

The uniqueness of the language of literature: A stylistic analysis of Jide Balogun's "a Fool at Fifty"

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Abstract

This study explores the unusual use of language in literature. The Hasan Ghazalah's (1987) proposed model for the stylistic analysis (SA), cited in Mostafa Rostami (2012) was adopted for the study to analyze the contents of the selected poem, "A Fool at Fifty"; showing the instances of the unique use of language and the possible meanings it produces in the literary world. This model comprises two major components-'intuitions about the text as a whole', and 'stylistic analysis' which entails 'structuring of the layout of a text (that is, Clausing, sentencing, paragraphing and cohesion) and 'lexis', containing 'lexical field and vocabulary', and other elements. The theoretical framework used, aids the researcher to bring out the unique use of language in the poem under study, and this explicitly shows that language is inevitably modified for cause and effect in a literary text. It also gives answer to the interrogative statement, 'how indispensable is language modification to inferring meanings from the contents of a text?'

Keywords: SA, uniqueness of the language of literature, 'a fool at fifty', analysis, linguistic/literary devices, evaluative discussion

1. Introduction

According to Idowu and Oladipupo, 'the effectiveness of the message in any literary work is achieved through the appropriate manipulation of the language of discourse. During one of his lectures in 2018, Babatunde said "language is a natural gift given by God to man for the purpose of communication". So, language can be said to be a vehicle for communication. Language is used to portray the world views of people, living in a particular community. Lahey's, as cited in Johnson's ^[6] work, defines language "as a code whereby ideas about the world are expressed through a conventional system of arbitrary signals for communication".

English is a rule-governed language; its lexical features and usage are subjected to rules which always serve as guiding principles for its users. This was demonstrated in Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar, as he seeks to lay down descriptive or normative rules for the use of English in oral and written discourses.

1 Johnson, O, Communication Disorder (Abeokuta: GOAD Educational publishers,2008),66

2 Chomsky, Noam, cited in Tale, Olujide, Notes on Transformational Grammar (2016), 5-6.

Chomsky's effort in his approaches or models to language study, especially, his second model (Aspects of the Theory of Syntax), was aimed at preventing redundancies in the use of language, which might in turn, lead to anomalous construction of messages and/ or meanings in our everyday communication.

The foregoing discussion is not the case of the language used in literary English expressions. This is owing to the fact that language is governed by man's emotions; of course, the intents of man are expressed through language. Creativity is the heart which makes literature live; as a

matter of fact, it is the lungs and nose through which literature breathes in and out. In the literary context, language performs two main functions – attitudinal and social functions. By attitudinal function, language is an indicator of an author's innateness/intuitive knowledge; including his or her world views; by the latter, language unveils the cultures, norms and traditions of a particular geographical social environment. For language to really perform the purpose for which it is used in literature, it has to be transformed.

Foregrounding is a major tool used in literature to achieve special use of language. This concept denotes relegating something to the background (i.e. bringing down the value and worth of something) so that another feature can be highlighted. Therefore, foregrounding in literature is a deliberate attempt to demean the values and idiosyncratic features of the English language, so as to achieve the literary effect of a particular work of art. There are four ways of achieving foregrounding in literature; these are deviation from the norms, choices, idiosyncrasy and recurrence.

A writer intentionally switches to the unusual use of English in order to successfully drive his/her messages in a work of literature to their destinations (readers). This is done by moving away from the peculiar features or norms of English to the unusual ones. For instance, a writer may write a proper noun, starting with a small letter of alphabet for a particular purpose; either to underrate the person under discussion in his work, or to express the person's weaknesses which make him to be different from other human beings. Unnecessary capitalization of words, spacing, moving an incomplete idea to the next line-in the case of poem, and so forth, are instances of deviation from the norms.

