut dire qu'on peut

accomplir une tâche énorme qu'on commence bien que lentement.

(ii) Les idiotismes

Selon le Dictionnaire Hachette, Idiotisme est une expression ou construction particulière a une langue, intraduisible dans une autre langue ou qui s'introduit tel quel dans une langue.

L'idiotisme, qui porte un sens par son tout et non par chacun des mots qui le composent est un terme de grammaire par lequel on désigne les tournures particulières a chaque langue. Pour les traduire dans d'autres langues, il faut chercher un idiotisme correspondant s'il en existe mais, si non, on est obligé de les courber sous les lois de la grammaire générale.

Voyons les différents idiotismes à travers les langues différentes.

- a) Français: avoir une tête a tête
- b) Anglais: to have a heart to heart talk (avoir une discussion cœur à cœur)
- c) Igbo: i da nti (cogner les oreilles)

Tête-à-tête qui est une situation ou deux personnes seules ont peut-être une discussion. L'une avec l'autre est exprimée avec différents symboles. La tête pour le français, le cœur pour l'anglais et l'oreille pour l'igbo.

Le français	L'anglais	L'igbo
Un sou	A brass farthing	Afù
La pomme de discorde	The bone of contention	Isi sekpu nti (la tête qui porte l'oreille)
Prendre la parole	To take the floor	Malite ikwu okwu (commencer a parler)
Graisser les paumes	To give bribe	Inye aka azu (donner la main dernière)
Une pierre d'achoppement	A stumbling block	Agada gbachiri uzo (le masque qui ferme le chemin)
Prendre la tête	To take the lead	I bu uzo (porter le chemin)
Prendre la fuite	To take to one's heels	I rachapu oso (lécher la course)

Voilà que vraiment la culture influence la traduction. Si l'on traduit ces idiomatismes littéralement, le sens va être perdu.

(iii) La flore et la faune

La flore

Selon le Dictionnaire Hachette, (Juniors) la flore est l'ensemble des espaces végétales d'une région, d'un pays. La flore est l'ensemble des herbes d'une région. Chaque communauté utilise les noms des animaux de son environnement physique pour dire ses proverbes.

L'effet désiré ou l'intention peut être la même, pourtant les animaux nommés peuvent varier.

La connaissance et la compréhension de la culture de la langue de départ et de la langue d'arrivée sont très nécessaires pour une bonne traduction comme dit Nwanjoku (2008 :44)

For a folktale translator, it is imperative to know the cultures of the languages involved since language is embedded in culture and the meaning of the word is



deduced from its cultural context. For Cample, the expression "Ajoo ohia" or 'Ikpa' connotes the idea of abomination or the unclean. In Igbo, this is a place where people who committed unacceptable offences are abandoned for life. Also "oji" in igbo connotes warm reception and love. In fact, language is not only the symbol of the people who speak it but it is even tied to the culture.

Anyaehe (1998) a traduit le titre d'une des Fables de Jean de la Fontaine, "La Laitière et le pot au lait" en Igbo comme "Nwanyị ore mmaui na ite mmanu ya ". Le thème principal dans la version française de cette fable de La Fontaine est la futilité de s'inquiéter sur l'avenir. Une femme porte un pot plein de lait pour aller vendre à la marche. En route pour vendre le lait elle fait des plans pour utiliser l'argent de la vente du lait. Parce qu'elle est pensive, elle trébuche contre une

La faune

La faune inclut les animaux d'une communauté donnée. Sous forme de table, nous voulons démontrer ce concept dans son expression en anglais, en français et en igbo du Nigeria.

pierre. Le pot de lait tombe de sa tête et se casse. Ainsi, tous les plans de gagner et utiliser l'argent provenant du lait sont perdus. Dans la culture Igbo, il est bizarre de voir une femme qui fait la vente du lait. Cela se trouve au nord du Nigeria chez les Hausa -Fulani. Les femmes igbo, de leur côté, portent des pots d'huile pour aller vendre au marché. La tragédie de la femme avec un pot de lait dans Fables de La Fontaine peut arriver à une femme igbo avec un pot d'huile. Ainsi, en traduisant "le lait" (culture française) avec "l'huile" (équivalent culturel en igbo), Anyaehe est arrivé au même thème principal de Jean de la Fontaine qui est la futilité de s'inquiéter sur l'avenir. Le poème entier est une allusion religieuse au message de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ dans Mathieu chapitre 6 verset 25-30, qui nous prévient qu'il ne faut pas se tracasser le corps pour l'avenir.

Ne vous inquiétez pas pour votre vie de ce que vous mangerez (ou de ce que vous boirez), ni pour votre corps de quoi vous serez vêtus...

	Concept	En culture igbo	En culture anglaise	En culture française
1.	La supercherie	La tortue	Le singe	Le renard
2.	Géant	Alakuku - géant igbo ne à Owerri	Goliath	Gargantua (Rabelais 16 ^e)
3.	Amertume	Utazi. Olugbu	Wormwood (Prov Ch. 5 v. 4)	Absinthe
4.	L'imbécilité	L'agneau	L'idiot	L'idiot
5.	La Légende ou le Folklore	L'histoire d'Iduu na Oba (deux animaux maritimes)	L'histoire du Coq et de la Vache	Conte de fées

Dans ce tableau, il est possible de voir que chacune de ces langues utilise les réalités présentes dans son environnement physique.

Selon Ajunwa (1991:35) les caractères de certains animaux dans une culture ont leurs équivalant dans d'autres animaux dans une autre culture. Ajunwa a donné comme exemple "agu" (le lion en igbo). Quand on parle d'"agu" en igbo, on a son équivalent dans "Zarki" en Hausa ou vers le nord où se trouve le désert. Là, la végétation n'est pas favorable à l'habitation du lion. Il faut ajouter que lorsqu'on parle de la traduction de la Sainte Bible dans la langue Igbo, ce qu'on lit dans Genèse chapitre 3 verset 1 que le serpent est le plus ruse ou supercherie des animaux des champs devrait être adapté à la culture Igbo avec le remplacement du serpent par la tortue, parce que les Igbo voient la tortue comme 1^{er} animal le plus ruse. Donc,

Le serpent était le plus ruse de tous les animaux des champs que l'Eternel Dieu avait faits....

Se traduirait en:

Ma mbekwu di aghuuho karia anuohia o bula nke Jehova, bu Chineke. kere..

Conclusion

Finalement, dans ce travail, on a traité le rapport entre la culture et la traduction. On a vu

que quand il s'agit de la traduction, la connaissance de la culture des langues de travail est très importante parce que la langue est enfoncée dans la culture.

Au cours d'une activité traduisant, il ne s'agit pas d'un exercice où on cherche des correspondances des mots dans les dictionnaires pour la langue d'arrivée. Il s'agit plutôt d'équivalence. Une traduction par correspondance ne rend pas le sens exact du texte. En revanche, une traduction par équivalence présente une identité du sens: elle rend le sens contenu dans le texte sans se baser sur les mots. Voilà pourquoi, la connaissance de base des cultures en contact est très importante dans la traduction. Elle ré-exprime le vouloir dire de l'auteur. Certes "toute traduction comporte des correspondances entre des vocables, mais elle ne devient texte que grâce à la création d'équivalences" Lederer (55). Le traducteur ne traduit pas des mots, mais il comprend pour exprimer. Avec les exemples sur les proverbes, la faune et la flore et les idiotismes, ce travail a montré que la culture vraiment influence la traduction parce qu'on ne traduit pas de mots mais le sens du texte. Voilà la raison pour la quelle la réaction à un texte amusant doit être la même pour le texte d'arrivée.

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Multidisciplinary Assessment of Reading Skills among New-Intakes in Nigeria University (South-East) - A 21st Century Issues

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Abstract

The accelerating communication tempo and the ability to decode segments of an enormous and expanding symbology quickly and accurately becomes of paramount importance not only for the highly trained technician or scholar in this 21st Century, but for the average man as well. Twenty first century involves application of skills, knowledge and attitudes for success and development in the 21st century workplace. Inadequate reading ability remains the principal reason for the children being kept back in the elementary schools and continues to plague the secondary schools and higher institutions. This study aims to investigate formal procedures in assessing reading capacity or expectancy level among new- intakes in Nigerian universities. A sample size of 538 respondents was randomly selected among fresher's (new-intakes) in five (5) Nigerian Universities in (South- East) using corrective and remedial teaching techniques and analysis. Based on the findings, a standardized reading measurement /innovative teaching were recommended to boost reading culture among students, in our Nigerian Universities.

Key words: Reading skills, tests, teaching, 21st century, multidisciplinary.

Introduction

As society changes, the skills needed to negotiate the complexities of life also change. Brabner (2009) categorically stated that unless an individual is living in a geographically isolated area, the inability to read, and to read well, will handicap such a person more in numerous life situations than many physical or mental limitations. Unquestionably, sensory handicaps, neurological impairments, low intelligence, metabolic disorders and cultural-psychological influences will continue to be contributory factors in reading retardation for some time to come; but it is my conviction that the largest portion of fresher (new intakes) who are retarded are so because of poor instruction. Where instruction is inadequate, and students still learn to read adequately, their reading ability is developed in spite of that instruction, not because of it. Too often we look for the reading problem in a youngster, and thereby slip into the habit of identifying the problem as the child's and not as the teachers'. It would be more accurate to say that the affliction is the child's but the problem of cure, or amelioration, is the teacher's, we prefer to talk about the learning disabilities of

children.

The pertinent question is: where does the focus properly belong? We must examine both the child's behavior and our own as teachers. There are numerous strategies and skills we can apply in assessing reading skills; which may be suitable to certain topics, courses and different class levels. Variety and creativity in literacy instruction starts from the learning environment, this is very important at all levels of education (Obiajulu 2013). The teacher facilitates change in the students, brings about reading/learning outcomes and builds characters. There is an adage that says 'readers are leaders'. The modern and competent 21st century teacher must be able to manage his class by planning and directing reading activities that match the aptitudes and multidisciplinary areas of the students. (Ezenwa 2007).

The teacher becomes the school's primary initiator for inculcating reading skill discipline among new intakes, because the management of a class which gives enjoyment of work, affection and security to the students regardless of their ability is the basis of school discipline which we need today. The teacher's role, therefore, makes the authority legally



delegated to him for the guidance of the students acceptable and desirable. A modern 21st century competent teacher may be viewed as a well-adjusted and genuinely responsive individual who is supposed to be a model, creative, intuitive, a dispenser of knowledge, who encourages talents and abilities and who possesses intuition. He is seen as generous motivator to others (Ukong 2015). Students could be motivated on reading skills especially when their minds are still on the greener side, about to be catapulted rightly or wrongly. The effective teacher in this 21st century modern setting is therefore seen as an all-round person.

Statement of the problem

Our society today emphasizes qualitative education in the school system; broadly speaking an instructional problem can be reasonably defined as any obstacle to learning created by, or persisting because of the failure of the teacher to make the modifications of her behavior and/or materials necessary to eliminate the obstacle. This research is designed to identify the psychological correlates of the disability in a student's behavior; how to correct or remediate effectively multidisciplinary reading skills among fresher's (New Intakes) through manipulating the physical aspects of the learning environment, and how to modify our behavior as teachers, which is a vital part of that environment. This is the gap the researcher hoped to fill through this study.

Aims and objectives

Rightly pointed out above, we must examine both the students' behavior and our own as teachers; with the following objectives:

1. Identify techniques for estimating reading capacity
2. Discover techniques for reading achievements
3. Identify techniques for Observing and analyzing Reading performance
4. Identify Perceptual and Conceptual Levels in School Programme.

Scope of the study

The study focuses on instructional competences of University teachers for the

implementation of reading skills in Nigeria universities (South East) specifically, teacher's innovative and creative approach for effective pedagogy and multidisciplinary assessment were examined.

Research method

The design of this study is descriptive survey research design. The design was appropriate in this study because the research tends to describe, explain, document and report the multidisciplinary literacy required in this 21st century. This study was conducted in Umudike (South East of Nigeria) the technique for research was administered to respondent with the help of two research assistants using corrective/remedial teaching technique. Moreover, the instrument used was face validated by three experts from renowned universities. These experts vetted the instruments in terms of relevance, clarity, usability and suitability.

Literature review on reading skills

The first of this research was designed to discover psychological correlates of reading disability (dyslexia). DYSLEXIA was defined by Kass as 'retardation in reading skills which is not due to mental retardation or to sensory defects (blindness or deafness) (Kass 2003). She believes that a deficiency in the process of integration, possibly neurological in origin, may underlie the reading difficulties and that training should be directed toward these processes, rather than toward the conceptual or more meaningful processes.

Graubard(2006) attempted to identify some psycholinguistic correlates of reading disability in emotionally disturbed students. Graubard's results showed shift from communication processes, most of ' their deficits appeared at the integrational level, he called attention, however to the need for developing new training methods which can be used to remedy integrational deficits particularly of the visual-motor type. Simpson (2006) includes a perceptual training program designed to include reading readiness. Emejulu (2013) proposes phased reading which he clearly defined in three phases:



before or “pre”, during and after or “post”-this he said is very helpful in achieving full understanding of ideas presented in books. The pre-reading stage is the place that

- (a) Focuses attention of the reader
- (b) Activates background knowledge of the learners so that you can build on a solid foundation
- (c) Motivates them to discover more

Research questions

Four research questions were developed to guide the study, while three hypotheses were formulated using corrective and remedial teaching techniques. Survey research design was used for the study. The population for the study was 3,527 of which a sample size of 538 respondents was randomly selected among fresher's (new intakes) in five (5) Nigerian Universities.

Research Question 1

What are the techniques for estimating multidisciplinary reading capacity?

A variety of standardized tests are available for the formal evaluation of both oral and silent reading achievement. Teachers become most familiar with the latter tests when they are routinely administered in a school system. (Dolch 2006) suggested a quick way to survey a class of poor readers by obtaining a sample of their reading performance following an oral procedure: the teachers can test for comprehension by having the students read silently four or five paged selection. As each student finishes the selection; he closes the book and looks up at the teacher; in this way, slow readers, can be detected. When every student has finish reading, the teacher reads a prepared list of short-answer questions and the students write their answers. The book under consideration will prove too difficult for students scoring below 70% in comprehension. This technique will reveal those children who are achieving at a level too low to use the basal reader that the majority of the class will be using. Itam's

(2000) recommends that multidisciplinary texts books in various content areas, as well as basal readers be used. For this purpose allow the student to read aloud from a graded series of readers until the student attains that level (the instructional level) at which he can read adequately with minimal assistance; yet still be sufficiently challenged.

Research Question 2

How do we analyze multidisciplinary reading performance?

Formal techniques for observing and analyzing specific reading skills and processes of the type described in this section are found in individual diagnostic reading examinations, in check lists of reading difficulties often included in such examinations, and in Variety of specialized tests which have evolved out of clinical practice. Skills are required to analyze reading performance in high specific way, so that deficits can be pin-pointed, errors identified and analyzed.

Three visual ability areas related to reading which the teacher should be interested in assessing informally are:

1. Visual memory
2. Visual discrimination
3. Visual sequencing

Time and space may limit our explanations of these points but we will dwell on one.

Visual sequencing is the ability to organize visual stimuli in correct spatial order. The response may be one of recognition, recall or reproduction; but frequently more than one of these elements is involved. For instance, in visual-motor sequencing as measured by the Illinois tests of psycholinguistic abilities (McCarthy and Kirk 2006), both reproduction and recall play a part, as they do in written spelling. Visual-motor sequencing is defined here as the ability to reproduce a sequence of visual stimuli from memory. A teacher may employ a modified version of the visual motor sequencing sub-test using letters. The student's errors can be recorded and compared to the performance of his classmates. The technique required that an individual be able to

discriminate visually among letter series as well as to sequence the visually order.

Research Question 3

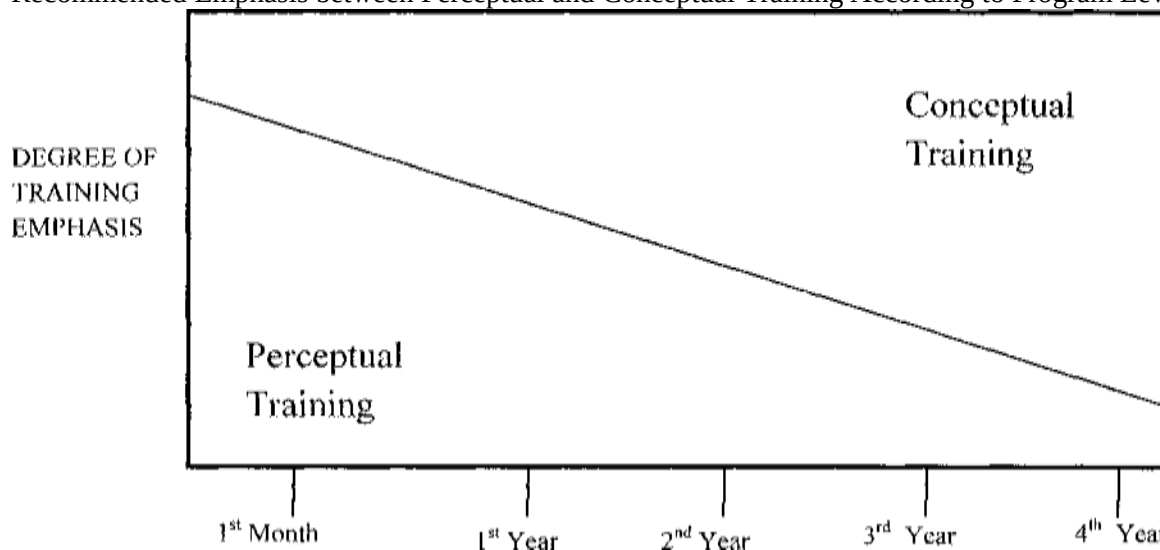
How do we identify perceptual and conceptual levels in school program?

Naturally, it is rightly observed that some youngsters are distinctly more advanced than others in perceptual and memory abilities long before they enter school. Cognitive training practices intentional and unintentional vary widely from one student to another. Systematic exercises emphasizing perceptual-memory integrational training may come to occupy a prominent position in the educational program. This kind of instruction could continue first year, second year gradually decreasing in amount while accompanied by a corresponding increase in more conceptual meaningful instruction. There are however, indications that proficiency in reading may be more dependent upon perceptual and memory abilities than upon conceptual abilities. At present, we are contending with many perceptual problems in the classroom which could be eliminated, or greatly minimized through an early intensive diagnosis; the establishment of a solid foundation of perceptual memory skills and

gradually increasing attention to conceptual development could result in an excellent reading readiness program.

Using an experimental group of 27 first year intakes of 529 control students, the researcher directed the teacher of experimental group in implementing a perceptual training program which was added to the regular first year curriculum activities. At the conclusion of the study, a comparison of the reading achievement of the perceptual training group with that of the control group showed the average reading achievement of the training group to be significantly greater (3.33 months) from the findings, perceptual development of new intakes in our Nigerian Universities can be increased through appropriate perceptual, with a resulting increase in reading achievements. Simpson (2009) states that there is a statistical justification for increased emphasis on the teaching of reading as if it were a PERCEPTUAL ART as well as a LANGUAGE ART. Serious consideration must be given to the balance between perceptual and conceptual aspects of the reading readiness program and, later to the specific nature of the training provided.

Recommended Emphasis between Perceptual and Conceptual Training According to Program Level



Reading skills in 21st century

21st Century skills represent the fresh, serious, new perspective required in light of historical events, globalization and the idiosyncrasies of the 21st century. Reading skills when considered within the context of rigorous academic standards are intended to provide the public and educators with a common understanding of what is needed by students in this digital age. Reading skills are the synthesis of the essential abilities students must apply in our rapidly changing world. In the 1900s, a person who had acquired simple reading, writing and calculating skills was considered literate. Only in recent years has the public education system expected all students to build on those basics, developing a broader range of literacy (International ICT literacy Panel, 2002). To achieve success in the 21st century, students also need to attain proficiency in science, technology and culture, as well as gain a thorough understanding of information in all its forms.

21stCENTURY LITERACY: includes the following:

Basic Literacy: Reading to acquire language proficiency and numeracy at levels necessary to function on the job and in society to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potentials in this 21st century.

Scientific Literacy: knowledge and understanding via reading of the scientific concepts and processes required for personal decision making, participation in civic and cultural affairs and economic productivity.

Economic Literacy: The ability to read and identify economic problems, alternatives, costs and benefits, analyze the incentives at work in economic situations, examine the consequences of changes in economic conditions and public policies, collect and organize economic evidence, and weigh costs against benefits.

Technological literacy: Reading to acquire knowledge on what technology is, how it works, what purposes it can serve, and how it can be used efficiently and effectively to achieve specific goals.

Visual literacy: The ability to read, interpret ,use, appreciate and create images and video using

both conventional and 21st century media in ways that advance thinking, decision making, communication and learning.

Information Literacy: The ability to read and evaluate information across a range of media, recognize when information is needed, locate, synthesize, and use information effectively and accomplish these functions using technology, communication networks and electronic resources.

Multicultural Literacy: The ability to read, understand and appreciate the similarities and differences in the customs, values and beliefs of one's own culture and the cultures of others.

Global Awareness: The recognition and understanding via reading of interrelationships among international organizations, nation-states, public and private economic entities, socio-cultural groups, and individuals across the globe.

Let's return back to the fundamentals of this study which have been highlighted already; BASIC LITERACY-this is the ability to read, write, listen and speak. An adage says, 'You are what You read' this comes out of the abundance of what you have taken in (contents reservoir) you speak. The definition of basic literacy has changed over time to reflect that increasing importance. In the early 1900s, basic literacy meant the ability to write one's name. That definition was later **expanded to** mean the decoding of text, and by the 1930's, it had come to include **reading and** expressing oneself through writing (Bransford et al, 2009). The national **Literacy** Act of 2001 defined Literacy as 'an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English as well able to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society in order to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential'(National Literacy Act of 1991 sec.3) The National Assessment of Adult Literacy measures basic adult literacy along three scales-prose, document and quantitative-composed of literacy tasks that simulate the types of demands that adults encounter in everyday life. Prose literacy tasks include reading, understanding and using information from texts such as editorials,



newspaper articles, poems and stories. Document literacy tasks include locating and using information found in common artifacts such as job applications, bus schedules maps, payroll forms, indexes and tables. Quantitative literacy tasks include reading to understand how to perform arithmetic operations required as prose and documents encountered in everyday life (e.g. bank deposit slips, checkbooks, order forms, loan applications) National Center for Education Statistics, 2003).

Summary of findings

Teachers can engage students in discussions, multidisciplinary enquiries, assigning students to come up with 'feedback' on relevant books and documents read that could build them up. The research indicates that students can excel when immersed in such meaningful challenging literacy tasks.

(Newmann et al 2000)

However, the findings of this study reveal that teachers' competency multidisciplinary skills are average.

Conclusion

Although reading, writing, listening and speaking are paramount, today's students must be able to decipher meaning while reading and express ideas through a range of media. Educators must stay current with practices that optimize student leaning. The 21st century reading skills should form a major part of the foundation of improvement processes in schools. Stakeholders in education such as the government, curriculum developers and teachers need to provide good instructional climate-well equipped for all inclusive learning.

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Morphological Errors in the Essay of Students of English as a Second Language

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Abstract

The English language poses as an influential language among other Nigerian languages. It is a language of communication, exchange, industry and commerce, among other uses. Its existence demonstrates estimable yardstick for measuring academic success and status. Low mastery of the English language among the students describes imperfection on the side of the students using it as a means of communication. This study investigates the morphological errors committed by the first year undergraduate students of Imo State University, Owerri, who are learning the English language as a field of study, and the reasons for these errors. The theoretical adaptation for this paper is based on Dulay and Burt's (1973) comparison on error of three groups of learners. The students' composition exercises serve as the data for this work. The findings reveal the students' inconsistency in the application of some morphological rules. Although they learn the English language, they have no concrete knowledge of morphology. It is therefore, recommended that teachers of the English language should pay more attention to the teaching of morphology as in the other components of the English language.

Keywords: English language, students, morphology, morphological rule, error.

Introduction

English as a second language in Nigeria which functions as an official language of the nation is regarded as an acceptable medium of communication among Nigeria's ethnic groups against any of the local languages. The introduction of the English language in Nigeria is traceable to slave trade, colonialism and western religion. When the Europeans came to Nigeria and Africa in general, they needed a language to communicate with the indigenous people of Africa. In order to bridge the gap in communication, they began to teach their languages, and also raised local teachers to do so. Consequently, the English language became the most significant language of education in Nigeria which was colonised by Britain. The English language prospered in commerce depending on the extent of its acquisition by an individual who used the language. Based on this concept, Brosnaham (1963:59) asserts that the English language is the language of commerce and law, of politics and the administration of education and of culture at all levels above the local languages.

Adesoye's (1980: 101) grouping of the speakers of the English language in Nigeria

describes the situation of the language in Nigeria. According to him, group one comprises those who speak the English language from the existence of daily use which variety is imperfect involving total transfer of first language (L1 henceforth) with poor mastery of the lexis and structure of the English language; the second group of speakers are those whose syntax is near the British standard, but their phonology and lexis are far from that which is the rule; the third group are mainly products of secondary school with syntax and semantics that are British, and their language usage acceptable to groups one and two; and group four are those whose English is characterised by standard British English (BrE). The last group comprises 5 per cent of the speakers of the English language in Nigeria. Adesoye's analysis describes the imperfection of Nigerians using the English language as a means of communication and how the imperfection varies from the second language (L2 henceforth) which is the target language. Also, because of their inability to understand the rules governing the use of the English language, the speakers lack high level mastery of the English language. Emenanjo (1990:4) buttresses the imperfection by stating that:



The use of the English language in Nigeria is class restricted based on circumstances. The percentages of Nigerians who are able to speak the English language are usually thirty per cent, and there is lack of good mastery and competence among the students which manifests in both external and internal examinations.

It is on the above notion that this paper examines the effective use of the English morphology by students of the English language. Morphology is an aspect of language that is concerned with the structure of words. Ndimele (2002:2) asserts that morphology is a branch of linguistics which is concerned with the study of how words are formed. He describes morphology as a co-joining of words which shows the internal structure of words. Omorodion (2011:162) refers to morphology as the internal structuring of how words are composed, and brings about arrangement of morphemes.

This paper examines the morphological errors committed by the first year undergraduate students of Imo State University, Owerri, and to find out the reasons for these errors on morphology. The focus of this paper is on word formation and the functional morphemes. The researcher chose the students' composition exercises as the source of data. This paper attempts to outline the regular situations where these errors appear on the students' scripts, and suggests ways to eliminate the students' morphological errors. This work will add to the ESL learners' knowledge on morphology and will add to existing literature in this field for future researches.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical adaptation of this paper is based on Dulay and Burt's (1973) comparison of errors of three groups of learners: the Spanish group, the English group learning the English language as their mother tongue and the Chinese group. Using Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM) as an elicitation technique for acquisition of eight grammatical morphemes they called functors, a term sometimes used in word classification for words and bound morphemes whose role in

language is largely or wholly grammatical such as prepositions, articles, pronouns and conjunctions. Using empirical study to compare the language of these learners, the theorists' investigation reveals that the ESL speakers / learners find some grammatical morphemes difficult regardless of their length of exposure to the English language. They concluded their findings by stating that it is the L1 system rather than L2 system that guides the acquisition process, that is, the mother tongue is usually responsible for the difficulties or errors encountered by the learners. This theoretical framework is germane to this study because, this study intends to investigate on the morphological errors of students who are studying the English language as second language.

Morphological Errors

Morphological errors are some of the constraints which the L2 learners of the English language encounter when developing their word formulation. Consequently, they misapply the rules as a result of inability to comprehend the restriction rule of the language. Akande (2001:14) takes a serious investigation on the acquisition of eight inflectional morphemes in English. He stipulates on the high margin of errors from the students on grammatical morphemes. His analysis on the students' essay shows that the students exhibit poor mastery of the use of the English language: participles, passive, inflection, past tense morpheme and plural inflection were low. He reveals the inappropriate expression of words by the students on their essays on word-formation which impedes good mastery of the language. Akande's analysis shows students' poor performance on the grammatical morphemes. Thus the second language learners found plural morphemes difficult. This is attributed to the irregularities in the rules of the English language. For instance, *cat - cats, church - churches, lady -ladies, leave - leaves, man - men and chief – chiefs*, and so on. These irregularities in the English morphemes presume complexity and confusion on the English as second language (ESL) learners

Hawkins (2001:40) states that the ESL learners find some grammatical morphemes of



the English difficult to acquire despite their length of exposure to the English language. He claims that the students lack acquaintance in their language learning. Hawkins identifies the levels of inaccuracy when the students are given task to solve. His evidence on the learners constitutes inconsistency on the students' grammatical morphology. However, the students misunderstanding of the rules gives room for misapplication of the use of the restriction rules of the language. Consequently, comprehension of the concepts becomes difficult in developmental structure of the morphemes.

McNeill's (1996:36-63) studies on vocabulary knowledge profiles with evidence from two different groups of learners studying ESL: English major graduates who had been instructed through the medium of English and the third year students in pursuit of Bachelor of Art degree in the English language. Thus, he claims also that there is an important difference between the groups. The aspects of the English tested them according to McNeill's study were, word meaning, phonology, morphology and sentence production, but morphology is the aspect that is of direct relevance to this study.

Statement of the Problem

Morphology as a branch of linguistics has polysyllabic nature in the English language. Most problems the ESL learners encounter are basically on inconsistency inherent the language. The inconsistency generates high level of confusion to the learners which makes them over-generalise and misapply the rules guiding the language when given any task to perform. Some of the irregularities or inconsistencies are illustrated as follows: If the plural forms of knife, calf, and thief are knives, calves and thieves, respectively, why should the plural of *chief* not be *chieves*? Similarly, if the plural of *box* is *boxes*, why is *ox* not *oxes* but *oxen* or *cattles* not the plural of *cattle*? This also applies to the formation of past tense in the English language. *Killed* is the past tense of *kill*, but *eated* is not the past tense of *eat*, but *ate*. These inconsistencies or irregularities have serious implications in the learning of the English language by ESL learners. There are therefore, numerous rules existing in

the English language which no doubt, create difficult mastery to the ESL learner.

Perhaps, the teachers who teach the students do not give adequate time when teaching morphology, but concentrate more on syntax and lexis. The kind of textbooks the students use may hinder effective learning as the authors of these textbooks may not analyse morphology related topics the way they should. This inhibits mastery of the language as a unified whole.

Akande (2005:46), citing Ririn (2010:32) argues that some of the causes of students' errors relating to forms, rules and practice are supposed to be pathway of controlling the student's morphological errors. Akande stresses on the teachers who teach the students who should on regular basis attempt supposable drills and practices to facilitate their knowledge on morphology.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consisted of fifty (50) first year undergraduate students (one hundred level), in the department of English Language and Literary Studies, Imo State University, Owerri, who were randomly selected.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This paper adopted the descriptive approach for the analysis of the morphological errors discovered from the students' written essays. The analysis was grouped into categories: affixation related errors, and compounding errors. The students were requested to write a restricted essay of about three hundred words (300) entitled, *A Day I will Never Forget in My Life*, with some listed items to be written in opposite forms such as *significant*, *able*, *decent*, *mature*, *honest*, *dispensable*, *necessary*, *conscious*, and to indicate the plural forms of *equipment*, *information* and *accommodation*. The exercise took place in the classroom. After identifying the morphological errors on the students' scripts, the researcher classified the data collected based on the morphological errors discovered on the students' scripts. and numbered them. The study also measured the frequency of each type of morphological error which appeared on the students' scripts. The data was analysed using simple percentage:



Values were assigned to the percentages as

follows: above 19% and below is regarded as insignificant.

Affixation Related Errors in the Students' Essays.

Note: Words wrongly used in the sentences are marked asterisks

Table 1(a): Errors arising from wrong use of suffixes

Sentences	No. of times error occurred	No. of respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
1. You are *inhonest (dishonest)	20	15	30%
2. It is *unsignificant (insignificant)	26	12	24%
3. The girl does not agree because, she is *inmatured (immature)	32	23	46%
Total	78	50	100%

Source: 2019 Survey

Table 1 indicates that 30% of the participants committed error in the use of *dishonest*. This error appeared 20 times in the sentence because, the participants were ignorant of the appropriate prefix to be used while trying to create new words or give the antonym for *honest*. The second row shows that the respondents were unable to form their prefixes well on *insignificant*, and by so doing, committed an error. 24% of the students committed this error for a total of 26 times. In the third row, 46% of the participants committed error in the use of *in-* morpheme, instead of *im-* morpheme.

Though the errors in the table above were syntactic errors because, they made the sentences ungrammatical, they indicated that the respondents committed errors in the use of

morphemes. For instance, it is a well known fact that the opposite of some words are formed by affixing *un-* before their roots as in, *unacceptable*, *unable*, *unnecessary*, just as the opposite of some words are formed by placing *in-* before them as in, *indecent*, *indispensable*. This implies that some of the respondents, who committed these errors in table 1 above, probably applied these rules without being conscious of the restrictions involved. In the case of (3) above, two errors were identified. Firstly, there was an unnecessary insertion of the *-d* suffix, and secondly, the correct prefix was *im-* and not *in-*. Thus, as far as the word in *immature* was concerned, two different morphological errors were committed, that is, the use of an incorrect prefix and insertion of an unnecessary suffix.

Table 2: Errors arising from wrong use of suffixes.

Sentences	No. of times error occurred	No. of respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
1. The stupid boy *broadcasted the news to everybody (broadcast).	20	40	80%
2. I *cutted my finger and was taken to the hospital (cut)	10	5	20%
Total	30	45	100%

Source: 2019 Survey

Table 2, number 1 shows that 40 (80%) of the respondents committed error of adding the *-ed* morpheme to *broadcast*. This error occurred 20 times in the 40 students' scripts. In sentence

number 2, 10 (20%) of the participants also committed the error of adding *-ed* morpheme to *cut*. As could be seen from the data above, the errors were caused as a result of the insertion of



the past tense marker *-ed* to *broadcast* and *cut* which amounted to inserting unnecessary suffixes, *broadcasted* and *cutted* respectively.

Table 3: Errors arising from analogous use of certain suffixes:

Sentences	No. of times error occurred	No. of respondents	Percentage (%) of respondents
1. They did the work *fastly (fast)	40	18	36%
2. Our friends are *gossipers and they will never change(gossips)	30	12	24%
3. I hate *cheaters (cheats).	31	10	20%
4. I am sure you know that is *insultive (insulting)	40	10	20%
Total	141	50	100%

Source: 2019 Survey

Table 3, sentence number 1 shows that 18 (36%) of the participants committed an error by adding the *-ly* morpheme to the root *fast*. In the second row of table 3, 12 (24%) of the respondents committed an error by adding the *-er* morpheme to *gossip* instead of the *-s* morpheme. Instead of the *-s* morpheme, 20% of the respondents added the *-ers* morpheme to the root *cheat* in the 3rd row. In the 4th row, the respondents showed wrong use of the morpheme by adding the *-ive* morpheme to *insult* instead of the *-ing* morpheme. The students who committed this error were ten in number which made up to 20% of the respondents.

From the data above, various factors were responsible for the errors on table 3 above. They included the misapplication of the rules, to inappropriate use of the suffixes which were due to lack of knowledge of some restrictions to certain morphological rules. However, there are

verbs which constitute exceptions to these rules such as *gossip*, *inhabit* and *cheat*, whose noun counterparts are *gossips*, *inhabitant* and *cheats*, than being *gossipers*, *inhibitors* and *cheaters* as were written by the respondents. These words simply undergo the morphological process of conversion and need no inflection (Arema, 2005:44). Similarly, *fastly* was used instead of *fast* in table 3(1) probably as a result of their knowledge of certain adjectives like *quick*, *slow* and *happy*, when they are used as adverbs. In 3(4) above, *insultive* was analogously used instead of *insulting*. In the English language, the word, *instructive* is formed from *instruct* and it was probably this knowledge that the students applied in forming *insultive*. It is important to state that their use has become almost institutionalised in Nigerian English as errors of this nature are made by several people from different works with very high level of educational background.

4. Errors arising from uncountable nouns

Errors Arising from Uncountable Noun	No. of times error occurred	No. of respondents	Percentage(%) of respondents
1. We have many *equipments there (equipment)	20	15	30%
2. He brought her many *furnitures (furniture).	25	18	36%
3. They gave them new *accommodations (accommodation)	30	17	34%
Total	85	50	100%

Source: 2019 Survey

Table 4 shows that a total of 85

morphological errors of diverse kinds were



committed by all the respondents in their composition exercise in the following way: In the first row, 30% of the respondents committed an error by adding the -s morpheme to *equipment* to form the plural. The total number of this error identified in the respondents' scripts was 20. In the second row, 36% of the subjects committed an error in the use of the uncountable noun *furniture* by adding the -s morpheme to it to form the plural. 34% of the respondents committed an error by adding the -s morpheme to *accommodation*.

From the data above, the errors in (1) to (3) were made due to the tendency of most English L2 learners to make uncountable nouns countable. Thus, such deviant forms as *accommodations*, *equipment*, and *furniture* are common in the English usage of most Nigerians. Just as the examples above indicated in their L1, the concepts which these English words represent are countable. The errors can therefore, be attributed to the influence of the L1 on the English language.

Table 5: Errors caused as a result of the use of the -ing morpheme instead of the -en morpheme

Sentences	No. of times the error occurred	No. of respondents	percentage (%) of respondents
1.I cut my finger and was *taking to the hospital (taken)	40	15	30%
2.My mummy was *beating (beaten)	30	20	40%
3.She was *taken the money when (taking)	35	15	30%
Total	105	50	100%

Source: 2019 Survey

Table 5, row 1, shows that 40% of the respondents committed the error of using -ing morpheme instead of the -en, thereby, realising *taking* instead of *taken*. The same type of error occurred in the second row where 30% of the respondents committed an error by adding the -ing morpheme to *beat* instead of the -en morpheme. In the third row, 30% of the respondents committed an error by using the -en morpheme instead of the -ing morpheme.

Most of the errors highlighted above were syntactic errors as they made the sentences in which they appeared ungrammatical. However, since the study focused on each word and the kind of error which a particular word manifested, they also qualified to be regarded as morphological errors realised from the respondents.

The above analysis on morphological errors of first year undergraduate students were considered as deviant or inefficient on the intended rules of the English morphology, thereby, showing the inability of the learners to

generate absolute rules of the language. Headbloom (2006:33) claimed that morphological errors were caused as a result of not being aware, and over generalisation of inflections.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The teachers who teach morphology should be graded on it and must give more attention to the subject rather than to the other components of the language because, morphology development increases the students' vocabulary in English.
- 2) The study observed that morphology-related topics were not taught at all in most institutions probably as a result of dearth of textbooks. The English language scholars should be encouraged by the government and other stakeholders in the Education sector by funding the publications of textbooks on morphology or textbooks embedded with detailed topics on morphology, for effective

teaching of this aspect of the English language.

3) The students should ensure that they create good consciousness in using morphological rules while writing in order to avoid morphological errors.

Since the school is an institution of learning where pupils, students and other learners come to learn and be equipped in the English language, the students learning morphology of English should put every effort to improve in this aspect of the language.

3) Morphology should be systematically taught in schools especially, in the undergraduate classes to enable the students gain mastery of the restriction rules.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to show clearly how far the productivity of word formation rules generated complexity to the learners of the English language. The morphological rules need to be specified by condition and constraints in order to avoid over-generalization and inconsistency. An understanding of the fundamental rules guiding morphology is very crucial for the second language learner in order, for mastery to take place. All effort must be put in place to boost performance in the English language as it is the pedestal upon which success in education lies. Morphology of English must therefore, be treated in the same manner as other topics in English as a unified whole.

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Ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo

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Abstract

Ellipsis is the omission of redundant constituents in a construction. The word „ Ngwa“ refers to the people, the geo-political area known as Ngwa land and the dialect of Igbo spoken by the indigenes of Ngwa land. The Ngwa people are found in Abia State in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Some of the objectives of this work are: to illustrate the ability of the remnant in an elliptical structure in the recovery and interpretation of the elided parts, and to show that Ellipsis enhances the economy of words. Data for this paper was obtained using the elicitation method of translating a set of elliptical constructions in the English language into Ngwa-Igbo by two competent native adult speakers of Ngwa-Igbo. Secondary data was collected from text books, and the internet which were acknowledged. The theoretical framework used for this paper is the X – Bar theory of phrasal analysis and the tree diagrams reflected this wherever it was necessary. Some of the findings are: that Ellipsis is a linguistic mechanism that is used to avoid the repetition of strings that have already been uttered in the previous part of a construction and that the name given to each of the type of Ellipsis, depends on what was elided in the fuller structures. This paper recommends the study of Ellipsis as a natural phenomenon in human languages.

Keywords: Ellipsis, remnant, recoverability, X-bar, Ngwa-Igbo.

1.0 Introduction

‘Ngwa’ refers to the dialect, the people and the geo – political area known as Ngwa land. Ngwa people are found in Abia State of Nigeria. Seven of the seventeen Local Government Areas in the State, belong to the Ngwa people. These local Government Areas are: Isiala Ngwa South, Isiala Ngwa North, Obingwa, Osioma, Aba North, Aba South and Ugwuagbo. Ngwa is classified by Williamson and Blench (2003, p. 31) as an Igbo dialect under the new Benue – Congo language family.

The framework adopted for the analysis of data in this paper is the X-Bar Theory of structural representation. The notion of X – Bar Theory was first introduced into grammatical analysis by Chomsky (1970) in his article titled *Remarks on Nominalization* and was later expanded by Jackendoff (1977) in a monograph entitled *X – Syntax*. The major concerns of the X – Bar

Theory are: to account for word order, to determine the configuration of the D – structure, to determine the direction of movement if there is any, to demonstrate constraints in the movement of structural constituents, to determine the structural relationship between the head of a construction and other members of the construction such as: determiners, complements and adjuncts, to recognize intermediate categories like: (N¹, V¹, P¹, I¹), which are larger than the terminal lexical categories; (N, V, P, A) but smaller than the phrasal categories such as: (NP, VP, PP, IP) and so on. (cf. Ndimele 2004, p. 34). The tree diagrams in this paper will reflect this as required.

The quest for what is grammatical and acceptable in linguistics is a major force beneath the search into the acceptance of elided structures with reference to the context of speech. Lyons (1977, p. 589), refers to Ellipsis as “... grammatically incomplete, but



contextually appropriate and interpretable sentence – fragments”. Here Lyons notes categorically that elided structures are syntactically incomplete, but semantically accepted structures with reference to the context of speech. Lyons (1977, p. 589) observes further that “a conversation consisting entirely of grammatically completed text – sentences would generally be unacceptable as a text, and it is part of the language – competence of a speaker of the language to use and accept such incomplete structures in conversations”. Thus, in the view of Lyons, ellipsis is a natural phenomenon. Lyons (1977, p. 589) to illustrate an instance of a conversation gives the following expressions in the English language:

1. ‘As soon as I can’

He explained that this structure “...produced with the appropriate stress pattern and intonation might occur in a text in reply to an utterance (intended and taken as a question) such as;

2. When are you leaving?

He argued that the grammatical structure of the context – dependent sentence fragment, ‘*As soon as I can*’, can be accounted for by describing it as an elliptical, appropriately contextualized version of the utterance’. ‘*I’m leaving as soon as I can*’. Thus, according to Lyons (1977, p. 589) “ellipsis is one of the most obvious effects of contextualization in the case of sentence fragments such as the one just illustrated above.

