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PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF THERAPOETICS

Background

The concept of therapoetics is an evolving genre within the medical humanities. According to Martyn Evans et al, the objective of medical humanities is a "cumulative interdisciplinary understanding of illness as a human need and clinical medicine as a human response to it" (5). Thus, in the study of therapoetics, poetry can be activated as a therapeutic apparatus under the pseudoscientific field of art therapy which is a branch of medical unit that unifies medicine and art. However, in this paper, we intend to contextualize therapoetics beyond the field of naturopathy by expanding and exploring it also from the sociological and metaphysical perspectives. This purpose is indicated and captured in the title of the paper. Put together, our aim will be to explore and present poetry as a societal, spiritual and psychological therapy. Apart from its application to the society as a curative therapy against social ills, its psychotherapeutic application to humans, with zero percent toxicological side-effect, stands in contrast to other modes of drug-induced medicine. It implies that we will be contextualizing poetry as a natural non-drug stimulus imbued in human with no adverse effects. The scope of the paper will be guided by three concepts: therapeutics, therapoetics and naturopathy. The common denominator that interlinks these three concepts is the word - therapy.

Therapoetics, or the study of poetry as therapy, recognizes the individual as one placed at the psychic center of psychotherapy and physiotherapy. The nexus between a psychotherapeutic healing (treatment of mental disorders through psychological therapy) and a physiotherapeutic healing (treatment of physical disabilities through physical therapy) is that the former aids the latter mostly through catharsis. In the interpretation of catharsis, we can identify three strands which are the medical, the religious and the intellectual. The medical strand interprets catharsis as purgation of emotions in which the patient receives emotional release, leading to a balanced state of mind. In other words, catharsis is linked to forms of elimination; to discharge and to return to normality. The religious strand interprets catharsis as spiritual purification of the soul, while the intellectual interpretation amounts to the point of clarification/resolution or understanding of a phenomenon by the intellect.

The relationship between therapeutics (medicine that deals with methods of treatment) and therapoetics (an art-science study of poetry as therapy) connects in multiple ways. But for the sound variation initiated by the syllables eu and oe respectively, both terms are structurally identical. Semantically, the term therapy produces the interlinking meaning. Apart from evoking a sense of identical sound, both terms are registers within the medical humanities. Therapoetics, being the younger of the two which is still an evolving concept, tends to evoke a sense of semantic corruption of therapeutics. Nevertheless, it is used in defining the clinical application of poetry as a therapeutic apparatus. It draws inspiration from therapeutics which, in turn, involves the use of remedial agents or modes in the treatment of various forms of illness, especially mental or psychological ones. It can be appreciated as the application of written or spoken poetic words for the healing and growth of the soul. The evocative power of words in poetry as well as the pleasantness derived from its musical rhymes captures the purpose of poetry as therapy.

Poetry as therapy can be prescribed for everyone but mostly for those who suffer from depressive circumstances such as veterans, drug addicts, juveniles, prisoners, physically challenged individuals, survivors of violence, widows and widowers, rape victims, and other victims of circumstances. The healing process commences when the poet activates a kind of catalyst (subject) that will evoke the proper mood as the preparatory ground for the full therapeutic session. With the appropriate choice of words, the poet builds a tempo that gradually triggers a momentum of emotional responses. It is this engagement that helps the audience or patients develop capacities emotionally and cognitively. Poetry then becomes a form of therapy that helps in reducing muscle tension and stress. It can as well be employed as a tool that helps in lowering blood pressure and also in controlling pain. It can be employed to serve the purpose of behaviour therapy or cognitive therapy. It can be used to explore the relationship between one's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours. In this case, it attempts to identify negative thoughts in order to replace them with positive and healthier ones. Rather than engage in the addiction of hard drugs like the use of opium to escape the harsh realities of Nigeria into a false paradise of fantasy, poetry can be prescribed for juveniles since it will only use evocative words to transport them into what William Wordsworth describes as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling [which] takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity" (673).

One of the ways Kontein Trinya explains therapoetics in his Inaugural Lecture is that it is, an interest in the therapy that the creative process offers the poet; the healing or health or palliation that comes from the 'expressive' release of toxic pent-up emotions; the relieving pleasure of a fantasied escape through the passage of poetry into a dreamed land of bliss or other; the healing of the soul through a creative 'confession' of acts that, in a somewhat Freudian sense, it might have been 'unsafe' to declare except through the disguise of art. (22)

To reinforce and/or complement some of Trinya's position, let us subsequently explore the same subject through three conceptual frameworks. In the first, we will adopt a sociological approach in

contextualizing therapoetics. In the second, we will explore therapoetics from a metaphysical dimension. In the third, we will analyse therapoetics under the conceptual framework of naturopathy.