Choice, as a way of achieving foregrounding, is a personal alternative that exists in the writer's mind which helps him to explicitly portray the picture or idea of the messages

passed to readers in his work. For example, in Niyi Osundare's^[3], "NEPA" which accounts for the negligence and/or atrocities committed by NEPA (National Electric Power Authority) in its daily discharge of responsibilities. At the 'E' segment of "NEPA", Osundare substitutes 'Epilepsy' for 'Electric' (now 'National Epilepsy Power Authority'), to reveal the instability of electricity in the Nigerian society. This is because a person with the disease, 'epilepsy' loses consciousness, and later comes back to life. It is this idea that prompted Osundare to make the choice, 'epilepsy' in his poem (lines 1-7).

Idiosyncrasy, a foregrounding tool, explains a writer's personal attributes and an attempt to find appropriate means of passing his intended messages to his readers, in view of the environment to which his work is written. Looking at the way of literary writing of Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe, it is very easy to identify the works of the two prolific Nigerian writers, even if their names are not written in such works. This is because certain attributes are common in the works of each of them. Wole Soyinka's are characterized by code mixing- the mixture of the lexical features of two

3 Niyi, Osundare, "NEPA", lines 1-7.

or more languages in a single utterance, and code switching -moving from one language to another in a conversational/written discourse (read Soyinka's, *A Play of Giants, Death and the King's Horseman* e.t.c.). Also, Wole Soyinka uses obscure and personally-formed words in his works (read Soyinka's, *Alapata-Apata, "Abiku"* etc). On the other hand, Chinua Achebe's works are characterized by the use of proverbs and Igbo words (read Achebe's, *Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God*, etc)

Recurrence, as a feature of foregrounding in literature, is the reiteration of the same word in literary works. The essence of recurrence is to create auditory effect in the mind of the readers. Recurrence is also an attention-catching device, as it evokes audience attention to a particular work of art (be it drama, prose or poetry). For examples:

- a. Blood hath bought blood, blows have answer'd blows/
(Shakespeare's, "King John", cited in Victoria, 2007)^[14].
- b. I told my wrath, my wrath did end/ (Blake's, "A Poison Tree", cited in Victoria, 2007)^[14].

Language used in literature is a diversified form of the normal (day to day) language; and it has an underlying meaning. In any literary work, a writer presents his discourse of interest, based on his world views and life experiences. So, language used by such a writer is susceptible to modifications.

To crown it all, Lexis and other grammatical features in literary stylistic analysis are the aspects whose significance has been looked down. This might be as a result of little knowledge of the language users and language interpreters of literary texts or the view that English grammar and literary English are separate entities. But the fact is that, the knowledge of the language users in literary texts and language interpreters of these texts has to be well-grounded on the use of language, and how it can be interpreted in the literary field of study. This is what G. Leech and M. Short, as cited in Mostafa; refer to as 'Stylistic Competence', as

compared to 'Linguistic Competence' of Chomsky (which lays emphasis on the knowledge of language system shared by all native speakers of a language). Leech and Short define this term-'Stylistic Competence' as "the capacity we possess and exercise unconsciously and intuitively" and the speaker's responsiveness to style". So, this study aims at investigating the unusual use of language in literature, by reviewing the related literature to the study; accompanied by the presentation, analysis and interpretation of Jide Balogun's "a Fool at Fifty", using Hasan's model for stylistic analysis, so as to see how literary effects are related to linguistic causes.

4 Victoria, Alabi, Lexical-syntactic, Phonological and Graphological Patterns, Choices and Devices in Discourse (Ilorin: Unilorin Publisher, 2007), 163-164

5 Hasan, Ghazalah, cited in Mostafa, Rostami "A Model for the Evaluation of Translations: With an Emphasis on the Stylistic Features", International Journal of Linguistics, 3 (February, 2012):58.