Lyons (1989, p. 175) again argues that elliptical structures are shorter forms of some longer version of the same sentence, and that elliptical structures can be understood to refer to grammatically equivalent but perhaps stylistically distinct forms as occurring in otherwise identical sentences. This here means that Ellipsis is a style found in some short expressions that

have longer forms with the same meaning. Hence, the need to make a distinction between grammatical and contextual completeness in elided and non-elided forms of identical constructions.

Brown and Miller (1985, p. 151), refer to ellipsis as “structures that are to a greater or lesser degree either grammatically or semantically incomplete or both; grammatically incomplete insofar as constituents have been elided; semantically incomplete inasmuch as the sentence can only be understood with reference to their context”. In both cases, these sentence fragments as they refer to elided structures can only be fully understood by reference to some understood fuller forms where the items have been elided or reduced to pro-forms. Here Brown and Miller describe elided structures as grammatically and semantically incomplete structures that can only be understood with reference to context. Brown and Miller (1985:151), add further that, “the amount of grammatical and contextual interpretation necessary can be appreciated if we consider, for example (3) below to be only understood as (4) only in the appropriate context. In other contexts, it might be understood as: (5) and (6) below:

3. ‘She wouldn’t’.

4. ‘Mary wouldn’t shut the door’.

5. Mary wouldn’t feed the cat; or

6. Jane wouldn’t give up smoking.

Hence, ellipsis from their explanation could give rise to the generic reading of some fragmented structures except in the light of other preceding structures in the context. Matthews (2007, p. 119) indicates that pro-forms can be used in elided structures to stand in place of full predicates. Matthews explains this by saying that in a structure like:

7. “John did see them”.

Could be reduced to



8.. ‘John did’, with the pro – form *did* replacing the entire predicate. This in other words means that in elliptical structures, stretches of utterances are reduced into just one word recoverable with reference to the context of use.

From the internet, Kennedy (1994, p. 4) asserts that “ellipsis involves the ‘reuse’ of linguistic material, material which is treated by other components of the grammar as identical to the original”. This is what he claims to be the nature of elliptical dependence. It is this aspect of Ellipsis that is responsible for the argument identity constraint in Argument Contained Ellipsis. Argument Contained Ellipsis as used here by Kennedy is Equivalent to a type of Ellipsis called VP Ellipsis. In his defence of the Argument Identity Constraint, Kennedy illustrates that when the subject of the non – elided VP is distinct from the subject of the elided VP, the result is an ungrammatical sentence. He gives the examples below:

9. If John plays well, Lou does [e] too.
10. Mary likes every song that Lou [e].
11. A woman who promised to leave town did [e].
12. * A woman who persuaded Horace to leave town did [e].

(12) above is ungrammatical because the subject of the non – elided VP, *the woman* is distinct from the subject of the elided VP, *Horace*. This he argues “follows from a fundamental property of Anaphoric Relations; dependence or referential dependence, and that intuitively, the interpretation of an anaphoric element is determined by the composition of its antecedent; hence an anaphoric element is dependent on anything contained in its antecedent”. This means that in VP – Ellipsis the elided verb phrase receives its interpretation from the overt verb phrase. Kennedy (1994, p. 4), refers to this type of

relation as ‘elliptical dependence’ or identity relations’. Thus, from the examples above, (9 – 12), the direct object of both the overtly expressed and elided verbs are understood to be the same which gives the required condition for ellipsis to hold. Kennedy schematized his argument as shown below:

“Ellipsis between VP α and VPB, VPB contained in an Argument A α of VP α , is licensed only if A α is identical to the parallel argument AB of VPB”. This means that the recoverability of an elided item is based on dependent relations within the same linguistic environment.

Another insight from the internet by Forgarty (2012, p.1) asserts that the use of ellipsis is indicated by the use of “those little dot – dot – dots you often see in e – mail messages”. Forgarty (2012, p.1) goes further to add that people use it all the time, and it seems like a way of making ones writing more informal and conversational as if a person was pausing, and that one can use ellipsis in formal writing in making quotations. To show the use of dots in indicating ellipsis, Forgarty uses the quotes below:

13. “I cannot help it; reason has nothing to do with it; I love her against reason’.

According to Forgarty, under a tight word limit, the quotation above can be shortened to:

14. ‘I cannot help it ... I love her against reason’.

In his words “the middle part of the construction”... reason has nothing to do with it”, seems redundant and taking it out does not change the meaning. Dot – dot – dot and it is gone, which saves seven words.” He however adds that it is wrong to use an ellipsis to make even a subtle change to the meaning of a quotation. This perception of ellipsis is not what this paper is poised to do



but it is worth mentioning that it is used in the presentation of written materials. This is because points of ellipsis are mechanical devices used to indicate: to indicate a falter in dialog, the passage of time, an unfinished list, or that a speaker has trailed off in the middle of a sentence or left something unsaid, or fragmented speech accompanied by confusion, insecurity, distress or uncertainty.

According to Forgarty the use of ellipsis points as a punctuation mark(...), contrasts with the dash (-), which is used for more confident and decisive pauses. As a warning, Forgarty (2012, p.3) stresses that one should not allow the sweet lure of points of ellipsis “... to muddle one’s ability to write a complete sentence and that writers who use ellipses to imply that they have more to say may not have anything in mind since the device seems a rather cheap one.” This means that one has to be careful when reading a text with points of ellipsis. Forgarty also writes that in the use of points of ellipsis, one must make sure in writing, typesetting, and page designing that the ellipsis points do not end up on two different lines, but with a space on each side of an ellipsis point that is, between the word before it and the word after it because it typically stands in for a missing word or a sentence. Forgarty in this respect points out that if points of ellipsis come after a sentence, one should put the full stop (.), put a space, before putting in the three ellipsis points and that this usually results in four dots in a row. Hence, one has to be careful to observe this punctuational rule. Points of ellipsis, Forgarty adds, must be used to indicate a quotation that starts at the middle of a sentence for good writing habits. For example:

15. Aadvark said, “... squiggly never caught a fish”.

Forgarty argues that “perhaps the original quotation was;

16. “Even though he was on the lake all day, Squiggly never caught a fish”.

Points of ellipsis, in association with question mark, exclamation mark, comma and semicolon Forgarty adds that there should be a gap between each of the different punctuation marks in a good writing exercise. For examples:

17. “Where did he go ...? Why did he go out again?”

18. “Come! Don’t say anything!

In (17), there is a gap between the points of ellipsis and the question mark (?), while in (18) there is a gap between the exclamation mark (!), the points of ellipsis and the full stop (.), which demonstrates a good writing practice.

Martin (2012, p. 1), indicates that “... ellipsis simply means “omission”. In punctuation, Martin adds that the use of the dots of ellipsis means that something is missing from the sentence. For example: (“... and so on ...”). An elliptical conversation, Martin further explains, that it is one where a lot of key information is left out because the speakers know it already”. For example:

19. ‘Have you got one?’ – is elliptical.

Martin explains that in the utterance above, the speakers know what ‘one’ refers to and that in grammar; one most times, in informal conversation, tends to leave out words that our hearers are sure to infer from the context of speech. He gives the following examples:

20. – Got any money? (‘Have you, is omitted).

21. – Must go (I).

22. – There is something but I don’t what ...(its)

23. – I’ve brought the documents, as ... agreed (we).

(20-23) above, have a missing part in them as indicated in the brackets.

From the Free Encyclopedia (2012, p. 1), “Ellipsis is a word from Ancient Greek



which means; omission, or falling short. It refers to the intentional omission of a word, sentence or a whole section from an original text being quoted.” Wikipedia adds that, ellipsis when used at the beginning or end of a sentence, can “inspire a feeling of melancholy or longing. As to its use in writing, this source points out that it is used in reported speech to represent an intentional silence, perhaps indicating irritation, dismay, shock or disgust. In poetry it is used to highlight sarcasm or make the reader think about the last points in the poem. In newspaper reporting, it is used to indicate that a quotation has been condensed for space, brevity or reliance. In Mathematics, it is used to mean “and so forth”. Thus, Wikipedia illustrates the various functions of the points of ellipsis which is required for good reading and writing exercises.

According to Bear (2012, p. 1), in computer interfaces and programming, ellipses are often used in an operating systems taskbars or web browser tabs to indicate longer titles than will fit. In an interface guideline, the use of points of ellipsis after the name of command implies that the user will need to provide further information such as: “Save As...”command, which shows that after being clicked will require the user to enter a file name as opposed to “Save” where the file will usually be saved under its existing name”. This means that point of ellipse is used as a device to direct a computer on what to do. Still on computer operations, this source writes that “an ellipsis character after a status message signifies that an operation may take some time, as in “Downloading updates ...”. Bear also reports that in the internet there is what is called “extended ellipses” which could have several dots of six to twelve points of ellipses used to indicate an awkward silence or a ‘no comment response to a previous

statement made by the other chat party”. Bear, Forgarty and Martin have shown that a good understanding of the use of points of ellipsis is relevant even in the operations of a computer.

Akindele (2012, p. 1), sees ellipsis as, “the idea of omitting part of a sentence on the assumption that an earlier sentence will make the meaning clear”. Akindele identifies three types of ellipsis namely: nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis. Akindele gives the following examples:

24. Sade bought some oranges and Seun some guavas. (Verbal Ellipsis).
25. Three members of staff went there and yet another three. (Nominal Ellipsis).
26. I left my meal in the kitchen and someone came in and ate it up without saying a word to me. I wish I could find out who. (Clausal Ellipses).

According to Akindele, in (24) above the verb *bought* has been elided, in (25) the noun *members* was elided, while in (26) *who* replaces someone and the clause *came in...* was elided. With reference to Akindele’s assertion, ellipsis is a cohesive device that helps to unify a text by economy of words because it saves a writer from unnecessary repetition of words that already have an endophoric relation in a text.

Ellipsis in the Igbo language is called *ńsépúókúwú* which means deletion of an utterance. This implies that ellipsis is a purely syntactic process that involves the omission of a grammatically required word or phrase that can be inferred from its immediate structural context. Hence, ellipsis is a phenomenon of deletion in the surface structure of a language and this is the view upheld in this paper. Having seen the views of some language scholars on what ellipsis is, the next section of this paper will present the



types of ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo.

1.1 Ellipsis in Ngwa – Igbo

In this part of the paper, we shall be examining the various types of ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo. The various types of ellipsis in human language depend on the individual perception of what is omitted in a construction. Below, is a discussion on: Gapping, Stripping, VP- Ellipsis, Pseudo-gapping, Answer Ellipsis, Sluicing, N-Ellipsis, Comparative Ellipsis, and Null Complement Anaphora, as types of ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo.

1.1.1 Gapping

Matthews (2007, p. 153), refers to gapping as "... the deletion of a verb, with or without other elements from the middle of

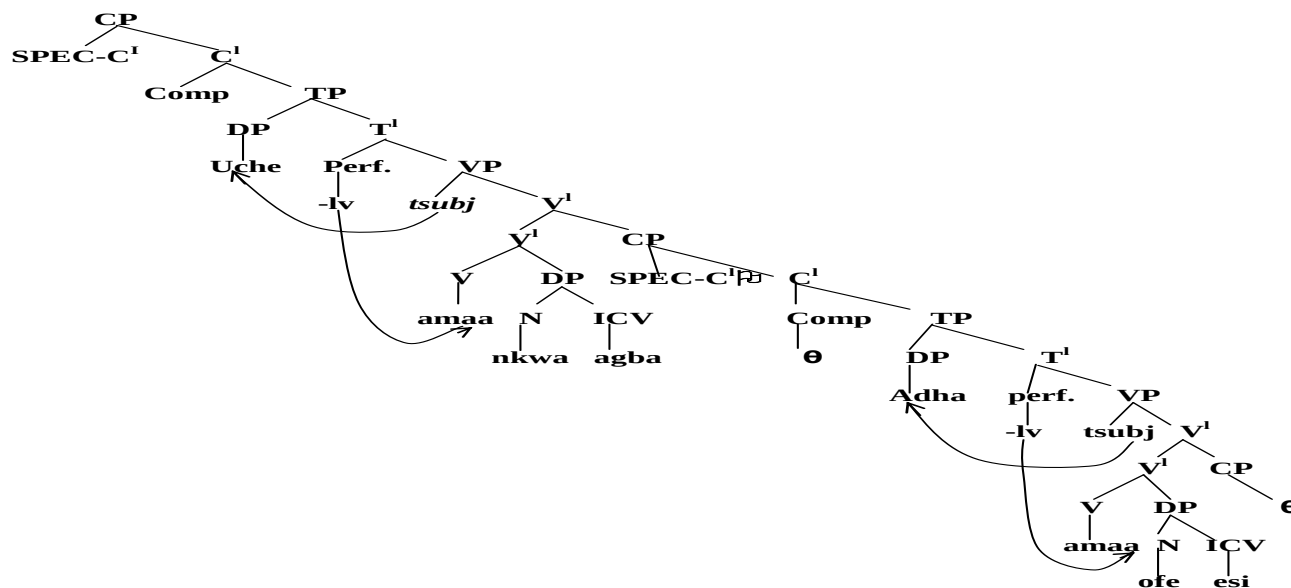
the second and any subsequent clauses in a sequence related by coordination". This means that redundant materials that are present in the immediate preceding clause in a coordinate construction are not deleted. The gapped material usually has a finite verb. For example:

27a. *Úchè amáálá nkwa ágbá Àdhá amáálá ófè' ésí*
Uche pr. know dance ICV, Adha pr. Know soup ICV
Uche knows how to dance and Adha knows how to cook soup.

b. *Úchè amáálá nkwa ágbá Àdhá [e] ófè' [e].*
Uche pr. knows suff dance ICV Adha [e] soup [e].
'Uche knows how to dance, Adha soup'.

Below are the tree diagrams for (27a -b) represented as (27c-d):

c.

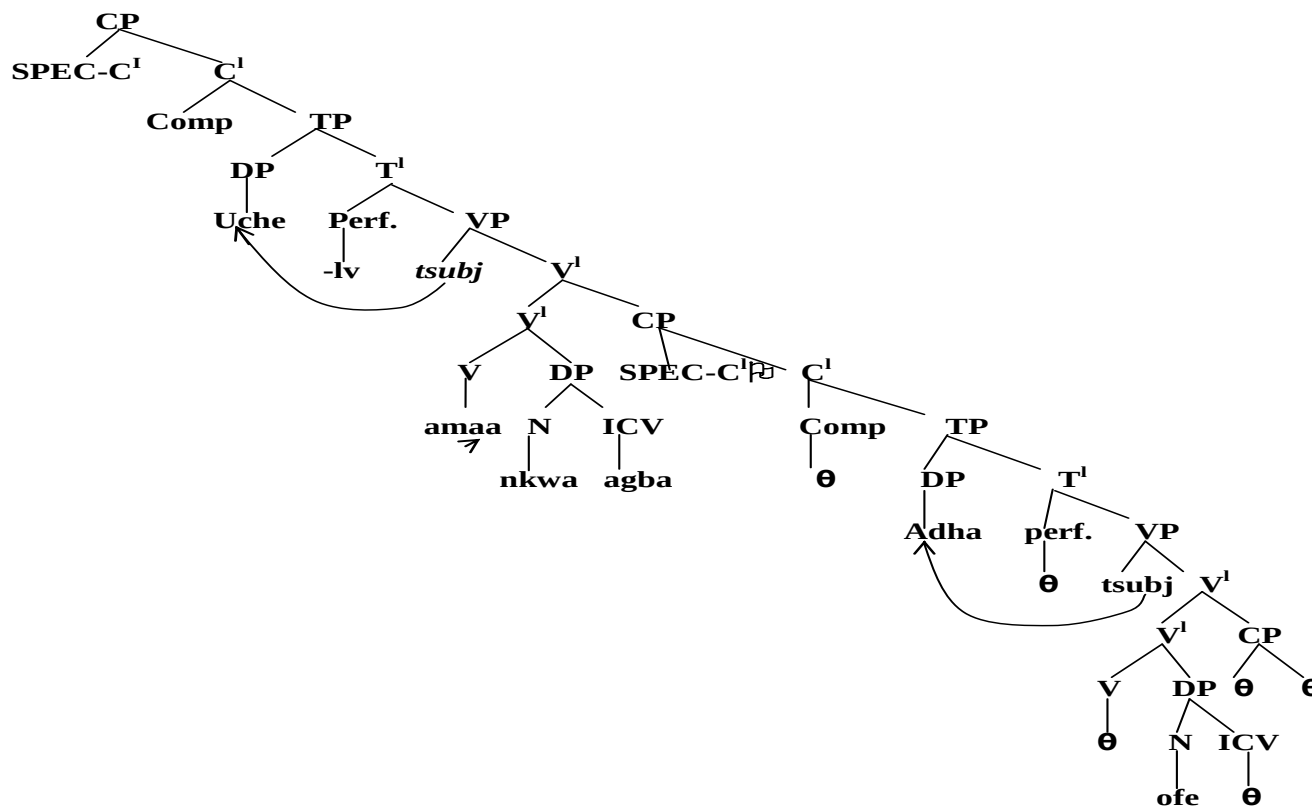


Úchè amáálá nkwa ágbá Àdhá amáálá ófè' ésí

Fig.1: Diagram illustrating a non-gapped structure in Ngwa-Igbo.



d.



Úchè àmáálá nkwa agba Àdhá [e] ófé' [e].

Fig.2: Diagram illustrating a gapped structure in Ngwa-Igbo.

In (27a) is the underlying structure from which (27b) is derived. In (27a) there are two clauses: *Úchè àmáálá ñkwà àgbá*, 'Uche knows how to dance' and *Àdhá àmáálá ófé esi*. 'Adha knows how to cook soup'. conjoined without an overt coordinating conjunction. In (27b), the verb phrase in the second clause has been eliminated, leaving only the subject nominal *Àdhá* and the object *ófé* in the predicate positions of the second clause. In the tree diagram for (27c-d), the arrow from the *tsubj* to DP (Determiner Phrase) in consonance with the X-Bar Theory shows that the subjects: *Úchè* and *Àdhá* in the coordinate sentence are internally generated

by the verb which is the theta role assigner. The arrow from the T (Tense node) lowers the *-lv* suffix to the verb for the complete realisation of the verb *àmáálá* 'knows' in its appropriate perfect tense in Ngwa. There is no elision of any constituent in (27c). In (27d), there is a deletion of the verb *àmáálá* 'knows', and the inherent complement verb *esi* 'cook', in the second clause. The condition which enabled this is because the verbs in the coordinated construction are identical.

1.1.2 Stripping

According to Matthews (2007, p. 348), stripping in linguistics is "... the reduction of a clause to a single unit by which it differs



from an earlier clause to which it is related by coordination. Matthews gives this example in English:

- 28a. I sent a letter to her parents and I sent some flowers to her parents.
b. I sent a letter to her parents and <> some flowers.

Here in stripping, one can see that the agent in the two clauses refers to a particular person. Hence the difference between gapping and stripping is that while gapping refers to different subjects in the two coordinated structures, that of stripping refers to the same agent carrying out different actions in the two coordinated structures, hence the elision of the subject in the second clause since it can be recovered by reference to the preceding subject. This is demonstrated below in Ngwa:

- 29a. *Ōbí n̄zùtààrà yá ósè, Ōbí n̄zùtààrà yá n̄nú.*
Ōbi pr. buy – suff – past he pepper Ōbi pr – buy past her salt.
'Ōbi bought her some pepper and Ōbi bought her some salt'.

- b. *Ōbí n̄zùtààrà yá ósè[e] là n̄nú.*
Ōbi pr. buy – suff- past her pepper elision and salt.
'Ōbi bought her some pepper and some salt.'

In (29a) there are two coordinated structures: *Ōbí n̄zùtààrà yá ósè* 'Ōbi bought some pepper for her, and *Ōbí n̄zùtààrà yá n̄nú*. 'Ōbi bought some salt for her' In (29b) above, the entire constituents of the second clause was elided with the exception of its direct object *n̄nú*, 'salt'. So the stripping was almost a total one.

1.1.3 VP – Ellipsis

Kennedy, (1994, P. 2) argues that, "VP – ellipsis is characterized by the apparent deletion of a full VP under identity with some VP in the discourse". An insight from Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia asserts that "this type of ellipsis is also known as Verb Phrase ellipsis (VPE). The VP – ellipsis, elides a non – finite VP. The ellipsis must be introduced by an auxiliary verb or by the particle *to*. Examples from Kennedy (1994, p.

2)are:

30. If John plays well, Lou does [e] too.
31. Sterling will try the push after Maureen has [e].

Examples from Ngwa – Igbo are:

- 32a. *Àdhá n̄dì írī n̄rí, Úchè n̄dì írī n̄rí.*
Adha pr. be to eat food, Uchepr be to eat food.
'Adha is eating food Uche is eating food.'
b. *Àdhá n̄dì írī n̄rí, Úchè n̄dì kwà.*
Adha pr be to eat food, Uchepr be too.
Adha is eating and so is Uche.

(32a) above, is a coordinate construction but with no overt marking of the coordination. However, it is obvious that the construction is made up of two independent clauses: *Àdhá n̄dì írī n̄rí*, 'Adha is eating', and *Úchè n̄dì írī n̄rí*, 'Uche is eating'. In (32b), in the second clause of the coordinate construction, the main verb has been elided, leaving only the VP *n̄dì írī n̄rí* is eating' and the adverb *kwa*, 'too'.

1.1.4 Pseudo-gapping

This is a type of ellipsis that many linguists take to be a particular manifestation of VP – Ellipsis. The major difference between VP – ellipsis and Pseudo-gapping is that Pseudo-gapping occurs in contrastive contexts of a single verb. Carnie (2007, p. 384) asserts that pseudo-gapping is a "...variant of ellipsis that puzzlingly doesn't delete the entire VP... but that the accusative DP is left behind". The accusative DP here refers to the object of the second clause. Carnie (2007, p. 384) argues that in regular VP – ellipsis, the object disappears in those contexts, unlike in pseudo-gapping. Carnie gives the example below to drive home his point.

33. Darin will eat a squid sandwich and Raiza will [e] a peanut butter one.

An example of Pseudogapping in Ngwa-Igbo is:

- 34a. *Úchè n̄chòrò jí, mà Àdhá n̄chòrò éde.*



Uche pr want + past yam but Adha pr want + past cocoyam.
Uche wants yam, but Adha wants cocoyam.

b. *Úchè òhòrò jí, Àdhá [e] éde.*

Uche pr. want + past yam Adha pr. [e] cocoyam.

'Uche wants yam, Adha cocoyam.

In (34a), we have two structures: *Úchè òhòrò jí*, 'Uche wants yam' and *Àdhá òhòrò éde*, 'Adha wants cocoyam', linked by the contrastive coordinator *mà* 'but'. In (34b) there is a deletion of the coordinator and the verb of the second clause which leaves only the subject *Àdhá* and the object *éde* in the second clause.

1.1.5 Answer Ellipsis

This type of ellipsis involves question – answer pairs. The question focuses on an unknown piece of information, often using an interrogative word like: *who*, *which*, *what*, *when*, *how*, and so on. The corresponding answer provides the missing information and in so doing, the redundant information that appeared in the question, could be optionally elided. For example:

35a. Who has been hiding the truth?

b. Billy (has been hiding the truth.)

36a. What have you been trying to cook?

b. (I have been trying to cook) rice.

Examples in Ngwa-Igbo are:

37a. *Únyé nsi là Ézè òzùrù ígwè?*

Who pr say that Ezepr buy + past bicycle?

Who said that Eze bought a bicycle?

b. *Àdhá [e]*

(37a) above is the question construction. (37b) represents the structure of ellipsis where every constituent of the answer has been elided, leaving only the subject '*Àdhá*'. The realization of the elided section in the answer would come from the information contained in the question.

1.1.6. Sluicing

According to Chung (2012, p. 1), in

Sluicing, "...an interrogative phrase appears stranded where one might have expected to find a complete constituent question". In the words of Matthews (2007, p. 370), Sluicing is used to refer to "... a term proposed for a syntactic process deleting all but a questioned element in a dependent interrogative". Thus, in Sluicing, there is a deletion of some parts of an answer terminating in the part that re – echoes the question. For example in Ngwa:

38a. *Úlèè mgbè Ííísgà – àbíá?*

Q when Jesus will come.

'When will Jesus come?'

b. *Ógà – àbíá, kámaàmághí m, mgbè óbù [e].*

He aux. pr. Come conj. Pr know NEG. When he it be [e].

'He will come but I know not when it will be [e].'

39a. *Ò bú gírì là Àdhá mmà esí?*

Pro be what that Adha know cook

What is it that Adha can cook?

b. *Àdhá mmà hwé esí, káma àmághí mhwé óbù [e].*

Adha pr know thing pr cook, but pr know not me thing pro cook [e]

Adha knows how to cook but I don't know what [e].

In (38b) the verb part *Ó gà – àbíá*, 'he will come' which should have completed the answer part is deleted and in (39b), the verb part *Ó mà esí*, 'she knows how to cook' which should also have completed the answer part is equally deleted. But these deleted parts are recoverable from the questions part of the conversation.

1.1.7. N – Ellipsis

This means Noun ellipsis. This occurs when the noun and perhaps the accompanying modifiers are omitted from a noun phrase. N – ellipsis often occurs in structures with cardinal or ordinal numbers. (cf. Wikipedia (2012, p. 5). Examples are given below from Ngwa – Igbo.

40a. *Úché mbughí ádí ghí mímá, óchénkéátó ádí ghí mímá.*

Chair first pr. be + NEG good, chair of three pr be +neg good.

The first chair is not good, and the third chair is not good.



- b. Óché mbụ là [e] ñkéáto ádi ghi mímá.
Chair first and ellipsis of three pr be + neg good.
'The first and third chairs are not good.'

The above examples illustrate N – Ellipsis with cardinal and ordinal numbers. In the deep structure in (40a), the nouns in the two clauses are fully spelt out with their ordinal numbers. In (40b) however, there is a merge of the two nouns by the coordinating conjunction *la* 'and', followed by the elision of the subject *óché* 'chair' in the second construction. However, there is an elision of the verb phrase *ádighi mímá* 'is not good' in the first clause. This resulted in the realisation of the construction: *Óché mbụ là [e] ñke áto ádi ghi mímá*. 'The first and third chairs are not good'.

1.1.8. Comparative Ellipsis

This is also called comparative deletion. It occurs in comparative clauses introduced by *than* in the English language. The expression in the comparative clause is elided that corresponds to the expression focused by a comparative morph such as *more* or words with the suffix *-er* in the antecedent clause. Examples of Comparative ellipsis in the English language are:

41. Doris looks more satisfied than Doreen looks [satisfied].
42. William has more friends in many countries than you have [in many countries].

(cf. Wikipedia (2012, p. 6). In Comparative Ellipsis, one must observe that the unelliptical versions of these sentences are unacceptable. Hence, Comparative Ellipsis seems to be obligatory for structural acceptability in order to avoid the production and use of clumsy constructions. An example in the Ngwa-Igbo is:

- 43a. Nkèchí nnwere nthùthu káriákè Ádhá nnwere nthùthu.
Nkechi NNP have + rv hair more of Adha NNP have + rv hair
'Nkechi has more hair than Adha has more hair.'

- b. Nkèchí nnwere nthùthu káriá [e] Ádhá [e]
Nkechi NNP have + rv hair more [e] Adha [e]
Nkechi has more hair than Adha.

In (43a) the item that is in comparison is: *nthùthu* 'hair' and it occurs in the two clauses in the construction. With the application of Comparative ellipsis *nthùthu* 'hair' is deleted from the underlying construction resulting in the production of (43b) which is a less clumsy construction and a more generally accepted form.

1.1.9. Null Complement Anaphora

In this type of Ellipsis, there is a complete deletion of a complement, whereby the elided complement could be a finite clause, an infinitive clause or a prepositional phrase that has already occurred in the question. The free encyclopedia (2012, p. 6), reports that: "The verbal predicates that can license Null Complement Anaphora, form a limited set. These include verbs like: know, approve, refuse and decide". This means that not all verbs can subcategorized for this kind of ellipsis. Some examples in English are:

- 44a. Do you know what happened?
b. No, I don't know (what happened). = finite clause
45a. Do you approve of the plan?
b. No, I don't approve (of the plan). = prepositional phrase
46a. Have you decided to take the offer?
b. Yes, I have (decided to take the offer). = infinitive clause
47a. They told Bill to help but he refused (to help).
= infinitive clause.

Examples from Ngwa-Igbo are:

- 48a. I kpébiéla íru órú áhụ?
Pro decide + perfpr work work that
Have you decided to do the work?
b. Ééé, ékpeébiaálá m.
Yes, pr. decide me
Yes, I have decided

(48a – b) is structurally represented below as (48c-d):



C.

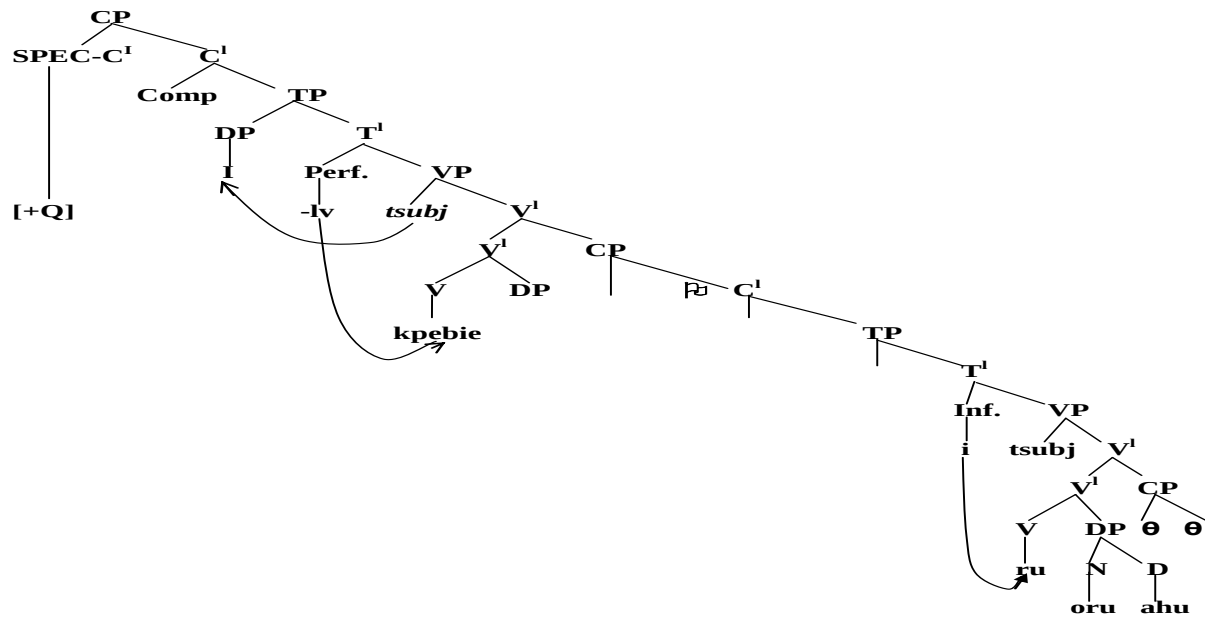


Fig. 3: Diagram representing an unnull'd complement anaphora in Ngwa-Igbo

d.

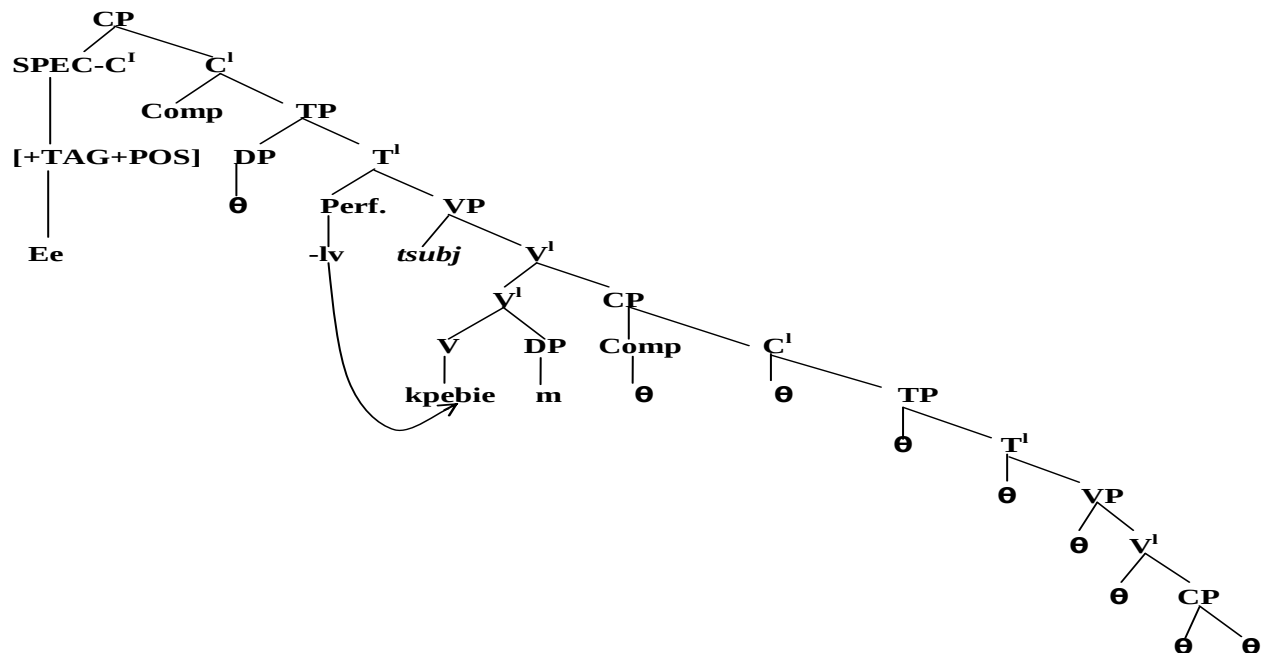


Fig. 4: Diagram representing a nulled complement anaphora in Ngwa-Igbo

In (48b) the elided part is: *írụ órú áhụ* ‘to do that work’. the part that is already contained in the question in (48a). From the tree diagram in (48c), the arrow from the *tsubj* to the DP, shows that the subject is internally generated by the verb, while the arrow from T (Tense node) to the verb lowers the prefix *i-* to form the infinitive *írụ* ‘to work’. In (28d), which is the response to (28c), there is a deletion of the anaphoric complement: *írụ órú áhụ* ‘to do that work’. This resulted in the elliptical structure: *Ééé, ékpéébiaálá m.* ‘Yes, I have decided instead of : *Ééé, ékpéébiaálá m írụ órú áhụ.* ‘Yes, I have decided to do that job’ which is the full expression of the reduced answer.

2.0 Conclusion

This paper, started off by introducing the dialect of study and its linguistic classification. Thereafter, a brief review of some literature of what ellipsis is, was presented. This paper, it is establishes that ellipsis refers to structures that are shorter forms of some longer versions of the same sentence that are grammatically equivalent but perhaps stylistically distinct forms. This paper in line with the assertion of Lyons (1977, p. 589) was able to establish the fact that there are contexts where structurally incomplete expressions are acceptable to both speaker and hearer and that the ability to produce and accept such structures form part of the native speakers competence in that, language or dialect as the case may be.

In the review of literature on ellipsis, it was found out that when elliptical structures are used in quotation, such quotations should retain the original meaning and that the use of points of ellipsis as a punctuation mark, is of great relevance to the act of good writing. In all the examples presented in this paper, it was observed that ellipsis is a linguistic mechanism that is used to avoid the repetition of strings that have

already been uttered in the previous part of a construction.

The paper illustrates too that elliptical structures could give rise to the generic reading of some structures, but the context of speech helps to resolve such instances of ambiguity. This paper has also shown that ellipsis is a natural phenomenon in Ngwa – Igbo as it is in all human languages; though such structures are grammatically and semantically incomplete. Their grammatical incompleteness is as a result of the fact that some constituents have been elided; and semantically incomplete in as much as the sentences can only be understood with reference to their context or reference to some other constituents in the discourse.

The paper also showed that the name given to each of the type of ellipsis depends on what was elided in the fuller structures. This paper also demonstrates the fact that ellipsis involves a dependence relation that holds between some elements within the same linguistic environment. Thus, in ellipsis recoverability of elided constituents is possible because of the antecedent and anaphoric relation that exist in elliptical structures. The paper also showed that ellipsis enhances the economy of words and avoids clumsy constructions. The data from Ngwa-Igbo have shown that ellipsis is a cohesive device which helps to bind elements of a construction together by the dependence relation of elided constituents on the non-elided counterparts. Hence, in ellipsis there is a reuse of materials. From the data, it was found out that ellipsis occurred more in coordinate constructions and in question and answer pairs. This paper is not exhaustive in all that could be said about ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo, but it rather recommends for further research in the study of ellipsis in Ngwa-Igbo and other languages of the world.



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La compétence linguistique des apprenants Yoruba en classe de français langue étrangère et la formation des noms au pluriel

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Résumé

Les problèmes confrontés par l'enseignement et l'apprentissage du français au Nigéria demeurent une préoccupation pour bien nombre d'acteurs et chercheurs. Malgré les solutions pertinentes proposées, la problématique de la baisse de niveau des apprenants en classe de FLE au Nigéria est loin de se résoudre. Cet article a deux buts majeurs. Le premier but pertinent est de présenter brièvement quelques problèmes rencontrés par les apprenants au niveau de la formation du pluriel des noms en français par les apprenants yorùbá en classe de FLE et le deuxième but pertinent est de suggérer quelques stratégies didactiques pour résoudre ces problèmes.

Mots Clés : Didactique, compétence linguistique, nom, stratégie, analyse contrastive.

1.0 Introduction

Les difficultés confrontés par les apprenants nigériens y inclut les apprenants yorùbaphones en classe de FLE au Nigéria ont déjà fait couler beaucoup d'encre ces dernières années et selon des chercheurs nigériens en FLE ces difficultés sont multiples. Alo (1995 :1) déclaré la même chose:

[...] Pour un Nigérien qui apprend la langue française, les difficultés sont de plusieurs ordres , notamment phonétique (eg : la prononciation des mots français) (orth) graphique, (eg. Les fautes courantes, les pluriels irréguliers, les mots à l'orthographe illogique ou difficile etc.) grammatical (eg. La syntaxe, l'emploi des verbes, les conjugaisons irrégulières, le genre et le nombre des mots etc.) général (eg. Les faux amis, la confusion de terme etc.).

En classe de FLE au Nigéria, l'un de ces difficultés est le problème de l'interférence linguistique. Selon Amosu (1995 :2) :

L'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère entraîne l'apparition chez l'apprenant des éléments et des habitudes de sa langue maternelle.

Cela conditionne sa façon de refléter les particularités linguistiques dans la pratique de la nouvelle langue.

Et ceci remonte au phénomène de l'interférence linguistique, un phénomène qui ne doit pas être sous estimé par les enseignants des langues étrangères au Nigéria. Car ce phénomène est la base majeure de difficultés confrontées en classe de FLE par les apprenants nigériens de la langue française.

Selon Martinet (1970) cité par Ngarsou (2008) « lorsque deux systèmes linguistiques s'influencent, ils provoquent ce qu'on appelle l'interférence linguistique » c'est-à-dire la présence dans une langue "A" d'élément d'une langue "B" et vice versa . En plus , Martinet (1960 read 1980) cité par Igbeneghu (2012) note par exemple que l'influence linguistique s'impose parce que : «Les systèmes de chaque langue forment une structure suil -genevis, c'es-à-dire qu'ils opposent les uns aux autres de façon particulière ». Et selon Igbeneghu (Op.cit), Martinet (1960 read 1980) donne l'exemple du sujet anglais apprenant le français qui est amené à traduire la signifie « hot dog » comme chien Chaud. Concernant les niveaux où se manifestent l'interférence linguistique, Martinet (1970) a cité par Ngarsou (2008) a cité trois niveaux à savoir les niveaux phonétique, lexical et syntaxe.



En ce qui nous concerne dans cet article , il s'agit d'un sujet qui se retrouve à l'optique de la syntaxe car nous avons observé que très souvent nos apprenants se voient confronté avec le problème de la formation du pluriel lorsqu'ils se servent du français pour communiquer surtout au niveau écrit et ceci rend leur communication très difficile à aborder et selon Ilah (2008):

La langue est un outil de communication, une vocation première qui n'est effectivement réalisable qu'à travers la phrase. Ceci parce que la communication n'est guère praticable par des unités linguistiques isolées mais, plutôt un agencement des unités en une suite appelée phrase dont l'étude se qualifie de syntaxe.

2.0 Objectif

Le présent article a pour but majeur de cerner les obstacles rencontrés par les apprenants yorùbaphones du Nigéria dans la formation du pluriel en français et de proposer quelques stratégies didactiques pour réduire ce problème en classe le FLE en milieu yorùbá du Nigéria et faire avancer l'enseignement et l'apprentissage du français au Nigéria.

3.0 Définition de thèmes pertinents

Didactique

En paraphrasant Cyr (1996) la didactique est une discipline qui a pour champs d'investigation la classe de la langue étrangère. Elle donne assez de la priorité aux interactions en classe de FLE. La didactique permet d'interpréter les phénomènes en relation avec les processus d'enseignement. Dans la didactique ; l'un des facteurs clé est l'apprenant. De tout ce que précède, on peut voir que la didactique s'intéresse à tout ce qui se passe en classe.

En tant que professeurs, la didactique nous permet non seulement à comprendre les apprenants mais à comprendre aussi tout ce que concernent les apprenants au niveau du plan émotif et du plan cognitif. Selon Tijani (2003) la didactique tient compte de non seulement l'apprenant mais aussi tout ce qu'est mis en place pour sa formation.

La compétence et la compétence linguistique

Selon da Cruz et Aoundji (2012) le terme « la compétence est polysémique » et d'après plusieurs définition (Legendre, 1993), Wolf et al, (1997), Percenoud (1998), Rogier (2001 et Dehatel (2001) on retient :

- Une compétence suppose à la fois des savoirs, savoir faire et des aptitudes.
- Une phase d'intégration des différents types de savoir.
- La résolution de problèmes, la réalisation de projet ou l'accomplissement de tâche.