Therapoetics: The Sociological Perspective

Therapoetics is not just the intellectual incision of poetry in order to extract its therapeutic qualities under the field of medical humanities, it is equally an art-science based field that helps us to understand some of the significant sociological paradigms of poetry in relation to society. Here, the expression "societal ills" is of importance because it connotes or implies that beyond the human body systems, the society can also fall ill. In the same vein, therapoetics can as well be expanded to accommodate how poetry can be engaged to function as a therapeutic apparatus in the treatment of societal illnesses. For instance, we cannot overemphasize the fact that among other things poetry has the capacity to teach good virtues and preserve history. In the hands of social activists and musicians, it can function as an instrument of positive socio-political change in the society and entertainment that palliates the burden of the mind. Therefore, it should not be regarded, according to X.J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia as "series of gorgeous noises" (508). Like law, it advocates justice for the weak, the marginalized and disenfranchised people, hence Percy Bysshe Shelley in his essay, "A Defence of Poetry" decries the fact that poets are the "unacknowledged legislators of the world" (309). It can also be used to diagnose, expose and heal or address any form of cruelty or societal ill like the prevalent ones bedevilling the socio-political history of Nigeria from inception: slave trade, tribalism, nepotism, civil war, military dictatorship, civilian "democrazy" or "demonstration of craze" according to Fela Anikulapo Kuti, corruption and hegemony, etc. Unfortunately, against the backdrop of these social ills, the enterprise of therapoetics in Nigeria has not been adequately appropriated in addressing them, hence Marc Polonsky feels that, "much of the violence and psychological illness and unease in our society is probably due to poetry deprivation" (1).

Poetry can extract from the society all tendencies, attitudes, worldviews, ideologies, visions and perceptions. That it is able to carry out these functions is because those who compose them are themselves part of the society. In some cases, the poets are civil or public servants, politicians or simply members of the social community like Geoffrey Chaucer, Christopher Okigbo, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Chinua Achebe who were statesmen in their various societies. The example of Senghor and Agostino Nato who were social activists and presidents of their countries respectively, makes the case even more outstanding. There are further examples of pastors and ordained priests like Gerald Manley Hopkins and Jonathan Swift who have made their mark in the global stage of literature. Due to the fact that poets are social insiders themselves, part of the system whose life experiences are influenced by the good and bad conditions of the society, their poems which are echoes of their lives become true embodiments of their social circumstances. These circumstances and actualities motivate the poets and consequently form backgrounds to their poetic composition,

influencing their thematic preoccupation and subject matter. Part of this kind of argument is what Professor Trinya also makes in his Inaugural Lecture, noting that the therapeutic nature of poetry under therapoetics equally affects the poet who also qualifies as the physician or doctor. Thus, for Trinya, therapoetics is also about, "the therapy that the creative process offers the poet" (22).

Therapoetics: The Metaphysical Perspective
Poetic words are not just mere statements for communication, but are evocative enablers for spiritually induced healings. It is infused in the religious practices of praise, supplication, intercession and other interactive solemn or sacred moments with the supernatural. In preliterate times, it was re-enacted through rituals, entertainment, riddle-making, soothsaying, prophecy and other social functions. Over the years, the evolutionary process of this mode of healing continues to gain more consciousness in many societies, where the choice of poetic words and their arrangement in the creation of incantatory and imitative rhythms, the employment of repetition, refrains, rhyme, and the relation of every aspect of the process is fully developed. Thus, it is a common sight in Africa to see a juju priest (native doctor) or herbalist, in an incantatory fashion, evoking poetic lines and chants while administering fetish or herbal healing on a client. Indeed, African traditional doctors, seers, sorcerers and prophets tend to conjure images through the invocation of spiritual forces; invocations that are skilfully escorted or complemented with poetic artistry. Of great interest in such performance is the ability of each spiritual personality to commune with these unseen forces through absurd sounds, words and poetic-inclined expressions.