2. Literature review

Literature has been a vital channel of communication in any society, local or foreign, and its relevance cannot be over emphasized. Literature does not exist in vacuum, as it always mirrors the doings of people, episodes of all kinds, beliefs, norms and cultures of people, living in a particular society. Literature, as a channel of communication in all human's endeavors, has been the concern of some linguists, to find a language, different in nature, feature, and structure from the general language, which would meet the communicative needs of writers, as well as society (what information needed by the society and how such information can be easily encoded and decoded?). This birthed some writings on the unique use of language in literature. Most significantly, as read in Sarab's article, the use of diversified form of language in literature can be traced to Charles Bally's proposition of Stylistics (Linguistic Stylistics)), a branch of applied linguistics in 1909 (20th century), to be a separate academic discipline for the analysis of oral language when he observed that the structural linguistics (linguistics that prioritizes structure as crucial tool in analyzing a text), led by Ferdinand de Saussure, his teacher, did not cater for personal expression in communication. In the same century, Karl Vossler propounded another subfield of stylistics called 'Literary Stylistics' for the analysis of written literary texts, as the former excluded the research and analysis of the written language in the literary field.

Edward sees language "as invisible garments that drape themselves about our spirit and give a predetermined form to all its symbolic expression" (par. 1). He concludes this by saying, "when the expression is of unusual significance, we call it literature". In affirmation of the relevance of unique use of language, he puts, "Art is so personal, an expression that we do not like to feel that it is bound". By this, it implies that, for language to portray the author's literary preoccupations, it must not be restricted to its everyday use. In "language in Literature", it was discovered that the conclusion of G. Leech and M. Short on what should be the language of literature corresponds with Edward's. The two linguists identify 'syntactic deviations' as the utmost important out of the three uses (diction, syntax and syntactic deviations) discussed in their work, which can be made of styles analysis, as a stylistic activities in literary studies. They put, "in literary texts generally, and especially poetry,

syntax can differ from everyday usage”.

It was explained by H. Ghazalah that the language of literature has been seen, this present days, as a major and separate one in its features, different from all other languages, as a result of its special use that is deviant or distant from everyday use. Language of literature according to him, violates the common norms of language such as graphological, grammatical, semantic and phonological norms.

6 Sarab, Mugair, “Orientations in Modern Stylistics”, International Journal of Social Science and Education, 3(January, 2013)727.

7 Edward, Sapir, an Introduction to the Study of Speech: chapter 11-Language and Literature, 1921, par.1

8 Language in Literature, pars, 6-12

9 Hasan, Ghazalah, “Literary Translation from a Stylistic Perspective”, Studies in English Language Teaching, 2 (2015):125.

The closely related to this study, is that of Adelowo’s, on language dynamism and its influence on meaning; but there is a point of demarcation, in the sense that, Adelowo’s was concerned with the dynamic nature of general language and its effects on contents and meanings; this study is geared towards investigating the uniqueness of language in the literary domain of study.

3. Theoretical Framework

Ogundipe postulates that probing a pressing problem in a research work was normally done by using a particular point of view –perspective. So, the study was done within the

linguistic field of stylistics. Stylistics, in the context of this study was seen as a theory because it directed the activities of the researcher in pinpointing the unique use of language in literature.

Stylistics as an aspect of linguistics has been found invaluable in the analysis of literary texts. It is the application of linguistic variables in the analysis and interpretation of texts. Stylistics, according to Rostami, “gives comprehensive studies and description of the formal features of the text such as levels of expression, bringing out their functional importance for the interpretation of the work (p.58)”. Its emergence was aimed at obliterating or ameliorating the issue of subjectivity and imprecision of literary studies.

Stylistics, in the study and analysis of a literary text, goes beyond grammatical or textual analysis (conventional interpretation) of a text; it is more concerned with contextual analysis (i.e. looking at the environment of a text, background of the writer, societal beliefs and cultures e.t.c.).

10 Adebumiti, Adelowo, Language Dynamism, Stylistic Influence and the Progression of Meaning, 2019.

11 Kolawole, Ogundipe, “The Significance of the African Cultures and Traditions”, International Journal of Emerging Technology and Innovative Research, 1 (January, 2020):68.