Du point de vue de da Cruz et Aoundji (Op.cit) :

Une compétence peut être comme la capacité de mobiliser [...] des savoirs, savoir faire et savoir être pour réaliser des tâches [...] la compétence est une acquisition, c'est le résultat d'un apprentissage. Il ne s'agit pas d'un potentiel que détiendrait l'apprenant en dehors de tout apprentissage, la compétence s'acquiert à l'issue de plusieurs séances ou leçons.

La compétence linguistique est donc la capacité de l'apprenant de produire et de comprendre un nombre infini d'énoncés soit en classe où en dehors de la classe. C'est aptitude de bien exprimer en oral comme en écrit en se servant des éléments grammaticaux et phonétiques.

La Stratégie

Le terme de stratégie connaît de nos jours une vogue sans précédent dans plusieurs domaines de la vie sociale et selon Cyr (Op.cit.) dans le domaine d'enseignement, on préfère aujourd'hui recourir aux exercices stratégiques d'enseignement et stratégies d'apprentissage. Qu'est ce que donc une stratégie et une stratégie d'enseignement. Selon Stern (1983), cité par Ajani (2011).

Dans l'acquisition de L2, les stratégies [...] sont des compétences, des techniques, des plans, des opérations mentales, conscientes ou inconscientes potentiellement ou fonctionnelles mises en place pour la réalisation d'un cours en classe de FLE.



4.0 Méthode et analyse d'enquête

Le corpus d'analyse est constitué de la production écrite de quelques apprenants yorùbá qui étudient le français dans les universités nigérianes et qui sont arrivés au village français du Nigéria Badagry pour leur programme d'immersion linguistique pendant l'année académique 2017/2018. Ces étudiants qui n'ont pas étudié le français au niveau primaire ni au niveau secondaire sont en 3ème année de leur étude avec le profile linguistique L1 – yorùbá, L2-anglais et L3- français.

Nous avons analysé leur production

écrite et à la suite des analyses que nous avons effectué, nous avons trouvé des exemples d'erreurs au niveau de la formation du pluriel des noms provenant de l'influence de la structure grammaticale au niveau de la formation du pluriel de L1- yorùbá et de L 2 – anglais sur la manière de la formation du pluriel en L 3-français et ceci pousse très souvent les apprenants yorùbáphones à faire des erreurs linguistiques lorsqu'ils se trouvent face à la formation d u pluriel des noms en français et c'est ainsi que nous avons quelques exemples de production écrite suivante de la part de ces apprenants.

S/N	PRODUCTIONS PRODUITES EN FRANÇAIS	PRODUCTIONS CORRECTES EN FRANÇAIS	SOURCES DES FAUTES
1.	Nous sommes des étudiant nigérian	Nous sommes des étudiants nigériens	Yorùbá
2.	Des journals originals	Des journaux originaux	Anglais
3.	Dans les classe, il y a des table	Dans les classes, il y a des tables	Yorùbá
4.	Ils ont des travaux à faire	Ils ont des travaux à faire	Anglais
5.	Il y a des cailloux partout	Il y a des cailloux partout	Anglais
6.	Nous portons des costume noir	Nous portons des costumes noirs	Yorùbá
7.	Sur le campus, il y a des organismes internationaux	Sur le campus, il y a des organismes internationaux	Anglais
8.	Ce sont des jeux dangereux	Ce sont des jeux dangereux	Anglais
9.	J'a des cahier noir avec moi	J'ai des cahiers noirs avec moi	Yorùbá
10.	Des hospitals nigériens	Des hôpitaux nigériens	Anglais
11.	Des animaux domestiques	Des animaux domestiques	Anglais
12.	Les chiens sont des animaux amicals	Les chiens sont des animaux amicaux	Anglais
13.	Voici des caillou noir	Voici des cailloux noirs	Yorùbá
14.	Les hommes sont toujours gentil	Les hommes sont toujours gentils	Yorùbá
15.	Les étudiant sont au village	Les étudiants sont au village	Yorùbá
16.	Dans les grande villes comme Lagos, il y a des taxi qui circulent partout	Dans les grandes villes, il y a des taxis qui circulent partout	Yorùbá
17.	Les buses sont à la gare routière	Les bus sont à la gare routière	Anglais
18.	Les policier sont arrivé	Les policiers sont arrivés	Yorùbá
19.	Les chapeaus sont avec moi	Les chapeaux sont avec moi	Anglais
20.	Pour régler le problèmes il faut des têtes-	Pour régler le problème, il	Anglais



	a-têtes	faut des tête-à-tête	
21.	Les pommes de terres arrive de la France	Les pommes des terre arrivent de la France	Anglais
22.	Nous faisons chaque jour des vas et vient entre nos foyers et les classes	Nous faisons chaque jour des va et vient entre nos foyers et les classes	Anglais

Concernant l'analyse, pour commencer dans le domaine du nombre et de la formation du pluriel, l'anglais et le français malgré quelques différences témoignent de leur origine commune indo-européenne en effet les deux langues présentent beaucoup de similarités et le yorùbá une langue africaine a une forme différente. Ainsi chacune de ces trois langues à son propre trait distinctifs, en premier lieu dans la morphologie du pluriel et ensuite dans la distribution des marques de pluriel dans les différentes parties du discours.

En se basant sur les productions produites par nos témoins, nous pouvons remarquer que là où ils devraient ajouter le 's' ou le 'x' pour rendre les noms singuliers aux noms pluriels, ils n'ont pas fait ceci et cela remonte à l'interférence linguistique provenant du L1 – le yorùbá qui est leur langue maternelle sur le français et là où ils devraient changer 'al' à 'aux' comme « journal » (singulier masculin) à journaux (singulier pluriel) pour rendre le mot journal au pluriel, ils ont ajouté le morphème 's' au mot journal pour rendre le pluriel. Et là où ils ne devraient plus ajouter ni le morphème « s » pour rendre le mot au pluriel, ils ont ajouté soit « s » ou « es » pour réaliser le même mot au pluriel, un bon exemple c'est le mot bus qui termine déjà avec le « s » au niveau singulier, et au niveau pluriel le mot devient buses et ceci remonte à l'interférence linguistique provenant de L2 (l'anglais) sur le L3 qui est le français.

5.0 Formation du pluriel des noms

D'après deux linguistes français Dubois, J. et Lagane, R (1995) :

En règle générale, un nom peut se présenter sous deux formes : le singulier et le pluriel [...]. Le singulier correspond ordinairement à la désignation d'une seule chose et le pluriel, à la désignation de plusieurs êtres ou de plusieurs choses.

5.1 Formation du pluriel des noms en yoruba

Il y a en yorùbá deux nombres : le

singulier et le pluriel. Un nom est au singulier quand il désigne un seul être ou objet. Un nom singulier en yoruba n'a pas de marque particulière ni de déterminant.

Exemple :

Iwe tabili okọ omọbirin
▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

Livre table voiture fille

Il est au pluriel quand il désigne plusieurs êtres ou objets (à partir de deux).

Exemples :

Awon iwe awon akẹkọ
↓ ↓
Des livres des apprenants

Formation du pluriel :

En yorùbá, pour noter la pluralité, il y a le préfixe **awon - des** et le suffixe : **okan – les numéraux**.

Singulier	Pluriel
Iwe kan	Awon iwe / iwe meji
Un livre ↓	Des livres / deux livres
Ọkọ kan	Awon ọkọ / ọkọ mefa
Une voiture ↓	Des voiture / trois voitures
Obirin kan	Awon obirin / obirin mefa
Une femme ↓	Des femmes / six femmes
Ọkunrin kan	Awon ọkunrin / ọkunrin mefa
Un homme ↓	Des hommes / six hommes

Ainsi en yorùbá, par rapport au français et à l'anglais où la pluralité est marquée par le 's' ou le 'x'.

Exemple :

français : un livre – des livres

anglais : a book – somme books

français : un animal – des animaux

english : An animal – some animals.

Notons qu'en yorùbá le nom est suivi soit par les chiffres comme les adjectifs numéraux, soit précédé par l'adjectif qualificatif **awon**.

Exemple:

- Iwe meji - deux livres – two books
- Awon iwe - des livres – somme books.

5.2 Formation du pluriel des noms en anglais

Pour la langue anglaise le nombre est une classification grammaticale utilisée dans l'analyse des groupes de mots, et qui établit un contraste entre singulier et pluriel.

Les contrastes de nombre en anglais sont constatés pour les noms (*boy, boys*) les pronoms (*she, they*), les déterminants (*this, that*), et les verbes qui ne sont pas au passé (*say, says*).

Exemples :

- Tobi/ he likes Ojo
- Ade/she likes Ojo
- The cats/they like them.

Mais cette corrélation n'est pas parfaite. Il existe en anglais des noms qui sont du singulier quant à leur forme, mais du pluriel quant à leur

référence ; il s'agit des noms collectifs.

Exemple :

The *jury* **is** considering **its** verdict. **It** **has** been out for two hours.

Dans les styles informels, il y a une tendance à utiliser un verbe au pluriel.

Exemple :

The *Jury* **are** considering their verdict.

Au pluriel quant à leur forme, mais, singulier quant à leur référence, y compris certaines exceptions:

Exemples :

Jeux : *cherckers, draughts*

Maladies : *measles, mumps*

Sciences : *physics, psycholinguistics*.

En outre, certains noms non comptables, comme *sugar*, font référence à la quantité d'une entité spécifique.

Bien qu'il ne soit pas question ici de la morphologie du verbe, il faut pourtant noter qu'en anglais la marque 's/es' appliquée au verbe, signale au temps présent le singulier et non le pluriel.

Exemple :

Present	Passé
he likes cheese	he liked cheese
we like cheese	we liked cheese

En anglais comme en yorùbá, le terme **nom collectif** désigne les noms singuliers qui ont un sens pluriel (exemple : *Ijoba*) la catégorie des

noms collectifs n'est pas fixée et l'on peut argumenter que certains emplois sont à mi-chemin entre les noms collectifs et les noms incomptables.

Par exemple, *team* est un nom collectif et *butter* est un nom incomptable, mais il n'est pas facile de décider le statut de noms du type : *hair*, *linen*, *royalty*. Nous pouvons les classer selon une règle grammaticale, les membres animés dans le groupe collectif et les membres inanimés ou les parties indifférenciables dans le groupe des noms incomptables.

Exemples :

Nom collectif	Nom incomptable
Committee	Water
Family	Timber

Un nom collectif est associé à un verbe singulier, et il est remplacé en anglais formel et écrit par les pronoms singuliers.

Le verbe à la troisième personne du singulier ne prend qu'un affixe *s* ou *es* à la forme basique du verbe ; à la première et deuxième personne du singulier ; aux personnes du pluriel nous avons la forme basique du verbe.

Exemples :

Singulier	Pluriel
Book	Books
Eye	Eyes
Potatos	potatoes

En anglais il existe un groupe de noms dont le pluriel est issu de l'anglais ancien et irrégulier.

Exemple :

Singulier	Pluriel
Child	children
Man	Men
Foot	Feet

5.3 FORMATION DU PLURIEL DES NOMS EN FRANÇAIS

Dans la langue française, les noms sont aussi organisés en noms individuels et noms collectifs.

Pour les noms individuels, il y a deux nombres : le **singulier** et le **pluriel**. Un nom est au singulier quand il désigne un seul être ou objet

ou un seul ensemble d'êtres ou d'objets.

Exemples :

- une plume
- une bande

Il est au pluriel quand il désigne plusieurs êtres ou objets ou plusieurs ensembles d'êtres ou d'objets.

Exemples :

- des plumes
- des bandes (de voleurs)

Pour les noms collectifs qui désignent un ensemble, une collection d'êtres ou d'objets, il n'y a qu'une seule forme du singulier, tant qu'il ne s'agit pas de différents éléments du même ensemble.

Exemples :

- Foule, tas, groupe, clientèle.

Le verbe qui s'accorde à un nom collectif en français est toujours au singulier.

Exemple :

- L'équipe de France est venue.

Formation du pluriel :

On forme le pluriel des noms en ajoutant un *s* au singulier.

Singulier	Pluriel
un home	des homes
une fille	des filles

Mais il y a des exceptions :

Les noms terminés par *-s*, *-x* ou *-z* ne changent pas au pluriel :

Singulier	Pluriel
un pois	des pois
une croix	des croix
un nez	des nez

Les noms en *-al* forment leur pluriel en –

aux :

Singulier	Pluriel
un journal	des journaux

Pendant les noms comme : *bal*, *cal*, *carnaval*, *chacal*, *festival*, *regal* ont leur pluriel en *-s*.

Les noms en *-au*, *-eau*, *-eu* prennent un *-x* au pluriel :

Singulier	Pluriel
Un tuyau	Des tuyaux

Un manteau	Des manteaux
Un cheveu	Des cheveux

Les noms en *-ail* et en *-ou* prennent un *-s* au pluriel

Singulier	Pluriel
Un éventail	Des éventails
Un détail	Des détails
Un clou	Des clous

Cependant les noms comme : *caillou*, *chou*, *genou*, *hibou*, *joujou*, *pou*, ont leur pluriel en *x*.

Certains noms ont au pluriel deux formes, avec des significations ou des emplois différents.

- a) On dit au pluriel *aïeul* quand on veut désigner précisément le grand-père paternel et le grand-père maternel ou encore le grand-père et la grand-mère.

Exemple :

Ses deux *aïeuls* assistent à son mariage.

- b) Le pluriel *aïeux* désigne, soit ceux qui ont vécu dans les siècles passés, soit les personnes dont on descend.

Exemple :

C'était la mode chez nos *aïeux*.

En français il existe un groupe de noms irréguliers au pluriel.

Exemple :

Singulier	Pluriel
œil	Yeux

Il existe en français des noms n'ayant qu'un nombre ; certains noms ne s'emploient qu'au pluriel ; ils expriment pour la plupart des choses ou des idées que, selon **Grevisse (1997 :55)**, l'esprit français ne conçoit guère au singulier. Tels sont : *dépens*, *bestiaux*, *agrès*, *annales*. D'autres expriment pour la plupart une idée générale ou abstraite et ne s'emploient ordinairement qu'au singulier. Tels sont : l'or, l'eau, la botanique, la bonté, le nord etc.

6.0 SUGGESTIONS

Dans cette partie de notre article, nous allons essayer de suggérer des activités didactiques qui seront très utiles aux enseignants et aux apprenants en classe de FLE dans un milieu yorùbá comme le notre . Notre but ici est de décrire un certain nombre de moyens par lesquels nous pouvons aider les apprenant à maîtriser la formation du pluriel en français et nous commençons avec l'utile de l'approche contrastive (AC) qui est selon Perrault (1981) cité par Igbeneghu (2012).

Un instrument précieux pour la linguistique générale, pour la connaissance des structures des langues et la projection de la diversité qui peut exister entre les langues utilisées par les différents groupes humaines.

Et d'après Ukaje (1995) cité par Ajani (2015) l'approche contrastive :

C'est la mise en application de la théorie de linguistique contrastive qui permet de mettre en parallèle tous les éléments point par point des systèmes de la langue de départ et de la langue d'arriver.

Et Ukaje (1986) cité par Igbeneghu (2012) distingue deux types d'approche contrastive à savoir :

- L'analyse contrastive positive qui vise à prévoir ce qui se passera chez l'apprenant en situation de bilinguisme.
- L'analyse contrastive négative qui se porte sur la relève de fautes qui constitue un moyen de confirmer les données de la comparaison linguistique ainsi qu'un moyen de prévoir les difficultés spécifiques à l'apprenant du français dans un milieu donnés.

Et en se servant de l'analyse contrastive, ce tableau ci-dessus peut être utile en classe de FLE car il montre la formation du pluriel des noms pour les trois langues : yorùbá, anglais et français.

	Formation du pluriel
Yorùbá	Le préfixe (adjectifs numériques + le nom) ou suffixe adjectif qualificatif et le nom
Anglais	Suffixe Ø
Français	Suffixe s avec des exceptions : - noms terminés par -s, -x ou -z ne changent pas au pluriel - noms en -al , forment leur pluriel en -aux - noms en -au, -eau, -eu prennent un -x au pluriel - noms en -ail, -ou prennent un -s au pluriel + formes irrégulières.

Selon Rachi (2010) :

Un certain nombre de pédagogues l'affirment : les élèves ne sont pas là pour construire mais pour apprendre ce qu'on leur demande d'apprendre.

Vachi (2010) ajoute en plus « quand un élève ne comprend pas, on lui réexplique ». Donc en tant que professeurs nous avons la tâche de tout faire pour aider nos apprenants de sortir du problème associés à la formation pluriel des noms en classe de FLE. Ainsi en plus de l'utilité de l'analyse contrastive, nous suggérons la mise en pratique régulièrement de la structure grammaticale de la formation des noms au niveau pluriel et ceci peut être possible en les exposant à certains points grammaticaux nécessaires associés à la formation du pluriel des noms en français à savoir les points suivants en se basant sur Dubois, J. et Lagane, R. (2009).

1. Très souvent le pluriel des noms communs se forme en ajoutant un « s » au singulier.

Exemple :

Un ennui- des ennuis

Un lit – des lits

2 Les noms terminés par « S », « x » et « z » ne prennent plus un « s ».

Exemple :

Un bois - des bois

Un noix - des noix

Un nez - des nez

3. Les noms terminés en « al » ont le pluriel en aux.

Exemple :

Un cheval - des chevaux

Un chacal - les chacaux

Mais les noms comme : bal, carnaval, cérémonial, chacal, choral, festival, pal, régal, régat, santal etc. prennent le « s » pour former le pluriel.

Exemple :

Un festival - des festivals

Un bal - des bals, etc.

4. Le pluriel des noms terminés en « eau », « au », « eu », et « oeu » se forment en ajoutant un « x » au singulier.

Exemple :

Un veau - des veaux

Un feu - des feux

Un vœu - des vœux

Un étau - des étaux

Mais les noms comme lendeau, sarrau, bleu, pneu prennent en « s » au pluriel.

Exemple :

Un pneu - des pneus

Un bleu chiffon - des chiffons bleus

5. Le pluriel des noms terminés par ou « ou » est en général en -ous. Exemple :

Un cou - des cous.

Mais les noms suivants : bijou, caillou, chou, genou, hibou, joujou pour prennent en « x » pour former leur pluriel : exemple :

- Un caillou -

des cailloux

Un genou - des genoux

6. Les noms terminés au singulier par « ail ».

Exemple :



- Un rail - des rails
Mais les noms suivants : bail,
corail, email, soupirail, travail, ventail,
vitrail ont le pluriel en « aux ».

Exemple :

Un travail - des travaux
Un vantail - des vantaux

7. Les noms comme aïeu, ciel, et œil ont
des pluriels irréguliers.

Exemple :

L'aïeul - les aïeux
Le ciel - les cieux
L'œil - Les yeux

7.0 CONCLUSION

Nous avons exposé les difficultés
rencontrés par les apprenants yorùbá en classe de
FLE au niveau de la formation du pluriel des
noms qui remontent à l'interférence linguistique
provenant de L1 : yorùbá et L2 : anglais. Les
données établis nous ont permis de relever les

difficultés dans lesquelles les erreurs se
manifestent. En plus, les données montrent que
dans la formation du nom au niveau pluriel, les
apprenants yorùbá en classe de FLE transfèrent la
connaissance acquise auparavant dans L1 yorùbá
et dans L2 anglais qui sont des langues de départ
à la langue d'arrivée qui est le français. Nous
avons également constaté les similarités entre le
français et l'anglais qui fournissent une source
d'erreurs morphologique. Ces erreurs nous
donnent des informations adéquates sur les
difficultés auxquelles sont confrontés les
apprenants au cours de la formation de noms au
niveau pluriel.

Finalement, nous demandons aux
professeurs en classe de FLE d'accorder assez
d'attention aux fautes de la part de nos
apprenants et d'attirer immédiatement l'attention
de nos apprenants à ces fautes commises.

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Les articles: étude comparée du Français et du Gworok

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Abstrait

Ce travail porte sur l'étude comparative et contrastive de la détermination nominale de français et gworok basée sur la catégorie grammaticale des « articles ». Il consiste à faire une étude lexico-sémantique de différents usages des articles en ces deux langues. Cette recherche nous montre que le français possède les trois articles définis : le, la et une autre élide « l », devant une voyelle et un « H » muet, au singulier, et l'article « les » au pluriel. Tandis que le gworok possède quatre articles, définis : ku, ka, u, ji au singulier et trois articles définis : ba, na, et ji au pluriel. Il nous montre aussi que les articles indéfinis et partitifs de la langue française « un, une et des » n'ont pas leurs équivalents en gworok. Mais la langue gworok possède plusieurs moyens dans son lexique pour exprimer les idées indéfinis et partitifs. Nous commencerons avec la présentation de l'emploi des articles français et leur traduction gworok, en gardant la nature contrastive et comparative.

Mots clés : Déterminants, l'article définis, indéfinis, partitifs, analyse contrastive français, gworok.

Introduction

Le français et le gworok sont des langues à déterminants. Ces déterminants servent à préciser le genre et le nombre du substantif. Selon Wiik, (2010 :1) « les articles n'existent pas dans toutes langues du monde, mais en français comme d'ailleurs, dans un grand nombre d'autres langues modernes ou anciennes, ce système de signes qui précèdent le nom et le font reconnaître s'est formé au cours des années, résultant du processus appelle « la grammaticalisation » (Chesterman, 2004 : 72) ». La norme en français moderne est que, ces articles sont employés normalement devant les noms. Le système des articles français est très riche et compliqué et il serait impossible de faire une présentation exhaustive alors, nous présenterons ce qui, selon notre présente étude, sont nécessaires. C'est-à-dire les grands usages concernant les articles français.

Notre intérêt pour les articles, en particulier s'est éveillé depuis nos études de la langue française. Nous constatons que la langue gworok aussi que la langue française ont un système de l'article riche, malgré le fait que la langue gworok ne possède pas les articles indéfinis et partitifs mais elle a l'article défini dans sa lexique.

Dans cette présente étude, nous affrontons le système des articles de la langue gworok de point de vue du système français. Notre but est de voir s'il existe des similarités et des différences concernant l'emploi des articles en ces deux langues. Pour ce faire, nous commencerons par une description des articles français en donnant des exemples à côté avec ceux de la langue gworok. Ensuite, nous analyserons les points de convergences et divergences et enfin nous terminerons avec la conclusion. Avant de lancer dans le vif de notre travail, il faut avoir quelques mots sur la langue gworok.

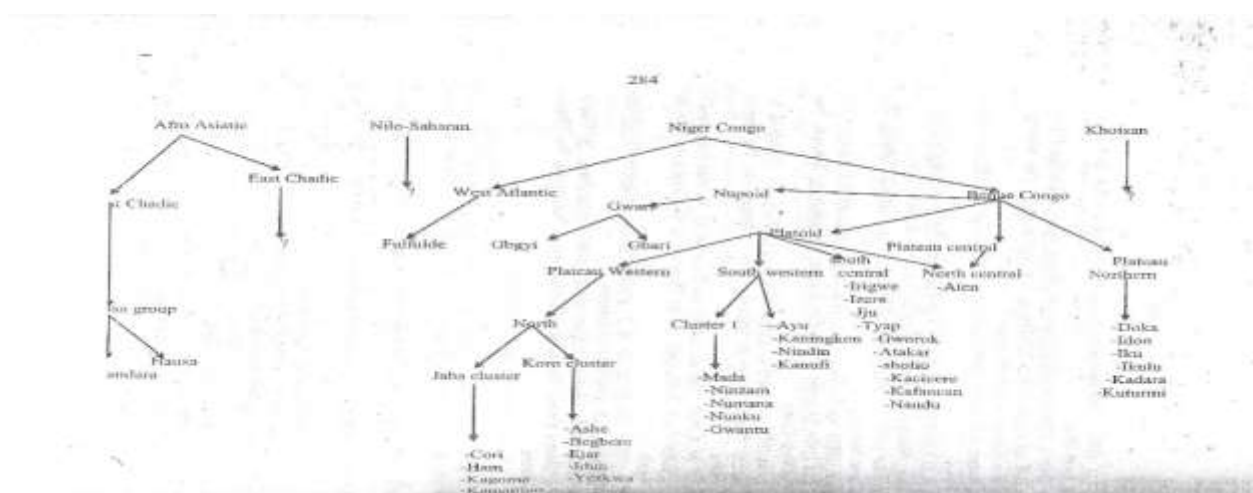
Langue Gworok

La langue gworok est parlée par les gworok ou les « oegworok » (comme les membres de la tribu se réfèrent). « Gworok » ou « Kagoro » (appelé par les haoussas) indique le village, la langue aussi que les membres de la tribu. Le village gworok est situé au sud de l'état de Kaduna, à 6 kilomètres d'une assez grande ville qu'on appelle Kafanchan. La langue appartient à la famille Benoué-Congo sous la division Niger-Congo, de la catégorie « platoïde » (Mohammed 2008 : 281). La langue gworok avec d'autres langues du sud de l'état Kaduna forment les langues principales de l'état. (Voir la carte et le schéma linguistique de



l'état de Kaduna ci-dessous). Les autres langues sont les suivantes : Jju, Atyap, Sholio, Attakar, Bakulu, Ninzam, Kaninkon, Fantswam, Gwandara, Jaba, Koro, Ikulu, Kagoma, Numana, Irigwe, Ham, etc. Ces langues principales de

l'état de Kaduna sont dispersées dans les divisions administratives locales de Kaura, ZangonKataf, Jaba, Lere, Jema'aSanga, Kachia et Kadarko.



L'article

L'article est un déterminant qui existe en toutes langues, comme constituant qui sert à côté du nom de construire un syntagme nominal. (SN). Le nom est l'élément central du (SN), toujours précède d'un déterminant. L'absence de celui-ci

est interprétée comme une irrégularité dans des langues. Alors on dit que le déterminant est le premier constituant immédiat de SN et sa présence est obligatoire devant le substantif. L'article est un signe qui marque le degré spécifique, du genre et du nombre du nom



(Moinet1984 :100).

Le chien les chiens

Det. N Det. N

Uvbukauvbu na

N Det.N Det.

L'enfant joue les enfants jouent

Det N Det. N

ngwon kaluwonwan naluwo

N Det.N Det.

Ces éléments grammaticaux (en termes techniques, les déterminants), *le*, *ka*, *et les*, *na* que l'on place devant(en français, et après en gworok) un nom commun pour en préciser certaines caractéristiques : son genre, nombre etc. Les deux déterminants« le et ka l » « les et na » sont obligatoires devant (en gworok « après » les substantifs chien et enfant, parce qu'ils servent à les concrétiser et à les actualiser.

L'article est un des éléments le plus remarquable du français. Précèdent le nom (ou l'adjectif épithète), il constitue le support, souvent indispensable de ce nom, il lui permet de se manifester dans la phrase. L'article marque le nom est pris dans un sens complètement ou incomplètement détermine, il marque les catégories du genre et du nombre.(univ-LyoA2.fr/documents/gctpart.php?id=954 d actionpdf)

Le Bon Usage (Grevisse, 2011) propose pour l'article la définition suivant :

L'article est le déterminant minimal, le mot qui permet au nom de s'actualiser, de se réaliser dans une phrase, si le sens ne rend pas nécessaire le choix d'une autre déterminant (p.578)

Ensuite, selon Larousse livre de Bord, (2004). L'article est le plus courant des déterminants. C'est un petit mot variable qui accompagne le nom en indiquant le genre et le nombre, et lui donne une détermination plus ou moins précise. On distingue : l'article défini, l'article indéfini et l'article partitif. (p. 59)

Selon le dictionnaire Nouveau Petit Robert (1995), « l'article est un nom masculin du

latin « articulus » de « artus », Cf. orteil ». Nous constatons qu'il y a plusieurs définitions du mot « article », mais celui qui nous concerne est la définition linguistique qui est, selon le même dictionnaire, « mot qui, place devant un nom (ou l'adj. Antépose au nom). Sert à le déterminer plus ou moins précisément, et peut prendre la marque du genre et du nombre » (p. 130).

Placement

Les articles français se placent devant le nom dans un groupe nominal, ou après dans certains cas, mais en gworok, ils se placent avant le nom. Les articles sont des mots grammaticaux que l'on peut dénombrer.

Accord

Tout déterminant français s'accorde en genre et en nombre avec le noyau dont il est satellite : ex

Le boulanger, la boulangère, les boulangères, le noyau est successivement :

Masculin singulier ; féminin singulier : Masculin ou féminin pluriels. Mais l'exigence de l'accord n'existe pas dans toute langue du monde, comme par exemple, en gworok

Rôle

Selon, (Samia : 2006 :22) « un déterminant à un rôle référentiel du nom, il a, en principe, un caractère obligatoire, c'est-à-dire que tout substantif nominal ou pronominal doit être précédé au moins par un déterminant. Sauf dans les cas où les noms actualisent sans la médiation du déterminant. Il varie en genre et en nombre. Il reçoit les marques de genre et de nombre du nom qu'il détermine ».

L'article défini

En français et en gworok les déterminants définis sont servent à référer à une entité, qui est devant ou qui est après (le cas de gworok). D'une manière générale, l'article défini donne aux noms communs pris dans un sens complètement déterminé (Grevisse 1995 :86)« désigne un objet réel », (Baylon et fabre1995 :12), « l'article défini marque devant le nom que celui-ci va être suivi d'un élément qui la déterminera » (Popin, 1993 : 67). Ils sont utilisés devant les noms qui désignent une personne ou une chose unique (Boularés et Frerot, 1997 : 18). L'article défini suppose que l'identité du substantif est connue et

il lui procure un sens déterminé. (Sechane,v. 1992 :239)

Selon Riegel et al (2002),

Les descriptions défini assurent l'identification univoque de leur référent qui est présente comme étant le seul à satisfaire la description dans l'univers du discours (p.574)

Jean Dubois et al (2002) ont donné au terme défini est la définition suivante : « *Ce trait défini est interprété sémantiquement comme instituant une référence précise ou comme ayant une valeur de générique.* » (p. 131)

Emploi de l'article défini

- i. il sert à référer des entités qui sont identifiable. De plus, l'article défini seul peut indiquer l'existence et l'unicité du référent. Ainsi dans la phrase suivante, seul l'article « le » donne des indications sur l'existence du groupe nominal. Par exemple :
 - Donne-moi le livre.
 - ii. L'article défini est employé devant les personne connue ou unique. Par exemple :
 - Le chef du département
 - Le doyen de l'université
 - La cour de l'école
- iii. les notions uniques. Par exemple :
 - La lune est grise.
 - Le soleil brille
- iv. Les noms pris au sens général (tout). Par exemple :
 - Les chiens sont l'ami de l'homme
 - La patience est une qualité précieuse

Tableau I.

La morphologie de l'article défini en français et gworok

	L'article français défini	L'article gworok
Masculin	le	u, ku, ka et ji
Féminin	La	u, ku, ka, et ji
Pluriel	les	na, ba et ji
Masculin/féminin est (devant voyelle et- H muet)	l'	N'existe pas

L'article élidé (l') est toujours place devant une voyelle ou un H muet. (Riegel et al ; 2004 p. 154). Par exemple :

- L'élève, l'hôpital, l'avion

Devant un nom géographique (continents, régions, pays, fleuves, montagnes, îles etc.

Après les verbes « aimer, adonner, détester, préférer) par exemple :

- J'adore le chocolat
- Elle déteste le football
- Il aime beaucoup la musique
- vii. Il est aussi employer pour exprimer le superlatif en grammaire. Ex.
 - Il est le plus intelligent de sa classe
 - Elle est la plus belle parmi les filles de monsieur Swanta
 - Il est le plus âgé que les frères
- viii. Pour exprimer les dates, ou des jours habituels. Par exemple :
 - Le 25 décembre est la fête de Noël.
 - Le dimanche, les dévotés vont à l'église
 - Il va au stade, tous les samedis.
- ix. L'article défini est employé dans les expressions de mesure. Exemple :
 - Le vin coûte 30 Fr. la bouteille
 - Le kilo de la viande coûte 1500 Naira.
 - Le parquet de la farine coûte 350 Naira.
- x. L'article défini est employé pour décrire les parties du corps. Ex :
 - Elle a les yeux bleus et les cheveux bruns

En gworok, il existe également des moyens d'exprimer ces nuances. Ils sont aussi employés comme référentiels, à des objets connus par le locuteur et interlocuteur. Mais cette-fois-ci les articles définis sont en postposition du nom. Voici ci-dessus, la morphologie des déterminants définis en français et en gworok. En français il existe trois déterminants définis contrairement au gworok qui connaît quatre définis au singulier et trois définis au pluriel dans ces deux langues



Ngwon ka assibiti u girgituza

Il y a pourtant des exceptions. Ex. le oui
i'iswakbanyunguhwon

En langue gworok les articles définis existent, mais ils n'ont pas de catégorisation en genre, i. mais seulement en nombre. L'élidassions n'existe pas

L'article définir envoie ainsi souvent à un substantif déjà mentionné. Le même c'est le cas en gworok. Dans ces exemples l'article défini français 'la' et 'le' correspond à ceux de gworok « u, ka, ku, je » singulier, et l'article pluriel 'les' correspond à celui de gworok « ba, ji et na ». Il est à noter qu'engworok il n'y a pas de différence en genre. Dans d'autres exemples en gworok, comme en français, l'article défini 'les' est exprimé de la même façon comme en gworok. Il faut d'abord pluraliser le substantif et l'article, avant d'arriver à la forme pluriel. Ex : Les garçons; les filles. Les substantifs doivent être pluralisés aussi que l'article. Prenons ces exemples :

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| - le pilon | les pilons |
| kpaku | nkpa na |
| - la dette | les dettes |
| taku | tittaba |
| - Le corne | les cornes |
| Aegwa ka | gugwa na |
| - le couvercle | les couvercles |
| kupji | kukup na |
| - la marmite | les marmites |
| aelan ka | lilanba |

Dans ces exemples il est clair qu'en gworok il faut pluraliser un nom aussi que l'article, comme

Les articles définis contractés

Lorsque les articles définis sont précédés par des prépositions « à ou de » on obtient les formes contractées. Riegel et al (p. 154) avec la forme 'la' et la forme « élidée » l', il n'y a pas de contraction.(Kalmbach : 2003 :35). Voyons ces exemples :

- a + le = au : ex : Je suis au marché - n shio bu kasuwo
- de + le = du : ex : Je veux du pain - n chat buredi
- à + la = à la : ex : Je vais à la pharmacie - n nied du luwosan kan
- de + la = de la : ex : l'amie de la fille - ae chat guniem ka
- a + l' = à l' : ex : Je pense à l'avenir - n dam tuzautswon ka

le onze la hache

en français.

les articles définis français s'accordent en genre et en nombre avec le nom auquel il se rapporte, mais en gworok l'accord n'existe pas. Par exemple.

- C'est la robe de ta sœur
- Nanyu gawu biyo ae torog u

Sœur toi es avoir robe la

On remarque ici qu'il existe l'accord entre la robe et ta sœur.

ii. L'article défini permet d'exprimer une nuance générale de (tout) Ex.

- Le chien est l'ami de l'homme
Ubvuka yet kpandangaetibishi
- La lumière est mieux que l'obscurité
Uluwosaikalanuluwolyin u
- La patience est une qualité précieuse
Hankurijibiyodaraja

On remarque aussi que les articles français *le, la, et l'* ; leurs équivalant gworok *ka, u, et* jison des articles définis qui donnent la nuance des (tout).

iii. l'article défini peut s'employer pour décrire les parties du corps. Ex

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|------------|
| - l'œil | les yeux | la jambe | les jambes |
| - elika | lilibatak | kutit | takba |

- le vendre les vendres

ufa ka ufa na

La référence est alors spécifique. Cela se fait en gworok aussi comme nous venons de voir ci-dessus.



- de + l' = de l' : ex : l'arrière de l'avion– mantagirgi tuza ka
- à + les = aux : ex : Je pense aux vacances- n dam tuzatsunku
- de + les = des : ex : Les jouets des enfants- nkyangluwonwan

La forme contractée des articles définis n'existent pas en langue gworok. Mais les phrases françaises ci-dessus peuvent être exprimées dans la langue gworok par l'usage du lexique et des articles définis- disponible à la langue. Comme nous venons le voir ci-dessus, il faut focaliser sur la position des articles définis gworok, toujours après le substantif.

4.0 L'article Indéfini

L'article indéfini s'emploie pour désigner quelque chose ou quelqu'un qui n'a pas encore été identifié

Selon Grevisse (2011) l'article indéfini se définit de la manière suivante :

L'article indéfini s'emploie devant un nom pour indiquer qu'il soit d'un il n'a pas encore été question, qui ne sont pas présentes comme connu, comme identifiées (p : 581)

La première différence qui frappe par rapport à la description d'article indéfini est qu'il introduit des noms jusqu' alors, inconnus. De plus, il ne détermine pas l'entité auquel le nom qu'il précède et il ne individualise pas. L'article indéfini ne présuppose donc pas l'unicité du référent par contre à l'article défini.

Selon Bouclarès et Frérot (1997) l'article indéfini est « usité devant des noms qui désignent une personne ou une chose parmi d'autres personnes et choses (p : 12). Alors il y a la perte de la particularisation. L'article indéfini s'accorde en genre et en nombre aussi que l'article défini. Voilà la table de la morphologie des articles indéfinis français et gworok.

Table de la morphologie et des articles indéfinis français et gworok.

	Français	Gworok
Masculin	Un	N'existent pas
Féminin	Une	N'existent pas
Pluriel	Des	N'existent pas

En langue gworok les articles indéfinis n'existent pas. Mais il y a des manières dont la langue utilise pour exprimer les mêmes réalités que le français. Cela se fait par l'usage des lexiques de la langue. Voyons les exemples côté à côté de ceux du français :

- un garçon

aesamuyiang (un certain garçon)

- une fille

guniem/aenabuyiang (une certaine fille)

- un chat

ukwiuyiang (un certain chat)

- des amis

kpandanguyang (des certaines amis)

Alors, le mot gworok « uyang » désigne un objet ou une personne nonparticulier. Dans certains cas, le mot « uyang » ne s'emploie pas, regardons ces exemples :

- Il mange des bananes

Aeyayaba (sans article)

- un repas délicieux



kyanyawobi yion yinyang ni (sans article)

- Il joue au foot

Aetswot bol (sans article)

L'article indéfini est employé devant un nom massif précédé par un article indéfini, il indique que le nom qu'il détermine est un type particulier de la catégorie.

Ex :

- ✓ C'est de l'eau
Sahwotnyio (sans article)
- ✓ Il a de la chance
Aebiyosa'a (sans article)
- ✓ C'est du vin
Aekannyio (sans article)

L'ARTICLE PARTITIF

L'article partitif est un déterminant, qui partage une même valeur « indéfini » en français. L'article partitif s'emploie devant les noms de masse, c'est-à-dire devant les noms non-comptables. (Kalmbach, 2003 :23). Son rôle principal est d'indiquer une quantité, il exprime une partie d'un ensemble dont la quantité est indénombrable ou imprécise. (Une partie, un morceau ou un fragment). Selon Larousse (2004), l'article partitif est employé devant les noms de choses pour indiquer une quantité indéterminée. (p.61), et des noms abstraites, il s'agit d'aliments ou de matériaux (Wiki 2010 :p. 32)

Les formes d'articles partitifs sont les suivantes :

Tableau III : la morphologie des formes de l'article partitif

	Français	Gworok
Masculin	du, de' l	n'existent pas
Féminin	de la, de l'	n'existent pas
pluriel	des	n'existent pas

L'article partitif s'accorde en nombre et en genre avec le nom qu'il précède. Placé devant un nom, l'article partitif s'emploie devant des aliments, des ingrédients ou des boissons que l'on ne peut pas compter, ou pour désigner une partie d'un aliment. Prenons ces exemples :

- du vin de l'huile de la farine

aekanaemyionhyo

1. j'ai acheté du pain.
Nsanburedi(sans article)
2. ce bébé boit du lait
ngwonswoaebiyen (sans article)
3. il boit beaucoup du lait
aeswoaebiyenaelau(sans article)

En gworok, comme nous avons montré ci-dessus au tableau l'article partitif n'existe pas. Mais il existe des adverbes utilisés pour exprimer une quantité. Prenons les exemples français et leurs équivalents en gworok.

- un petit peu - diddai
- un peu - chincuiid
- pièce/morceaux- chunchong
- fragments - aechuang
- pièces - aechunang
- un tas de - ukpa



- beaucoup de/ trop de -shi/ diddid/aelan
- excessive de - la swak
- tout/entier - sarai/ salai
- tout - kamburung
- un très grand tas de - gundung

L'article partitif a plusieurs usages, mais dans ce travail, nous avons choisi de travailler sur l'usage principal de ces articles partitifs, il s'agit d'aliment ou matériaux.

Il faut noter que le mot 'de' est cette fois une préposition et il est un élément fixe de la construction de quantité. (Kalmbach 2003 :30).

Prenons ces exemples :

- ✓ Je mange beaucoup de riz
Nlasyashinkafa
- ✓ Je mange un peu de beurre'
Nyadiddai hyau
- ✓ J'achète un kilo de la viande.
- ✓ n sannam kilo nyung
- ✓ Il faut manger beaucoup de fruits
Kuyetaeyalemubadiddid.
- ✓ J'ai mis un peu du sucre
Nchio adiddaisuga
- ✓ Nous avons acheté un tas d'ignames
Zisanukpa chi.
- ✓ Ils ont un grand tas de sable fin
Babiyogundungaeyin.
- ✓ Le thé contient un excès du sucre
Ti u biyosugaaelau
- ✓ Il a saupoudré son repas avec du sel.
Aesarangntwak bu mi kyanyagu.
- ✓ Il a mis des morceaux de la viande dans la sauce.
Aenchioachuwangnambuminyungku.

Dans les exemples suivants, la langue gworok n'utilise pas de partitifs pour exprimer la quantité.

Niveaux des similarités et des différences

Nous constatons que les articles français et gworok ont le même fonctionnement. Nous citons à titre les articles définis français, (le, la, l' et les) et leurs équivalents gworok (ka, ku, u, ji, et na, ba). La classe indéfini de la langue français (un, une et des) n'ont pas leurs équivalents en gworok, car le gworok n'a pas d'articles indéfinis en tant que tel, et enfin, la classe, partitifs (de, du, de la, et de). Ici aussi, il n'y a pas leurs équivalents en gworok. Mais il existe des similarités et les différences en ces deux langues. Commençons avec les similarités, puis les différences.

Les similarités

- En français, les articles définis existent comme des signes qui marquent le degré de spécificité du nom. C'est aussi le cas en gworok.
- Au niveau du pluriel, la grammaire de la langue française exige que le nom doit être pluralisé aussi que l'article. C'est aussi le cas en gworok.



- En français, les articles s'accordent en nombre et en genre, mais en gworok ils ne s'accordent pas en genre mais ils s'accordent en nombre seulement.