In addition to the gesticulatory movements and other dramatic expressions that amaze and sometimes frighten the audience due to the presence of an unseen being in the shrines, such as: the quick and sometimes furtive looks, nerve-shattering outcries, twitching mouths, mumblings, grunts, humming, moaning, unpredictable actions and weird reactions to an imagined invisible force, these spiritual mediators tend to master chants and the incantatory language which help to exalt their spiritual personality above that of ordinary men. Christians have also expressed in their own unique manner such spiritual behaviour through divine inspiration which some critics would rather prefer to adjudge as hysterical state of psyche. It is expected that God speaking through these mediums would also sustain same language that is not commonly ordinary. The words are selected, fitted into lines or expressions, they are uncommon and appear in all manner of poetic dimensions. There is therefore a strong relationship between poetry and divinity, between poets and priests. According to Denys Thompson,

The seer was the mouthpiece of the gods, speaking always in poetry; and for a long time, there was no clear distinction between poetry and prophecy... Seers uttering inspired verses accompanied by music were highly respected in most European societies; they were revered as messengers between the spiritual and the material worlds … Among the Arabs and Hebrews, the poet was a soothsayer, a magician, and a prophet; and his utterances had a positively utilitarian purpose. (58/59)

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Religion in Africa generally is actually a cord that binds Africans to their environment and creator. This urge of gratitude is accounted in many African praise poems that exalt the creator and other religious poetry that equally evoke the creator's assistance in confirming their survivalist efforts. African hunters, farmers, fishermen, and traders, were able to ultimately represent acts of their daily life through poetry. It was told of how hunters would praise and invoke the creator's hand as they move into the forests for their kill, imploring the creator's spell and to also reduce the lightning speed of their target animals. Farmers compose poetic songs, chants and invocative expressions that implore the creator's hand in their harvests, hoping to reap bountiful tubers of yam and other crops. Fishermen make memorized poetic prayer lines asking the creator to supply as much teems of fishes and direct their fishing nets to locations that will ensure great catch. Carvers and sculptors make poetic prayers to the Muse or god(s) of creativity for creative expertise to possess them during the process and moments of artistry. It is in this vein that native doctors entreat the gods through poetic lines to heal their clients or their community in the case of communal cleansing.

Words or utterances and how they are expressed are highly valued in the event of socio-religious expressions. An exemplary picture can be recreated in church services where pastors mandate members to pray to God on a certain subject. Thus, each member explores his or her linguistic arsenal for affective ways to attract the attention of God. In this context, poetic expressions are sometimes naturally generated such as we find with the supplicant, adulatory, intercessory or warfare prayers in the psalms of David. It is this poetic colouration that initiates an evocative atmosphere which makes prayers "affective vehicles," initiating the process of transformation from the physical to the numinous realm of God. This act creates the needed art in which words function in other sensitive capacities such as the medical through the spiritual. Therefore, poetic words are not just mere statements for communication, but are evocative enablers for spirituality and medical treatment.

Therapoetics: The Naturopathic Perspective
If naturopathy is a pseudoscientific drug-free method of treatment, then poetry is a perfect specimen. For poetry to find relevance or meaning in the medical humanities as a therapeutic phenomenon, it has to search for its own space in order to find co-relationship with medicine. This space is available under naturopathy which is a pseudoscientific application of therapeutic procedures. Naturopathic branch of medicine manifests in variety of forms such as acupuncture, homeopathy, Yoga, herbalism or diet-based therapies. Naturopathy introduces natural remedies to help the human system heal itself. It is the application of natural remedies that will boost the immune system in order to regenerate the lost functions of any part of the human system due to the invasion of ailments. Unlike allopathic medicine which involves the use of drugs in the treatment of a patient, naturopathy implies the natural treatment of an illness through the methodology of natural modes of human applications such as the regulation of our diet, the controlling of our state

of mind, and our engagement in physical exercise. In this type of medical approach, there is the tendency to depend on certain natural elements like water, air, heat, herbs, etc., to achieve healing with less or zero percentage of toxicological effect of the prescribed remedies which incurs no side effects. A way of demonstrating this notion is imagining a patient with headache who undertakes a drug-induced form of treatment and another who, with the same headache symptoms, decides to apply basic natural health principles such as having a good sleep after drinking water and taking refuge in a private and noiseless space. Both patients are expected to achieve the same healing result, but the difference is that the first patient is probably going to suffer the adverse effects of the drug-induced treatment undertaken, while the second patient achieves a natural reset of his anatomical system. In other words, the second patient who observes the precepts of natural laws in resetting his failing system emerges safer. Perhaps this could be part of the reason Ralph Waldo Emerson opines that a poet "is the true and only doctor" (2).