The Hasan Ghazalah’s (1987) proposed model for stylistic interpretation was adopted for the study. His model is of two categories, the first diagram of his model is presented below.

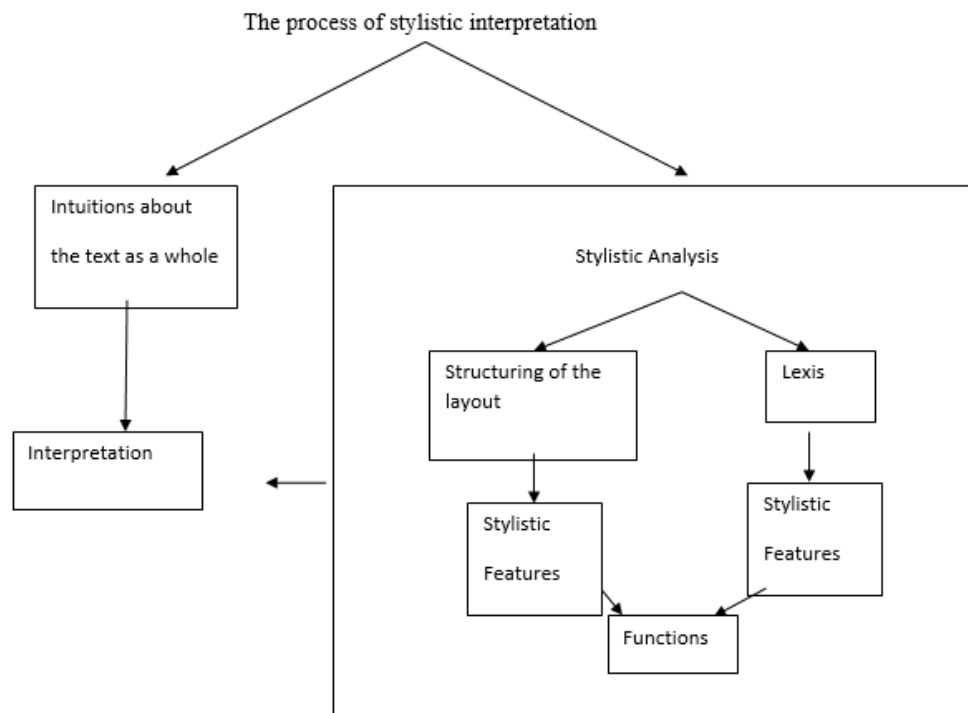


Fig 1: The process of stylistic interpretation, Adapted from Mostafa (2012, p.61)

As illustrated above, ‘intuitions about the text as a whole’, is the base of stylistic analysis and interpretation. Mostafa explained that Hasan cited an Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce, who defined ‘intuition’ as ‘fashioned out of a generalized human experience’. Intuition in the literary field is slightly compared to this definition because it refers to a prerequisite knowledge a reader possesses for the reading

and analysis of literary texts. Culler in 1975, G. Leech and M. Short in 1981, as cited in Mostafa, equate this ‘intuition’ with ‘Literary Competence’ and ‘Stylistic Competence’ respectively. The former means the reader’s normative and conventional knowledge or skills of reading literary texts, while the latter denotes the reader’s unconscious and intuitive ability for interpreting literary texts and the writer’s

expected response to the style. Finally, it was asserted by Mostafa that ‘intuitions about the text as a whole’ could come in form of linguistic, contextual, narrative features, plot and setting, e.t c.

12 Culler, Geoffrey Leech & Michael Short cited in Mostafa Rostami “A Model for the Evaluation of Translations: With an Emphasis on the Stylistic Features”, 59-60.

The next stage of the first figure is the stylistic analysis, where different linguistic features have to be investigated critically, in order to identify the hidden linguistic imports in any literary texts under study. The second diagram of his model presents the breakdown of stylistic analysis as shown below.