Les differences

- Le français possède trois (3) articles définis : « le, la, l' » au singulier et un seul article au pluriel « les », tandis que la langue gworok possède quatre articles définis singulier « ku, ka, u, et ji », et trois articles pluriel « ba, na, et ji ».
- La langue française possède deux articles indéfinis singulier « un et une » et un seul article indéfini « des » pour indiquer le pluriel. Mais en langue gworok, l'article indéfini n'existe pas en tant que tel, mais la langue utilise les moyens lexicaux pour exprimer l'idée non spécifique des substantifs.
- Le français a des articles partitifs pour exprimer la quantité ou des noms innombrables ; les quantificateurs sont, « du, de, la, l' et des » précédé par le substantif, tandis qu'en gworok ces types d'expression n'existent pas, mais comme nous avons signalé plus haut, l'idée de la quantité est marquée par l'usage des mots dans sa lexique pour exprimer ces idées. Les articles français indiquent le genre du nom mais le gworok n'a pas de genre pour les substantifs.
- En français les articles précèdent les noms, c'est-à-dire, qu'ils sont placés avant le nom, (anteposés), tandis qu'en gworok, ils sont postposés.

Conclusion

Nous avons mené une étude comparative et contrastive entre le système de l'article en français et en gworok. Nous avons repéré les équivalant des articles français et gworok, et commenter sur leurs rôle et leurs fonctionnement dans les discours.

On comparant les deux systèmes des articles, nous avons montre que les articles en gworok est plus pauvre comme en français, surtout aux niveaux des articles indéfini et partitif.

Nous avons comparée et commenté sur leurs définitions, leurs rôles et leurs fonctionnements dans les discours en ces deux langues, mais le génie de la langue gworok comble toujours le vide et possède en ensemble de termes qui servent à exprimer les mêmes réalités qu'en français.

Nous avons présenté le fait que l'article français a un rôle d'actualise le nom, et se place toujours avant le substantif alors qu'en gworok, l'article a le même rôle, mais il est placé toujours après le nom.

Dans cet article, nous avons présenté les emplois des articles en français et en gworok. Nous constatons que certain nombre d'emplois se ressemblent dans ces deux langues, mais en grand nombre d'utilisation des articles sont employer différemment.

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Exploring French Language Studies for an Effective Conflict Resolution between Nigeria and her Francophone Neighbours

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Abstract

Language particularly the human language has remained the chief means of communication within the various human enclaves. It is therefore an indispensable tool that has been explored in various ways by man in order to meet his needs, attain his goals and aspirations as well resolve his conflicts. However, because human languages vary from one social enclave to another, language barrier remains a major factor that has hampered effective relations between individuals, communities and nation states. Hence, the need for language studies cannot be overemphasised. This study therefore seeks to examine ways of exploring language studies particularly French language for more enhanced relations and effective conflict resolutions between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours considering her geopolitical location. Thus, this paper is explored from the pragmatics perspective to the study of language in order to properly examine the subject. The inferential model of the linguistic communication study is specifically adopted. Suggested ways of exploring French Languages studies for an effective conflict resolution between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours include the reviewing of the Nigerian Education Policy on Language Studies by making French language a mandatory subject at all levels in all formal institutions of learning and formation. The restructuring of the French language studies curriculum at various levels to include topics such as the use of language skills in critical thinking, cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution. This way Nigeria and her francophone neighbours will have an enhanced relations devoid of suspicion, thus will be able to resolve conflicts more effectively without any language barrier.

Key words: Communication, Conflict, Conflicts Resolution, Francophone Neighbours, French Language, Language Studies

Introduction

Language is a unique trait endowed on humans chiefly for communication purpose. In every human society or coexistence, language is a vital tool explored to meet various human needs, interests, and aspirations; as well as resolve issues. Thus, the need for language acquisition among humans cannot be overruled. This paper therefore seeks ways of exploring language studies particularly the French language for effective conflict resolution between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours. Conflict is inevitable in every human sphere as each individual, group, community or nation has a unique perception, opinions pattern or even interest. Hence, there is bound to be disagreement or clashes from time to time. However, how this is resolved is what is of utmost importance. Conflict in itself is not bad or evil as conceived by some for it exposes areas of differences, as

well creates room for reaction and counter reaction over issues of disagreement, thus giving opportunity for understanding and better resolution of differences. On the other hand, if conflict is not well handled, it could result to a lot of mayhems that could be devastating. The process of conflict resolution demands varied strategies of which communication is the principal means by which they are achieved. In fact, communication particularly using human language cannot be ruled out in any conflict resolution. This is why most nation-states encourage bilingualism and multilingualism by way making and effectively implementing language studies policies.

However, in Nigeria, over the years, the government has been inconsistent in her language education policies particularly as regards French irrespective of her geopolitical location. This has adversely affected the effective promotion of the



country's national interest particularly within the West African sub-region. It has particularly hampered her relations with her francophone neighbours. In most cases of conflicts between her and her French neighbours, Nigeria has not been able to effectively communicate her intentions hence has not properly protected her interest (Offor 62-67). In fact, French language is often times limited to classroom practice due to the lip-service status given to it. In Nigeria, French language studies has not been adequately explored for use in solving real life challenges especially in the case of resolving international disagreements; due to various reasons ranging from inconsistency in policies making and implementation to lack of teachers' training as well as instructional materials. It is thus this aforementioned reasons that necessitated the writing of this paper.

To properly explore the subject of this paper, the theory of inferential Model of linguistics communication is adopted. The key concepts of this paper are explained from varying viewpoints. A background study is done on the Nigeria and her francophone neighbours. The status of French language studying in Nigeria is also briefly reviewed. Consequently, the importance of exploring French language studies is pointed out. Finally, ways in which French language studies could be explored for effective conflict resolution between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours are outlined.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is generally anchored on the communication theory which is often hypothesised from different angles in various fields. However, in this work, the theory of communication is specifically explored from the linguistic perspective. The Inferential Model of the Linguistics Communication Theory is particularly used to buttress the practical use of language in communication with specific reference to conflict resolution. According to Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, and Harnish, "The Inferential Model of communication proposes that in the course of learning to speak our language we also learn how to communicate in the language, and learning this involves acquiring

a variety of shared beliefs or presumptions as well as system of inferential strategies" (373). It is only through this process of language acquisition that a learner can be able to effectively communicate his or her intentions (Akmajian et al 372). The inferential model of communication therefore strongly advocates that language studies be geared toward the understanding of the structure of a language as well its use in real life context. This is because the human language as rightly observed by Spencer-Oatey and Zegarac, "relies heavily on people's capacity to engage in reasoning about each other's intentions, exploiting not only evidence presented by signals in language code, but also evidence from other sources, including the perception and general world knowledge" (71). Therefore, it is apparently very important that language studies be done in cognisance of the social cultural context of such language for its acquisition to be useful and effective in communication.

French language studies in Nigeria have not been done putting into consideration the above mentioned ideology on language acquisition. The Nigerian government and the various stakeholders concerned should therefore encourage a pragmatic approach to French language acquisition. This way, Nigeria will be able to produce citizens particularly professionals who are not only fluent in French language but are also able to effectively communicate in this language bearing in mind that communication goes beyond fluency. This will in turn boost Nigeria's relations with the international francophone communities particularly her francophone neighbours as her citizens especially those who man her in foreign relations, defence, economic and other governmental institutions are linguistically skilled enough in French to communicate her intentions and interest to them; thus, eliminating suspicion and misunderstandings of intentions enhanced by language barrier which breeds conflicts. French language teaching and learning in Nigeria should be done putting into cognisance its practical use in solving real life challenges such as conflicts. The communicative approach to teaching and



learning of language should be strongly encouraged in French language studies as it facilitates contextual language learning and use; thus enhancing proficiency.

Definition of key concepts

Communication

Communication is the act of expressing or conveying ideas, information or orders using verbal or non-verbal means. Communication is said to be effective if the intention of the speaker is adequately deciphered by the hearer. According to Croft, "Communication encompasses a great deal of human (and animal) activity. Reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing images, and creating images are all acts of communication" (1). For Akmajian et al, "communication is a social affair, usually taking place within the context of a fairly well defined social situation" (365). Generally, in the human society, the natural languages are often the chief means of communication. Thus, language use must be done taking into cognisance its socio-cultural context. What then is language itself?

Language

The concept of language particularly the natural language is multi-disciplinary. Thus the concept of Language has been defined from various perspectives such as the social, linguistics, psychological, and scientific viewpoints. However, one universal trait of the natural language is acknowledged in all this discipline; which is its peculiarity to humans. Affirming this fact, Pinker maintains that "in any natural history of the human species, language would stand out as the preeminent trait" (16). He further asserts that "Language is so tightly woven into human experiences that is scarcely possible to imagine life without it" (17). Hall, therefore defined language as an "institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols (158). In the same vein, Finegan described language as "a vehicle of thought, a system of expression that mediates the transfer of thought from one person to another" (16). He also referred to "the capacity to use language appropriately" as communication competence (Finegan 10). Language could be

defined thus as the linguistic code that is peculiar to a social group which is used for communicating thought, intentions, ideas and information. The need therefore for language acquisition cannot be ruled out in any human community.

Language Studies

Language Studies is an interdisciplinary course which its main goal is to equip learners with competence in a foreign language by way of exposing them to the structure and use in of such a given language. A language study gives learners the opportunity of understanding the structure and use of a language. It is basically aimed at language acquisition for use in real life context or situation. Thus, language studies create room for acquiring a language in cognisance to its socio-cultural context. It also affords one the opportunity of being bilingual or even multilingual. In as much as language remains the chief means of human communication, it studies is inevitable if any individual or group wants to keep abreast or relate with others.

Conflict:

Conflict is a universal phenomenon which is inevitable in every human relations. This is because most individual, groups or nation-states relating often have varied interests, ideologies or perception which determine their actions or counter-actions in a given situation. Thus Galtung referred to conflict as disagreements resulting from *contradiction* and *incompatibility* (24). According to Rahim "conflict is an interactive process manifested in the incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance with or between social entities" (198). Nicholson described conflict "as an escalation of a disagreement, which is its common prerequisite and is characterized by the existence of conflict behaviour, in which the beings are actively trying to damage one another" (16). For Pia and Diez, "conflict is a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals" often resulting from incompatibility (2).

Conflict could have a positive or negative consequence depending on how it is handled. It is also obtainable at various levels of human existence and coexistence. Thus, conflict could



be intra-personal or interpersonal, inter-group, inter-state, inter-region or global. Types of conflict include: substantive/content conflict (disagreement on an issue or situation), personal conflict/relational conflict (personality incompatibility) and process conflict (disagreement on approach). By nature, it tends towards polarization. Having elaborated on the concept of conflict, Conflict resolution is apparently the next term to view.

Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution is an act that is as old as man's existence, for in order to live peacefully, humans often seek means of resolving their differences. However, Conflict resolution as a defined field of study started between the 1950s and 1960s at the height of the cold war when world powers with nuclear weapons threaten each other and even the world's survival (Ramsbotham et al 4). In this view, Ramsbotham et al described conflict resolution as a field of modern study that "defined itself in relation to the challenge of understanding and transforming destructive human conflicts" (Ramsbotham et al 8). For Nicholson, conflict resolution is when the inconsistency between wishes and actions of parties is resolved (11). Conflict resolution thus involves a conscience effort by conflicting parties to reach a neutral point. It involves a lot of strategies of which communication is the chief medium through which these strategies are carried including the act of mediating, persuading, negotiating and coordinating. Having explained the key concepts, a background study of Nigeria and her francophone neighbours relations is the next thing to reviewed

Nigeria and Her Francophone Neighbours: A Background Study

The term "francophone" is used to refer to places or countries where French is spoken as a maternal language, official language or language of communication. In Africa, most of the francophone countries speak French as an official language because they were colonized by France. Even after independence France has continue to wield great influence in her former colonies. Hence, France sees Nigeria as great threat to her relationship with her former colonies considering

Nigeria's huge human and natural resources as well as her hegemonic influence in the West Africa sub-region (Nzuanke45). In order to continue exerting influence in her former colonies, France has always explored her language diplomacy strategy to the disadvantage of Nigeria.

Nigeria is an Anglophone (English speaking) country bordered in the north by Niger, north-east by Chad, to east by Cameroun, to the south by the Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) and to the south-west by Benin. Considering the geographical location of Nigeria, it is in her interest to encourage French language acquisition among her citizens so as to effectively propagate her national interest within the international neighbourhood. In view of the above, Adetula asserts that, "Geography plays a crucial role in defining the behaviour of states in the international system" (7).

The Nigerian foreign policy to towards her neighbours is anchored on the principle of "the promotion of stability and friendliness in neighbouring countries" (Alkali 183). Considering this, Nigeria has always maintained a position of peaceful resolution in the settlement of her conflicts with her neighbours. However, the actualisation of this principle is often hampered by language barrier particularly in French language. Thus, with rising contemporary issues such as insurgency and terrorism; as well as persistence increase in previously existing issues like inter-communal clashes between bordering international communities and cross-border crimes (oil theft, robbery and smuggling), there is therefore an urgent need for Nigeria to step-up workable strategies to overcome her language barriers in order to effectively handle these issues (International Crisis Group and Paix-Travail-Patrie « Nigeria, notre voisin, notre partenaire » 2). Nigeria needs to create avenues for equipping her citizens with French language skills. This way, she can effectively explore the language diplomacy to her advantage like France particularly in the case of conflict resolution.

Brief Review of the Status of French Language Studies in Nigeria

Considering the geopolitical sphere of the



Nigerian State as discussed above, the need for the acquisition of French language became a necessity. However, the French language studies was officially integrated into the Nigerian Education Curriculum after independence. Prior to the pre-independence years, French language studies was not officially integrated into the Nigerian Education Curriculum due to the “subtle competition between English and French colonial superpowers regarding whose language will emerge as the world’s first language” (Onyemelukwe: The French language and literary creativity 6).

Nonetheless, over the years, the Nigerian Government has remained inconsistent in her language policy on French Studies. Of all the editions of National Policy on Education (NPE), the 3rd edition published in 1998 has been the most favourable policy on French Language Studies stated thus:

For smooth interaction with our neighbours, it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria and it shall be compulsory in schools. (FRN, 1998:9)

Though the degree of the implementation of the above stated policy cannot be ascertained, yet it remains the most assertive policy on French language Studies in recent times. In fact the assertion in this policy is owed to an earlier declaration made by the then Head of State General Sani Abacha having perceived the need for the study of French language (Onyemelukwe: The French language and literary creativity 48-49).

From the fourth - sixth editions of the NPE, French language as stated is only a core subject at the primary and junior secondary school levels. At the senior secondary level, is a non-vocation elective subject? (FRN 2004, 2008 & 2013). Suffice to say that despite the National University Commission (NUC) making French a General Studies Course (NUC 17), the scope of French language studies is still limited to that of a course of study in some universities and most tertiary institutions; while in the innovation

enterprise institutions and formation schools French language studies is excluded from their curriculum. In fact, French language teaching and learning in Nigeria is generally limited to classroom practice. The content and scope of French language is not designed to enable learners use French to solve real life challenges. Yet, one of the beliefs on which the Nigeria Education philosophy anchored is that “education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society” (FRN 2013: 1). A good one I must say; but is the Nigerian government actually putting forth the right steps toward the realization of this belief. This is the problem this paper seeks to explore. Also, the overall philosophy of the nation as stated in the 2013 edition NPE includes: “promotion of Inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding” (FRN 2013: 1). One wonder then how an understanding could be reached if there is no effective means of communication.

Putting the afore stated belief into cognisance, the Nigerian government needs to come forth with more assertive policies that will gear hers citizens towards the effective acquisition of French language skills that will be relevant to the needs of the nation particularly in the resolution of conflict between her and her francophone neighbours.

Importance of French Language Studies in Promotion of Peace and Conflict Resolution between Nigeria and Her Francophone Neighbour.

Language has always been, despite advancement in technologies, the most effective communication medium through which strategies of conflict resolution are explored. According to Offor, the ability of one to speak the language of the opponent in any negotiation is of great advantage (29). Thus, the importance of acquiring French language skill cannot be underestimated if Nigeria wants to effectively actualise her foreign policy objective of peaceful conflict resolutions between her and her francophone neighbours as stated thus in her 1999 constitution section 19, sub-section e: “Respect for international law and treaty



obligation as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation conciliatory arbitration and adjudication” (Alkali 184).

Highlighting the importance of French language studies in Nigeria in the enhancement of global peace and security particularly among her francophone neighbours Akinterinwa stressed that:

the understanding of French, especially by public servants in Nigeria, is a desideratum, because of relationships with the immediate neighbours and because of ECOWAS region, where Nigeria is a regional influential, and also because French is a language of imperium and self-reliance (www.thisdaylive.com).

French language studies provides the avenue for equipping Nigerians with the linguistic competence as well as skills needed in effective communication particularly in conflict situation thus affording them useful service to the nation particularly during conflicts. This way, the nation's interest and intentions are well communicated, thereby clearing any misconception that could lead to suspicion among her francophone neighbours. Commenting further Akinterinwa added that:

the acquisition of proficiency in the French language in Nigeria, which has the potential to also prompt a better understanding of the way of life in Francophone Africa, and therefore, an appreciation of better understanding as a basis for maintenance of regional peace and security... (www.thisdaylive.com)

French language studies thus affords Nigerians the understanding of the socio-political structures of her francophone neighbours thus strengthen diplomatic ties with them. It will also help the Nigerian security and foreign mission staffs to be proficient in French thereby affording better intelligence gathering and sharing which is very crucial for mapping out security and conflict

resolution strategies particularly in this time of cross-border insurgency and terrorism. In addition, negotiations can also be effected in the favour of the Nigeria's national interest as Nigerians who are proficient French language are used for such negotiations in contrast to cases where third parties who are often francophone translators are used.

In fact, the need for language acquisition is very imminent in our today's world that has transformed into a global village. Hence, for Nigeria to effectively propagate her foreign policy, she must encourage foreign language acquisition particularly that of French language. Moreover, language remain an effective medium for propaganda among nation states. Therefore, Nigeria needs to promote French language studies so as to equip her citizens through whom she can propagate her interest as well assert her hegemony with the West African sub-region and Africa also by extension wield her influence in the international arena.

Ways of exploring French Languages studies for effective Conflict Resolution between Nigeria and Her Francophone Neighbour.

Having seen the importance French language studies in the resolution of conflicts between Nigeria and her francophone neighbour, how then can Nigeria adequately explore French studies to her advantage particularly in resolving conflicts with her neighbours? It is an established fact that a country is usually a reflexion of her educational system be it formal or informal. Thus, the lack of proficiency of most Nigerians in French language despite decades of integrating it into the Nigerian education curriculum reflects the state of French language studies in Nigeria. How then can Nigerian improve her French language teaching and learning so as achieve proficiency and in turn enhance communication between an average Nigerian and a francophone? Some practical steps toward the acquisition of French to meet life needs and challenges are outlined below:

- Nigeria must have a more assertive education policy towards French language studies. French should be made compulsory in all the Nigerian education system and at all levels as is the case of



English language. This way a large portion of her population could be made proficient in French thus facilitating communication with her francophone particularly between communities that live that border towns. This will help minimise inter-border clashes among bordering communities.

- The Nigerian French language studies curriculum and teaching methodology should be structured to suit the nation's needs and aspirations particularly with regards to the Nigeria relations with her francophone neighbours and the world by extension. Instructional materials should be tailored to instil skills of cognitive hypothesising, inferring, problem solving, negotiating, distinguishing fact from belief and expressing opinions in French language taking into cognisance its sociocultural context
- Language immersion programmes should be encouraged by the government through funding. Further the immersion programme should not be limited to only classroom activities but should be structured in such a way that it exposes students to real life situation thus drilling students to proficiency at the same time familiarising the learners with sociocultural realities in the francophone nations. For innovation enterprise, professional and formation institutions, the Nigerian government should negotiate with the francophone countries for exchange of experts. This way, our foreign mission and security personnel

will acquire proficiency and professional skill that will help them to effectively defend Nigeria's interest particularly in conflict resolution. It will also help act as better mediators as they have often done in Africa.

Conclusion

Language is a trait that is peculiar to humans. It is the chief medium through which they communicate their ideas and intentions. It is also explored by man to solve life challenges; one of which is conflict. Conflict is a universal phenomenon that exist in every human existence and coexistence. It is of great advantage if adequately managed but could bring devastating effect if not properly handled. Thus, the act of conflict resolution is a complex one that requires well-structured strategies. However, the main medium through which these strategies are actualised is language. Therefore, lack of language proficiency can be a major hampering factor to conflict resolution as intentions are not properly communicated.

Thus, this paper advocates the need for Nigeria to expand and diversify the scope of her French languages studies considering her geopolitical location so as to effectively resolve conflicts with her francophone neighbours. To this effect, a more assertive language education policy on French language studies backed with prompt implementation should be considered. Finally, this paper recommends a pragmatic approach to the teaching and learning of French language in Nigeria. This way, French language could be explored to solve real life challenges such as resolution of conflicts.

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La notion de l'équivalence en traduction des proverbes et des idiomes dans le film *Havoc* de Gabriel Moses

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Résumé

La traduction des expressions rhétoriques est une activité complexe qui pose des difficultés. Elles se lient au patrimoine socioculturel et sociolinguistique d'une communauté qui ne conforme pas souvent aux exigences du génie de langue universelle. Le problème provient du fait que les cultures ne sont pas universellement les mêmes. Cette différence culturelle surgit dans la façon dont chaque société collectivement exprime les expériences de leur vision du monde. Puisque la traduction ne s'opère pas au niveau du remplacement des mots d'une langue à une autre, la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes demeure une activité exigeante. En se basant sur la notion de l'équivalence, cette étude vise donc à montrer que la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes exige une approche souple pour effectuer une traduction adéquate. Dans cette optique, on se sert des principes de la théorie comparatiste pour effectuer la traduction. Pour mener à bien cette étude, vingt-six expressions rhétoriques ont été sélectionnées de la transcription du film HAVOC, un film nigérian écrit en anglais par Gabriel Moses et réalisé par Ifeanyi Azodo en 2000. Pendant l'analyse, nous avons mis en évidence que la recherche des équivalences au cours de la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes demeure une activité complexe mais souple qui permet à retenir la couleur locale, le style et le sens original dans la langue cible.

Mots-clés : équivalence, traduction, proverbes, idiomes, culture, théorie comparatiste

Summary

The translation of rhetorical expressions is a complex activity that usually poses challenges as a result of richness of socio cultural and sociolinguistic heritage of a society that hardly conforms with the universal language exigencies. The problem depicts the fact that cultures are not universally the same. This cultural diversity manifests in ways each society collectively expresses the experiences of their world vision. Since translation is not just an activity of replacement of word from one language to another, translation of proverbs and idioms remains a demanding task. Based on the notion of equivalence, this study therefore aims to show that the translation of proverbs and idioms requires a flexible approach to achieve a faithful translation. In view of this, we adopted some basic principles of Comparative theory of Vinay et Darbelnet for the translation. To carry out this study, twenty-six rhetorical expressions were selected from the transcription of the film HAVOC, a Nigerian film written in English by Gabriel Moses and directed by Ifeanyi Azodo in 2000. In the analysis, we highlighted that the search for equivalence in translating proverbs and idiomatic expressions is indeed a complex translational activity but suitable strategy that helps to preserve the local colour, the style and the meaning of original expressions in the target language.

Keywords: equivalence, translation, proverbs, idioms, culture, comparative theory

Introduction

La traduction des expressions rhétoriques en tant qu'activité traductionnelle exige la recherche et l'établissement des équivalences entre deux cultures différentes. De nombreuses études menées dans le domaine de la traduction des expressions rhétoriques ont maintes fois butées sur des obstacles d'établir fidèlement des équivalences aptes dans la langue cible. Il est évident que la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes exige donc une opération de

l'équivalence entre deux langues en question. Du fait que les proverbes et les idiomes sont souvent d'origines ethnolinguistiques, l'étrangeté de ses formes conservatrices pose des contraintes de la compréhension et la réexpression à travers des langues. Aussi universel que soient quelques proverbes et idiomes, il y en a ceux qui sont très étranges à certaines cultures au point qu'ils ne peuvent que se traduire par le moyen de l'équivalence naturelle. Dans le domaine d'étude traductologique, le sens générique du terme



‘équivalence’ désigne l’idée d’établir une même valeur syntaxique, sémantique, stylistique, affective, notionnelle, situationnelle,... entre le texte de départ et le texte d’arrivé.

Lédérer (50) décrit le terme comme « un message ; une expression ou la somme des expressions qui peut représenter le vouloir dire d’un auteur, et qui porte toujours les mêmes caractéristiques à l’égard du sens et ses effets visés. » Dans la même ligne de pensée, Lédérer (46) ajoute que « le sens d’un texte traduit par équivalence est le même que celui du texte original, car une traduction réussie est celle qui produit les mêmes effets (cognitifs et affectifs) sur les lecteurs que le texte original » D’après Vinay et Darbelnet (242),

L’équivalence part donc de la situation, et c’est là qu’il faut en chercher la solution en LD; ce procédé permet de rendre compte d’une même situation en mettant en œuvre des moyens stylistiques et structuraux entièrement différents considérées sous forme figée, les équivalences pourront, donc, figurer dans des répertoires, sous des étiquettes variées : gallicismes, idiotismes, proverbes, phrases idiomatiques etc.

Ils ajoutent que l’équivalence ne s’intéressent qu’à la situation, pour produire l’effet désiré sur le lecteur du texte d’arrivé. De son côté, Albir (105) souligne que l’équivalence du sens mène à une identité de sens et d’effet produit sur le lecteur du texte d’arrivée, et ceci peut être possible si l’énoncé est traduit en contexte.

En ce qui concerne la traduction de proverbes et d’idiomes, de nombreuses études ont fait ressortir l’importance de l’équivalence dans l’acte traductif. Akakuru et Mombe (1) soulignent que «Idioms and proverbs are part of this stock of these form (idiotisms) [...] They are culture-specific and can be more faithfully translated from English into French by proposing the equivalent idioms and proverbs in each case.»

Dans son étude intitulée : «Traduire les proverbes : De l’équivalence à la littéralité», Chima (4-5) dit que « quelques proverbes ne

peuvent jouir une réussite voire la recherche et la réexpression des équivalents dans la langue vers laquelle on traduit. » Il ajoute qu’il y a des cas où la littéralité démontre une puissance majeure sur l’équivalence, comme un procédé de traduction des proverbes. En ce qui concerne l’approche de la traduction des proverbes, il signale que « Préconiser une méthode quant à la traduction des proverbes sans établir dès le départ, la catégorie du proverbe à traduire remet en question la validité du proverbe dans la langue cible. »

Galisson (2) dans son ouvrage : *Linguistique de demain* souligne qu’un proverbe ayant sa forme figée et attestée, rimée et quelquefois présenté sous une forme binaire, ne peut soumettre facilement aux conventions de traduction littéraire. Ce fait pose une contrainte, et il n’est pas question de chercher et en donner une nouvelle forme pour le traduire. Un proverbe ne peut être traduit que par un proverbe, et ce sera possible dans le cas où il existe une séquence proche. Dans le cas où les deux langues n’ont pas développé des séquences similaires, un problème se pose. Afin de ne pas fausser le message original, Lederer (29) dit que le traducteur doit établir dans la langue d’arrivée, leurs équivalents aptes. Dans cette optique, elle souligne que « la traduction des proverbes exige une traduction par équivalence voire traduction interprétative.

La délimitation du proverbe et de l’idiome

Dans le domaine de l’étude littéraire, de nombreuses définitions des termes ‘le proverbe’ et ‘l’idiome’ abondent mais dans cette étude, nous allons nous pencher sur le sens générique des termes. D’après le Dictionnaire Larousse Encyclopédique, (1997) le proverbe est une phrase complète, devenue commune, qui sous une forme imagée, propose une certaine vision du monde.

Sur cette réflexion, Mejri (2018) présente trois natures dénomminatives de proverbes qui comprennent les caractères suivantes:

- Le proverbe est une entité préconstruite : même si elle trouve son origine dans le discours, elle est fixée dans la langue et fait partie, à ce titre, de la compétence des locuteurs ;



- le proverbe a toujours fait l'objet de pratiques lexicographiques qu'il soit inséré dans le corps des articles des dictionnaires ou qu'il fasse l'objet de listes conçus d'une manière autonome ou qu'il constitue l'objet unique de certains dictionnaires, le proverbe a souvent été intuitivement perçu comme une entité apparentée au lexique.

D'après le *Grand Robert de la langue française*, Un idiome (du grec *idios* signifiant « propre », « spécial ») est l'ensemble des moyens d'expression (langage, modes de pensée) d'une communauté donnée, relatif à un domaine d'activité spécifique de cette communauté. Du sens générique, Udoh cité par Yong & Orjinta (50) définit l'idiome ainsi:

L'idiome c'est une forme grammaticale qui a un sens que l'on ne peut pas déduire de la structure ; une variété des phrases apprises comme des unités qu'on ne peut pas faire l'analyse ; une unité phraséologique avec un sens que l'on ne peut pas déduire les différents mots qui font l'unité.

De sa part, Geluck cité par Ependu (25) ajoute que «L'idiome est une expression qui a du sens dans une langue mais qui, traduit mot-à-mot, dans une autre langue étrangère n'a plus le même sens.» A ce stade, on remarque que par la raison de l'exigence linguistique qui s'impose aux certaines expressions idiomatiques, il y a la possibilité de traduire les expressions par le moyen de la littéralité sans trahir le sens original.

La problématique de l'étude

En se basant sur l'axe que la traduction des expressions rhétoriques pose des difficultés aux traducteurs qui s'occupent de ce domaine, il faudrait la recherche des démarches souples qui soulèvent des difficultés. Le problème qui se lie à la notion d'équivalence constitue un souci dans le domaine de la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes. La notion d'équivalence détermine le sens qu'on recouvre au cours de la traduction.

Les objectifs de l'étude

Pour mener à bien cette étude, on vise à réaliser ces objectifs:
Mettre en évidence l'équivalence qui retient le

sens et le style du texte original

- Mettre en évidence que les principes de l'approche comparatiste s'avèrent pertinents dans la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes.
- Montrer le rôle pertinent que joue l'environnement contextuel dans la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes.
- Résoudre les problèmes qui se lient à l'intraduisibilité en traduction des proverbes et des idiomes.

Le cadre théorique

Nous allons adopter certaines stratégies de la théorie comparatiste de Vinay et Darbelnet. Ces théoriciens soulignent que la traduction s'opère principalement sur deux directions à savoir la traduction directe et la traduction oblique. La traduction directe comprend trois procédés: le calque, l'emprunt, la traduction littérale tandis que la traduction oblique compose de quatre procédés : l'adaptation, la transposition, la modulation et l'équivalence. D'après Vinay et Darbelnet (46-52), la traduction littérale désigne le passage mot-à-mot de langue de départ (LD) à la langue d'arrivée (LA). Le calque est un emprunt d'un genre particulier : on emprunte à la langue étrangère le syntagme, mais on traduit littéralement les éléments qui le composent. Le calque est l'emprunt d'un syntagme étranger avec une traduction littérale de ses éléments. L'emprunt exige le transfert vertical des catégories morphologiques d'une langue à une autre. L'adaptation s'applique à des cas où la situation à laquelle le message se réfère n'existe pas dans LA, et doit être créée par rapport à une autre situation, que l'on juge équivalente. La modulation est une variation dans le message, obtenue en changeant le point de vue, d'éclairage. L'équivalence est un procédé par lequel on rend compte de la même situation que dans l'original, en ayant recours à une rédaction entièrement différente.

Etant donné que l'équivalence demeure un phénomène crucial dans cette étude, nous avons jugé bon à recourir à des principes qui proviennent de cette théorie afin de réaliser les objectifs de notre étude. Au cours de notre traduction, nous avons constaté que la recherche



des équivalences contextuelles marque la substance de notre traduction. De fois, certaines proverbes et idiomes anglais qui manquent d'équivalents déjà établis en français nous présente le choix de recourir aux autres stratégies de l'approche comparatiste tels que la littéralité, la modulation et l'adaptation pourvu que le sens du texte original soit transmis.

La méthodologie

Cette étude se base sur la traduction et l'analyse justificative de la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes qui se présentent dans un film nigérian. Pour effectuer la traduction, nous avons tout d'abord sélectionné au hasard vingt deux énoncés récoltés de la transcription du film dans lesquels se trouvent des proverbes et des idiomes. Au cours de la traduction, nous nous sommes penchées sur la recherche d'équivalences qui se présentent dans les dictionnaires bilingues. Nous avons consulté des documents officiels de montage de film chez les chaînes télévisées NTA (Nigerian Television Authority) et ESBS (Enugu State Broadcasting Service). On a consulté des sites web qui sont disponibles sur internet. Face au manque d'équivalent naturel, nous sommes obligés de recourir aux approches alternatives pour retenir le sens et l'effet des proverbes et des idiomes dans la langue cible. Pour ce faire, nous avons approprié l'énoncé dans son contexte afin de saisir le sens des proverbes.

Notre analyse porte sur la présentation des versions anglaises et françaises des expressions rhétoriques en quatre rubriques. La première rubrique consiste des proverbes et des idiomes qui sont traduits par la recherche de l'équivalence. La deuxième rubrique présentera les proverbes et les idiomes qui sont traduites par la voie de la littéralité. La troisième rubrique présentera les proverbes et les idiomes qui sont traduits par la modulation. La quatrième rubrique consiste les proverbes et les idiomes qui sont traduits par l'adaptation. A l'aide des exemples qui proviennent de notre corpus, on va justifier notre traduction et les approches mises en place pour traduire les expressions. Les rubriques se présentent en « Mouvement », ce qui dénomme les déplacements des acteurs/actrices dans des endroits différents pour produire les différentes

scènes du film.

La limitation du travail

Notre étude ne se focalise que sur la traduction des proverbes et des idiomes sélectionnés dans ce film. Elle ne couvre pas la traduction tout entière du film. Nous avons constaté que le film n'existe actuellement qu'en anglais et, on lance donc un appel aux traducteurs d'entreprendre la traduction sous-titrage en d'autres langues.

Le résumé du film *Havoc*

Havoc est un film nigérian écrit en anglais par Gabriel Moses et réalisé par Ifeanyi Azodo en 2000. Il s'agit dans le film d'une leçon morale de la crise du foyer où l'émancipation financière d'une femme a détruit la paix et la fondation de la famille. Dans le film, Liz, l'héroïne devient femme d'affaire, est initiée au culte des femmes riches de la Cité. Vu son statut social, elle a donc commencé à maltraiter son pauvre mari qui n'arrive plus à subvenir aux besoins de sa famille. Elle a continué à commettre ce crime contre son mari avec la complicité de deux de ses enfants : Ike et Ifeoma. Enfin, est Liz (leur mère), Ik et Ifeoma ont tous été punis pour leur méchanceté. L'exception était Sandra (leur fille cadette), la seule à ne pas participer au crime contre leur pauvre père. Elle s'est donc occupée soigneusement de son père jusqu'à la mort.

Analyse justificative de la traduction

Au cours de ce travail, nous avons constaté que la recherche et la réexpression de l'équivalence demeure une stratégie indispensable en traduction des proverbes et des idiomes. Comme l'équivalence des proverbes et des idiomes ne prennent leurs valeurs sémantiques que dans un contexte ou dans un milieu socioculturel, il nous faut une analyse basée sur la recherche de l'équivalence souple pour traduire quelques expressions dans notre corpus. A ce stade, il faut signaler que certaines phrases originales sont anglaises nigérianes qui ne conforment pas à l'exigence de l'anglais standard. Pour traduire ces expressions, on a retenu le style, la couleur locale et le vouloir dire de l'auteur dans la langue cible. On parcourt le contexte pour saisir toutes les exigences



linguistiques, stylistiques et ethnographiques des expressions originales afin de rendre une traduction adéquate.

Rubrique 1 : Traduction par le moyen de l'équivalence:

Exemple 1: (Mouvement 44): Idiom

Anglais:

Ifeoma : *My stay in my husband's house is shaky.*

Français :

Ifeoma : *Mon mariage bat de l'aile.*

Au cours de la traduction, le sens figuratif de l'expression se peut traduire fidèlement comme «être mal en points» mais nous avons recouru au sens contextuel qui nous fournit l'équivalence adéquate pour réexprimer le vouloir dire de l'auteur. Pour traduire l'expression «My stay in my husband's place is shaky», nous avons trouvé dans un dictionnaire monolingue une équivalence contextuelle «battre de l'aile» qui signifie «un oiseau blessé». Comme nous l'avons déjà remarqué, il y a d'autres expressions qui ne passent qu'à l'équivalence contextuelle fournies par les dictionnaires bilingues. En voici quelques exemples :

Exemple 2: (Mouvement 16): Idiom

Anglais:

Liz: *Iron lady, that's why we say two heads are better than one.*

Français:

Liz: *Dame de fer! Voilà pourquoi dit-on que deux avis valent mieux qu'un.*

Exemple 3: (Mouvement 6): Idiom

Anglais: *Forewarned is forearmed.*

Français : *Un homme averti en vaut deux.*

Exemple 4 : (Mouvement 8) idiom

Anglais : Liz: *₦100,000.00 what? You must be out of your mind. You can't eat your cake and still have it.*

Français: Liz : *₦100,000.00! Quoi? Tu es fou. Vous ne pouvez pas être et avoir été.*

Exemple 5: (Mouvement 6): Idiom

Anglais: Voice Over; *my shop is too scanty, but somebody has promised to help me out nothing goes for nothing she said, but my husband warned me of this danger before he opened this place for me. If I do anything*

contrary to his advice how will it be ₦10,000.00 on a visit, the money is too much, the ultimate purpose for which this shop was opened is money, money can come in anyway. I won't let my husband know; after all he needs money too.

Français : Voix Off: *Ma boutique est trop peu approvisionnée, mais quelqu'un a promis de me venir en aide. Point d'argent point de Suisse, dit-elle. Mon mari m'a prévenue de ce risque avant de m'ouvrir cette boutique. Si je contrarie ses conseils, comment sera-t-il ? Dix mille naira de gagner en une sortie, mais c'est trop ! Cette boutique a été ouverte pour gagner de l'argent. Après tout, l'argent n'a pas d'odeur. Je ne dirais rien à mon mari. D'ailleurs, il en a aussi besoin.*

Exemple 6 : (Mouvement 27) : Idiom

Liz: *You can go, have to call Chinedu, when one door closes, another one opens.*

Français : Liz : *Va-t'en ! Je dois appeler Chinedu, un de perdu, dix de retrouvés.*

Exemple 7 (SYNOPSIS, 1ère ligne): Idiom

Anglais: Money is the root of all evil.

Français : L'argent est source de tous les vices.

Rubrique 2 : Traduction pas le moyen de la littéralité

Au cours de la traduction, on constate que la majorité des expressions ne présentent pas d'équivalent naturel en français. Pour évoquer une même situation de ces expressions, nous sommes obligés de chercher un autre équivalent contextuel qui retient la couleur locale et à la fois le même effet dans la langue cible. On a jugé bon d'adopter la littéralité pour retenir la couleur locale ainsi que le même effet que du texte original. Dans la traduction, on retient les séquences identiques des images morphologiques et sémantiques dans la langue cible. En voici quelques exemples:

Exemple 1: (Mouvement 6): Idiom

Anglais: Ibekwe: *Well em, I see nothing wrong with somebody adding to your salary, but women, women, you will never know their true colour until a little money gets into their hand. I now you must have made up your mind and that you are telling me for telling sake, otherwise, I do not support the idea.*

Français : Ibekwe : *Alors, je ne vois rien de mal si ta femme apporte de l'argent pour*



augmenter ton salaire, mais c'est très difficile de prédire les femmes, une fois qu'elles ont un peu d'argent, elles *montrent leur vraies couleur*. (Il réfléchit). Je vois que tu as déjà pris ta décision, et que tu m'informe pour faire semblant de m'informe. Sinon, je ne suis pas d'accord avec toi.

Exemple 2: (Mouvement 41): Proverbe

Anglais: Uzoka : We have tried, *when an underaged child searches for the (cause of the) death of his father, he will be visited by what killed his father*. Ikechukwu, leave this plot of land, it is not yours. It belongs to Okoye, that is our verdict.

Français: Uzoka : Nous avons fait de notre mieux. *Un mineur qui cherche la source du malheur de ses parents sera un jour victime de ce malheur*. Ikechukwu laisse cette parcelle de terre à Okoye, elle lui appartient. Voilà notre verdict.

Pour ce proverbe nous avons jugé mieux de traduire «the death of his father» en «malheur de ses parents» au lieu de «mort de son père.» Il ne s'agit pas seulement de «mort», mais tout malheur possible.

Exemple 3: (Mouvement 48): Idiom

Anglais: Liz : Your husband has *touched the tail of a tiger*, (calm down) it is a simple thing (think) the major problem that has been bugging me is IK, he is heading to forty years, and he is not thinking of getting married, his favourite these days are divorced or married women.

Français: Liz : Ton mari *a touché à la queue d'un tigre* (se calmant). C'est très simple (pensive) le problème le plus perturbant, c'est IK. Il a presque quarante ans et il ne veut pas se marier. Il préfère les femmes divorcées et les femmes mariées.

Exemple 4 (Mouvement 14): Idiom

Anglais: MD: To hell with that your stupid wife, I thought as much, that lousy loud mouthed thing you call your wife. *You cannot serve two masters at a time*, better go and marry your wife, and leave my office, foolish man.

Français: La directrice: Allez au diable avec votre idiote de femme ! Je m'en doutais qu'il ne pouvait s'agir que d'elle. Cette gueularde-la qu'est votre femme! *Vous ne pouvez servir deux maîtres à la fois*. Fichez-moi le

camp ! Allez donc vous occuper de votre femme. Espèce d'idiot ! C'est l'équivalent naturel et aussi la traduction littérale de ce proverbe.

Au cours de la traduction, nous avons d'autre possibilité «Vous ne pouvez pas courir deux lièvres à la fois» mais dès que l'expression ne retient pas le vouloir dire de l'auteur, nous avons choisi l'équivalent qui s'avère juste.

Rubrique 3 : Traduction par la modulation

Dans cette rubrique, il s'agit de la traduction de certaines expressions en changeant de point de vue d'éclairage de l'expression originale sans trahir le sens original. D'un point de vue de l'équivalence, les expressions du texte d'arrivée ne disposent pas nécessairement du même ensemble de capacités référentielles mais possèdent celles relatives au sens habituellement retenu pour les expressions du texte de départ. En voici quelques exemples:

Exemple 1: (Mouvement 16): Idiom

Anglais: China: Well, I know that, we women are jealous and can go to any length, but my dear, let me tell you, if your husband comes here to join you that will mean doom for you, you better not make that mistake, *look well before you leap*.

Français: China : Ça alors ! Je m'en doutais. Nous les femmes, nous sommes jalouses. Et la jalousie peut nous pousser à tout faire. Mais Liz, ma chère amie, écoute-moi bien, si ton mari vient gérer cette boutique avec toi, tu seras fichue. Tu feras mieux de ne pas commettre cette sottise. *En toutes choses il faut considérer la fin*.