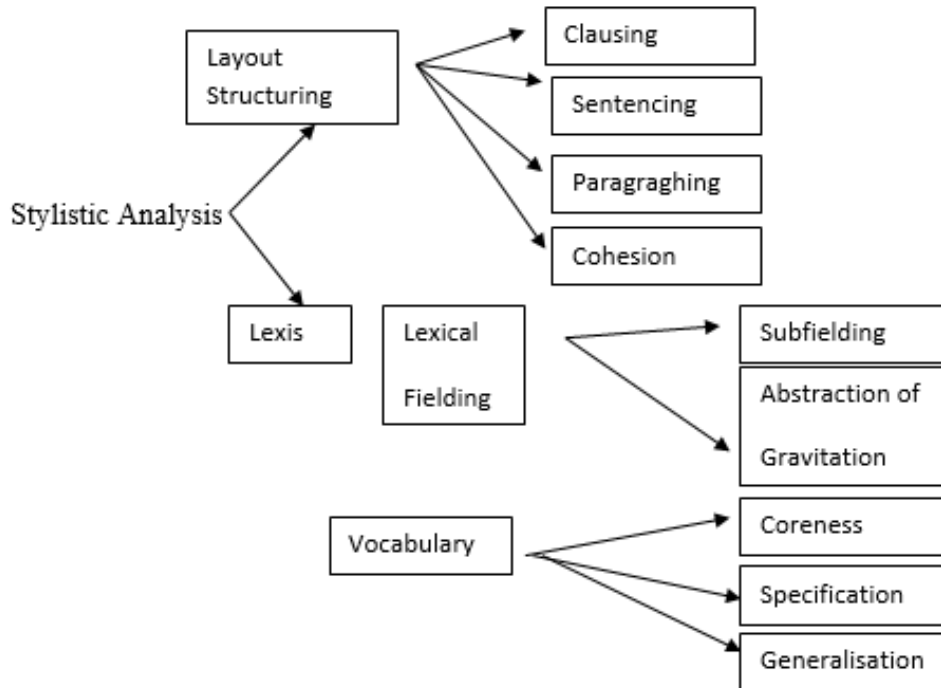


Fig 2: Stylistic Analysis, Adapted From Mostafa (2012, P.61)

Figure 2 gives a vivid description of ‘stylistic analysis’ which comprises ‘structuring of the layout’ and ‘lexis. Structuring of the layout is a stylistic activity which is aimed at probing the arrangement of clauses, sentences and paragraphs through the use of cohesive devices, so as to see whether the structure is contradictory, conglomeratic or congruous in nature. The second one-‘lexis, demands that, in analyzing a literary text, as shown from the illustration, the analyst must investigate the choice of words used by the writer in order to arrive at both subjective and objective interpretation of the text in question. The activity here, entails looking at the lexical field (that is, under which category of lexis) a certain stylistic feature is identified. The next thing is to identify the centrality of the identified feature for the portrait of the writer’s ‘book eye’ (intended meaning of a content of such text); then the analyst can finally conclude his interpretation of the target text-the inferred interpretation, which is aided by considering the stylistic features of the original text.

4. Research Methodology

An analytic technique/appraisal tool-Ghazalah’s model for stylistic analysis was used to probe the unusual use of language in the literary world. This is done by painstaking reading of the contents of the poem used for the study; and thereafter, critical exploration of the linguistic weapons used by the poet, which are quintessence of the uniqueness of the language of literature.

5. Presentation and Analysis of the Poem

5.1. Presentation of the Poem, “A Fool at Fifty”

Fifty year foolish child
 Any hope of better things
 Expected of him?
 For ever foolish will he remain?
 A fool at forty, people say, a fool for ever
 A child groping in the dark,
 For fifty years, there is no hope?
 Surely in darkness he will die!
 Hope of seeing the light is over- the bar!
 Like in Samaria, people fry their children for food
 Blind to reason
 That these are their children
 Yearn for comfort to them.
 He fans the embers of revolution
 For when people are pushed to the wall
 No option than to strike.
 Who can tell the extent of such strike?
 They go to the pulpit
 And forget themselves
 Perchance the soul-owner
 Will hear and answer us.
 His ears remain deaf still

Culled from Jide Balogun’s “The Desert in the River”

5.2 The Plot Summary of the Poem (Intuitions about the text as a whole)

“A Fool at Fifty”, written by Jide, a Nigerian poet, discusses the inability of the Nigerian society to develop since its

independence in 1960 and its repercussion on the citizens. "For fifty years, there is no hope?" in line 7 and "Like in Samaria, people fry their children for food" in line 10 respectively, paint the picture of this failure and its repercussion on the inhabitants of the country. The collection of the poems "The Desert in the River" by Jide, was written and published in 2010 when Nigeria clocked fifty years of her independence from the British colony, established in the African continent. The stagnant position of the Nigerian society since independence triggered the interest of the poet to write the poem.

13 Jide, Balogun, "The Desert in the River", 7. Ilorin: Haytee Press and Publishing Company Nigeria Ltd, 2010.

5.3. Structuring of the Layout

The contents of the poem are grammatically cemented through some cohesive devices (such as 'when', 'that', 'for when', 'who', 'and') in such a way that both clauses and sentences explain the literary themes of the poem. Some clauses are subordinated to others, to show the poet's tone (that is, his anger to the failure of development and compassion for the people affected by this failure). The use of interrogative, declarative and exclamatory sentences is featured in the poem to show contradiction which portrays the literariness of this discourse (poem).

5.4. Lexical Analysis (lexis)

This is concerned with the selection of vocabulary (diction) in any literary texts for the clarity of meaning. All the words used in the poem are context-oriented in features; they are distant to their everyday use, in the sense that, they are metaphorical in meaning. For examples, the compound adjective, 'fifty year' and 'child'; 'blind' and 'reason' respectively, show specialness of meaning. 'Child' used here refers to the subject of discussion (Nigeria). For more explicitness, both 'structuring of the layout' and 'lexis' in the model used for the study are given attention in the identification, description and evaluation of the linguistic/literary devices used in the poem. Different lexical fields, where stylistic features are identified or the categories of lexis used, are written as headings followed by the identification of the devices, and evaluation (functions) of the identified devices one after the other.

5.5. Linguistic/Literary Devices Used in the Poem

Victoria Alabi identifies some categories of devices that can be used in analyzing a text, to mark the aberration in the use of language and its hidden semantic implication. These categories are lexico-syntactic patterns (such as word balance, unusual word order, omission of words and reiteration), phonological devices (rhyme, consonance, assonance e.t.c.), graphological devices (spacing, capitalization, exclamation mark e.t.c.), and other devices which are under 'lexico-syntactic choices'. The devices used by the poet to suit his literary motives are thus identified below:

A. Lexico-Syntactic Choices

1. Piling Unusual Collocates

Line 1: Fifty year foolish child

Line 11: Blind to reason

'Piling unusual collocates' is the placing of two or more words which have no grammatical or correspondent

relationship (in any sense) side by side or in the same structure e.g. the adjective, fifty year and the noun, child; blind and reason have no correspondence. This device shows contradiction of thought in the poem.

2. Enjambment

Line 2: Any hope of better things

Line 3: Expected of him?

Line 10: Like in Samaria, people fry their children for food

Line 11: Blind to reason

Line 12: That these are their children

Line 14: He fans the embers of revolution

Line 15: For when people are pushed to the wall

Line 18: They go to the pulpit

Line 19: And forget themselves

Line 20: Perchance the soul-owner

In the above lines, there is use of enjambment which is also called run-on-line. Enjambment is the carrying over of a sentence or part of it, from one line of a poem to the next line without pause. Enjambment is used in the poem to show his serious emotion to the subject matter of the poem.

3. Rhetorical questions:

Lines 2-3: Any hope of better things

Expected of him?