Pour traduire cette expression, nous avons adopté cette stratégie parce qu'elle nous a permis de retenir le sens original qui englobe tous conseils de base dans l'énoncé. Ce qui lance un appel à prendre conscience de n'importe quelle action avant de choisir. Au cours de la traduction, nous avons trouvé d'autres expressions comme «Regarder avant de sauter» et «Réfléchir avant d'agir» pour changer le point de vue de l'expression originale mais nous avons choisi l'expression « En toutes choses il faut considérer la fin» afin de retenir le sens inédit de l'énoncé.

Exemple 2: (Mouvement 3): Idiom

Unoma: *You have been talking and talking, but you have not been able to hit the nail on the head*. You have not said what Osita has done wrong,



neither have you said what he is about to do.

Unoma : *Tu tournes en rond sans mettre le doigt dessus. Tu n'as pas dit ce que Osita avait fait de mal, tu n'as pas non plus dit ce qu'il compte faire.*

Un autre choix nous parvient au cours de la traduction pour retenir le style original mais la littéralité ne fournit qu'une traduction ridicule comme «Tu parles et tu parles sans mettre le doigt dessus». Pour retenir le style et l'effet de l'énoncé original, on recourt à cette stratégie.

Exemple 3 (Mouvement 3): Idiom

Anglais: Ibekwe: Good, that he has opened a big shop for his wife in the city, what a funny thing to do. There are so many other things to do with money rather than *playing host to the devil*.

Français: Ibekwe: Bien, c'est un drôle d'idée qu'il a ouvert une boutique pour sa femme en ville. Il y a tant d'autres choses à faire avec cet argent que *d'ouvrir sa porte au malheur*.

Pour traduire cette expression, nous avons d'autres choix « Devenir un hôte pour le diable » et « Jouer le rôle d'un hôte pour le diable ». Mais nous avons choisi la traduction qui s'avère adéquate pour exprimer le vouloir dire de l'auteur.

Exemple 4 : (Mouvement 27) : Idiom

Anglais: Ibekwe : It's ok. Save yourself the agony of trying to explain. It's even good that you did not die in their hands. The food that you will eat won't be a problem to me and my wife, don't worry too much, *whatever that goes up must come down*.

Français : Ibekwe : (Lui coupant la parole) Ça suffit! Ne cherche pas à t'expliquer; Heureusement que tu t'es sauvé. (Ibekwe fait un geste désespérant et continue). Ma femme et moi, nous pouvons subvenir à tes besoins. Ne t'inquiète pas trop. *Toute chose a une fin*.

Pour traduire cette expression, d'autre possibilité s'impose à la traduction comme « Tout ce qui monte doit descendre » mais l'expression nuit au génie de la langue française, et elle ne met pas en relief le sens, ou le vouloir dire de l'auteur. Pour retenir l'effet voulu sur le lecteur du texte d'arrivé, nous avons choisi la modulation.

Exemple 5: (Mouvement 28): Proverbe

Anglais: Ibekwe: Well, since you have refused to talk, I have to talk my own. You see him as he is should anything happen to him, it will not be in your favour... you will suffer it most... *Water in the broken pot is there for the dog...* know why I am saying this, you may claim to be rich, or you may claim to be hard ... but...the pride of everywoman is her husband.

Français: Ibekwe: Enfin, puisque tu ne veux rien dire, je dois parler, moi-même. Tu vois comme ton mari a maigri, s'il lui arrive quelque chose de mal, cela ne sera pas du tout dans ton intérêt. Tu vas subir des châtements. *Tu ne pourras pas échapper à ta responsabilité*. Je comprends bien le problème qui va se poser éventuellement. Tu peux te croire très riche, ou récalcitrante, mais sache bien que la fierté d'une femme c'est son époux.

Comme nous l'avons remarqué ci-haut, une autre stratégie s'impose à la traduction comme «L'eau dans un pot cassé est là pour le chien» mais la traduction n'a pas de sens à l'audience française à laquelle la traduction est destinée. C'est la raison pour laquelle on en est arrivé à retenir l'expression «Tu ne pourras pas échapper à ta responsabilité» pour retenir la couleur locale domestiquée à la langue Igbo. Dans la culture Igbo, les familles qui élèvent les chiens leur mettent de l'eau dans les pièces du pot cassé, alors, nul ne boit cette eau. C'est seulement le chien qui en boit. Voici donc d'où on est tirée le sens de ce proverbe. Le choix fait véhicule fidèlement le vouloir dire de l'auteur.

Exemple 6: (Mouvement) 25: Proverbe

Anglais: Obi: Nna anyi, Ibekwe, you have done justice to this matter. *He who knows how to pound, let him pound in the mortar, he who does not know how to pound, let him pound on the ground*.

Français : Obi: Père Ibekwe, Vous avez bien parlé. *A bon entendeur, salut*.

Dans la traduction, si nous employons la littéralité pour traduire ce proverbe, le choix va surement heurter au génie de la langue française. Nous avons d'autre possibilité comme «Qui sait comment piler, qu'il pile dans le mortier, qui ne sait pas comment piler, qu'il pile sur le sol.» mais le sens n'est pas bien dévoilé avec ce choix. Dès



qu'il existe des lacunes qui attendent d'être remplies pour que le lecteur francophone puisse saisir le vouloir dire de l'auteur du texte de départ, on recourt donc à la modulation.

Rubrique 4 : Traduction par l'adaptation

Dans cette rubrique, la traduction de ces expressions s'avère plus complexe et délicate car elle exige une connaissance approfondie du monde socioculturel de la langue française. Pour effectuer la traduction, on tient compte de l'environnement contextuel des expressions afin de dévoiler l'équivalent le plus fidèle possible dans la langue cible. En voici quelques exemples:

Exemple 1: (Mouvement 5): Idiom

Anglais : I am giving you wealth *on a platter of diamond* and you are about refusing it.

Français : Je t'offre la richesse *avec générosité* et tu es sur le point de la refuser.

Au cours de la traduction, l'équivalence de l'expression «Platter of diamond» ne se trouve pas dans les dictionnaires bilingues. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous avons adapté l'expression «avec générosité» pour véhiculer le vouloir dire de l'auteur du texte de départ. Cette expression porte le sens de l'énoncé et produit le même effet sur le lecteur du texte cible.

Exemple 2: (Mouvement 9): Idiom

Anglais : **Larry:** I must deal with this woman, I must give her something to remind her of the day she *stepped into a lion's den*.

Français : **Larry :** Je ferai voir à cette femme de quel bois je me chauffe pour lui faire regretter le jour où elle *s'est jetée dans la gueule de loup*.

Dans la traduction, l'expression «Stepped into a lion's den» se traduit par «S'est jeté dans la gueule du loup». Pour retenir la couleur locale de cet idiom dans la langue cible, on recourt à l'adaptation «la queue du loup» comme étant une réalité française pour remplacer une réalité anglaise «lion's den».

Exemple 3 (Movement 3): Idiom

Anglais : **Ibekwe:** My sister, [...] we cannot fold our arms and watch Osita *enter into a beehive*. Such can happen to those who do not have relatives, not our own Osita.

Français : **Ibekwe :** Ma sœur, [...] nous ne pouvons croiser les bras et voir Osita *se met dans*

une ruche. Cela peut arriver aux gens dépourvus de famille, mais certainement, pas à notre frère.

Dans la traduction, on est recouru à la adaptation pour remplacer la réalité anglaise «enter into a beehive» par «se met dans une ruche» en français.

Exemple 4: (Mouvement 3): Proverbe

Anglais : **Ibekwe :** You are just seeing it, superficially. Look, there are other places where that money would have gone, *rather than purchasing a maggot infested firewood*, opening a shop, for a woman in the city it involves a lot.

Français : **Ibekwe :** Il paraît que tu la voyais autrement. Il y aurait d'autres choses à faire avec cet argent *plutôt que de semer le trouble dans son foyer* : monter une entreprise pour une femme en ville, cela peut s'avérer très dangereux.

Dans la traduction, une partie du sens du proverbe «Rather than purchasing a maggot infested firewood» se rend en français grâce à la prise en compte du sens contextuel, et nous sommes arrivés à dévoiler le vouloir dire de l'auteur.

Exemple 5 (Mouvement 40): Idiom

Anglais: **Ibe:** You wicked woman, *you have killed a big meat*, go and chop the meat, drunkard.

Français : **Ibe :** Femme méchante ! *Tu as tué un gros gibier*. Il ne reste plus qu'à le manger ! Ivrogne!

Pour traduire l'énoncé, l'expression «You have killed a big meat» s'est rendue fidèlement grâce à la stratégie qui nous fournit l'équivalence en français. Dans cet énoncé, la réalité «meat» se traduit en français par «gibier»

Conclusion

La traduction de proverbes et des idiomes exige la recherche de l'équivalence apte qui porte le sens émotionnel ainsi que le style du texte original. Bien qu'il s'agit d'une opération complexe, cette étude a montré que le sens de ces expressions est nécessairement associé au sens ethnographique de la langue cible. C'est la raison pour laquelle la traduction de ces génies de langue exige l'emploi des stratégies souples qui fournissent soit l'équivalence naturelle soit l'équivalence contextuelle. Ces réflexions confirment que la traduction d'un proverbe et



d'un idiome est très délicate car, les expressions s'écartent le plus souvent de régularité linguistiques de la langue d'arrivée. La recherche de l'équivalence naturelle de ces expressions pose souvent des problèmes stratégiques. Face à ce problème, on se sert des approches qui fournissent l'équivalent contextuel. Pour ce faire, nous avons pu établir l'équivalence des situations

entre le français et l'anglais afin de ne pas fausser le vouloir dire de l'auteur du film. A travers cette étude, on a constaté que les proverbes et les idiomes du texte d'arrivée ne disposent pas nécessairement du même ensemble de capacités référentielles mais possèdent celles relatives au sens habituellement retenu pour l'expression du texte original.

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Une lecture écocritique de *L'emploi du temps* de Michel Butor

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Résumé

La plupart des écrivains du Nouveau Roman (l'un des courants littéraires au 20^e siècle) abordent grands nombres de thèmes dans leurs œuvres. De l'archéologie, l'art, la chimie, la biologie, la médecine jusqu'à l'écologie, ces écrivains voient la littérature comme un outil qui s'avère utile pour changer positivement le sort de l'homme. Cet article montre en quoi Michel Butor, incarnant ce nouvel esprit, dénonce dans *L'Emploi du temps* la dégradation de l'environnement et l'attaque contre ses biotiques dans une ville anglaise imaginaire, Bleston. L'article adopte la théorie écocritique pour analyser le niveau de cette dégradation. Notre problématique consiste donc à ressortir les éléments de la nature affectés par les activités des habitants de la ville de Bleston pour faire ressortir le message de Michel Butor. L'article conclut qu'un environnement sale et pollué, à en croire par Michel Butor, a un impact négatif sur l'homme et même sur la nature elle-même.

Mots clés : dégradation, écocritique, Nouveau Roman, nature

Introduction

L'Emploi du temps, le deuxième roman de Michel Butor, peut être classé comme Nouveau Roman à cause des phrases extrêmement longues, l'intrigue complexe et incohérente avec peu de personnages et la présence de l'exploration du flux de pensée. En tout cas, le Nouveau Roman est un mouvement littéraire qui regroupe un nombre d'écrivains dans lequel la diversité des auteurs est aussi grande que la force novatrice qui les réunit (Elaho 2011). Son projet ambitieux, qui renouvelle non seulement la forme du roman mais aussi la fonction même de celui-ci, constitue un domaine de recherche très variée et rentable.

Appelé par certains critiques comme école du refus, le Nouveau Roman « refuse également la schématisation chronologique du temps qu'il remplace par le temps de la conscience ou de la mémoire » (Moye 46-47). Toutefois, le Nouveau Roman déconstruit les normes du roman traditionnel pour permettre d'exprimer une nouvelle conception de l'homme et de sa réalité. Cette double innovation du roman et de l'homme est particulièrement intéressante dans la façon dont elle exprime une vision critique et restreinte de la représentation traditionnelle et essaie d'exprimer la complexité et la dynamique de l'homme et du monde avec lequel il interagit. En plus, ces écrivains abordent

beaucoup de thèmes dans leurs œuvres : de l'archéologie, l'art, la chimie, la biologie, la médecine jusqu'à l'écologie.

En adoptant la théorie écocritique, nous voudrions étudier la présentation des éléments de la nature dans *L'Emploi du temps*. Ces éléments sont en l'occurrence l'eau, la terre, l'air et l'igné. Ils sont présentés d'une manière polluée, dégradée et sale. En plus, nous examinons leur état dégénéré et l'incommode qu'ils provoquent chez les habitants de la ville Bleston, car, à cette époque où les phénomènes des changements climatiques sont déjà présents partout dans le monde, il est important de s'inquiéter sur la situation de notre environnement.

La théorie écocritique : Définition, historique et principes de base

La théorie écocritique est un terme employé pour la première fois par William Rueckert en 1978, dans un essai intitulé, « Literature and Ecology : An Experiment in Ecocriticism », pour se référer à l'application de l'écologie et des concepts écologiques dans l'analyse et l'étude littéraire. Plus tard en 1996, un ouvrage intitulé *The Ecocriticism Reader : Landmarks in Literary Ecology* par Fromm, et Glotfelty, a été publié en Amérique. C'est une anthologie sur l'écocritique et il a marqué un jalon pour le développement de ce domaine de recherche. Dans cette anthologie se retrouve une



définition de l'écocritique, croyons-nous, la plus explicite à laquelle des chercheurs contemporains font sans cesse référence. L'écocriticisme est, selon cette anthologie: "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (Fromm et Glotfelty xviii). Cette définition établit la relation entre l'analyse littéraire et la théorie écologique.

L'écocritique s'est développée à une époque où les problèmes environnementaux globaux devenaient de plus en plus connus. Selon Sven Lars Schulz, ce domaine de recherche « (...) se caractérise en grande partie par une forte position normative » (ix-xxviii). Ainsi, les chercheurs écocritiques adoptent souvent une certaine perspective éthique dans leurs analyses de la représentation littéraire de la nature. La perspective nommée l'écocentrisme, selon laquelle la nature possède un statut moral, a toujours été répandue parmi ces chercheurs. En tout cas, la définition de l'écocriticisme par Estok, cité par Finch s'avère utile ici aussi. Selon lui, la théorie écocritique porte sur "any theory that is committed to effecting change by analyzing the function – thematic, artistic, social, historical, ideological, theoretical, or otherwise – of the natural environment, or aspects of it, represented in documents (literary or other) that contribute to material practices in material worlds" (201). Dans le contexte de cette étude, la définition qui nous semble la plus explicite du terme 'écocriticisme' serait celle de Lawrence Buell. Selon lui, la théorie écocritique « is the study of literature and environment from interdisciplinary point of view where all sciences come together to analyse the environment and brainstorm possible solutions for the correction of the contemporary environmental situation » (239).

En s'établissant comme un mouvement critique-littéraire assez nouveau, l'analyse écocritique déploie sa pensée depuis que les

grands sages, à travers le temps, éternisent leurs réflexions en écrivant noir sur blanc leurs inquiétudes pour l'environnement et les espèces qui y cohabitent. Aujourd'hui, plus que jamais, l'écocritique est convaincue qu'à travers la littérature, on peut instruire et éveiller la conscience écologique du lecteur pour compiler et estimer des textes étudiés auparavant d'un autre point de vue, ainsi que pour soutenir la nouvelle création littéraire qui recrée des liaisons plus fortes avec la planète et ses habitants. C'est également une littérature qui fait la promotion non pas seulement d'acte artistique mais aussi qui sert comme thermomètre à l'état concourant du milieu environnant.

De cette façon, le discours écocritique, interdisciplinaire par excellence, donne voix et pouvoir à tous les composants qui forment la chaîne de vie, puisqu'il fournit une connaissance vaste du monde extérieur où l'environnement "naturel" (vu traditionnellement comme un encadrement) devient, d'une certaine manière, le protagoniste. La révolution industrielle et bourgeoise en Europe annihile les portions de nature sauvage qui pouvaient persister; toutefois, dans ce contexte naturaliste apparaissent de grands auteurs francophones comme Jean-Christophe Ruffin et Julian Crag, qui se distinguent comme de véritables pionniers de la pensée écocritique moderne, en faisant vivre dans leurs œuvres l'amour pour la terre, l'eau, les plantes et les animaux.

Cette théorie est déployée dans cette étude pour scruter la relation des éléments de la nature et la fiction chez Michel Butor. En effet, nous voyons la manière dont Butor présente l'état dénigré de ces éléments dont l'aquatique, l'ignée, l'aérien et le terrestre, dans le but de sensibiliser le public sur sa dégradation et l'état d'incommode qu'ils provoquent chez ses occupants et chez le personnage principal du roman, Jacques Revel.

Résumé et quelques commentaires critiques sur *L'Emploi du temps*

L'Emploi du temps s'ouvre sur la scène de l'arrivée de Jacques Revel, un Français effectuant un stage d'un an dans une entreprise anglaise, Matthew and Sons, dans une ville



anglaise imaginaire de Bleston. Le protagoniste qui est à la fois le narrateur du récit décrit ses aventures dans un journal intime où il note au début son premier contact avec la cité, contact qui n'est ni agréable ni souhaitable ; cette ville l'accueille d'une manière bien déplaisante. D'abord, Bleston se montre labyrinthique, inextricable, difficile, sombre, sale et pluvieuse. Mais ceci n'est qu'une première partie de sa caractéristique et de son état.

Au fur et à mesure, et à cause de cet accueil peu satisfaisant, le protagoniste accorde à la ville les caractères humains ; il découvre que la ville est comme un être humain, ayant à la fois un état physique et psychique ce qui constitue dès lors un autre personnage du roman. En fait, selon Gabrielle Frémont, cette ville, Bleston, « n'apparaît plus comme une entité bien délimitée mais comme une personne en chair et en os, avec des 'entrailles', du 'sang', des 'yeux' et un 'visage' » (445). A part ces attributs humains, Bleston dispose encore d'autres caractères difficiles, méchants et ignominieux, comme le montrent les termes tels que la « colère », la « vengeance » ou le « sarcasme » (24) employés par le narrateur pour décrire le tempérament et le comportement de cette ville. Claire Mazaleyrat, en analysant le nom de Bleston dit que « c'est déjà l'étymologie du nom de Bleston – *Belli Civitas* ou la ville de la guerre – qui en constitue la justification ultime de sa violence naturelle inscrite dans ses fondements » (24).

En plus, Bleston est une ville labyrinthique, enlisant ses occupants et que seul les initiés sont capables de la naviguer en raison de sa structure complexe et bizarre. Elle aussi animée d'un esprit maléfique qui dérange ses habitants malheureux comme Jacques Revel par l'intermédiaire des éléments de la nature dont : l'eau, le feu, l'air et la terre. Ces quatre éléments de la nature deviennent écologiquement les agents « matériels » comme support au monde physique pour ainsi emprunter les termes des écologistes et qui permettent d'atteindre les hommes réellement, de causer des ennuis et de se coller à leur peau vive et vulnérable. Puisque la ville a « réussi à asservir, à soudoyer » (*L'Emploi* 355) les quatre éléments de la nature, elle s'est

emparée de leur pouvoir pour manifester sa colère et son attaque. Les quatre éléments de la nature ravagent les habitants de Bleston. Revel en a marre déjà avec ces quatre éléments dès son arrivée. Quoique chacun des ces éléments ait son propre domaine d'action, il n'est pas rare de les voir coopérer et travailler ensemble dans le but d'intensifier leur puissance sur sa victime. Revel va, malgré lui, continuer à poursuivre son objectif dans cette ville dangereuse de point de vue écologique.

Stéphane Gallon observe que Bleston est la ville qui sert de fond de ce roman, qui se ressemble à la ville anglaise, Manchester, quelque peu transformé, caractérisée du maléfique, de la malveillance, voire même de l'animosité, qui devient même son personnage principal. Salih Subhi et Perugini n'ont pas douté la question du statut de Bleston comme le personnage principal de *L'Emploi du temps* et son rapprochement à Manchester. Loucif Badreddine écrit que *L'Emploi du temps* est défini par une structure fondée à la fois sur la métaphore et sur l'inventaire, tout comme *La Modification*, au titre significatif, bref, chez Butor, il s'agit de construction plutôt que de transcription.

Pour les duos, Mennan, Zeynep et Demirel Emine Bogenç, le lien entre les personnages et le mythe dans *L'Emploi du temps* dispose l'effet stylistique: et la correspondance des personnages mythiques avec ceux du roman constitue une intertextualité (116-117). En fait, C'est justement l'association entre mythe et fiction qui caractérise le second grand thème mythologique de *L'Emploi du temps*, la légende de Thésée. Revel prend contact avec ce mythe grâce à la Tapisserie Harrey exposée au « Bleston Museum of Fine Arts » (*L'Emploi* 213). Allant dans la même direction, Subhi explique que *L'Emploi du temps* se situe entre les deux aspects du mythe dont malédiction/bénédiction. L'accent est mis plutôt sur le danger qu'offre pour l'existence humaine la modernité, mais elle montre aussi comment y échapper (175-176). Lison Brenu observe que le narrateur parle d'une 'transpiration, [d'une] terrible exhalaison de Bleston'. L'odeur de la ville du roman de Butor surprend le narrateur par le miasme qui s'en



échappe. Il s'agit, dès lors, d'une émanation propre à un corps malade, putride (44). Brenu parle de l'une des entraves que constitue la ville pour l'homme contemporain comme Butor la présente dans ce roman. Le travail de Lison Brenu présente davantage la conception de la ville dans les romans de Butor.

Marian A. Grant écrit un ouvrage intitulé, *Butor: L'Emploi du temps* ou elle étudie le roman comme étant le journal intime que Revel utilise pour rendre compte de ses jours à Bleston. Certains critiques comme Britton et Grant voient le réalisme dans *L'Emploi du temps*. Ainsi, tous les éléments évoqués dans *L'Emploi du temps* donnent l'image du réel. C'est un raisonnement que nous trouvons essentiel concernant le style de ce roman. Les expériences de Revel, le principal personnage dans le roman, pourraient passer pour réelles.

A la différence de l'étude de Britton, Ligny et Rousselot étudient *L'Emploi du temps* et ils évoquent les principes du Nouveau Roman. Parlant du style, *L'Emploi du temps* est vu comme un texte dont l'enjeu apparaît à la fois comme évident et paradoxal. L'évidence: les premières pages d'un roman doivent délimiter un espace, un temps, des personnages. Le paradoxe : ce roman commence par une fin, le déclin, la mort et l'automne. Mais en même temps, il s'écrit au printemps, et ces premières pages constituent en fait un rite préparatoire à l'écriture comme renaissance et reconstruction (292).

Dalia El Mourad considère le rôle de la ville dans *L'Emploi du temps* et observe que la ville pour Revel apparaît mystérieuse et fait voir plusieurs formes de labyrinthe que Butor évoque dans ce roman. L'échec de Revel de bien s'initier à Bleston est, certes, le résultat de son caractère labyrinthique. Johan Faerber divulgue l'importance du voyage pour Butor. *Le déni du lieu* est d'abord lisible dans *L'Emploi du temps* lorsque l'espace n'est que la durée du temps. La conception spatiale de Butor est comparée à celle de Leibniz pour qui « l'espace n'est rien d'autre que l'ordre de l'existence simultanée des possibles » (239). C'est dire que le lieu chez Michel Butor reste un espace provoquant des sujets.

Les arguments de Faerber et El Mourad sont clairs. Alors que Faerber examine le rôle du voyage et l'espace dans l'univers romanesque de Butor, El Mourad évoque le rôle de la ville. Comme le travail de Brenu et de Celia Britton, le travail de Faerber et El Mourad jette un peu de lumière sur les ressources thématiques de *L'Emploi du temps*. Pour nous dans cette étude, il s'agit d'étudier à fond les éléments de la nature dans ce roman, ce qui échappe à la plupart des critiques de *L'Emploi du temps* aussi amples qu'ils soient.

Les quatre éléments de la nature : l'aquatique, l'air, l'ignée et la terre

Dans *L'Emploi du temps*, l'élément aquatique est présent sous trois formes principales: celle de la rivière, de la pluie et des boissons. Ces trois éléments s'avèrent indispensable dans la vie d'un homme. Cependant, une fois dans un état sale ou pollué, ils peuvent provoquer des incommodités. C'est le cas de la rivière Slée, « dont le nom rappelle les mots anglais "slime" (la boue) ou "sleaze" (sordide) » (Kotowska 2), elle est trouble et boueuse, indice de la pollution et de la saleté de cette rivière. Les canaux de Slée sont dangereux pour l'être humain et la vie aquatique qui s'y trouve. Ils sont solides, denses et dégagent des odeurs nauséabondes qui salissent l'air et infectent ses victimes. Avec cet état de chose, il n'existe pas la fraîcheur, la limpidité et la force purificatrice que les environnementalistes trouvent essentielles pour la caractéristique de l'eau propre. En tant que liquide qui est protégée et immobile, la rivière Slée représente le symbole de la stagnation détériorée.

L'élément aquatique est encore dispersé dans l'atmosphère de Bleston et se condense en brume ou en pluie. Cette pluie n'est pas comme celle d'ordinaire ; elle constitue une sorte de geôle et isolement qui empêche les victimes de sortir. Cette pluie décrite comme : « noire et froide » (*L'Emploi* 372), cause l'incommodité aux habitants. Normalement, l'eau doit se présenter en tant que boisson rafraîchissante. Elle pourrait apparaître, avec le mélange des autres éléments, sous autres formes diverses : du vin, du thé, du café ou de l'alcool. Mais, elle ne perd jamais ses



qualités essentielles, à savoir le rafraîchissement et la satisfaction. Or, l'eau qui se trouve à Bleston manque ces qualités et Butor dénonce cet état de chose.

En plus, à Bleston, l'air qui s'y trouve est beaucoup pollué. L'air normal et sain est conçu doux, léger et azur, parcouru aussi bien par des nuages duveteux que par des oiseaux joyeux, l'aérien blestonien, représenté par le ciel gris, les brouillards désagréables et le vent gluant, est décrit dans ce propos comme : « Cet air auquel j'étais désormais condamné pour tout un an, je l'ai interrogé par mes narines et ma langue, et j'ai bien senti qu'il contenait ces vapeurs sournoises qui depuis sept mois m'asphyxient, qui avaient réussi à me plonger dans le terrible engourdissement dont je viens de me réveiller » (*L'Emploi* 10) (Nous soulignons). A en juger par ces mots soulignés, la vie des habitants dans cette ville s'avère difficile et ces habitants seront contraints de respirer dans la douleur perpétuel.

Le soleil transparaît rarement à travers une lourde couverture nuageuse du ciel constamment chargé (Kotowska, « Le soleil... »11). Ce climat asphyxie les habitants de cette ville aussi bien dans le sens littéral que métaphorique. En outre, la salissure de l'air de la ville Bleston semble se moquer de la pureté parfaite postulée par l'auteur de l'air et les songes ; Revel qualifie « cette transpiration, cette terrible exhalaison de Bleston » de « venimeuse, insidieuse, alourdissant, ralentissante, décourageante » (*L'Emploi* 131). La structure de Bleston est en elle-même enlisante. En effet, la circularité formée par les parcs situés dans les différents arrondissements, ainsi que celle formée par le déplacement mensuel de la foire, constitue une sorte d'enlissement, d'étouffement ; la ventilation se fait rare. Revel est d'ores et déjà contraint à l'air « amer », acide, carbonneux, lourd » de cette ville, à cet air qui l'« asphyxie » et l'« engourdit » (*L'Emploi* 11). Il ne peut plus faire marche arrière à cause du « fossé qui s'était démesurément agrandi tandis qu'[il] le franchissait » (*L'Emploi* 11).

Pour l'écologiste social, Murray Bookchin, l'urbanisation est nécessaire mais, il faut toujours conserver la nature et le système

écologique. Dans son œuvre *Urbanization without Cities*, Bookchin critique l'urbanisation pour mesurer le rôle des villes dans la dialectique sociale et il affirme que les villes ont été nécessaires, toutefois défectueuses dans le progrès humain. Dans ses efforts de « sauver la ville » Bookchin fait une série de liens entre l'écologie des espaces ouverts et celle des implantations métropolitaines.

Pour sa part, Raymond William écrit l'ouvrage, *La campagne et la ville* dans lequel il annonce une croissance industrielle démesurée qui assujettit la nature et l'homme même. *Naissance d'un pont* écrit par l'écrivaine française Maylis de Kerangal, montre la mentalité des leaders contemporains à l'égard de l'environnement. L'action se déroule à Coca, une ville imaginaire en Californie, pendant la construction d'un grand pont suspendu. C'est un pont qui devra incarner la grandeur (ou bien la mégalomanie) du maire de la ville et qui sera « (...) à l'image de la nouvelle Coca » (Maylis 64), « The Brand New City! » (Maylis 169). La construction du pont influence beaucoup la vie de la population urbaine, mais aussi la nature environnante et le peuple indigène habitant dans la forêt à proximité de la ville. Elisée Reclus écrit *L'Homme et la Terre* dans lequel il dénonce les activités humaines qui sont nuisibles à l'environnement en se référant aux pays de l'Europe: « C'est l'observation de la Terre qui nous explique les événements de l'histoire (...) vers une solidarité plus consciente de notre individu, à la fois si petit et si grand avec l'immense univers » (4). Reclus avertit que les conditions historiques et sociales changent la physionomie de la terre dès que la société change son paysage et qu'à son époque, l'expansion du bétail provoque l'extension des terrains fourragers. Tous ces auteurs sont unanimes dans leur condamnation de la dégradation de l'environnement face aux activités humaines qui sont nuisibles d'abord à l'homme et puis à la planète terre.

Toutefois dans *L'Emploi du temps*, l'élément terrestre est l'autre détresse et, en même temps, le troisième élément de la nature qui opprime les habitants de Bleston. Dans



L'Emploi du temps, la terre se présente comme un lieu dans laquelle on s'enlise: la boue désagréable recouvre les trottoirs quelle que soit la saison, et elle colle aux vêtements et tente à les transpercer forcément. Dans les rares endroits non couverts de boue, la terre anti-maternelle produit une végétation pauvre qui se résume souvent à « l'herbe rase et malade » (*L'Emploi* 183), même en plein été, alors dans le temps de l'épanouissement de la nature. Cette nature de terre dans cette ville donne souvent à réfléchir sur la condition actuelle de notre planète terre.

L'autre fléau qui pèse sur la ville rude Bleston est l'élément igné. L'élément igné, qui pourrait être de feu et aurait les caractères des flammes est produit par l'action de l'homme. Il s'avère un destructeur malin qui, caché sous la trompeuse apparence diverses (un foyer bienveillant ou d'un radiateur chaud), guette le moment propice pour agresser sa victime. Il suffit un instant de mégarde pour que la chaleur alors agréable devient brûlante et les flammes, apparemment domestiquées, de nouveau dangereuses. Les incendies qui se perpétuent fréquemment dans toute Bleston, tels les manifestations de la fureur de la ville, n'ont aucun autre but que de dévaster les bâtiments et de nuire aux citadins.

Michel Butor rejoint dès lors Jean-Christophe Ruffin dans *Globalia* publié en 2004, qui présente la manière dont le système écologique a été détruit par les corporations multinationales avec la collusion du gouvernement du jour. Les expressions dans *Globalia* présentent et personnifient la nature: « Le sol parfois était couvert de cailloux violets à la texture friable et grasseuse qui pouvaient témoigner d'un ancien revêtement en asphalte désagréé par l'érosion » (138). Le roman donne voix à la nature tout en dénonçant la destruction causée par l'homme.

Conséquences de l'attaque de ces quatre éléments de la nature sur la ville et sur Revel

Dans *L'Emploi du temps*, Jacques Revel décide de se rendre au cinéma pour la première fois et il est encore inconscient qu'il y trouvera ces « sanctuaires des images » (*L'Emploi* 66) pour se forger une vision générale de chaque

bâtiment de ce type. Le cinéma nommé ironiquement 'Gaiety' est, lors de la saison hivernale, « recouvert [...] de glaces dans son entrée » (*L'Emploi* 122), alors inhospitalier bien avant le vestibule. Et à la sortie, l'impression du malaise ne fait qu'agrandir chez Revel ; la porte à peine fermée, la pluie s'abat rageusement sur les spectateurs, comme pour les punir d'avoir assisté à une séance interdite.

Le Théâtre des Nouvelles dispose d'un intérieur qui s'avère encore plus désagréable qu'était la façade du Gaiety: la salle est tellement froide, les fauteuils sont très inconfortables et toute l'atmosphère semble « mal aéré[e], dense de la fumée des pipes qui trouble les images » (*L'Emploi* 128). Pourtant, un spectateur déterminé est toujours gêné par cet inconfort, il sera forcé de sortir. Attiré par les paysages inhabituels Revel revient quelques fois au Théâtre des Nouvelles pour revoir les mêmes courts métrages et pour se laisser saturer des vues admirables. Étant sorti du cinéma, le protagoniste essaie de retrouver les traces de ces endroits exotiques autour de lui: il guette les jours exceptionnels ensoleillés à Bleston et, ceux-ci arrivés, il implore leur aide par les mots: « Soutien-moi, beau temps » (*L'Emploi* 152). Le temps qui se voit adressé si ardemment semble répondre à la demande de Revel et les quatre éléments de la nature de Bleston sous forme des phénomènes atmosphériques se métamorphosent pendant quelques instants en leurs contraires et déploient leurs charmes. La pluie interminable cesse brusquement, le « ciel séducteur » (*L'Emploi* 181) fond son épaisse couche de nuages et reprend la teinte presque bleue (*L'Emploi* 148), le vent câlin caresse le visage de Revel (*L'Emploi* 167), le parfum des roses se répand dans l'air (*L'Emploi* 152), le « beau soleil poudroyant » (*L'Emploi* 149) adoucit agréablement la température et fait miroiter la Slée dans un spectacle formidable (*L'Emploi* 289).

Bien que Revel n'ait pas d'illusion sur le véritable but de cet « allègement de [...] chaînes » (*L'Emploi* 152) par la ville et ne s'abandonne pas à son atmosphère bizarre, il se laisse un peu enchanter par chaque moment charmant et se



permet d'admirer le beau temps qui dévoile une facette coquette de Bleston, soudainement attrayante. L'apostrophe du protagoniste de *L'Emploi du temps* lancée à ce temps agréable, citée avant, prouve qu'il presse la complicité de l'élémentaire bienveillant dans sa délivrance. Les quatre éléments de la nature, « cachés sous l'aspect météorologique, peuvent renforcer Revel dans sa lutte contre la suite des jours accablés de la plupart de l'année » (Kotowska, « Les quatre...123).

Tout comme le film est comme le « rempart mental » contre la force de la ville, le bâtiment du cinéma paraît un « rempart matériel »: quoique contrôlé par Bleston, alors rendu froide et inhospitalier en créant un abri provisoire pour des spectateurs regroupés à l'intérieur (*L'Emploi* 329). L'Angleterre est généralement considérée par la plupart des Européens comme un pays brumeux et pluvieux, où la nourriture est écœurante et les boissons sont quelquefois détestables.

Bleston manifeste son irritation en brûlant, dans le sens à la fois littérale et figuré, de colère inconvenable et pourtant vaine. Revel apprend le matin par les affiches du Bleston Post « qu'hier au moment même où [lui et Jenkins] contempl[ai]ent sur l'écran du Théâtre des Nouvelles, sous le ciel pur et bleu du désert oriental, ces sombres flammes de pierre brillant, ces braises d'une ville romaine [...], pendant ce temps, un grand hangar brûlait dans le onzième le long de la Slee » (*L'Emploi* 161). Métaphoriquement, Bleston déploie le feu pour brûler ses occupants. Cet état d'incommodité à Bleston provoque ce sentiment chez Revel.

Aussi, Revel évoque-t-il l'élément igné vu dans les films, un incendie s'attaque à quelques bâtisses de Bleston. Que ce soit une vengeance sublime projetée par la ville méchante ou une étrange et peu probable coïncidence, le message igné arrive à son destinataire. Troublé, Revel avoue: « je n'ai pu me défendre de l'impression que cette information m'était en quelque sorte personnellement destinée, j'ai songé aux flammes qui dévorent Athènes dans la dernière tapisserie du Musée, au ciel rouge derrière la ville de Caïn dans le Vitrail de

l'Ancienne Cathédrale » (*L'Emploi* 161). Il est clair que la cité traite le protagoniste en adversaire redoutable, alors elle lui adresse ses jeux subversifs qui ont un double rôle de la provocation et de l'avertissement.

Les manifestations de la furie à Bleston canalisées dans des duels ignés ne sont pas sporadiques et Revel en connaît les causes: « Les incendies ont toujours été fréquentes à Bleston, mais depuis quelque temps, ils semblent se multiplier [...]. Tout cela n'est que cauchemar provoqué par l'opium des exhalaisons de la Slee, la lassitude, la superstition de Bleston, et la contagion du mauvais temps » (*L'Emploi* 161). À présent, il n'est plus étonnant que le protagoniste range le mauvais temps parmi les majeurs facteurs destructeurs.

Dans ce climat terrible et effrayant, qu'est le résultat du contact nécessaire entre les quatre éléments de la nature, s'accomplit dans l'esprit de Revel la première étape d'une prise de conscience. Cette prise de conscience est, quant à nous, un appel ou avertissement de Michel Butor envers les citoyens du monde pour prendre garde contre les activités humaines qui sont nuisibles à la planète terre et qui incitent les changements climatiques tels que nous les éprouvons actuellement. Le protagoniste de *L'Emploi du temps* parvient à dépasser et à surmonter les apparences difficiles de Bleston, en trouvant le soutien au sein même de la ville en essayant de comprendre ces quatre éléments qui déploient leurs agressions contre lui. Michel Butor est ainsi de l'avis que les changements climatiques ravageant la planète terre a de remède au sein même de la même planète terre. Les activités humaines qui sont les principales responsables de ces phénomènes sont à revoir. En ce qui concerne les villes modernes, symboles d'avancement technologique, elles sont à réexaminer et à restructurer pour tenir compte du confort de l'homme dans ces villes.

Conclusion

Avec l'approche écocritique comme théorie de base, nous avons examiné les quatre éléments de la nature dont l'air, la terre, l'aquatique et l'igné, dans une ville anglaise imaginaire, Bleston. Michel Butor dénonce la



dégradation de ces éléments afin d'éveiller la prise de conscience collective sur les activités humaines qui incitent les changements climatiques, phénomènes qui sont devenus très répandus ces dernières décennies et qui donnent les cauchemars aux citoyens de la planète terre.

L'une des premières démarches vers la restauration de la propriété de la planète terre c'est la prise de conscience de l'effet de sa dégradation sous l'influence des activités des êtres humains.

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Màda Double Object Constructions: A Problem for the Case Theory

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Abstract

This paper examines how each of the two argument NPs, in Màda double object constructions (DOC), receive abstract Case in order to prevent a violation of the Case filter. Màda, a Platoid language of the Benue-Congo subfamily, is spoken predominately in Nasarawa State and few adjoining states in the Middle Belt, Nigeria (Kaduna and Plateau States). It has long been observed in the literature that abstract Case could be assigned either structural or inherent derivable at the D-structure or S-structure. In principle, a verb must not only govern its complement but assign abstract Case to it constrained by government and adjacency conditions. However, there are lexically closed verbs that can co-occur with double object NPs without any overt Case marker in Màda. This type of construction violates Case filter. The question we intend to answer here is how abstract Case is assigned to the Caseless NP in a typical Màda double object construction. Our focus in this paper is to show how Case is assigned in Màda and how to address the problem of Case assignment in Màda DOCs within the Principles and Parameters model. In an attempt to solve the problem, we adopt Chomsky's (1981) Alternative approach and Sanusi's (2001) Unified approach. Data for this study is elicited through introspection corroborated with insights from competent speakers of Màda. Finding from this study reveals that Màda lacks overt dative marker and dative shift is not allowed in its syntax. The study concludes that double object verbs are shown to reanalyze with their direct objects to form complex predicates, which inherit the Case assigning properties of their main verbs (via GTC) and therefore have the ability to govern and assign abstract Case to the ungoverned NP thereby escaping a major violation of Case filter.

Keywords: Case, Case filter, ditransitive, Double object constructions, Reanalysis, Màda

Introduction

The concept Case generated a lot of interest in linguistics (cf. Chomsky, 1986, Blake, 1994, Horrocks, 1987, Culicover, 1997, Ura, 2001, Cook & Newson, 2007). Case is a syntactic property that is universally attested among natural languages. Blake (2001) refers Case to inflectional marking, and typically, Case marks the relationship of a noun to a verb at the clause level or of a noun to a preposition, or another noun at the phrase level. It is purely a syntactic relations, such as subject, direct object and indirect object, each encompasses more than one semantic role. In the literature, distinction is made between two types of Case: abstract Case and inherent Case. According to Spencer (1995), abstract Case is a property of the S-structure while inherent Case is a property of the D-structure. Abstract Case is assigned under government (Chomsky, 1981; Riemsdijk & Williams, 1989). Chomsky (1981) remarks that

Case assigners are heads of syntactic categories. In other words, abstract Case is assigned to NPs by Case assigners like verbs, prepositions, and tensed INFL. While verbs and prepositions assign Accusative and or Oblique Case to recipient and theme arguments, the tensed INFL assigns Nominative Case to agent-arguments.

A double object construction (Henceforth, DOC) is one of the means in natural language to encode a predicate with three arguments. Edmond & Whitney (2005) report that DOCs have been studied within linguistic theories with a significant focus in accounting for which of the two objects is the true object. Despite the wealth of research in this area, few lexical items have been studied; especially the *give-verb* or construction appears to be the most widespread. It is often described as the prototypical DOC verb (Lam, 2008). In fact, to investigate the syntax of DOC, the most frequently used term is ditransitivity or the *give-*



construction (Kittilä, 2006; Malchukov et al, 2007; Lam, 2008; Thomas, 2012). Following Lam (2008), definitions of ditransitivity are illustrated as comprising a verb like 'give'. However, she reports that the give-construction is not prototypical as assumed in the literature though the trivalent verb 'give' is the most represented ditransitive verb cross-linguistically and perhaps the only ditransitive verb that behaves exceptionally (cf. Lam, 2008; Thomas, 2012).

Lam (2008) describes ditransitivity in two ways: first as a semantic label which considers the number and type of argument a verb takes at the level of argument structure. In other words, semantic ditransitivity denotes a three-place predicate or trivalent (Kittilä, 2006), and subcategorizes for arguments such as agent, recipient-like and theme. Malchukov et al (2007) report that verbs such as *give*, *lend*, *sell*, *return*, *show*, *tell* and *hand* are trivalent in nature hence subcategorize for agent argument, recipient-like argument and a theme argument. Lam (2008) illustrates semantic ditransitivity in the following examples:

- (1) [John] gave [Mary] [the book]
Ag Rpt Th
- (2) [John] sold [Mary] [the book]
Ag Rpt Th
- (3) [John] showed [Mary] [the book]
Ag Rpt Th

From the foregoing, there is one-to-one mapping between semantic roles and grammatical relations. Notice that the verbs subcategorize for two arguments rightward thus, playing a role in the realization of argument option. This describes what Rappaport Hovav & Levin (2008) termed verb-sensitivity or verb-sensitive approach. Secondly, in favour of argument mapping, Kittilä (2006) and Lam (2008) opine that a predicate is syntactically ditransitive if and only if it co-occurs with two objects. This is to say that the constructions above cannot be described as DOCs without some form of syntactic diagnostics though the verbs *-give*, *buy* and *show* are trivalent but not all trivalent verbs are ditransitive. In English, for instance, the dative

alternation shares the same argument structure of the agent, recipient-like and theme argument with either pattern [V NP PP] or [V NP NP]. Consider the examples below;

- (4) [John] gave [the book] [to Mary]
V NP PP
- (5) [John] gave [Mary] [the book]
V NP NP

We can see (from 4-5 above) that both structures are trivalent yet only one satisfies our definition of syntactic ditransitivity. In (4), the recipient argument is realized by an oblique PP and not by the NP as shown in (5). The pattern –agent-recipient-theme is considered a double object construction against the pattern in (4) that is, dative construction or alternation. Our focus, however, is to examine the nature and pattern of double construction in Mada [V NP NP] with a view to investigating the problem pose by this type of construction to the Case theory.

1. Mada Clause Structure: An Overview

Mada exhibits SVO as its canonical word order. It displays most of the usual Benue-Congo word order properties. It is entirely a head-initial language with features such as having a preposition, postnominal possessor, postverbal adjuncts and so on (Samuel, 2016). The Mada clause structure generally builds on words, phrases such as NP, VP, AP, PP and simple sentences. Structurally, it exhibits the subject-predicate relationship. Consider the following examples in (6) below:

- 6 i. gu re matò
3SG buy-PAST car
S V O
'S/he bought (a) car.'
- ii. Rinchē rē là yə
3SG eat-PAST food the
S V O
'Rinchē ate the food.'

As we can see in (6), Mada exhibits the SVO word order which is relatively fixed. In terms of linear ordering, other elements can be fused into the SVO structure as far as they do not alter the fixed order. Consider the following examples in (7) below:



- 7 i. Anaga rē Mbecūn gbārki
3SG buy-PAST Mbecūn flower
S V O O
'Anaga bought Mbecūn a flower.'
- ii. Bala nā Audu kejī
Bala give-PAST Audu money
S V O O
'Bala gave Audu money.'
- iii. ngā nā bā blā
1stSG give-PAST them instruction
S V O O
'I gave them instruction.'

It is clear that in (7), the two NPs are contiguous; one adjacent to the verb and the other as direct object. This type of construction is permissible in the syntax of Māda; thus double object construction is seen as a type of sentence in Māda.

2.1 Syntactic Classification of Māda Verbs

Apart from the general semantic classification of verbs, another approach to classifying Māda verbs is through the examination of the type of arguments that verbs subcategorize for. In other words, the classification of verbs concerns the number of arguments a verb can take. Syntactically, Māda verbs are sub-classified into five classes (Blench & Barau, 2006; Samuel, 2012; 2016) viz: transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, ditransitive verbs, intensive or copular verbs and verbs that subcategorize for prepositional phrases as complements.

2.1.1 Transitive Verb

A transitive verb is one that requires a single NP as a sister in the verb phrase. A canonical transitive verb denotes a functional relationship between a verb and a single NP. Examples are:

- 8 i. rē matò
buy-PST car
'bought a car'
- ii. blā mgbamvu car yə
read tablet write the
'read the slate'

- iii. gu rē krī
3SG eat yam
'S/he ate some yams.'

From the foregoing, (8) shows a functional relationship between a verb and its corresponding NP. In (8i-iii), the verbs subcategorize for NPs whose syntactic functions are to complement the main verb in a typical verb phrase or simple sentence as shown above.

2.1.2 Intransitive Verb

This class of verb does not require any complement (NP) as a sister in the VP. In Māda, it can form a complete sense.

- 9 i. ywē
'go'
- ii. gu nyə.
3SG come-PAST
'S/he came.'
- iii. gyer ngā dō
mother my sing
'My mother sings'.

2.1.3 Ditransitive Verb

A ditransitive verb is a double object verb. It requires three-place argument NPs functioning as subject, indirect object and direct object. Examples are:

- 10 i. gurē Nuhu gbārki
3SG buy-PAST Nuhu flower
S V IO DO
'S/he bought Nuhu a flower.'
- ii. vən ngā nā Mbecūn kajī
son my give-PAST Mbecūn money
S V IO DO
'My son gave Mbecūn some money.'
- iii. tə mē gu kə
3pl build-PAST him house
S V IO DO
'We built him a house.'
- iv. gu nā bā bəbu
3SG give-PAST them bible
S V IO DO
'S/he gave them a Bible.'
- v. ngā cār gu wasikā
1st SG write-PAST him letter
S V IO DO
'I wrote him a letter.'



In (10), we can see that the two argument NPs follow the verb without any intervening overt marker because the word order is relatively fixed. In other words, we cannot alter the argument position of the two NPs without using an intervening overt marker. The following examples are ungrammatical:

- 11 i. *gu rɛ gbārki Nuhu
3SG buy-PAST flower Nuhu
S V DO IO
'S/he bought a flower for Nuhu.'
- ii. *vɛn ŋgə nə kəji Mbecūn
3SG my give-PAST money Mbecūn
S V DO IO
'My son gave money to Mbecūn.'
- iii. *tə mɛ kə gu
3PL build-PAST house him
S V DO IO
'We built a house for him.'

2.1.4 Intensive Verb

Intensive verbs are commonly known as linking, or copular verbs (Robert, 2016). This type of verbs requires a single complement which can be predicate nominal, predicate adjective, or prepositional phrases (Robert, 2016; Hopper, 1999). In Māda, the most common class of intensive verb is the auxiliary verb-*là/sɛ/sə* (Blench & Barau, 2006; Samuel, 2012; 2016).

- 12 i. tɛ ŋgə sɛ kūn (AP)
Father my be sick
'My father is sick.'
- ii. ŋgə là ən kə (PP)
1st SG. be at house
'I am at home.'
- iii. gu sɛ gyə ŋgə (NP)
3SG be mother my
'She is my mother.'

From the sentences presented in (12), the auxiliary verb *là* is used differently from *sɛ*. The reason is that while *là* is used with only first person, *sɛ* is used distinctively with second and third person.

2.1.5 Verbs that Sub-categorize for Prepositional Phrases as Complements

There are verbs that are complemented by prepositional phrases. Such verbs require only

a single PP as an optional modifier, adjunct or complement. In Māda, the locative preposition *ən* 'at', the ablative preposition *ru* 'from' are commonly used with intransitive verbs (Samuel, 2012; 2016). Consider the following examples in (13) below:

- 13 i. tə sɛ ən kə
3PL be at house
'We are at home'.
- ii. Laraba nyə ru Keffi
3SG come-PAST from Keffi
'Laraba came from Keffi.'
- iii. Bala mər ən yà ŋgə.
3SG look-PAST at friend my
'Bala looked at my friend.'

In (13), the verb requires a prepositional phrase as complement, or adjunct. For instance, in (8iii), the verb *mər* 'to look' can only be complemented by a prepositional phrase (PP). Consider, for instance, the deviant sentences in (14) below:

- 14 i. *Nuhu mər (mər is not intransitive)
Nuhu look-PAST
'Nuhu looked.'
- ii. *Nuhu mər yàŋ gə (mər is not transitive)
Nuhu look-PAST friend my
'Nuhu looked my female friend.'
- iii. Nuhu mər ən yà ŋgə (mər requires a PP complement)
3SG look-PAST at female friend my
'Nuhu looked at my female friend.'

2. Defining Abstract Case

Smith (1996) defines Case as syntactic prior its basic distribution and interaction with other Cases. According to Blake (2001), Case refers to purely syntactic relations, such as subject, direct object and indirect object, each encompasses more than one semantic role. Distinction is made between abstract Case and inherent Case (Haegeman 1991; Cook & Newson 2007; Prasad 2008). Abstract Case is a type of Case that is sensitive to structure, and is assigned under government. In other words, the governor determines the choice of abstract (structural) Case. If Case is assigned under government, and if every lexical NP must have Case, then every lexical NP must appear in a position governed by the Case assigner (Riemsdijk & Williams, 1986).



It follows that both the assignee and assigner must be contiguous. The most common abstract Case includes: Nominative Case, Accusative Case, Dative Case and Oblique Case. Consider the examples below:

- 15
- i. Baba re mgbamvū car
3SG. buy-PAST leaf write
NOM ACC
'Baba bought a book.'
 - ii. bə mɛ kə
3PL. build-PAST house
NOM ACC
'They built a house.'
 - iii. tə nūn gwā yə bə dā
1st SG. kill. PAST snake the with machete
NOM ACC OBL
'We killed the snake with a machete.'

Abstract Case is assigned in (15). Syntactically, abstract Cases (NOM-ACC-OBL) are heads of syntactic categories as shown above. Inherent Case is associated with particular arguments, and it is sensitive to semantic role (Blake, 2001). This type of Case is assigned by nouns and adjectives to their NP complements. According to Chomsky (1986b), if A is an inherent Case assigner, then A assigns Case to an NP, if and only if A theta-marks the NP. In lieu of this, Prasad (2008) postulates the following conditions:

- a. Nouns and adjectives should assign theta roles to their complements.
 - b. They should govern their complements.
- In the literature, the most common inherent Case is genitive Case, which is assigned to an NP followed by something within it. In fact, genitive Case is morphologically realized in a form denoting possession.

This type of Case is only sensitive to semantic role or theta marking of complements (Blake, 2001; Prasad, 2008).

3.1 Case Marking in Māda

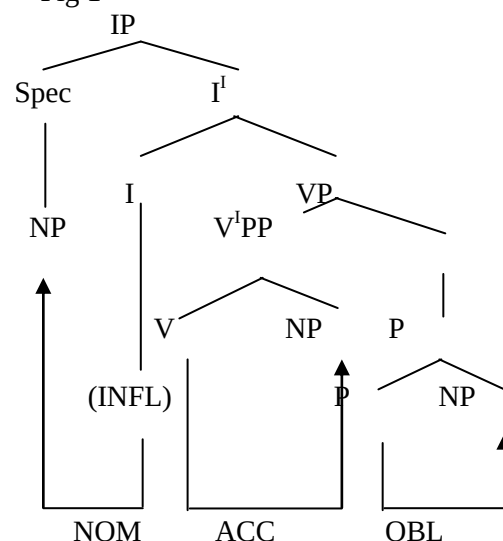
Case is a universal feature of all phonetically realized NPs in a given language whose central role is to regulate the distribution of NPs within a sentence (Haegeman, 1991; Yusuf, 1997; Agbede, 2000; Cook & Newson, 2007; Prasad, 2008; Lamidi, 2008). Case marking is uniform in

all language. In view of Case uniformity, two major systems occur cross-linguistically: Nominative/Accusative system and Ergative/Absolutive system (Tallerman, 2005). Māda, like English, is a Nominative/Accusative language because it has little or no overt marking, and organizes aspects of its syntax uniformly. Hence, Māda exhibits the SVO word order. Sells (1985), states five basic instances of Case marking. They are as follows:

- a. If INFL contains TNS, nominative Case is assigned to an NP, S¹ position.
- b. A verb assigns Accusative Case to NP.
- c. A preposition assigns oblique Case to NP.
- d. Case is assigned under government with the exception of genitive Case.
- e. Genitive Case is assigned in the structure [NP- X].

In Māda, Case assigner is on the left while the assignee is on the right (VO). In other words, Māda has the pattern AS/O: A (agent) and S (subject) which are marked the same for Nominative Case, O (object) is marked differently, either as direct object (ACC) or indirect Case (OBL). It is a known fact that in Nominative/Accusative languages, subjects of both transitive and intransitive or ditransitive verbs are marked the same (NOM) and objects of transitive verbs are marked with Accusative Case. The diagram below explains this uniformity.

Fig 1



Given the structural representation in Fig.1, nominative Case depends on the tensed INFL purportedly marked under I', accusative Case is assigned by the verb to its argument NP which depends on the V within the VP, and P assigns oblique Case to its object NP. The core argument(s) of the VP must be assigned some Case. That is, the verb assigns accusative Case to its argument. Accusative Case is assigned by the main verb of the VP within which the status of the object NP depends on. Consider (16) below:

- 16 i. mbə rē ləgū
woman eat-PAST cassava
'The woman ate cassava.'
- ii. gu sɔ tə
3SG. love we
'He/she loves us.'
- iii. tē ɲə cār mgbamvū cār
father my write-PAST leaf write
'My father wrote a book.'

In (16i-iv), the object NP receives accusative Case by virtue of its syntactic position in the sentence. The verb *rē* in (16i), for instance, assigns accusative Case to its object NP *ləgū*, thereby satisfying adjacency condition which requires Case assigners to be adjacent to the NP that receives Case. The Mada pronominal system recognizes the fact that Case is uniformly assigned to NPs (pronouns) in argument position. Consider the table below:

		Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
Singular	1st	ɲə 'I'	ɲə 'me'	məɲɲə 'mine'
	2nd	wə 'you'	wə 'you'	məwə 'yours'
	3rd	gu 's/he'	gu 'him/her'	məgu 'his/hers'
Plural	1st	tə 'we'	tə 'us'	mətə 'ours'
	2nd	gyə 'you'	gyə 'you'	məgyə 'yours'
	3rd	bə 'they'	bə 'them'	məbə 'theirs'

Table showing the Mada pronominal system

The table shows the pronominal system of Mada in its singular and plural forms. Consider the following examples in (17).

- 17 i. ɲə ywē kə
1SG go-PST house
'I went home.'
- ii. Nēkrə ɲə kə ɲrən vən məkə.
3SG come-PST house see child his
'Nēkrə came home to see his son.'
- iii. wə gi ɲjī yə
2nd PL steal-PAST knife the
'You stole the knife.'
- iv. bə tsə gu
3PL beat him
'They punished him.'
- v. mgbamvū cār sē məɲɲə
leaf write is mine
'The book is mine.'

We can see in (17) that Mada pronouns are marked for Case based on their distribution within the sentences above. For instance, the pronoun 'wə' is assigned nominative Case by virtue of its structural position within the sentence. In (17iv), the object pronoun *gu* receives accusative Case while the genitive pronoun *məɲɲə* in (17v) receives an inherent Case (genitive Case).

3. Syntactic Consideration of Mada Double Object Constructions

Judging from our examples in (10), it is clear that double object construction is a type of sentence in Mada. Consider the following examples:

- 18 i. ɲə rē gu matə
i buy-PST he car
Subj V IO DO
'I bought him a car.'
- ii. vən yə té Baba pré
boy the fetch-PST Baba porridge
Subj V IO DO
'The boy served Baba some porridge.'
- iii. ɲə mē gyər ɲə kə
i build-PST mother my house
Subj V IO DO



- 'I built my mother a house.'
- iv. ləlɔn rɛ Mbəkī ləmū
man buy-PST Mbəkī orange
Subj V IO DO
'The man bought Mbəkī some oranges.'
- v. Nəkrɛ nə ŋgə kəjī
Nəkrɛ give-PAST me money
Subj V IO DO
'Nəkrɛ gave me some money.'
- vi. ŋgə ryūn gu sɛka
i cook-PAST him rice
Subj V IO DO
'I served him rice.'

As could be observed in (18), the verbs subcategorize for double object NPs. The two complements of the ditransitive verb follow the canonical order below:

VP → [VNP₁NP₂]

Within this order, the adjacent NP receives abstract Case because it immediately precedes the main verb in the sentence while the second object NP on the other hand, is neither governed nor receives any abstract Case by the verb thereby violating the Case filter. In the opinion of Riemsdijk & Williams (1986), if Case is assigned under government, and if every lexical NP must have Case, then every lexical NP must appear in a structural position governed by the Case assigner. However, the second object NP is not properly governed nor appears in a structural position to receive abstract Case

4. The Proposal

Given the theoretical issue raised in this paper, we shall adopt Chomsky's (1981) Alternative approach and a unified approach, as proposed by Sanusi (2002; 2012) which merges Larson's (1988) V' Reanalysis and Baker's (1985) Abstract Noun Incorporation (ANI) and Government Transparency Corollary (GTC).

5.1 Chomsky's (1981) Alternative Approach

Chomsky (1981) suggests that an alternative analysis of DOC would be that the VP contains an internal VP (v') which assigns inherent Case to an ungoverned and Caseless NP.

Based on this assumption, all DOCs in (5 & 13) can be explained as containing an internal verb which govern and assign inherent Case to the ungoverned object NP. In this order, the structure of DOC would look like...

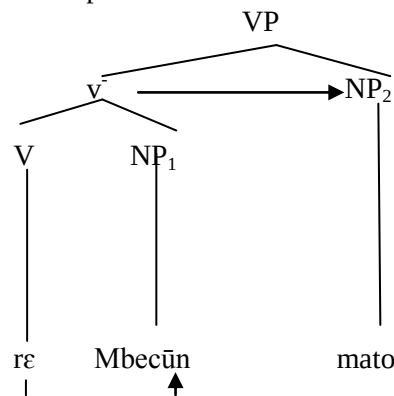
NP [VP [_v NP₁] NP₂]

Therefore, the internal verb is inherently realized at the D-structure. Let us consider the illustration below:

- 19 i. Nəkrɛ [VP [_v nə Mary] gbārki]]
Nəkrɛ give-PAST Mary flower
Subj V IO DO
'Nəkrɛ gave Mary a flower'.

- ii. gu [VP [_v rɛ Mbecū] matò]]
s/he buy-PST Mbecū car
Subj V IO DO
'S/he bought Mbecū a car'.

As could be observed in (19i & ii), the string *Mary* receives abstract object Case from the main verb *nə*, while *gbārki* receives another Case from the *v'* which functions as a governor. According to Chomsky (1981), internal verbs have the ability to assign secondary Case to their second NPs. In the same vein, Ouhalla (1994) presents an appraisal in support of Chomsky (1981) that there have been attempts in the literature to attribute verbs such as 'give' in standard English the ability to assign two Cases. We assume that the internal verb which is realized at the D-structure assigns secondary Case to NP₂. Thus, the structure of Māda DOCs based on our assumption will look like



It is argued here that there is an internal verb at the D-structure which assigns Case to the second object NP. The main verb governs and assigns only one Case to NP₁-*Mbecūn* while NP₂ is assigned inherent Case by the internal verb (*v*). In support of his proposal, Chomsky claims that inherent Case is closely related to certain theta roles, and, therefore is assigned according to the idiosyncratic properties of the verb. As could be observed in our diagram above, the second NP-*matò* receives theta role, namely *theme*, from the verb *re*.

5.2 Sanusi's(2002; 2012)Unified Approach

As in other account of Case assignment in DOC, the structure of DOC is described as containing an internal layer that governs and assigns inherent Case to the second ungoverned NP, thus it is apparent to show that we can assign two object Cases in DOC structurally. This can be achieved through what Larson (1988) termed V^I-reanalysis. According to Larson (1988), a complex predicate is formed only if v-raising is taken into consideration. In other words, he describes the structure of DOC as [*v* *t* *e*] where *t* is the trace of v-raising, and *e* is the trace of NP movement.

As a further consequence, we assume here that in Mada DOC, the direct object is incorporated into the main verb through 'restructuring', and that the NP constituent derived from syntactic reanalysis produces a complex predicate which has the ability to govern and assign Case to the ungoverned and Caseless NP via Government Transparency Corollary(GTC). In other words, the lexical category which has an item incorporated into it governs everything which the incorporated item governed in its original structural position. According to Sanusi (2012), incorporation is derived from the theory of government and the complements of the moved word are governed by the complex word that is formed by incorporation. However, we appeal to the claims made by syntacticians that NP₂ is incorporated into the *v* to avoid violation of Case filter given the notion of Abstract Noun Incorporation (ANI). Noun incorporation of this kind is triggered by

head movement from the original structure. Massam (2009) summarizes noun incorporation as thus;

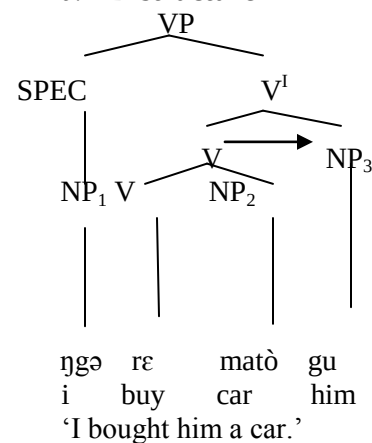
"... a grammatical construction where a nominal that would be canonical be expected as an independent argument or adjunct is instead in some way incorporated into the verbal element of a sentence, forming part of the predicate" Massam (2009)

From the foregoing, a nominal element, preferably direct object or a bare noun can be incorporated into the verbal element to derive a complex predicate, that is, a case where a nominal element is merged with a light verb to derive the pattern [IP [_{VP} V NP]_iInflt_i]]. Consequently, the derived complex predicate must satisfy two structural conditions:

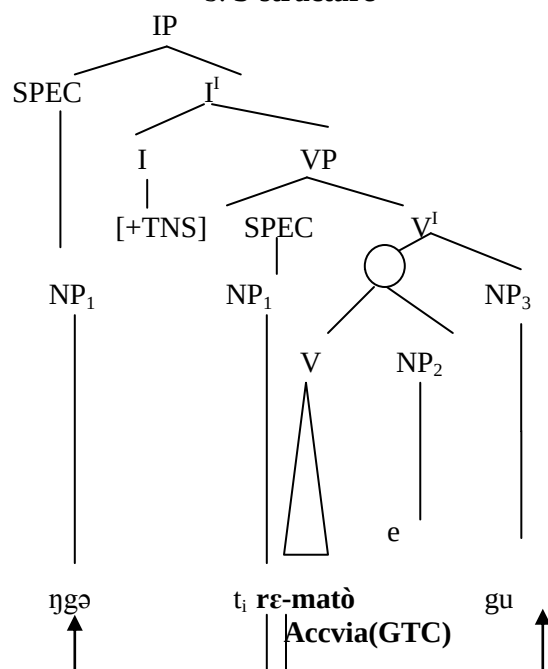
- Government Condition: Abstract Case is assigned to an NP that is governed by the verb. In other words, the verb and its complement are sisters.
- Adjacency Condition: Abstract Case is assigned to the NP that immediately follows the verb.

However, using Koopman and Sportiche (1991) **VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis**, we can depict the D-structure (since inherent Case is assigned at the D-structure) and S-structure of Mada DOC below:

a. D-structure



b. S-structure



To derive the surface structure above, the light verb (the head of the VP₁) appear in a structural position from which it can govern the NP in Spec VP₂. Notice that the V node is restructured to form a complex predicate **-rɛ-matò** (buy a car) through incorporation. The main verb **-rɛ**(to buy) and the abstractly incorporated direct object (matò) compositionally assigned accusative Case to NP₃ via GTC thereby escaping a major violation of the Case filter. Through reanalysis of nominal incorporation, NP₂ is absorbed because the direct object is combined with the main verb **rɛ** to form a complex structure, that is, [v V-NP]. Furthermore, we assume that NP₃ (second object NP) is the object of the derived complex verb **rɛ-matò**. However, this reconstruction satisfies the structural conditions of government and adjacency as well as Case filter. The expressive power of GTC cannot be overemphasized. It has been proven in the works of Baker (1985), Aoun and Li (1993), Sanusi (2002, 2012) among others to account for the problem of Case marking in double object constructions. Therefore, this study is a contribution to theoretical issues in Mada grammar and, in particular, the syntax of double object constructions.

5. Conclusion, Limitations and Implications

This paper focuses on the double object construction in Màda. It attempts to find out how abstract Case is marked in Màda. Syntactic issues in Màda received little or no attention. Previous works in Màda provided only comparative and descriptive analysis; theoretical accounts are very scarce. The present study serves as a foundation to theoretical analysis in Màda. In studying Màda verbs generally, this present study discovers that there are verbs that require two successive object NPs. However, we argue that the problem of Case assignment is cross-linguistic, and Màda DOC violates the Case filter, even structural conditions (i.e. government and adjacency conditions). As could be observed from Màda DOCs in (10 & 18), empirical evidence has shown that ditransitive verbs and their object NPs lack adjacency and are not properly governed. However, they violate government and adjacency conditions as well as Case filter. Attempt has been made to solve the problem of Case assignment and we demonstrate this using Sanusi's (2002) unified approach which merges Larson's (1988) V' Reanalysis and Baker's (1985) ANI and GTC. Our choice of proposal is based on the fact that GTC ensures that the lexical properties of the verb which are absorbed from the derived complex structure are made available through incorporation.

However, some limitations could be noted in this study. For instance, we attempted an examination of the structure of DOCs in Màda without looking into some aspects of linguistics such as the semantics of DOCs in general. Thus, from the inferences drawn in this study, there still remain a lot to be done in the syntax of Màda in general. We cannot claim to have exhaustively dealt with the subject matter; rather we have only attempted a theoretical analysis. Therefore, the attention of linguists has been drawn to embark upon general linguistic study of Màda and other indigenous languages from both ends (descriptive and theoretical perspective).

Endnotes

1. The Government Transparency Corollary (GTC) is a sequence of head movement (cf. Baker, 1985).



2. Abstract Noun Incorporation (ANI) is a syntactic word formation process where a nominal element is incorporated into the verbal element of a sentence. Thus forming part of the predicate.
3. Mada is a Platoid language of the Benue-Congo subfamily. It is the language of

the people of Mada that is spoken in predominantly in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa state and few adjoining states such as Kaduna and Plateau (cf. Samuel, 2016).

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Gender Inequality: The Effect on National Development

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Abstract

Gender discrimination in developing world is an unfortunate reality. It reflects and manifests in various dimensions despite the fact that women play a vital role in the development of any nation. Nigerian women, like their counterparts around the world face a lot of discrimination that limits their opportunities to develop their full potentials and impact their world positively. The paper seeks to re-emphasize the need for gender equity in all spheres of life; the need to empower women with liberty to function uninhibited in various affairs of life, this will enhance their productivity in all field and ultimately reflect positively in national development. The feminist conflict theory was adopted. The paper suggests among other things favorable government policy that promote social and economic equality between women and men as this will ensure rapid progress and development of the nation.

Keywords: discrimination, equality, gender, national development,

Introduction

In the last two decades, according to Olaleye (2008), debates on the status of women and the need to integrate them into development process of any nation have dominated the national and international workshops, seminars among others. The perspectives, various interests and focuses had been on human rights, women inequality, women empowerment, girl-child education, feminism, female educational opportunities etc. These relative gender issues are more prevalent and obvious in Nigeria.

The issue of gender inequality can be considered as a universal feature of developing countries. Harriet Martineau, who was considered to be the first female sociologist was a 19th century social thinker. She challenged the status quo and advocated for women's equality with men. And she was a revolutionary figure in this regard. She also advocated for female education so that women could have more to look forward to than being subservient to a man and just raising a child. In our schools, women continue to face gender -based disparities and biases. To this day, math and science are often thought to be, "male" fields, while subjects in the humanities are considered to be the more natural province of women. Of course, particular subjects are not

inherently "male" or "female." However, gender norms are often informally inculcated at an early age, when elementary school teachers may encourage boys to pursue math and science and not do the same for girls. Further, boys generally receive more positive and negative attention in the classroom than do girls; as a result, the school environment can unintentionally become male-centered. These economic and cultural factors, coupled with institutional factors dictate the gender- based division of labor, rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and access to and control over resources.

In Nigeria today, the women folk have come a long way in businesses, politics, education, sports, and other professions. They have made an indelible mark in their efforts to conquer the limitations of the past which have sought to place them permanently in the kitchen and bedroom. Olumukoro (2012) opines that the National Policy on women was approved and adopted in Nigeria in the year 2000, of which the goal of the policy is the full integration of women into the social and political status as a means of developing the nation's human resources for national, economic and human development. Its objective included the provision of gender mainstreaming into all policies and programmes.



However, majority of Nigerian women have not been fully mobilized and empowered to contribute to national development. Else, we would not still be talking about good health for women, educational, economic, social, cultural, and political empowerment of women.

UNESCO (2002) states that women form a high percentage of the population, and as such they need quality literacy education to be able to contribute their quota to the development of the nation. There is now the realisation that sustainable human development cannot be effective if half of the human race (the womenfolk) remain ignorant, marginalised and discriminated against. However, the provision of quality literacy to them will greatly improve lives and will no doubt have a great and sustainable social and economic impact on the womenfolk, and the nation in general.

Gender

Gender can be seen as synonymous with sex but viewed rather from the social and cultural perspective and not from the biological. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* (8th edition), gender is defined as ‘the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, not differences in biology’.

Ocha Gender Toolkit (2012) defined gender as the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. According to World Health Organization (WHO) gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. Gender in its narrowest sense means socially constructed sex, be it female or male. It was in the 1970’s that American and English feminists started using the term ‘gender’ and ‘gender relations’. Hence the transition was made from ‘the study of the differences between the sexes... to relations between the sexes both in the sense of relations and conceptual relations’ (Hurtig, Kail, and Rouch, 1991, p.1). The word ‘gender’ was to develop at a remarkable pace in the 1980’s (Nairobi Conference, 1985) in English speaking and Latin American countries and also

within all international organizations; its usage would be facilitated by the holding of a succession of important conferences such as the Cairo conference (1994) and the Beijing Conference (1995) during which the team definitively established itself.

National development

The concept of national development has been viewed from different angles; social, economic, political and cultural. From whatever angle it is however viewed, it depicts positive change and development in socio economic and political conditions or situations of the society. According to Akintayo and Oghenekohwo (2004), development is a process of economic, social, political and cultural change engineered in a given society by the efforts of all stakeholders both internal and external. Osokoya (2008) sees national development as the development of a nation’s human and material resources, and education is perhaps the only means to prepare individuals for participation in national development.

Fadeyi (1995), in Oyitso and Olomukoro (2012) views development in terms of human potentials and capabilities in the context of relations with other social groups. He further emphasises that development means greater understanding of social, economic and political process, enhanced competence to analyze and solve problems of day to day living, expansion of manual skills, and greater control over economic resources restoration of human dignity, self-respect and equality.

The 2001 Human Development Reports (HDR), in Okojie (2011), states that the most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for the decent standard of living, and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Thus, from the HDR dimensions, gender equality relates to differences between women and men in education and health, labor participation, participation in political decision making, and access to and power over economic resources. Thus, national development is seen as a multi-dimensional process involving the transformation and improvement of the



economic social and political situations.

Equality and Equity

In a perfect world, all people are created equal in terms of opportunities to develop and reach their full potentials. That is equality, a goal to which we can aspire. However, in reality, we know that we are a long way from living in a world in which every person is given opportunity to achieve his or her potentials. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* (8th edition) equality is the fact of being equal in rights, status, advantages etc. it is a situation whereby the law treats everyone the same whether female or male, rich or poor, literate or semi-literate etc. Equity means fairness, that is, finding ways to help the disadvantaged and disempowered “catch up” with their more actualised fellow humans through opportunities for development and control over their lives.

Inequality on the other hand is the unfair difference between groups of people in society, when some have more wealth, status or opportunities than others. Gender inequality therefore is the idea and situation that women and men are not equal. It refers to the unequal treatment or perception of individuals wholly or partly due to their gender. Gender inequality stems from distinctions whether empirically grounded or socially constructed.

Reasons/ causes of gender inequality

The unequal treatment given to the female gender in respect to the male gender has many causes. Why do men outnumber the female in the government of many countries? The simple answer is because the males are seen as superior to the females. What was the proportion of men to women in 2007 in Nigerian National Assembly? Out of 109 senators in the Senate House, there were only nine (9) women in their midst. This means that the proportion of the women in the senate was 8.26% and that of men was 91.74% in 2007. This is one of the major challenges in Nigeria as well as a problem in the general Africa continent. In that same year, there were about twenty-seven (27) women in the House of Representatives out of 360 members of the House (Nigeria). The truth remains that the

unfair treatment given to the female gender is more in African continent unlike Europe and these unfair treatment has many causes. They include:

Women: culture and tradition

Culture is often used to justify inequality or to act as a constraint to equality. It is important we know what culture and tradition is. Culture can simply be defined as the way of life of a particular society or ethnic group while tradition is the custom or belief of a society. These two words are one of the reasons females are regarded as less important than males in most African countries. To the male folk, it is an anomaly (not cultural or not according to tradition) for a female to rule a community when there are capable men in such community who can take up such leadership positions. This has become the way of life (culture) and the belief (tradition) of the society we find ourselves. Thus, in order to see both the female and male gender as equal, there should be a serious revival in some cultures and traditions because culture is a living thing created by people and therefore can be changed by people. Hence, if women and men push for more opportunities and choices for themselves, their culture will adapt accordingly. This is not to say that change will always be easy or conflict free but change can occur as women and men push for it together.

Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) asserts that Nigerian women are stalled by culture, which made them vulnerable to effectively join the workforce and contribute to economic, and thus national development. This means that the actual energy that should be put into national development is not completely utilised. Fasuba (2000) states that Nigerian women, like in other developing countries of the world suffer from undue discrimination, marginalisation, and exploitation by the men folk through the implementation of their traditional beliefs which placed men as super human beings.

Women and religion

Some religions are sources of situations where women are generally expected to show allegiance and total submission to the men. Some teachings in some religions have caused more



pains than peace to the world. It is good to belong to any religious group but the truth remains that some of these religions do not give freedom to the women folk. Taking the two major religious groups in Nigeria as instances, today Christianity has different attitudes to the role of women and men within the church. Christians who hold traditional views believe that men and women are created equal in the sight of God. They believe that whilst men and women are equally important, they are also created to be different with different roles in society and the Christian church. For example, the Roman Catholics does not allow women priests. This is based on the belief that all priests are successors of Jesus apostles and as he only appointed men, and therefore the role is not open to women. Majority of the protestant churches accept equality of both sexes many of whom have women priests that are making waves. The “parliament “of the church of England(called the General Synod) decided to allow women priests in November 1992. This was a momentous decision, the motion having been the root of much controversy for many years, fiercely debated and constantly defeated. The first women priests were ordained into the Church of England in 1994. The debate continues as to whether or not women should be allowed to become bishops, with the last vote in 2012 rejecting the proposal.

There are diverging opinions among experts in Islamic theology concerning gender segregation. Some Islamic theologians has said that segregation of the sexes is not a requirement in Islam, as men and women used to interact during Mohammed’s time without any partitions for there is no evidence from the Qu’ran that requires segregation. Sharia law conflicts with natural secular principles especially in relation to women’s rights, on which Nigeria is formally based. It places a lot of restrictions on the rights of women. In spite of all these, women are not allowed to lead prayers in Islam in the congregation of men and women but the Muslim women are fighting back, while despotic governments and extremists battle for power, Islamic scholars, community activists and ordinary Muslims are waging a peaceful jihad on

male authority, demanding what they say are God-given rights to gender equality and justice.

Women and violence

Over a decade now, numerous cases of women’s rights violation such as acid baths, murder of women, rape, widow abuse and physical assaults, have occurred in Nigeria. Unfortunately, it is only extreme cases of women’s rights violation which results in death or permanent disability that earns the media attention and the police interests. Critical cases like female circumcision or genital mutilation, wife battery, marital rape, sexual harassment, verbal and emotional abuse, incest, termination of employment as a result of pregnancy etc., are not considered problematic enough to be highlighted in the media as well to be taken seriously by the police.

More so, the victims of violence especially domestic violence and rape hardly report to the appropriate authorities. An example of wife battery is viewed as a private affair between husband and wife. Moreover the tradition or culture and religious beliefs in Nigeria as a typical patriarchal society see the wife as a property of her husband and as such he has the moral right to beat her as penalty for insubordination and or perceived wrong doing. Even law enforcement agents do not readily entertain complaints of domestic violence because for them it is a minor offence of “two people fighting” or they laugh it off and term it a “husband and wife” problem that needs to be settled by the parties involved. In the case of rape, some women will not voice it out because of the social stigma it will leave on them. Also in Nigeria, there are no adequate laws to protect women from violence. Example marital rape is not recognized as an offence in any system of law in Nigeria, even when the wife is wounded in the course of the forced sexual intercourse.

Women and education

Education, according to Fafunwa (1980) is a means of developing abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour that are of positive value to the society in which the individual lives. Daniel (2010) asserts that education remains an important means of making members of the



society advance in their thinking and ability in life that is, a means of leveling the pervading social inequality holding sway within the society. It is based on the above that we can conclude that education emancipates. Like literacy, it breaks the shackles of ignorance, poverty and sets one free to make appropriate decisions, conduct research, construct, invent, write and promote cultures as well as strive for the betterment of mankind.

Education thus, should be the right to which every child must have access because it is the most potent and valuable instrument for socioeconomic development. It is a vital tool for national development and integration. That may explain the UNICEF (2011) report which states that when children have access to a rights – based quality education rooted in gender equality, we create a ripple effect of opportunity that impacts generations to come. That is one reason education ought to be readily accessible to all. However, the access is not wide enough to absorb all because of socio-cultural, economic, religious and other constraints. These inequalities condemn thousands of children to a life without quality education, to a life of missed opportunities and aborted dreams. To eliminate gender disparity and reduce the gender gap in education, there is the need for a change in people's mindsets, an educational system and structures that will take care of the constraints bedeviling it. In Nigeria, despite the free education, (FGN, 2004) at all levels, access to education for all remains so on paper. Though women and girls are seen to be the most affected by the disparity in access to education, there are very strong evidences to show that the males are also affected in the Igbo speaking states of the country. (Nnachi), 2010).

The importance of women education

The gains of education are endless. For instance, it provides opportunities for a better life. Fatimayin (2004) opines that education and by extension, literacy is of great value for personal emancipation and survival. This means living a quality life by meaningfully participating in politics, enjoying economic fairness, being socially acceptable and having personal fulfillment. To cap it all, Ofoegbu (2009) asserts

that education empowers citizens for sustainable development and increases their capacities to transform their visions of society into reality. According to her, it is an instrument not just for some or a few but for all. In a related vein, Onukogu (2002) argues that before independence, Nigeria had a workforce to be reckoned with because its citizens ranked among the most educated globally and that based on this, Nigeria was billed to provide the needed leadership to liberate Africa from colonialism as well as acquire the needed technology for development. However, he laments that education which enabled Nigeria attain that pre-independence feat has over the years been ignored. Based on the foregoing, both male and female children need equal access to quality education.

According to Nnachi (2010) equity in gender considerations refers to providing equal opportunities and treatment to all irrespective of their sex and that if more favorable consideration is tailored towards one of the sexes, it is inequity. Equity in education must therefore be a policy priority to drive national development. Nigeria must plan for the future by adopting the Chinese proverb- *“if you are planning for tomorrow, sow rice..., if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people”*. It is however ironic that the society which stands to benefit from education of all her citizens is the main hindrance to her own development. This is because the society is made up of parents who dictate, carry out socio-cultural norms, religious rules and make family decisions. It is these same parents who to a large extent deny their children and wards access to and retention in education.

Ways of sustaining women in education

Kester, Okemakinde and Ejerenwa (2005), are of the opinion that women can be empowered to sustain the economy through education by the under listed points:

1. The Nigerian government should emphasise the importance of education of female population not only in arts, the humanities and social sciences but also in science and technology.



2. There should be sensitisation of the parents and key stakeholders about the importance of female students in learning.
3. Teachers should assign female students to leadership positions, and use female educators and professionals as role models for career talks and guest lectures.
4. Teacher should encourage the female students to participate fully in action based learning, and male students should not continue to be allowed to dominate classroom or laboratory activities.
5. Educationists should avoid the exclusive use of male generic nouns or pronouns.

There should be positive motivation and reinforcement of female students by teachers. Akinsanya (2011) asserts that feminists have advanced the issue of empowerment of women through education as a means of challenging patriarchal ideology of male dominance and women subordination, transforming the structures and institutions that perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequity, as well as equal opportunity for women at all levels in all spheres of human endeavors.

Challenges to Nigerian women in contributing effectively to national development

In spite of the seemingly remarkable achievements recorded by women across the globe, Nigerian women remain severely constrained in their efforts to play a major and decisive role in the socio- political and economic development of the nation. Agu (2007) blames the colonial authorities for setting a dangerous stage and precedence for the weakening of the influence and role of women through what has been described as the “abrogation of the social stability” which the Nigerian society had enjoyed before the coming and intrusion of the British colonialists. The result of this dislocation was the relegation of the role and functions of women to the background in the Nigerian society, particularly in the areas of leadership and political responsibility.

Fasuba (2000) asserts that Nigerian women, like in other developing countries of the

world suffer from undue discrimination, marginalisation, and exploitation by the men folk through the implementation of their culture of religious and traditional beliefs which placed men as super human beings. Globally, the access of women to finance is so minimal that women are generally disadvantaged in terms of economic stability and independence. Women on their part do not often see themselves as viable instruments of political participation and national development. The complacency of women in several aspects of national life not only reduces their capacity for maneuver in a male dominated society but helps in perpetuating the culture of reducing women to positions and roles of second fiddle. In business, most women do not often involve themselves in high profile ventures rather they prefer to engage in petty trading where the gains and losses are articulated at the end of the day.

Agu (2007) believes that women see politics as a dirty game, a business which involves intimidation, rigging, assassination, kidnapping of opponents and all sorts of electoral violence which are brought into play in order to gain an undue advantage over opponents.

Conclusion

There are many advocates of gender equality. Parents should train their children both male and female educationally and equally. Governments and individuals should organise women empowerment programmes in many countries to reduce the unfair treatment given to women. There are some traditions that really require re-branding to meet what the current society needs. Without this rebranding, gender inequality in many African countries will keep increasing instead of declining.

Recommendation

Empowering Nigerian women towards national development should be a matter of national priority which demands the attention and genuine commitment of every responsible member of the society. It is along this line that the paper feels inclined to put across some recommendations which could be brought into play for the realisation of the noble goals of women’s contributions to national development.



The Nigerian government has a crucial role to play in providing an enabling environment for Nigerian women to rekindle their hope and faith in the ability of the system to provide avenue for development for its people irrespective of sex, age, ability, religious inclination and other mundane considerations.

The Nigerian nation owes the women folk the responsibility of removing those artificial and institutional barriers based on religion, culture or traditional considerations which have incapacitated the ability of Nigerian women to participate effectively and freely in national affairs particularly at the political and economic levels. Women on their part should strive to break through developmental barriers with great determination, perseverance, unbreakable solidarity and genuine desires to conquer the natural challenges of their origin.

Women organisations and movements have important roles to play by seeking to protect the interest of women. These organizations and movements should shoulder the responsibility of seeing that institutions of society are not deliberately structured to place hindrances and constraints on the paths of women.