Line 4: For ever foolish will he remain?

Line 17: Who can tell the extent of such strike?

Rhetorical questions are questions that require no answers. They are used in the poem to show the poet's intense feeling to his message, thereby calling the attention of the readers to it.

4. Simile

Line 10: Like in Samaria, people fry their children for food

Simile is the comparison of two things using 'like' or 'as'. It is used to show the intensity of the problems we are facing in the country.

B. Lexico-Syntactic Patterns

1. Anastrophe

Line 4: Forever foolish will he remain?

Line 8: Surely in darkness he will die!

Anastrophe, which is an instance of unusual word order, is defined, according to Victoria Alabi as the inversion of the natural or usual word order. It can also be seen as the reversal of the grammatical structure in a discourse. It is used to create emotion in the reader's mind.

2. Ellipsis

Line 5: A fool at forty, people say, a fool for ever

Ellipsis is a deliberate removal of a word which is grammatically required in a structure. For example, the linking verb, 'is' was deliberately elided by the poet.

C. Graphological Devices

- 1. Capitalization:** the first letters of each of the words that begin each of the successive lines are capitalized. Capitalization is used to show the beginning of a sentence after a preceding complete sentence or thought has been made.
- 2. Exclamation mark:** in lines 8 & 9 Exclamation is used to show surprise or deep emotion of a speaker or writer.
- 3. Question mark:** in lines 2, 3, 4, 5, & 17. Question mark is used to introduce an interrogative statement or sentence.
- 4. Hyphen:** in line 9, over- the bar. Hyphen is mostly used to separate some compound words. In this poem, the graphological devices are used

2. Rhymes

as attention-catching devices.

D. Phonological Devices

1. Consonance

- Line 9:** the ... the
- Line 12:** that... these... their
- Line 1:** fifty...foolish
- Line 4:** for ever...foolish
- Line 5:** fool... forty... fool...for
- Line 7:** for fifty
- Line 10:** fry...for

Consonance is the repetition of the same initial consonant sounds in the same line

Table 1

Lines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Sounds	/d/	/z/	/m/	/n/	/ə/	/k/	/p/	/ai/	/a:/	/d/	/n/	/n/	/m/	/n/	/l/	/k/	/k/	/f/	/z/	/ə/	/s/	/l/
Rhymes	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	a	d	d	c	d	j	f	f	k	b	e	l	j

The rhyming scheme of the poem is: Abcd e fgh iadd cdj f k b e l j

Rhyme is the realization of similar phonetic sounds at the end of successive lines of a poem. Rhyming scheme of this poem is irregular, as its rhyme of lines does not follow a regular pattern.

14 Victoria, Alabi, *Lexical-syntactic, Phonological and Graphological Patterns, Choices and Devices in Discourse* (Ilorin: Unilorin Publisher, 2007), 163-164.

5.6 Evaluative Discussion of the Poem “A Fool at Fifty”

To a layman (literal interpreter), the poem gives account of a child who fails to develop/grow in all ramifications: physically, intellectually, socially and spiritually, as it is expected of him/her; in spite of the years he/she has spent in life. But looking at the poem critically by the choice of words, used by the poet and the context where the poem is written (Nigeria’s environment), the poem portrays Nigerian society, showing her failure to develop since its independence. ‘Fifty year foolish child’ in line 1, which is an example of ‘Pilling unusual collocates’ shows this failure. The compound adjective, ‘fifty year’, qualifying the noun, ‘child’ is unusual, because a person at the age of 50 is not expected to be referred to as a child. What Jide depicts here, is a ‘sense of immaturity/failure’ which is a metaphor for the Nigeria’s political, economic, social and educational stagnation since independence. Also, the use of blind and reason in line 12, is metaphorical and unusual. This is because ‘reason’ is connected with the ‘cognitive process’ while ‘blind’ is connected with the ‘sense of sight, one cannot reason with one’s ‘sense of sight’. One may argue on this view that, ‘it is what is seen in the physical realm that is taken into the ‘cognitive faculty’, which is ruminated upon, and in turn, leads to intellectual output of man’, but it should be noted that, the idealists’ view on epistemology (the study of knowledge) said that knowledge gained through the senses of touch, hearing, seeing or feeling cannot be relied upon. What can be deduced from this device is that the poet means, ‘intellectual inability to think of the right solution to problems, thereby, heightens the already existing ones. Instead of the people of Samaria to