The Ministries of Women Affairs all over the Federation need to play a great role in bringing to focus the fundamental challenges of the women folk which the government and other institutions of state owe the responsibility to tackle. To achieve this, constant pressure should be brought to bear on the authorities to create positions of responsibility and advancement for the women folk. The nation needs to understand that laying a solid and stable foundation for the

girl child is a vital link in the overall development and advancement of the society. The girl child should not be denied exposure, socialisation and refinement of modern education as a fundamental prerequisite for tackling the numerous challenges of adult life.

There is need for workshops, seminars and conferences to highlight and showcase successful women leaders and unionists as models who are enlightened and are able to know their rights and obligation without undue confrontation with authorities. Federal, states and local government should work hand in hand to support the effective implementation of women education programmes in the country.

Educated women should work hard to ensure that they raise social awareness of large number of women in the rural area, through effective educative programmes, and mass communication as these will help to improve their self-confidence.

Every women forum, whether in the city or rural areas should be effectively utilized as an avenue to educate the illiterate ones among them on skills, knowledge and values that will help them to improve their social, economic and political life style. Parents, guardian, and the society as a whole must allow and encourage their female children to enroll in schools, overcome the paralysis of illiteracy and acquire a proper awareness of their potentials, rights and higher responsibilities in society. Literacy programmes should be incorporated with life skills components so that women can be well equipped to perform their roles more effectively.

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Language shift and attrition: Typical sociolinguistic phenomena in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper examines language shift and attrition in Nigeria, and the effect of insurgency in the northern Nigeria on minority languages. It notes that language shift induced by some factors including insurgency may lead to the death of some languages that put Nigeria on the world's linguistic map by having three out of four language phyla in Africa. While some factors lead to gradual shift, it is discovered from our observation from different Internally Displaced Persons camps that the displaced survivors of insurgency rapidly shift to the (major or minor) languages of their host communities. Questionnaires were administered on 100 respondents chosen from four selected cities (Lagos, Benin, Warri and Port-Harcourt) to ascertain the extent of language usage and shift while oral interview was conducted on 60 Internally Displaced Persons in three Internally Displaced Persons camps, namely Kano, Makurdi and Abuja, to ascertain the effect of insurgency on indigenous languages especially in the north-east and north central. Findings reveal that, some seriously endangered languages have become terminally-endangered. The language use of the immigrants in cities has been largely replaced by pidgin and the established language of the host communities.

Keywords: Boko Haram and herders' insurgency, Internally-displaced persons IDP's, language attrition, language shift, northern Nigeria

Introduction

Language is not an isolated phenomenon; it exists alongside its speakers in the society. As such, language has a direct link with the society and culture. Whether from linguistic or sociolinguistic perspective, language is always dynamic. One of the current references for Nigerian languages in has 515 living indigenous languages. Out of these number, 505 are living indigenous language, 8 are extinct while 2 are second languages, (see Grimes, 2000:166). Haruna (2007) notes that many more Nigerian languages still die each day especially in the north. A survey of language usages in the cosmopolitan cities like Lagos and Port Harcourt reveals that many of these minority are constantly threatened by language shift and attrition due to some sociolinguistic variables that are beyond the control of the native speakers in the new environment. Many linguists have gone ahead to explain rather than define the concept of language change and language shift. Thomason (2001) sees language attrition as a gradual process by which a

language recedes as it loses speakers, domains of use, and structure. For Schmid (2011:3-4), language attrition is "the (total or partial) forgetting of a language by a healthy speaker...[which] takes place in a setting where that language is used only rarely". The foregoing is corroborated by Abdulkadir and Abbas (2017) that language attrition refers to the declining use of mother-tongue skills by those caught in bilingual situation.

Attrition which usually results from language shift is a by-product of language contact where speakers unconsciously neglect or helplessly become incapacitated to maintain maximum use of their language. Fishman (1991:59) explains that language shift occurs 'because interacting language in-cultures are of unequal power, and, therefore, the weaker ones become physically and demographically dislocated.' Lieberman (1981) on the other hand believes that, 'changes in pattern of language usage can ultimately be traced to societal shifts'. This assertion is not disputable here considering



the fact that the dynamism of language and society is interwoven. In most multilingual speech communities in Nigeria, individuals or groups of speakers use a dominant language of the community other than their own for every day communication. A dominant language here refers to what Essien (2001:1) would prefer to describe as that language in a bilingual or multilingual situation, 'which usually invests its speakers with not only what Wardhaugh (1986:344) refers to as a "full panoply of uses that signify a standard language", but also with prestige, self-confidence and power.' The implication of this is that a dominant language may not necessarily be a major language.

The type we have in mind here is the language of government, business, education, the legal system and social mobility of all kinds. Therefore, when individuals or the entire community of speakers shift from one language to another in every day conversation and make this other (new) language their dominant language, their former language becomes passive and eventually forgotten. As Yule (1996:222) will note 'small speech communities, are usually more susceptible to existential changes which can result in a rapid decline of their mother-tongue.'

Sand (2018) observes that what is peculiar to the situation in Africa is the pressure on susceptible languages by some other minority languages. In other words, language shift appears to be from a small/minority language to a locally dominant language rather than to a global language (Batibo 2005, 2013a). The foregoing is however refuted by Obikudo et al. (2016) who note that language shift still manifest among minority languages. They cited an example of Nkporo, an Ijaw language spoken in Rivers State Nigeria by about 2,000 people is "severely endangered, yet Defaka (another language spoken in Bonny, Rivers State) speakers are shifting to Nkporo.

In a multilingual community like Lagos, Port Harcourt and Abuja, the degree of multilingualism is always relevant in determining language shift. Our investigation is focused on sociological multilingualism and not individual

multilingualism. An individual may have many languages in his/her linguistic repertoire without his speech community adopting any or all of these languages as language(s) of communication. Based on this assumption, many domains and settings of language use were investigated and it was discovered that children of bilingual/multilingual parents are at risk in relation to intergenerational language shift.

Multilingual urban centres are typical pluralistic. The different ethno-social groups have different habit of meaning and sociolinguistic coding orientation. Most speakers who have internalized patterns are extraordinarily heterogeneous and naturally react to this by choosing some coding and assigning normative values to them. When this is habitually done over a period of time, some unsuccessful languages are marginalized and others gain prominence thereby causing a shift in the pattern of language usage. It can be said that a chain of sociolinguistic phenomena associated with language endangerment like attrition, emanate from language shift.

Haruna (2007) notes that 'we have an idea of extinct languages within the north eastern part of Nigeria...some of these languages, e.g. Aukoyawa/Shira are no longer living languages used by speakers and speech communities in their day-to-day conduct, they have disappeared without even rudimentary information about their known features being available to us ... and sadly, many more are still being lost'. The foregoing lends credence to the present study given the displacement, and destruction of lives arising from terrorist attack in the north-eastern Nigeria and Fulani herders attack in the Middle Belt (north-central Nigeria). These crises have led to the decimation of the negligible population of speakers of these minority languages who have scattered in different directions for safety. Many of them are presently seeking refuge in various Internally Displaced Persons' Camps (IDPs) in the southern Nigeria. Kuju (1999) notes that northern Nigeria is a better-known linguistic 'killing-field'.

This region attracts attention because, by the African standard, northern Nigeria represents



a region of linguistic complexity. It is unique because it is a meeting point of three African language phyla found in Nigeria; the Afro-asiatic phylum, the Nilo-saharan phylum, and the Niger-Congo phylum. This area is therefore one of the geographical areas of Nigeria richest in languages. Table 1 below presents a broad scope of the language phyla and sub-families present with a few languages.

Table I: Language phyla and sub-families of Northern Nigerian languages

Phylum	Sub-phylum	Language
Afro-asiatic	Chadic	Hausa, Angas, Bura
Nilo-saharan	Saharan	Kanuri, Teda-Daza, etc
	West Atlantic	Fulfude
	Adamawa	Waja, Chamba, Mummuye
Niger-Congo	Benue-Congo	Jukun, Jàar, Laour, Birom

So, the manifestation of language shift in urban centres and IDPs camps would continue to constitute a context within which language attrition flourishes in Nigeria. Though many scholars have researched on languages in the north-east and north-central (Middle Belt), (Omale-Peters, 2001, Yusuf, 2006), not much work, to the best of our knowledge, has been carried out on the adverse effect of insurgency and herders' crises that are continually threatening the survival of and decimating the remaining minority languages, hence the need for this study. In other words, this paper examines:

- i. the sociolinguistic motivating factors for language shift and attrition in the urban centres in Nigeria, being an instance of gradual declining, and
- ii. the effect of Boko Haram insurgency attack and Fulani herders' crises on the minority languages in the north-eastern and north-central (Middle Belt) Nigeria respectively, which represent the quicker process of attrition and language death.

Yusuf (2006) notes that majority of minority indigenous languages in Nigeria are in the north. And almost all of them are endangered in one way or the other.

1. Significance of the study

Though many scholarly works abound in language shift and attrition, as well as their motivating factors, however, none has indeed examined from linguistic or sociolinguistic perspectives the influence of insurgency and crises in the northern Nigeria on the already endangered minority languages in the north-east and north-central (Middle-Belt). Besides, while other language shift and attrition induced factors, as we shall in the paper, usually lead to a gradual decline in the language usages, observation from insurgency and crises lead to sudden or faster disappearance of these languages due to the death or displacement of small community of speakers who have been sustaining the survival of the languages.

More significantly, if this ugly trend is not quickly curtailed, northern Nigeria that is known for its linguistic richness as a result of the presence of three major language phyla known in Africa on account of these minority languages may lose its linguistic value and visibility on the world's linguistic map because of languages shift, attrition and language death.

Multilingual urban centers in Nigeria

Nigeria is densely multilingual and operates a complex linguistic system as noted above. Based on the existing structure, the country adopts the three major languages (Hausa for the north, Yoruba for the south west and Igbo for the south east) as national and somewhat official languages. Though cities/urban centres in Nigeria are synonymous with state capitals like Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu, Abuja etc, there are some major cities in Nigeria that are not state capitals, e.g. Onitsha, Warri, Gboko, Suleja etc. These urban centres have a common index: they are multilingual, though the degree of multilingualism varies from one place to another. Some like Warri, Lagos, Benin, Abuja and Port Harcourt are more linguistically heterogeneous than others. The pattern of language use and



subsequent shifts in these urban centers vary. In some of the cities, the natives had established and developed a language system which immigrants inherit. A typical example is Lagos and the use of Yoruba, Hausa in Kano. In some other areas like Port Harcourt, the natives did not get established long enough to develop a language system for immigrants to inherit.

Generally, cities worldwide including Nigerian have some magnetic force to attract diverse people, notwithstanding pattern of settlement. As Dawling (1999:34) would note, '...among forces that have encouraged movements of people out of their homes of origin into new communities, particularly since the end of the second world war, are colonial activities and development of formal education as well as employment opportunities, industrial development and urbanization.' For a normal Nigerian who is either pushed out of his speech community by the socioeconomic forces or pulled by city attractions, the city becomes a permanent settlement. He only visits his country-home on vacations. Beyond his will, therefore, he makes efforts to adapt to the norms of his new settlement. In an attempt to become effectively integrated into his new society, he uses language as a tool for socialization and adaptation. He could lose his language in the process or acquire more in addition to his mother-tongue. This indeed is typical of multilingual urban centres in Nigeria and possibly African cities.

These language shift and language attrition motivating factors, and more significantly, the effect of Boko Haram insurgency and Fulani Herders' crises on minority languages in the northern (north-east and north-central 'Middle Belt') Nigeria are the major thrusts of this study.

Empirical studies

Adegbija (2008) examined language maintenance and language shift with respect to indigenous languages and English. The paper recommends that though English is still dominant in Nigeria in terms of geographical spread, efforts should be made to secure future for Nigeria indigenous languages. Yuka and Bayodele (2017) looked at lexical attrition and language shift in Uneme language. They discovered that lexical

attrition has pattern in relation to the location and generation of the native speakers. Okeke and Okeke (2017:1) investigated attrition in Nkpor dialect of Igbo. They noted that the dialectal attrition which resulted from dialect shift may lead to dialect loss if unchecked. According to them, 'attrition involves the gradual...decline, weakening or loss of native speakers' proficiency in their mother tongue as a result of their negative attitudes...or lack of loyalty towards the language/dialect.

However, one can assert that even when the speakers have loyalty and some measure of good attitude, there are still some prevailing factors that constrained these speakers to renege on their positive attitude and loyalty to their mother-tongues. Categories were provided to try and capture languages that are apparently in decline due to gradual shift to dominant languages in contact situations despite having a viable number of speakers. These languages have variously been christened 'endangered' 'deprived' 'disappearing' 'dying' 'vanishing' 'declining' or 'moribund' languages. Wurm (1998 and 2003) provides some sort of classifications of language endangerment. He distinguishes five types of language communities focusing on the weaker languages.

- i. Potentially endangered, if the children start preferring the dominant language and learn the obsolescing language imperfectly (the language begins to lose child speakers).
- ii. Endangered, if the youngest speakers are young adults and there are no or very few child speakers.
- iii. Seriously endangered if the youngest speakers are middle-aged or past middle age.
- iv. Terminally endangered or moribund if there are only a few elderly speakers left.
- v. Dead or extinct when there are no speakers left at all.

Sociolinguistic phenomenon in the urban centres depict the potentially endangered situation of some minority languages especially in Lagos, Benin, Warri and Port Harcourt while the



linguistic situation in the IDPs camps illustrates the seriously endangered languages since some speech communities have been completely displaced and inhabitants are either killed or relocated to IDPs in a different region for safety or seek refuge elsewhere.

Method of data collection and analysis

For the purpose of this study, seven major multilingual cities are considered. They are Lagos, Benin, Warri, Port Harcourt, Kano, Makurdi, and Abuja. These cities have been selected randomly based on their linguistic heterogeneity and locations of internally displaced persons' (IDP's). While the sets of data collected from Lagos, Warri, Port-Harcourt and Benin are used for the sociolinguistic changes in expanding cities, data elicited through oral interview from internally displaced persons' camps in Kano, Makurdi and Abuja are analysed to determine the extent of language shift and attrition in the northern Nigeria due to the insurgency. For the residents in Lagos, Benin, Warri and Port Harcourt, the questionnaire is designed primarily to investigate the language available in the linguistic repertoire of residents of these cities. These include the language they use in the different domains. We further probed the languages used before movement into these cities whether they are still used by their speakers or have been marginalized or lost. We also probed into their marital status to determine the influence of inter-tribal marriage on language shift and eventual attrition.

We decided to investigate the language use in their place of occupation (for the civil servants only) to ascertain the formal and informal domains of the language use in these urban centers. The stability of the linguistic status quo of these cities was investigated to determine the effect of the sociolinguistic factors of the pattern of language usage. Twenty research assistants were engaged to help interpret the oral interview that were recorded through observer's paradox to our informants at the IDP's camps. Both the oral interview and questionnaire sought to know why, when and how the new languages were acquired. Other bio-data information including age, sex, and marital status are

excluded from the table presented below. Information drawn from the interview and questionnaire was administered on total number of 160 respondents (20 from each IDP camps and 25 from each of the four cities). The summary of the questionnaire is given in the table 2 below.

Language shift and attrition: the sociolinguistic induced factors **Multilingualism**

Though languages are spoken by individuals, the effect of shift in the pattern of language use is noticeable in the speech community. In a multilingual society, choices made by individuals or groups may become institutionalized at the societal level. In most multilingual cities in Nigeria, the languages serve specialized functions and are used for particular purposes. Some are elevated as national and regional languages, e.g. Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, and others like Fulfulde, Kanuri, Efik/Ibibio, Tiv, Igala, Ijò and Edo are only regional according to Akinaso (2015). Pidgin and other minority group languages are however used in the home domain.

These major/national languages Hausa (in the North), Igbo (in the east) and Yoruba (in the west) are used as lingua franca for regional communication (see Igboanusi, 2002 and 2008), the minority languages are used for 'local (often) rural communication' (Schmid, 2013: 26) and are functionally marginalised to the 'primary domains of life' (Webb, 1994:181), such as family and friends, local markets and domestic services, traditional social institutions and religion. As such, people shift to such 'prestigious' language that enjoys wider acceptability. This present study however discovers (as we shall see much later in this paper) that the use of Pidgin, especially in urban centres like Warri, Port Harcourt and Benin transcends beyond home/informal domain.

Multilingualism affects the pattern of language usage in a speech community especially in the area of language acquisition among children. The use of more than one language especially in addressing children by their parents suggests a major mechanism by which long term



shift or change may occur in the language system. This is because the children grow up to acquire more languages than their parents. This is in addition to the simple changes from parents' mother-tongue (MT) to the use of a different language from their offspring. The situation becomes complex since there is equally the possibility that these offspring may themselves use both languages and sometimes others to address their children in a process which could go on indefinitely. As more and different languages are acquired by these children and later their offspring, the pattern of language use in their immediate community keeps shifting with the stronger or more viable languages surviving the weaker ones.

Government policies

Government policies on education as outlined in language provisions of the National Policy on Education (NPE) affect the sociolinguistic status quo of a speech community. The NPE of 1981, section 8, stipulates that in the interest of national unity, 'each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages other than his own mother-tongue...government considers the major languages in Nigeria to be Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.'

What this implies for the speakers of other languages is that in addition to their mother-tongue, they will still acquire the language of wider communication (if it is different from their mother-tongue) and also two other languages in a formal classroom environment (English and any of the three major languages), (see Igboanusi, 2002, 2008; Adegbite, 2010). The situation is more complicated in some multilingual cities. In Port Harcourt for instance, which is known for its complexity, the children are exposed to many languages at school because the government, on the approval of the Rivers Readers' Project encouraged the use of many indigenous languages at school to foster literacy development for these languages. Due to some sociopolitical and economic factors, the programme could not be sustained. The consequence of this is that when the zeal wore

out, teachers and students resorted to the use of Pidgin to fill the gap created.

Since formal education tends to add competence in another language, children acquire the languages in stages. As their level of acquisition graduates in stages and they eventually begin to use the language(s) at home and with friends, the pattern of language usage shifts.

Migration

Language shift may also be motivated by migration. Migration to multilingual cities in Nigeria as a result of marriage, business, education etc. has resulted in a leveling of the language differences among the different groups in the speech communities. With time, new generations are born leading to new population spread which settles at an early age in the host speech community. They grow up to acquire a language and culture different from those of their parents. Children in this group use pidgin as their L1 through the process of creolisation. In cities with established language patterns, like Lagos, as earlier mentioned, Yoruba is used as the established language of the natives and therefore inherited by immigrant alongside Pidgin.

In many of the multilingual cities in Nigeria, the migratory or cultural affiliation leads to voluntary clustering of ethnolinguistic groups in separate neighbourhood of the host city. When this happens, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, even though from a different ethnolinguistic group, use their native languages instead of the dominant languages of the immediate community. The Hausa quarters in many Nigerian non-Hausa towns and cities portray good examples of this sociolinguistic situation. The shift in the pattern of language use in these cities with high immigrant population is observed when one considers the retention rate of mother-tongue languages used by these immigrants (language vitality). Some ethnolinguistic groups have higher retention rate than others.

As observed, the Hausa, for example, are known to cling to their language irrespective of the environment. They are in this trend followed by the Yoruba. A visit to a Hausa community outside Hausaland (either in the southern, eastern,



or western Nigeria) reveals that a non-Hausa speaker, even though a speaker of the language of wider communication in the community, resort to the Hausa language to facilitate communication with the Hausa immigrant. We cannot offer any objective reason for the differences in the high retention rate of (Hausa or Yoruba) language of immigrant groups, since that is not exactly the focus of the paper. However, a widely held view by some scholars shows that the ethnolinguistic vitality of a language and the attitude of speakers of that language go a long way in facilitating the retention of the language. At least, high vitality will lead to maintenance while low vitality usually results in shift towards the dominant language, or in some cases, as it were in the urban centers and IDP camps, shift towards another more prestigious vernacular. Language maintenance is characterised by the continued survival of a language in contexts where it is expected to be endangered, due to sustained use of the language and its transmission to neophytes (Ostler 2011).

Language contact

Language contact necessitates multilingualism in Nigerian urban cities. Languages used in these cities influence, considerably, one another in various ways to the extent that the longer the contact, the deeper the influence. As Emenanjo (2003:12) points out, 'when many languages live cheek by jowl in a very compact area... through attrition and survival of the fittest, the stronger or more viable language survives.' The sociolinguistic implications of language contact situation vary. Extreme contact situations lead to language diffusion or displacement. Ugwuoke (1999) listed a number of Nigerian languages in danger of disappearing. Unfortunately, during our investigation, some of these endangered languages were mentioned by our respondents as mother-tongue languages used before movement to the cities.

In the four cities observed, there seem to be a limitation of the native languages' use to more restricted social contexts (like the home domain), to the point of what Bright (1997) calls 'obsolescence' of the native languages in some

environments and ultimate language shift in the direction of the more socially acceptable language(s); in most cases one of the languages of wider communication, languages, pidgin and / or English. The birth and growth of pidgin is traced to language contact situation. However, the use of Pidgin in formal domains especially in Warri, Benin and Port Harcourt features more prominently than it is in Lagos. Because of constant increase in contact and interaction in Nigerian multilingual cities, it is predictable that the pattern of language use will keep changing to reflect the ever-increasing intensity of interaction from language contact.

Terrorists' insurgency and Fulani herders' crises: Threat to endangered languages

Boko Haram started as a non-violent breakaway group, persecution and aggressive crack-downs from the security services brought about their violent response. Boko Haram was at first a small and controllable problem, but the issue escalated in 2009 after heavy crackdowns were ordered by President Yar'Adua. The crackdown was brutal and disproportionate; around 700 innocent people were killed, some of them publicly executed on suspicions that they were member of Boko Haram (Sani, 2012). The killing of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf actually made the group increase its rate of violent activities (Ajah, 2011). Following the killing of their leader the movement went underground but emerged a year later with renewed attacks. The group that comprised essentially Muslims puts forward the idea that it has religious connotation. The principle governing its emergence and activities relates to its rejection of Western education as evil, Islamising Nigeria and promoting Islamic ideologies in the country.

Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east and Fulani herders' crises in the Middle Belt (north-central) have beyond any other factor decimated the pocket of native speakers who are sustaining some minority/small indigenous languages in the north generally. Small languages are defined here as those with 0-10,000 native speakers. A number of these speech communities have been destroyed while the native speakers are maimed and killed. The survivors of the attack



usually either orphans, or widows/widowers are presently seeking refuge in IDPs camps in other regions as far as south. Several attempts by the Federal Government to relocate them to their homes have failed due to some unknown reason(s). Their languages have been weakened; the speakers in a bid to survive in their new environment abandoned their mother-tongue in total embrace of the languages of the host community. Presently, there are over 380,000 children in different internally-displaced persons' camps across Nigeria. Many scholars have written on the imminent death of many Nigerian languages especially when the present elderly ones who are sustaining the languages die (Emenanjo and Bleambo, 1999, Ostler, 2011, Sand, 2018). A change in environment would mean that the cultural and social settings in which a given language had been functioning, usually for a very long time, have been replaced by new and quite different ones as a result of irresistible culture contact with the traditional dominant language instead of it readily functioning as a vehicle of expression of the new culture.

Out of 60 respondents (who have different minor languages as their L1 or mother-tongues) interviewed through our research assistant, 48 agreed that their respective languages are severely affected by displacement arising either from Boko-Haram scourge or Fulani herders' crises. 18 of the respondents noted that their different micro-speech communities were completely destroyed while the inhabitants dispersed in different directions for safety. We observed that there are some languages that do not have up to 10 speakers in some displaced camps. To worsen the situation, these surviving speakers are already learning how to communicate some basic communicative needs in some other languages that have majority speakers within the IDP camps. In some instance like in Kano and Makurdi, some internally

displaced persons, in spite of the negligible percentage of speakers of some minority languages, prefer to speak some dominating languages like Tiv, Idoma, Yoruba, Igbo, Igede in Benue and Abuja while Hausa, or Fulfude dominates other minor languages in Kano.

According to Schiffman (1998) in Okeke and Okeke (2017), language death arises when a speech community fails to use their mother-tongue due to negligence. Schiffman notes that the first step in language death is language shift followed by the assimilation of the speakers by another (host) language, or when the last speaker of a language dies due to genocide, natural disaster. The final stage is when the speakers are scattered in such a way as to break up the language/speech community. This final stage of language death explains the present situation in the north-east and north-central Nigeria. It has been suggested that a language must have at least 100,000 speakers to be considered 'safe' (Lee and Van Way 2016:281). If this claim of Lee and Van Way is true, a vast majority of small/minority languages of the northern Nigerian are indeed unsafe.

Even before the terrorist and herdsmen attack, most of the minority languages in the north-eastern and north-central Nigeria are under serious threat of Hausa, Fulfude. Judging from the result of historical and comparative linguistics, the culture contact with Hausa/Fulani definitely is one of the most important factors which has led and is still leading to changes in the ecology of the languages of the north-east Nigeria (Aliyu, 1986; Adamu, 1984; James, 1987; and Harnishfeger, 2002). While these scholars agree that contact does not lead to the extinct or even marked decimation of the population speaking a given language, it severely affects the attitude of that community towards its language.

Table 2: Sociolinguistic variables and shift in the pattern of language usage over time

Sociolinguistic variable	MT %	LWC %	PI %	ENG. %	Maj. Lang.
% of languages used in the home domain	65	45	50.0	45	4.0
% of languages used in the market	4.00	95	95	20	30
% of languages used in the office	2	50	55	75	45



% of languages used in the place of work	5.00	40.0	65	80.0	45.5
% of languages used before inter tribal marriage	90	10	50	30	20.5
% of languages used in the after marriage	40	30	67	45	41.0
% of languages used in the club/play	20.5	78.5	98.5	20	5.0
% of the languages used in school by students outside classroom	1.0	80.0	95.0	25.0	5.0
% of languages used in school by teachers	2.0	4.0	1.5	98.0	35.0
%of languages used before movement into the city	98	2.0	10	40	48.0
% of the languages used after movement into the city	1.0	90	95	60	48.0
% of the languages used in all environment	10	50	95	40	35.4
% of the languages used but lost after movement into the city	80	1.6	2	60	30
% of the languages used as L1 and MT	40	14.4	25	1.5	4.0
% of the languages used out of necessity	25	90	95	70	6.0
% of the languages used by choice	60.8	80	88.5	50	20
% of the languages used out of convenience	15.5	70	90	45.5	25.3

Discussion of findings

From the table presented above, we discover that 65% of MT usage in the home domain was recorded. The 4% recorded by majority languages indicated that even when these majority languages are acquired at school because of the government policy on education, the use at the home domain is minimal and negligible.

Apart from the formal classroom environment and place of work, the pidgin scores the highest percentage in different domains of language use. This finding lends credence to the wide acceptability of the use of the pidgin language even in the informal/official domains among Nigerians as enunciated by Babarinde, (2017). Before movement into these cities, however, our respondents rarely use pidgin for communication. This accounts for the 2% recorded as loss suffered after movement into the cities. On the other hand, 25% is recorded in the use of pidgin by children born or settled early in these multilingual cities. They have grown up not using the parents' native languages of wider communication in the immediate environment (especially in Warri, Benin and Port Harcourt). This may be because most of Niger Delta population speaks it Pidgin as their first language. This is not unexpected given the fact that the Portuguese settled in this geopolitical region when they explored Nigeria. Since these people had no common language, it was easy for the

Niger Deltan to learn the Portuguese-based pidgin.

Before movement into these cities, the use of the MT recorded as high as 98%. These MTs are later to record a loss of 80%, leaving only 18% as the retained. On the use of majority languages by non-speakers, 8% was recorded for use before movement into cities, 35% usage by teachers in classroom environment as they are taught as school subjects, and 45% usage after settlement to the tune of 35.4% as these languages are acquired and relinquished, the pattern in the usage keeps shifting.

On the effect of insurgency, it is discovered that due to the displacement that led to eventual dispersal of surviving native speakers of some minority languages in the north east and north central, the so-called few surviving native speakers of already endangered languages have further been decimated to the point of terminal endangerment. As observed, some of the internally displaced camps have less than 10 speakers of some minority languages. This further poses threat to these languages more so that these surviving speakers are gradually abandoning their languages to the embrace of some other minority languages with fairly high number of speakers or some other major languages spoken outside the IDP camps. It is noteworthy that the category of speakers who are inclining towards the acquisition of another language at the expense of their own are children



and youths. While adult internally displaced persons still maintain loyalty to their language despite the threat, the youngsters have started shifting gradually towards another language with some stronger influence over theirs.

Summary of findings and conclusion

Language is organic and it keeps pace with the social development of its users. Many multilingual cities in Nigeria have witnessed some shift in the pattern of language usage, some stages with longer life span than others. The effect of multilingualism (which leaves cities with as many as five languages or more at any given stage) on the pattern of language is noted. Some of the languages gained prominence while others are marginalized towards attrition. Most importantly, the acquisition of these languages is not simultaneous, so the pattern of use is not always stable. Extreme contact situation has led to the disappearance of some languages in the linguistic repertoire of inhabitant of these cities. Because of the need for a language of convenience and social accommodation, the pidgin has grown to be a language of necessity except in Lagos where there exist an established (Yoruba) language of the natives and therefore inherited by the majority of the immigrant.

Interestingly, it has been discovered that when there is an intergenerational weakening of the mother-tongue, a complete shift is generated. The foregoing which finds credence in Wurm (2003) classification of endangered languages is corroborated by *Times Magazine* of July 1997, Vol.(150)1:50 that the most serious indication of a language's imminent demise is when it is no longer spoken by children. It cuts the cords of linguistic transmission between generations and when the elders die, their language dies with

them.'

Sociolinguistically speaking, when an existing pattern of language use is established, there is tendency for this pattern to perpetuate itself for a long time. This is because when a particular language has gained widespread acceptance and usage, becoming the language of wider communication in a multilingual speech community, non-native speakers of this language help in preserving the language pattern. In the case of multilingual cities in Nigeria, the sociolinguistic status quo will remain stable for some time; but shift they will, because there are bound to be social changes in these cities which will in turn change the pattern of language use.

On the effect of insurgency and crises, unfortunately, majority of the speakers of these minority languages that only existing at the spoken form have been decimated by the combined efforts of Boko Haram and Fulani herders. The survivors, who can no longer cluster together as a group or community of speakers have scattered around in different directions including IDPs camps far from their region and even across the Nigerian borders. That these endangered languages are seriously or terminally endangered is to say the least on account of language shift, its attendant attrition and eventual death.

The overall effect of this is that, Nigeria that has been occupying a prominent place in the world's linguistic map on account of these minority languages that are housed in the northern Nigeria may soon lose the prestige due to the alarming declining, attrition, and death of these languages arising from destruction and displacement of the small number of speakers sustaining the languages.

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Pragmatic acts in selected Ilorin Waka

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Abstract

The Ilorin Waka is an islamic and cultural oral entertainment form, usually performed at a given ceremony. During its performance, people gather to savour the melody that the solemn danceable local rendition provides. The Waka is an interplay of education, sermonisation or sensitisation and other sundry messages bothering on serious matters of life, skillfully and meaningfully woven together in unique language. However, this form of poetry has not received enough scholarly attention to underscore its pragmatic values. The purpose of this study is to analyse the Waka lyrical poetic discourse with the objective of highlighting how Waka performances serve as acts of doing things. The data selected for analysis is a snippet of Waka rendition taken from one of the earliest Waka exponents, late Alhaji Imam Laro Mohammed as documented in Jimba (1997). Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts and Altieri's (1975) Poem as Acts theories are adopted as theoretical framework for study. Findings from the analysis reveal the multiplicity of activities being performed in just a snippet of an utterance to include the acts of challenging, assuring, seeking, avoiding, warning, advising, referring, declaring, asserting and describing, all being speaker-based. At the level of the hearer, the acts of imagining, self-probing and being resolute were also shown. The study is also a revelation of some psychological, metaphorical, referential and inferential acts at the textual part of the Waka prameme. In all, the study validates the fact that beyond the entertainment value of any typical Waka rendition it is characterised by several pragmatic acts in which both the speaker and the hearer are implicitly engaged.

Keywords: Ilorin Waka, Pragmatic Acts, prameme, practs, contextual

Introduction

Although, language is basically used for communication, it is, in addition, used to imply certain actions that may not be actually stated in an utterance. Negotiating for the unstated but implied meanings of speech, falls within the realm of pragmatics – a field concerned with “the study of linguistic acts and the context in which they are performed”. (Stalnaker, 1975 cited in Adegbija, 1999, p. 189). Included in the variety of discourses in which humans engage, is poetry, a genre, with multiple layers of implied meanings. Its multidimensional meaning potential becomes pragmatically evident, especially when a stretch of utterance is considered based on the notion of discourses being actions. This idea is as propounded in the “Speech-Act” theory by Austin (1962), Searle (1969), Grice (1975) etc. and more recently, in the “Pragmatic Act” theory by Mey (2001). Contrary to the Speech-Act theory, Pragmatic Act theory is a new perspective

to looking at the activities being performed with the spoken or written words from the totality of the utterance constituents and NOT just from any performative verb(s) in the discourse.

Meanwhile, prior to Mey's Pragmatic Acts, scholars had earlier developed the “Poem As Acts theory by which the act content of poetry could be expounded. The application of the “Poem as Act” theory allows for the evaluation of “the quality of the poem as act, by examining how alive it is to the complexity of the situation it presents”.(Altieri, 1975, p.105). Therefore, in this study, the combination of the “Pragmatic Act “ and the” Poem as Act” theories are utilized for explicating the multiple layers of meanings inherent in the Ilorin Waka lyrical data, whose evolution is traceable to the origin of the Ilorin speech community itself.

Literature review

The Ilorin Waka

‘ Waka’ is a distinct oral poetic form,



peculiar to the Islamic speech community of Ilorin, Kwara State of Nigeria which dates back to the late 17th century and can be categorised under lyrical poetry, considering its characteristic formal and contextual form. On its functionality, Ibitola (2015, p. 21) asserts that, “the Ilorin traditional folklores and traditional music of Waka are a major source of narrating the history of Ilorin which also contain philosophical messages and moral convictions”. This assertion implies that through the linguistic choices by which the Waka lyrics are often times rendered, they serve as platforms for not only mirroring the ills that are inimical to the growth and progress of the local environment, but also ‘philosophizing’ and ‘advocating’ positive acts that ought to be given a pride of place. Of utmost concern in this paper however, are the subtleties of the language of Waka art, which is chanted in the Yoruba language that has been impacted by a few other indigenous languages, as a result of the historical antecedents to the origin of Ilorin as a linguistic community. This is because, although Ilorin city, according to Jimba (1989), Jimoh (1994) and Onikoko (1992), initially evolved as a Yoruba speaking community, overtime however, it witnessed infiltration by an avalanche of different ethnic and cultural groups, resulting in a fusion of the lexical items of the languages in contact, like Hausa, Fulfude, Nupe, Baruba and Arabic, which is the language of the religion generally in practice in the community. Jimoh (1994, p. 9) succinctly captures the resultant effect of the amalgam of the various indigenous and religious languages, when he says: “consequently, a unique Islamic culture with which the diverse culture melted, emerged, and the infectious Yoruba language became the lingua franca”.

It was, and still is, with this dialect of Yoruba language that the Ilorin people conduct their daily businesses, including ceremonies and the accompanying musical and non-musical entertainments, like Dadakuada music, Pankeke music, Balu music, and Waka rendition. Na’Allah (2011, p. 54), rightly asserts that, “in many ways, the development of Waka as an Ilorin traditional genre and as an important symbol of Ilorin

multiculturalism reflect the community’s history and social life”, stressing that, “the Ilorin Waka, even though delivered mainly in Yoruba language, carries Hausa and Fulani cultural flavours with Islamic social contents”.

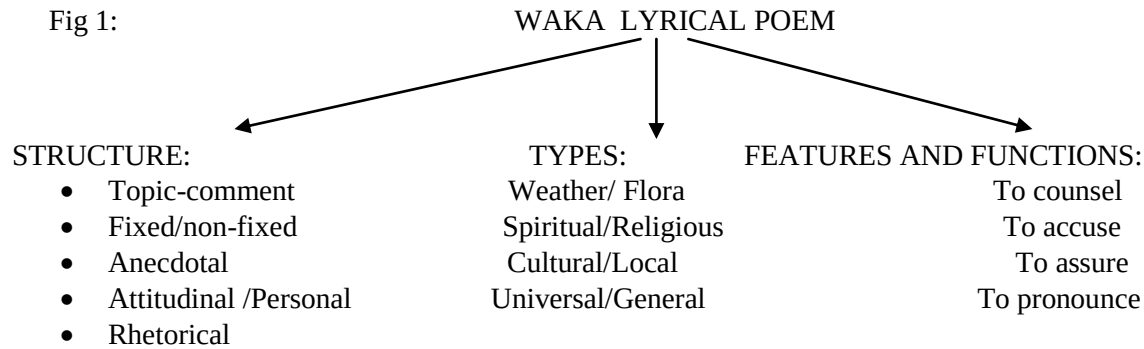
However, there seems to be levels of sophistication in the native speakers’ use of this impacted Yoruba language which could be pinned to their generations, as particularly evident in the Ilorin Waka renditions. Generally, it can be observed that the *senior citizens’* usages of the dialect is somewhat more advanced in structure than those of the young or average-aged members of the linguistic community. This is a disparity that is also noticeable in the usages by the earliest and latest generation of Waka artistes. In fact, the nearer to history a Waka datum, the richer and sophisticated its language use.

Waka Literary Characteristics

On a closer and deeper consideration, the Ilorin Waka lyrical poem can be seen to bear literary semblance with the Yoruba proverbs, which, according to Omoloso (2012, p.12), “constitute a special class of utterances, whose meanings cannot be arrived-at by a sole recourse to the meanings of the words of which they are composed...without recourse to contextual considerations”. The similarities shared by both the Ilorin Waka and the Yoruba proverbs in the areas of features, structure, typology and functionality may not be unconnected with the fact that the two art forms are wits and wisdom laden oratures of African tradition. It is for the reasons of sameness, that Odebunmi’s (2007) and Adedimeji’s (2010) categorizations of the nature, structure and functions of proverbs are considered appropriate for adoption in the discussion of the pragmatic acts of the Waka discourse in this work. Their categorization, which are closely related and overlapping, have been fused together to remove the overlap, with an addition of few variables to allow for a deepened analysis of the discourse value of the Waka art. The modified categorization is schematically presented below:



Fig 1:



Source : Researcher Designed

However, studying the Waka poem based on comparison with proverbs or any other literary form only in terms of similarity in structure, thematic underpinnings or functional commitment, may not make for a worthwhile exercise. For a wholesome analysis of the Ilorin Waka lyrical poem, a theory in Pragmatics discipline which takes the context of usage into consideration is quite expedient for employment. Such an exercise will ensure a thorough and down-to- earth explication of the meaning potentials of the Waka discourse, which is noted for its peculiar sourcing of vocabulary from different languages.

Pragmatics

The word “Pragmatics”, originates from the Greek word, “pragma”, which means, ‘deed’ or ‘action’. The concept developed as a reaction to the purely formalist approach to language (Adegbija, 1999, p. 189). As an insight to what gave rise to the discipline, Mey (2001) notes, that the intense attack, in the late sixties, on earlier theories which bother on ‘syntax- only’ approach to linguistic description occasioned the evolution of pragmatics. The earlier approaches were considered insufficient to interpret utterances, and so, scholars started to provide other paradigms considered useful and usable to account for the meanings of utterances from their contextual perspective. Austin (1962), Searle (1969) and Grice (1975) were among earliest notable pragmatics in this regard. As a linguistic discipline, Pragmatics, generally, concerns the study of language as it is used by people for their own purposes, within their own limits and affordances (Mey, 2001). It is NOT a

study of the extent to which a usage adheres to any rules of the grammar of a language in terms of syntax, morphology or phonetics to negotiate its meanings. Rather, it is the generation of meaning(s) through the deployment of contextual variables to a particular discourse. In the course of deploying context for meaning negotiation, pragmatics take cognizance of the notions of, **implicature, intention, inference, presupposition, mutual contextual belief, speech-acts**, etc. Each of these constitutes, in itself, an area on which pragmatic principles and theories are formulated to deepen the scientific analysis of meaning derivations from any given discourse. Among such theories is, the Speech Act theory, which views language as being used to do things or to perform acts. This Speech Act theory which is a foremost theory in Pragmatics as a discipline is the brain child of J. L. Austin (1962).

From Speech Act to Pragmatic Act Theory

The Speech-act is a communication activity (locutionary act) defined with reference to the intentions of speakers while speaking (illocutionary force of their utterances) and the effects they achieve on listeners (Perlocutionary effect). In essence, the speech act theory and indeed the whole of the concern of Pragmatics is, essentially, on how interlocutors (speakers and hearers) understand one another, in spite of the possibility of their saying what they do not mean, and meaning what they do not say”. Lawal (1997, p. 127). Searle agrees with some of Austin’s classifications of illocutionary acts, disagrees with some and goes ahead to rename those to which he is indifferent, offering additional in-

roads into the explications and understanding of acts being performed with speech. It is noteworthy that, although Austin's (1962) **Speech Acts** theory and the improvement on it by Searle(1969)and other scholars provide the springboard for Mey's (2001) **Pragmatic Acts** theory, Mey departs radically from Austin's and Searle's positions. The main flaws that Mey identifies in Speech Act theory concern the absence of a theory of action and the consideration of the presence of a performative verb in an utterance for the act in it to count. He maintains that a pragmatic look at people using language shows them as performing pragmatic acts. As such, one may conclude that since all human beings are language users, all are engaged in one form of pragmatic acting or another. Therefore, notwithstanding a users' non-compliance with rules, all language usages are

right, so long as the users know what they are doing.

In the rational reasoning of Mey (2001), acts performed with language needs not be tied to specific illocuted speech or word, but to the entire utterance. To him, there could be several acts being performed implicitly or explicitly by the interactants (speaker and the hearer) in a discourse. Such generalized pragmatic acts are what Mey subsumes under the concept of **Pragmeme**. A pragmeme, according to him, is the totality of the verbal activities contained in a body of a text or utterance, the variants of which are practs, Allopracts or ipras. In this direction, he provides a schema to guide the understanding and explication of pragmatic acts usually instantiated by content and context in an utterance. The scheme which is made used in this study is as below:

Fig. 2:

ACTIVITY PART
(INTERACTANTS)

PRAGMEME

TEXTUAL PART
(CO(N)TEXT)

INF

REF

REL VCE

SSK

MPH

'M'...

SPEECH ACTS

INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS

CONVERSATIONAL ('DIALOGUE') ACTS

PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTIONS)

PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS,..)

PHYSICAL ACTS:

BODY MOVES (INCL. GESTURES)

PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)

(BODILY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS

...

- (NULL)

From the above diagram, a body of discourse or text is conceptualized as a pragmeme, having two opposite left and right sides, one being **Activity** part and the other **Textual** part respectively. In the activity part of a given discourse, by this schema, is contained, the acts that the interactants are performing with their

utterances. The acts range from **direct** and **indirect Speech Acts**, turn-taking verbal exchanges (**Dialogue**), exhibition of **Emotions**, gestures and gesticulations (**Body moves**), deliberate and purposeful varying of voice levels as well as **Facial expressions**, all or some of which the speaker and hearer deploy to make their utterances more meaningful or



understandable. Likewise in the textual part are verifiable instances of **Reference (REF)**, **Relevance (REL)** and **Inference (INF)** made in the speech, allusion to **Metaphors (MPH)** and the **Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK)** evident in the utterance, given the situations and environment in which the speaker and hearer find their affordances. Meanwhile, it is not in every type of discourse that all the classes of activities and contextual features indicated in the Activity and Textual parts of this Mey's schema can be realized. The features are just optional, given the discourse type being examined. For instance, the dialogue feature in the activity part of the schema is practically unrealizable in a lyrical poetic discourse as is studied here, just as it is similarly improbable to account for features like bodily moves and facial expressions in a written or transcribed text as the data for this study. However, what is paramount and relevant to this study is that, "both the interactants and the contexts in which they operate are vital to the understanding of the Pragmeme". Odebumi (2007, p.204)

Methodology

The data for study in this paper is a snippet, from one of the various three decades old performances of a prominent Ilorin Waka exponent of his time, the Late Imam Laro Muhammed, the original Yoruba language version which I titled: "*Esan*" ('*Nemesis*'). The snippet of the data is randomly sourced from Jimba (1997). In this study, the original Yoruba language version of the data is first presented in full, side by side with the translation and later analysed in segments, to form five different blocks of utterances, while still being symmetrically linked and discussed. The segmentation is done for ease of a concise and coherent analysis of the entire Waka pragmeme. Also, a deliberate and careful attention is made not to lose the linguistic flavor of the original data by progressively rendering the Yoruba

version of every portion of the data referred-to, alongside its translation in the course of analysis. Differentiation between the two versions is indicated with the Yoruba texts in regular type font size, and in quote, while their translations are italicized, throughout the study. Loan words that are contained in the data are also asterisked with a view to calling attention to the effect of their use in the course of analysis.

Theoretical Framework

For the descriptive and analytical study of the data, our theoretical model is Mey's (2001) "**Pragmatic Acts**" and Altieri (1975) "**Poem as Act**" theories. Although Pragmatics is a linguistic discipline in which language usage is interpreted from the point of view of users taking context into consideration, the twin theories of "Pragmatic Acts" and "Poem as Acts" that are employed in this study, bother primarily on utterances being performances of activities, or communication activities of speakers and hearers. In pragmatic acting generally, interactants are considered as performing actions with the words they speak and hear, and doing so with or without any particular 'action-denoting' word in the utterance. Instead, the totality of the discourse is what constitutes the yardstick to account for the activities in the utterance, technically known as the **pragmeme**. In analyzing the pragmeme of any discourse, as done to Waka in this study, attention is paid to both the activity and textual parts of the utterance, pointing out the conversational, psychological and physical acts, etc, in which the language users are engaged. However, the theory of Poem as Acts is complementarily utilized for data analysis in this work because it is specifically on the explication of poem discourse as a dramaturgy. In other words, because the theory bothers on poetry genre like the Waka and sees poem as performance discourse, it is considered a useful complementary tool to do an enriching explication of the general Pragmatic Acts contained in the Waka data

Data Presentation

"Níbi *kóówa ó pàdè è ta ló yé sí"? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*

"Níbi *kóówa ó pàdè è ta ló yé sí"? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*



“Ikú tí n wá wa ká tí* kóówá n yàn lódi” *The death which seeks us but each tries to avoid*

“Níbi *kóówa ó pàdé è ta ló yé sí”? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*

“Èsan ò ní bóti, yìò sèsan fún* kóówa” *Nemesis cannot be missed, He will apportion it to everyone*

“Èsan ò ní bóti, yìò sèsan fún* kóówa” *Nemesis cannot be missed, He will apportion it to everyone*

“Olówó-ìkà n bímọ ẹmí rẹ n gùn” *The devilish rich man bears children and lives long*

“Kò sì p’Ọlọhun má sèsan fún *kóówa” *It does not stop God from apportioning nemesis to everyone*

“Ọlólá-ìkà n bímọ ẹmí rẹ n gùn” *The devilish wealthy man bears children and lives long*

“Kò sì p’Ọlọhun má sèsan fún *kóówa” *It does not stop God from apportioning nemesis to everyone*

“Jibiti ò ran Ọlọhun, ẹdà làálù” *God cannot be defrauded, as we do to men*

“Bóo fẹ o lọ bàrùbá, o lọ ẹ *dàbàrà” *If you like travel to Baruba land to make charms*

“Di ataare , o p’ọfọ si, o di yòókù lókùn” *Tie fetish alligator pepper, recite incantations and bind the rest with thread*

“Kò ságádágodo tó le ran Allahu” *There is no charmed padlock that can cast spell on Allah*

“Tó lè p’Ọlọhun má sèsan fún kóówa”. *To prevent God from apportioning nemesis to everyone.*

Analysis

The data above is though a mono stanzaic poetic form, its lines can be segmented into four, in the progression of the different **practs** being expressed in each segment in pursuance of the main theme of the Waka. The first segment, which comprises the first four lines and which opens up on a note of challenge to ‘humans’ in general reads thus:

“Níbi *kóówa ó pàdé è ta ló yé sí”? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*

“Níbi *kóówa ó pàdé è ta ló yé sí”? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*

“Ikú tí n wá wa ká tí* kóówa n yàn lódi” *The death which seeks us but everyone tries to avoid*

“Níbi *kóówa ó pàdé è ta ló yé sí”? *Where everyone will meet with it, who knows?*

The text can be said to be an implicit act of challenging the audience through the rhetorical interrogative clause: “Ta ló yé sí” ?” (*who knows?*), because, it expresses the lack of knowledge, by humans, of the venue and perhaps

the circumstance of his eventual death. Thus further implying that human beings are both ignorant and feeble, concerning the fate of death that awaits him, the assurance of which the Waka also expresses, even without any verb denoting it



in the text. Further to the expression of these two speaker-based **practs** of assuring and challenging, is the ignition of the audience's mental process of thought, by leveraging on the **Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK)**, to make the listener engage in the psychological act of 'imagining' an occasion when he will cease to exist; an unpreventable development, whose venue he cannot predict. This affective quality or influence of the Waka on the hearer, depicts the felicity force of the utterance in instilling fears in the reader, thus leading him to the **pract** of being 'resolute' at exhibiting righteousness. By so doing, the Waka achieves one of the functions for which it is purposed, namely, to counsel. It is however interesting to note the opposite direction of movement of the 'humans' and the 'Death', placed before the audience in this same portion of the poem, particularly in the utterance: "*The death which seeks us but each tries to avoid*". By this sentence, both the death and human beings are presented as two dramatic personae acting on a drama stage, one 'seeking', the other 'avoiding'. While death continuously seeks or hunts for the man, the hunted man contemptuously avoids it. The use of the two main verbs, "*seek*" and "*avoid*" in this relative clause, is quite purposeful, because, while the first verb, picks up the illocution of an imaginary act of seeking, by an imaginary being (i.e. death,) and in an imaginary 'context', the second verb picks up the illocution of the physical act of avoiding by the physical human in a physical context. Again, in this same speech event can be found, the presence of a **Metaphor (MPH)**, evident in the manner the Waka presents one of the persona involved in the ultra-directional rat race between man and death. It is metaphorical (MPH) that, 'death', an abstract phenomena, is said to be 'seeking' and at the same time being 'avoided', as would a concrete, physical or an animate object. Based on all these different **ipras** and **allopracts** seemingly being dramatized and functionalized in this first part of the poem, the reader is led to the second segment which is represented by the single fifth line of the text, which reads as : "*Èsan ò ní bóti , yìd sèsan fún* kóowá*" (*Nemesis cannot be missed, He will*

apportion it to everyone).

The audience, at this juncture, is presented with another different but coherent dramatic situation consequential to the one in the preceding part. His attention is 'shifted' from the previous physical world situational context (where human and death engage in an imaginary hide and seek game) to a different realm or context, existing in the after world, which is understood by foregrounding the **Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK)** existing between the speaker and the listener. While the protagonist and the antagonist in the first drama stage (man and death) are explicitly locuted, the casts here change to the Man and God. But, it is only the protagonist, God, represented with the pronoun, 'HE', that is referenced here. Although it is not explicitly stated, the reader is able to draw the right inference that "God" is the implied sharer of the 'nemesis', to which the utterance refers. It is however noteworthy that, the anecdotal nature of the poem, similar to that of a proverb is noticeable in this line, just as in the first and second parts of the poem. The poem is an 'anecdote', advancing the concept of the law of retribution, applicable in the life beyond to which by dogma, all humans agree even with no scientific proof. Also, the structural feature of a poem having a topic and comment elements is brought to the fore in this portion of the datum. While the topic of the first part is 'death' and the comment is man's ignorance of its venue, the topic of the second part is 'nemesis' and the comment is its inescapable apportioning. All the allopracts in these two parts jointly exhibit the functions of 'counseling' and 'warning'. These first and the second parts of the data show human beings on the earth, transiting through death to the world beyond where he would be visited with the consequences of his actions while on earth. These two parts, also form one of the areas to which the universal appeal of the poem can be pinned as they touch on 'death' and heavenly 'nemesis', which are not exclusive to a particular person, nation or race, but are universally believed, (through the **SSK** and **SCK**) to be attributable to mankind in general. The third part of the poem which runs from the



sixth to the eighth line further connects to the preceding parts, as it re-enacts man, no longer in heaven as found in the immediate last line, but on

“Olówó-ikà n bímọ ẹmí rẹ n gùn” *The devilish rich man bears children and lives long*

“Kò sì p’Ọlòhun má sẹsan fún *kóówá” *It does not stop God from apportioning nemesis to everyone*

“Ọlólá-ikà n bímọ ẹmí rẹ n gùn” *The devilish wealthy man bears children and lives long*

“Kò sì p’Ọlòhun má sẹsan fún *kóówá” *It does not stop God from apportioning nemesis to everyone...*

This portion of the poem contains the pract of ‘description’, made vivid and intensified with adjectives of different connotations: ‘devilish man’, ‘rich man’, ‘wealthy man’ and ‘long life’. There is also the **pract** of ‘naming’ deducible from the utterance’s reference to life successes, symbolized in the possession of riches, wealth and progenies. These luxuries are not only ‘named’, but also ‘rendered’ inconsequential in the allotment of nemesis by God should their possessor be devilishly inclined. Inferentially, it is a **metaphor (mph)**, that these triple allures of life (riches, wealth and children) which ordinarily should be useful to their possessor to get-off the hook of the wages of sins in life, become useless in warding-off nemesis in the after-life. The utterance implicitly ‘alludes’ to the fact that the natural order of this life is reversed in the after-life, as a man becomes incapacitated to use what he owns to assuredly get what he undeservedly desires contrary to what obtains here on earth. Also, it is a paradox that “favour” and “disfavour” are placed in opposition to be successively accruable to a particular individual in the dramatic temporal movement of the speaking voice of the poem. The discourse is

“Bóo fẹ o lọ bàrùbá, o lọ ẹ *dàbàrà” *If you like travel to Baruba land to make charms*

“Di ataare , o p’ọfọ si, o di yòókù lókùn” *Tie fetish alligator pepper, recite incantations and bind the rest with thread*

“Kòs’ágádágodo tó le ran *Allahu” *There is no charmed padlock that can cast spell on Allah*

The declarative act which is performed in the above utterance with the explicit use of the verb,

earth, exhibiting different actions. The reference to the different symbolic acts of humans in life is couched in the following lines:

inferentially understood and interpretable as saying ‘favour’ here in life (could) attract ‘disfavour’ in the hereafter, if the former is not positively utilized. This is because, it is a divine favour to be provided with the essentials of life as the poem recounts but such a provision turns out to be the instrumentality of attracting disfavour in the life beyond, if the fortunate man of success, gets steeped in the allures of his affluence, and throws caution to the winds, in his dealings with his fellow humans. He gains the world but loses his soul; So, what does he profit?, the poem seems to imply. It is necessary to point out again that together with the first and the second this third part of the data contributes to the general and universal appeal of the entire pragmeme of the data because the type of man ‘described’ as being affluently blessed but devilishly inclined exists in all ages and across climes and cultures. This third part also marks the attitudinal literary feature of the poem, as it points to the negative personal attitude of some class of men in the society taking the shared cultural knowledge (**sck**), into consideration.

The last part of the datum opens on a note of declaration when it says:

travel, also contains a presupposition. This is because, the reference to ‘Baruba land’ as the



place to which the audience is urged to travel, presupposes the existence within space of a referent that is so called, which is known to the speaker, and which he (the speaker) assumes may also be known to the audience taking for granted the shared situational knowledge (**ssk**) existing between them. It is this presupposition that leads the speaker to exhibiting the act of 'referring' to, not only a place named *Baruba land*, but also to an unnamed addressee made identifiable with the second person singular/plural pronoun, in the clause: '*if **you** like*'... This 'referring' act is done alongside the act of 'directing', issued to the hearer to '***travel** to Barubaland*'. But compliance to the directive is also made optional, with the proviso: '***if** (you like)*'; even though, this act of giving an 'option' will count only in consideration of the literal connotation of the word, '*if*'. Aside the literal consideration, the pragmatic act inherent in the word 'if' within the content and context of the utterance goes beyond giving a condition or option. The speaker can be understood as 'rendering' into a nullity, the travelling to Baruba to make charms. The poet is saying that, embarking on such a journey will be null and void and of no effect. Therefore, the allopracts contained in this first line of the last part of the datum, are those of 'referring', 'directing' and 'optionalising'. But the speaker is not silent on the reason for which the audience is 'directed' to 'optionally' travel to the place it 'refers'. It gives an explicit 'assertion' of the mission to Barubaland as going there '*to make charms*', which include, '*fetish alligator pepper*', '*spell-casting*', '*incantations*', '*thread-binding*' and '*charmed padlock*'.

It is from this last part of the poem that the reader begins to discern a dramatic change of focus and a descent from the universal or general appeal to African cultural/local relevance, based on the images and imageries (of places and activities) being created in the mind of the audience. This part is the flagship of the Africaness of the datum, notwithstanding its thematic universality, bothering on the phenomenon of death and its aftermath. In other words, it is at this point, that the 'acts of the poem' shifts to a stage dressed in African

costumes, with the protagonist (which all along has been the Man) now cast as performing acts that are contextually peculiar to African environment.

However, the utterance is felicitous enough to trigger some probing questions in the mind of the audience - to wit ; why, of all places, is Baruba land singled out for mention ?, why is the reference to that place in relation to charms?, why does charm making take the fancy for mention? As the reader is psychologically engaged in this self probing activity, he is simultaneously drawing some inferences, like:

- perhaps the speaker is leveraging on humans' particularly Africans' belief in the efficacy of charms to avert consequences of their negative actions;
- perhaps, charms, generally, have levels or grades in terms of efficacy; and
- perhaps, Baruba land is reputable for the *manufacturing* of more efficacious charms than any other places.

All those activities are triggered in the audience in his attempt at getting the speaker's true intention behind the utterance. But the poem later goes ahead to point out another caveat in the concluding line when it declares that "*There is no charmed padlock that can cast spell on Allah*". With this 'declaring' act, the poem does the act of 'nullifying'. The import of the statement is that, although it is characteristic of man, especially Africans, to resort to charms to avert calamities, and notwithstanding the acclaimed proven efficacy of the made-in Barubaland brands of charms, they are a nullity when "*nemesis*" is the ailment or catastrophe purposed for cure or prevention. In effect, the speaker is implying that, it is foolhardy on the part of man to, rather than taking to good deeds have the mindset of the instrumentality of propitiation with charms against the after-life *nemesis* for his diabolic acts on earth.

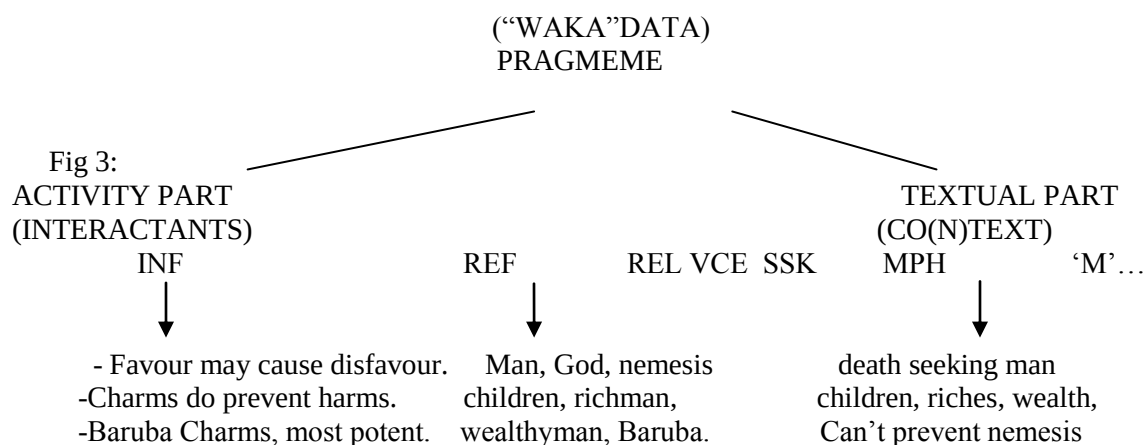
Generally noteworthy is the choice of the Hausa vocabulary of "*Kowa*" and the two Arabic lexis of "*Allahu*" and "*Dabara*" in this Yorùbá language rendered poem . While *Kowa* and *Allahu* directly translate to "everyone" and "God" respectively, the



Arabic word, “*Dabara*” is a corrupt form of “*Da’bbara*”, meaning ‘plan’ or ‘preparation’. Its choice for use may not be unconnected with the fact that perhaps the propitiations that is available in Baruba land is also usually ‘prepared’ through concoction of different items for use. This practice of code mixing is in itself an exhibition of multiculturalism on the part of the speaker and an implied presupposition by him of the hearer’s competence to interpret same. This act also signals the Islamic faith to which the poet

professes and further situates the poem as emanating from not only a Muslim environment, but one with sundry languages “impacted” or “infected” speech community.

All the preceding identified pragmatic acts in the Waka data which have been analyzed based on the theoretical perspective of Mey (2001) are hereby highlighted in summary form below, as a demonstration of the relevance of the pragmatic acts schema of Mey to the Waka :



SPEECH ACTS

(Seeking, Avoiding, Declaration)

As in: “*Iku ti n wa wa ka ti kowa n yanlodi*” (*Death which seeks us but each tries to avoid*)

“If you like...

- I. Travel to Barubaland
- II. Make charms
- III. Tie fetish alligator pepper
- IV. Recite incantations
- V. Bind the rest with thread “

INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS

‘Challenging’ as in: “*Ta ló yé sí?*” (*who knows?*)

‘Warning’ as in: “*Èsan ò ní bóti*” (*nemesis cannot be missed*)

‘Assuring’ as in: “*Yó sèsan fún kóowá*” (*He will apportion it to everyone*)

CONVERSATIONAL (‘DIALOGUE’) ACTS

Not Realised

PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTIONS)

I. Imagining

II. Determination/resolute

III. (agitated) probing

PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS,..)

I. “*Ta ló yé sí?*” (*Who knows?*)

II. “*Èsan ò ní bóti*”! (*Nemesis cannot be missed!*)

III. “*Jibiti ò ran Olóhun*”! (*God cannot be defrauded!*)

PHYSICAL ACTS:

BODY MOVES (INCL. GESTURES) Not Realised

PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS) Not Realised

(BODILY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS Not Realised

- (NULL)

Findings and Conclusion

The foregoing descriptions and analysis of the study data has shown that, beyond being an entertainment platform, several practs permeate



through the Ilorin Waka art form through which the poem performs the different functions of counseling, assuring, warning etc, all of which are aimed at appealing to the conscience of its audience thus causing it to be resolute at being of good conduct. Invariably, through this reformatory act, the Waka further justifies the long held view of language being a veritable tool for societal development. Besides, apart from the Ilorin Waka depicting the characteristic features and structures of a literary piece, the study also reveals instances of dramaturgy noteworthy in a poetry genre. Also, although Waka is a portrayal

of the language plurality in the speech community of Ilorin and reflects the peculiar Yoruba dialect being spoken, the universal appeal of the issues it often times addresses, makes its relevance transcend the local environment for which it is performed.

It can therefore be concluded, from the findings, that the Ilorin Waka, like all discourses, is an implicit performance of verbal activities, with the potency to linguistically impact on the psychology of its audience for a positive attitudinal change.

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A Syntactic Study of Lexical Heads in Kuce: A Principles and Parameters Approach

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Abstract

This paper describes the noun and verb phrases of the Kuce language with the aim of examining the operation of the Head Parameter principle in the language within the framework of Principles and Parameters, a sub-theory of Universal Grammar. The Head Parameter is assigned two values: head-first and head-last, with respect to the position of a lexical head in a phrase. The principle is hinged on the proposal that once a language selects a given value, all head categories in the language are expected to consistently select their complements in the same direction. This study employed the qualitative research methodology, as the data were collected from the native speakers of Kuce with the use of a researcher-designed wordlist, West African Linguistic Society's questionnaire and unstructured oral interview. The data were then subjected to descriptive content analysis. From the investigation, the paper's major finding was that Kuce is a head-first language in that all lexical and functional heads are consistently positioned before their complements at D-structure. It was also discovered that complements in Kuce are internal modifiers of the head element and show a high degree of cohesion with their governing heads, while adjuncts are external modifiers and show a less degree of cohesion with their governing heads. On the basis of these findings, the paper concluded that the operation of the Head Parameter principle in Kuce is very strict, and that the canonical structure of the language's phrases justifies the typological findings with respect to Head Parameter cross-linguistically.

Keywords: Syntactic Analysis, Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Kuce, Head Parameter, Principles and Parameters Theory

1. Introduction

Grammatical analysis, over the past few decades, has been centred on the development of an approach to the study of human language whose major goal is to set the parameters of Universal Grammar (UG). A crucial innovation of the concept of phrase structure that emerged in the early 1970's was the claim that all phrases have a central element, known as a head, around which other elements of the phrase revolve and which can minimally stand for the whole phrase. For example, the VP *drew an elephant* has a head verb *drew*; the NP *the child* has a head noun *child*; a PP such as *by the manager* has a head preposition *by*; and so on. The aim behind this, as always, is to express generalizations about the phrase structure of all human languages rather than features that are idiosyncratic to one part of language or to a single language.

An important aspect of language variation concerns the location of the head in

relation to other elements of the phrase called complements. The head of the phrase can occur on the left of a complement or on its right. Cook(1988, p. 9) argues that the relative position of heads and complements are specified once for all phrases in a given language. Rather than a long list of individual rules specifying the position of the head in each phrase type, a single generalization suffices: 'heads are last in the phrase' or 'heads are first in the phrase'. The variation in the order of elements amounts to a choice between head-first and head-last. UG captures this variation between languages in terms of a limited choice between two possibilities as the Head Parameter. The Head-position (or directionality) Parameter is basically a dimension along which languages differ in terms of their grammatical structure. In the light of the above discussion, this paper carries out a descriptive study of the noun and verb phrases of the Kuce language spoken in Plateau State with



the aim of determining how the universal properties of UG are applied in the language. The Kuce language is classified in the subgroup 4 of the Plateau A group of Benue-Congo, a subfamily of Niger-Congo (Wilson, 2002, p. 55).

There are a number of dialects of Kuce, including Kikala, spoken in West Bassa Local Government Area; Igbak, spoken in South Bassa LGA; Uja, spoken in North Bassa LGA; Abaninzara, also spoken in North Bassa LGA. This study focuses on a variety of Kuce known as Asak. This dialect is spoken around the Western axis of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau state in JebbuBassa community. An important aspect of the morphosyntax of Kuce that has been noted in the literature is the noun class system. Linguists have observed that individual language names of the Niger-Congo family are generally nouns with a prefix (Welmers, 1973, as cited in Ejimenu, 2014, p.9). For example, the language name 'Bantu' itself is a noun with a class prefix, *ba*, and *-ntuis* the noun stem. The language, Kuce, itself is a noun that consists of a stem *ce* and a prefix *ku-*. Some linguists like Blench (2001) represent it as 'Ce' whereas some, especially the speakers of the language, prefer to refer to it as Kuce (Ejimenu, 2014, p. 9). The Kuce-speaking people of Nigeria are geographically located in seventeen villages in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau state, North West of Jos in Central Nigeria. Some live at the foothills while others live on the hill tops.

This paper is divided into five sections. Section one introduces the work by giving background information about the study and the language under investigation. The second section concerns itself with an overview of lexical heads in Kuce whereas the third section presents a brief review of the chosen theoretical framework – Principles and Parameters Theory. The crux of the paper, section four, has to do with data presentation and analysis. The final section concludes the entire work.

2. Lexical Heads in Kuce

According to Radford (2004, p. 23), lexical categories are grammatical categories with the largest membership, viz noun (N), verb (V), preposition (P) and adjective (Adj). The words

which belong to these five categories are traditionally said to be contentives (or content words), in that they have substantive descriptive content. A noun like *car* has obvious descriptive content in that it denotes an object which typically has four wheels and an engine. Following Ouhalla (1991, cited in Heusing, 1999, p. 44), the term 'lexical' refers to what has traditionally been known as 'open categories'. It is assumed that one of the features of lexical is their subcategorization in terms of semantic categories i.e. their semantic)- selectional properties, known as 's-selection'. S-selection is largely determined by the inherent meaning of lexical items and operates in terms of semantic categories, called theta roles (Heusing, 1999, p. 13).

The lexical categories attested in Kuce include nouns, verbs, prepositions and adjectives. It is important to state that each of these substantive lexical categories is capable of heading a phrase in the language. Thus, Kuce attests four distinct phrasal categories: Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Prepositional Phrase and Adjectival Phrase, respectively.

2.1 Kuce Noun Phrase

According to Crystal (2008, p. 334), constructions into which nouns most commonly enter, and of which they are the head word, are generally called Noun Phrases (NP) or nominal groups. The following are examples of noun phrases in Kuce:

- (1) a. Abayiwak ayi Kuce
student of Kuce
'a student of Kuce'
- b. Ibol i gyin
ball CM one
'one ball'
- c. Atakarda a Asubahi
book CM Asubahi
'Asubahi's book'

2.2 Kuce Verb Phrase

A verb phrase is defined as verb followed by a non-verbal particle (Crystal, 2008, p. 510). The following are examples of verb phrases in Kuce:



- (2) a. John a [_{vp} tisik atakarda katat itebul]
+John will put book on top
table
'John will put the book on the table'
- b. Ingimi niba [_{vp} rat bay atakarda ngi
children they all read book the
'the children have all read the book'

2.3 Kuce Prepositional Phrase

A preposition followed by a noun indicating the location of the noun is referred to as a prepositional phrase (Crystal, 2008, p. 383). The following are examples of prepositional phrases in Kuce:

- (3) a. Tisik guyi [_{pp} ya katat itebuli]
put it just on top table
'put it right on the table'
- b. Bumi kutara ngi
inside room the
'inside the room'

2.4 Kuce Adjectival Phrase

A group of words with an adjective as the head which specify the attributes of nouns are referred to as adjectival phrases (Crystal, 2008, p. 11). The following are examples of adjectival phrases in Kuce:

- (4) a. Āchùkànú â shilāk [_{AdjP} gâgai nà mí]
Āchùkànú he so good to me
Āchùkànúis so kind to me'
- b. Ā nâ shì [_{AdjP} gâgai nâ wîi bù ūmâ ôfîs]
she did was good to him in her office
'She was kind to him in her office'

From the foregoing, it could be observed that each phrasal category in Kuce is named after its lexical head: the noun heads a noun phrase; the verb heads a verb phrase; the preposition heads a prepositional phrase; and the adjective heads an adjectival phrase.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is conducted within the framework of Generative Grammar, with particular attention focused on the Government and Binding (GB) Theory which emerged from Chomsky's *Lectures on Government and Binding* (1981), *Knowledge of Language* (1986a),

Barriers (1986b) and *The Minimalist Program* (1995) as well as several publications by other authors. The central concept in the Government and Binding Theory, as well as other versions within the framework of Generative Grammar is Universal Grammar, which Chomsky (1976, as cited in Heusing, 1999, p. 10) defines as 'the system of principles, conditions and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages'. This concept as put forward by Chomsky holds that the speaker of a language knows a set of principles which apply to all languages, and parameters which vary within clearly defined limits from one language to another. Chomsky further argues that principles are internalized in the human brain, while parameters are set in the process of language acquisition (Cook and Newson, 2008, p. 50).

In the GB model, Chomsky claims that UG is broken into two main components which are levels of representation and a system of constraints (Chomsky, 1981, p. 17), namely, (i) the *Lexicon*, which specifies the morphological and phonological structure and syntactic features of each lexical item (word, idiom, and so on), including the grammatical category to which each lexical item belongs (noun, verb, and so on) and features indicating the context in which it can occur; (ii) the *Syntax*, which consists of a categorial component and a transformational component (Chomsky, 1981, p. 5). The categorial component meets the requirements of X-bar theory. The transformational component contains the most radical change in GB Theory in reference to the earlier models. A major difference between earlier versions of generative grammar (especially the Standard (ST) Theory and Extended Standard Theory (EST)) and GB is that whereas the ST and EST propose construction-specific rules, such as question formation, passivization, dative movement, relativization, topicalization, focus marking, raising and so on, GB accounts for all rules that involve permutation with a uniform transformational rule, Move- α , which is constrained in all languages (Weibelhuth, 1995 pp. 6 - 9).

Chomsky further proposes that in GB, there is a shift of interest from the formulation of



specific rules to universal principles. The essence of reducing the number of transformations to just one is an attempt to restrict the generative power of transformations, and to impose certain constraints on the universal principles (Ndimele, 1992, p. 19). Such a rule had to be supplemented by a list of output constraints, that is, stipulations about what structures were allowed as outputs to the rule. The base consists of the lexicon and syntax. Chomsky uses a new name, D-structure, for what the base generates, instead of the previously used term 'Deep Structure', because the concept of Deep Structure had changed considerably in meaning (Koopman, 1986, p. 13). The rule 'Move- α ' maps (converts) D-structure into S-structure, which is the syntactic representation that reflects the surface order of the sentence, leaving traces in the position from which any item has been moved (Chomsky, 1981 p. 5). Chomsky further explains that the moved item is called, in its new position, the antecedent of the trace. The trace and its antecedent are co-indexed, that is, identical subscript figures are inserted to show that the two are related (Cattell, 2006, p. 183). This phenomenon is also known as binding. For example:

- (5) a. John will invite who?
b. Who_i will John invite t_i?

Assuming a deep structure like (5a), Move- α moves *who* into COMP and leaves behind a co-indexed trace, as shown in (5b). *Who* then 'binds' the trace.

Though 'Government and Binding Theory' was the common label for this version of grammar, Chomsky himself found it misleading because it gives the wrong impression that these two modules are more important than any of the the label of Principles and Parameters (P&P) Theory has come to be seen as closer to its essence, and can still be applied to the contemporary model (Chomsky, 1995 p. 30). The Principles and Parameters model has several modules, namely: theta theory, case theory, government theory, x-bar theory, binding theory, bounding theory and control theory. Also, a number of principles and parameters are inherent in the theory namely: headedness principle, locality principle, projection principle, binarity

principle, extended projection principle; wh-parameter, pro-drop parameter, head parameter and so on. However, the focus in this study is the Head Parameter. The Head Parameter concerns the position of heads within phrases (Cook and Newson, 2008, p. 44). This assumes that a particular language consistently has the heads on the same side of the complements in all its phrases, whether head-first or head-last. English is head-first as seen in the examples below:

- (6) a. *in the bank*: Preposition head first before the complement NP in a PP.
b. *amused the man*: Verb head first before the complement NP in a VP.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

As maintained earlier, this work focuses on a syntactic analysis of lexical heads in Kuce with a view to determining how the principle of Head Parameter is operational in the language. For the purpose of the analysis, the paper focuses only on Noun Phrase and Verb Phrase.

4.1 Noun Phrase Structure in Kuce

The Noun Phrase in Kuce has different syntactic structures. Each of them is examined as follows:

4.1.1 Head Noun and Prepositional Phrase

Prepositional phrases can function as complement or adjunct in the Kuce NP, as illustrated below:

- (7) a. àbāyiwák [àyi Kùcé]
student of Kuce
'a student of Kuce'
b. àbāyiwák [nū yén ūtútú]
student with long hair
'a student with long hair'

In the case of (7a), constituent (àyi Kuce) in parenthesis is in an intuitively fairly obvious sense, the complement of àbāyiwák, whereas the parenthesis constituent [nūyénūtútú] in parenthesis (7b) is an adjunct. The constituent Kùcé in (7a) tells us what it is that the individual concerned studies hence, the NP (àbāyiwák Kùcé) can be paraphrased by a clausal construction in which Kùcé functions as the complement of the verb *bây* in the following example:



- (8) a. *Â shì kî bây Kùcé*
he is in **reading** Kuce
'He is studying Kuce'

But this is not at all the case in (7b). In this case, the bracketed PP *nū yén ūtùtù* does not in any sense function as the complement of *àbāyīwāk*, so that it is not permissible to have any corresponding paraphrase in which *yénūtùtù* is used as the complement of the verb *bây* 'reading'. This is exemplified in (9) below:

- (9) * *Â shì kî bây yén ūtùtù*
he is in reading long hair
'He is studying long hair'

The example in (8) above reinforces the assumption that complements are closer to their heads than adjuncts are.

4.1.2 Head Noun and Determiner

In Kuce, a determiner may occur as an optional constituent in a Noun Phrase. The determiners are free morphemes and they include *ngi*, *gyi*, *wai*, *mu*, *mut*, *mi*, *gyin* and *she*. A simple NP could contain a determiner and neither a Complement nor an Adjunct, as in the following examples:

- (10) a. *āicàbàngì*
rice the
'the rice'
b. *ìwū i gyi*
dog CM this
'this dog'
c. *āmfun a wai*
cloths CM these
'these cloths'

The examples in (10) above imply that in Kuce, determiners are specifiers positioned after the nouns they modify in a simple NP that lacks complements and adjuncts. The concordial marker (CM) is a morphological device in Kuce that shows agreement between the noun and the determiner. In Kuce, modifiers often have features of morphological inflection (CM) that show grammatical agreement in a syntactic structure; The noun phrase constituents – demonstratives, pronouns, numerals and interrogatives bear a grammatical affix that is concordial with the affix that the noun bears. In (10a), there is no CM, while in (10b-c), the

concordial markers *i*, and *a* introduce the determiner to show agreement with the (prefix of the) noun.

4.1.3 Head Noun and Adjective

In a simple NP structure in Kuce, the adjectives always follow the head noun. These adjectives agree with their head noun in phonological identity, as seen in the examples (11) below, in which the concordial markers are indicated in bold type.

- (11) a. *átákárdá ágō*
book big
'big book'
b. *ùnkū kūgē*
bone big
'big bone'
c. *ùkaw ùgō*
bag big
'big bag'

The examples (11a – c) represent the same adjective 'big' but differ only in their morphemic form (in the prefix a-, ku- and u-). Ejimenu (2014, p. 25) explains that the adjective is conditioned by the morphemic form of the noun it is attributing or describing. However, this does not happen in every case, as in (12a – c) in which the adjective *cici* 'beautiful' does not share an agreement affix form with the head nouns.

- (12) a. *kìtù cici*
girl beautiful
'beautiful girl'
b. *kíkō cici*
house beautiful
'beautiful house'
c. *ájjèk cici*
garden beautiful
'beautiful garden'

The following rule can be formulated for the Noun Phrases in (11) and (12) below:

- (13) NP → N Adj

The Adjective in rule (13) merely serves to give additional information about the noun (i.e. the nouns happen to be beautiful, as shown in (12)). The Adjective in (12) is therefore an adjunct. It is therefore assumed that the Adjective, which is an adjunct from the analysis, consistently follows the head noun in a simple



NP structure in Kuce.

4.1.4 Head Noun and Noun

In the Kuce NP, complements of a noun must follow the head noun in a genitival construction. For example:

- (14) a. *átákárdá ā Āsùbàhí*
book CM Āsùbàhí
'Āsùbàhí's book'
b. *âgimā ā Āsùkùtúk*
mother CM Āsùkùtúk
'Āsùkùtúk's mother'
c. *Kītú ā Āyíkí*
head CM Āyíkí
'Āyíkí's head'

The nouns *átákárdá*, *âgimā*, and *kītú* in (14) are heads as they assign genitive case to the nouns *Āsùbàhí*, *Āsùkùtúk*, and *Āyíkí*, respectively. The examples in (14) imply that the complement of a head noun in a genitive construction consistently follows its head in the Kuce language.

To recap briefly, it could be concluded that in the Kucelanguage, NPs in different constructions consistently exhibit head-complement structure in accordance with the general schema: (15) $XP \longrightarrow X \text{ Complement (Adjunct)}$. This implies that complements of an NP are obligatory constituents and are internal modifiers of the head noun, while adjuncts are optional constituents and external modifiers of the head noun.

4.2 Verb Phrase Structure in Kuce

In Kuce, Verb Phrases (VPs) are constituents with the following structure:



where (...) stands for Complement or Adjunct. The following example illustrates the Verb Phrase in Kuce:

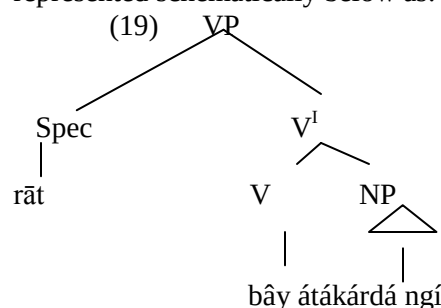
- (17) John â [_{VP} *tisik átakárdá kātāt itèbūl*]
John will put book on top table
'John will put the book on the table'

In (17), the direct object NP, *atakarda* 'book', is a complement of the verb, *tisik* 'put'. It is governed and C-commanded by the verb,

which assigns accusative case to it. The PP *kātāt itèbūl* functions as an adjunct. Adjuncts are optional elements and are also recursive in that they can be stacked. Consider the following example:

- (18) *Ingminibā [_{VP} *rāt bāy átakárdá ngí*]*
children they all read book the
'The children have all read the book'

In (17), the VP is similar to that of (18), but it is introduced by the quantifier *rāt* 'all'. In accordance with Haegeman (1991, p. 82), the quantifier *rāt* 'all' is part of the VP and is structurally independent from the V^I . The quantifier is not an adjunct of time or place like the post verbal PPs; it is not recursive and there can only be one quantifier in a construction. The quantifier combines with the highest V^I to form the full VP, i.e. it occupies [Spec, VP], which combines with V^I to form a V^{II} projection, the highest projection equated with VP. In light of this assumption, the example in (18) is represented schematically below as:



In example (19), the head of the projection (VP) is the V *bāy* 'read'. It C-commands the complement *atakarda* and assigns accusative case to it. Schematically, Kuce VPs are formed according to the following PS-rule:

- (20)
$$\begin{array}{c} \text{VP} \xrightarrow{\quad} \text{Spec } V^I \\ V^I \xrightarrow{\quad} \quad \quad V \end{array}$$
- Complement

This rule illustrates that in Kuce, the complement combines with V to form V^I . The specifier combines with V^I to form the VP. The rule also reveals that within the VP, the complement follows the verb.



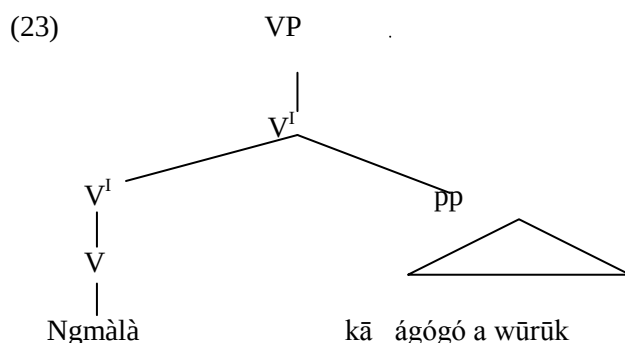
Furthermore, the Complement/Adjunct distinction drawn by Chomsky (1965, pp. 101-103), holds true for the Kuce VP, as the following examples illustrate:

- (21) Â ngmàlà [kūnīyīràs]
he laughed clown
'He laughed at the clown'

In (21) above, the PP *kuniyiras* 'clown', functions as an internal modifier of the verb *ngmala* 'laughed' i.e. it functions as a complement.

Similarly (22) has the structure (23) below:

- (22) Â ngmàlà [kāágógó a wūrūk]
he laughed at clock CM ten
'He laughed at ten O'clock'



In (23) above, the PP *ka agogo a wuruk* 'at ten o'clock', functions as an external modifier of the verb *ngmala* 'laughed', i.e. it functions as an adjunct.

The distinction captured in the structures (22) and (23) implies that verbal complements and adjuncts are generated by two different PS-rules in Kuce, as given in (59) below:

- (60) a. $V^I V^I XP \longrightarrow$ [Adjunct Rule]
b. $V^I \longrightarrow$ V XP [Complement Rule]

Thus, in Kuce VP, adjuncts are sisters and daughters of V-bar, and complements are sisters of V, and daughters of V-bar.

The analyses thus far provide empirical 's phrases justifies the typological findings with respect to Head Parameter cross-linguistically.

substantiation for the claim that complements in Kuce follow their governing heads (which assign cases to them). In other words, complements in Kuce are internal to the construction containing the head, whereas adjuncts are external to the construction containing the head.

5. Conclusion

The study has examined the Head Parameter principle of the Principles and Parameters Theory as it relates to phrases in the Kuce language. The structures of two lexical categories were described and the directionality of heads in relation to their complements was explored. All the noun and verb phrases of Kuce were shown to be head-first. The study also noted that complements in Kuce are internal modifiers of the head element and show a high degree of cohesion with their governing heads, while adjuncts are external modifiers and show a less degree of cohesion with their governing heads, with the X-bar framework accounting for the facts.

Within the Noun Phrase, the head is modified by prepositional phrases, determiners, adjectives and nouns, and all the modifiers were shown to consistently post-modify the head noun. Within the verb phrase, there are different levels of projection. The complements are internal to the construction containing the head verb, whereas adjuncts are external to the construction containing the head. All the modifiers were shown to consistently post-modify the head verb.

It has been proposed that if a language is claimed to select a given value of the head-parameter, all head categories in the language are expected to select their complement in the same direction at Deep Structure. This proposal is fulfilled by the lexical categories of nouns and verbs of Kuceas well as other categories. On this premise, it suffices to conclude that the operation of the Head Parameter principle in Kuce is very strict, as heads are consistently positioned before their complements, and that the canonical structure of the language

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