pray for God’s intervention to their problem (famine), they were killing their children that would take care of them when they are old. As far as the subject matter of this poem is concerned, instead of us to look for a lasting and appropriate solution to the stagnation of the development of Nigeria, some people indulge in all sorts of evils, which add to the problems that are already on ground.

The use of enjambment (run-on-line) in lines 2&3, 10-12, 14&15, 18-20 respectively, shows the poet’s angry tone towards his messages, thereby, calling the readers ‘attention to these messages.

The use of anastrophe in lines 4&8 is a way of evoking readers’ attention, as lexical items are arranged reversely; readers begin to wonder on the unusual arrangement or formation of sentences, and thereby, give attention to the contents of any literary work under study e.g. ‘Surely in darkness he will die’ could be rendered ‘He will surely die in darkness’. The use of anastrophe also shows abnormality of the structure of something. This expresses the irony or oddity of life; you expect good things, but you get the opposite of it.

The use of ellipsis in line 5 depicts the poet’s anxiety/delivery of important messages and call for readers’ scrupulousness to the thematic structure of his poem. The linking verb ‘is’ is replaced by comma to show the gravity exerted by the poet on the description of the undeveloped state of the country e.g. ‘a fool at forty, people say, a fool for ever’ instead of saying ‘a fool at forty, people say, is a fool for ever’.

The use of rhetorical questions is prominent in the poem. Normally, a question is accompanied by a direct answer; when this is not the case in a conversational/written discourse, it is called rhetorical question. Rhetorical questions are used by the poet for the consolidation and easy comprehension of his literary preoccupations by his readers. Simile is used in the poem to show how serious the problem caused by undeveloped state of the country since independence by comparing its problem with that of the people of Samaria.

At the graphological level, the use of capitalization in the poem is unusual. This is because capitalisation marks the

end of a complete sentence or thought, and the beginning of another one; but this is not, in this poem, at the beginning of every line; capital letter starts it, in spite of the incompleteness of ideas in each line of the poem. It shows the poet's intention to call the attention of the readers to his message.

The use of question mark to introduce both direct and rhetorical questions shows the poet's emotion towards his message. In the same vein, the use of exclamation mark depicts the poet's inner mind and disappointment over the failures we experience in the country. Hyphen that is used to separate 'over' and 'the bar' is also an attention-catching tool, to draw attention of the readers to important point-'despair'. Phonological devices used, both consonance and rhyme is to create sound effect in the reader's mind. The use of irregular rhyming scheme also indicates irregularity of situation.

6. Conclusion

Language is a pivot to communication. The use of language is determined by the context it is used. As far as literature is concerned, a manipulated form of language is used to transport the writer's intended messages to his/her readers. This is due to the fact that 'no two users of a language use the language the same way', and this is caused by the discrepancies in the world views of the users of a language, particularly the literary writers that use language in an unusual way to drive their literary motifs to the final destination (readers). The analysis of this poem follows the three stages in stylistic operation in their order namely: identification (bringing out the literary device used in a literary text one after the other), description (defining the concept of the identified device), and evaluation (assessing the effectiveness of the device in decoding the messages of the writer). Identification and description are done together under the heading, 'linguistic/literary devices used in the poem', while 'evaluation' is done below the heading, 'evaluative discussion of the poem'. The works of others cited in the study, avouch the uniqueness of the language of literature.

7. Acknowledgments

My deep gratitude goes to the Almighty God and the people whose works/ideas were cited in this study.

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