In contrast to all opathy, a medical procedure which adopts the principles of mainstream medical practice that achieves treatment through drugs, radiation, or surgery, poetry is a naturopathic force that initiates psychotherapeutic healing through catharsis. In the case of poetry, it does not require any foreign enabler to work, but simply relies on the internal and natural potency of skilfully arranged words rendered emotively. Thus, the therapeutic efficacy of poetic language in this context is realized when words are creatively articulated so as to initiate psychotherapeutic healing. My theory of the naturopathic therapy of poetry draws strength from a peculiar Mexican creature that goes by the name axolotl which has an internal mechanism to regenerate its lost tail – my reason for earlier stating that poetry is a naturally imbued tool in humans. The five-limbed starfish is also a creature that exemplifies a similar notion since it has the capacity to regenerate any of its lost arms. In other words, the provision of poetry becomes for man a natural psychotherapeutic phenomenon which enables him stabilize his mental system through catharsis as well as address societal ills. The ability to use poetry as a tool to achieve healing for mentally incapacitated victims of depressions, such as depressed veterans, drug addicts, juvenile delinquents, prisoners or incarcerated victims, the physically challenged, survivors of violence, abused or traumatized victims, isolated widows/widowers, incest and rape victims, makes the case clearer. David the son of Jesse in First Samuel, chapter 16, verse 23, who transformed from a "herdsman" to a "hero-warrior" and then a "poetic therapist" all through the Psalms of David stands as a good example. The poet, who in this context is the therapist or doctor, determines and prescribes the appropriate poetic approach with which to address any form of disorders as captured in the following table:

TABLE SHOWING THERAPOETIC DIAGNOSIS OF NIGERIA(NS)

PATIENTS	ILLS
NIGERIA	ETHNICITY, RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY, ABUSE OF OFFICE, EMBEZZLEMENT, CORRUPTION, GENDER DISCRIMINATION, CLASS DISTINCTION, HUMAN RITUALS, KIDNAPPING, HEGEMONY, etc.
NIGERIANS:	DEPRESSION & DISORDERS
Nigerian pensioners, Nigerian jobless youths Nigerian drug addicts, Nigerian juvenile delinquents, Nigerian trauma patients Nigerian incarcerated victims, Nigerian physically challenged, Nigerian abused victims, Nigerian widows/widowers, Nigerian incest and rape victims, Nigerian politicians etc.	Mood disorder Anxiety disorder, Obsessive-compulsive disorder, Panic disorder, Post-traumatic stress disorder, Psychotic disorder, Personality disorder, Bipolar disorder, Traumatic grief Stigmatization, etc. Primitive Acquisitive Disorder

Suffice it to state that at each epoch in the Nigerian history, there are socio-political and economic upheavals that galvanise or herald some of the above-mentioned mental health problems. These problems can be traced to the negative experiences of Nigerians during the colonial era. It has also been reflected in socio-political events that followed thereafter such as Nigerians' disillusionment immediately after Nigeria's independence, their ordeals during the civil war, and their post-civil war disenchantments against greedy, selfish and visionless military and civilian leaders. What the Nigerian poets have done over these painful years is to use poetry as catalyst in setting the stage. They have evoked the required mood for emotional responses so as to relieve Nigerians of these tragedies through catharsis. In other words, the Nigerian poets have employed their art as palliatives, enabling Nigerians to understand their predicament and as well develop emotional and cognitive capacity through catharsis.

Conclusion

What we have tried to do in the paper is to give a broad perception on the concept of therapoetics through the sociological, metaphysical and naturopathic conceptual frameworks. Under the sociological conceptual framework, we have tried to explore poetry as a human social therapy. It is an art-science based field that helps us to understand some of the sociological paradigms of poetry in relation to society. In other words, humans have the choice of exploiting poetry as a social mechanism in confronting and addressing societal ills or illnesses in any sphere of life. From a metaphysical perspective, our view is that poetry can equally function as a therapeutic spiritual vehicle that aids the process of translation into metaphysical realms for purposes of adulatory, intercessory, warfare or supplicant intercessions. As earlier noted, poetic words are not just mere statements for communication, they are evocative enablers for spiritually inclined healings, and hence they are infused in the religious practices of praise, supplication, intercession and other interactive solemn or sacred moments with the supernatural. Therefore, poetic colouration in moments of spiritual translation helps us to initiate evocative atmosphere which makes prayers "affective vehicles," commencing the process of transformation from the physical to the numinous realm of God. Lastly, we examined therapoetics from the perspective of naturopathy. Our presentation is that in contrast to allopathy which is a medical procedure that administers treatment through drugs, radiation, or surgery, poetry as a therapeutic instrument can be equated to the naturopathic mode or method of treatment which does not require any drug for healing. It only requires the activation of well-articulated words (inbuilt mechanism in humans) which are meant not only to communicate but to equally induce healing. As earlier demonstrated, this theory can be compared with the Mexican axolotl and the five-limbed starfish, each having the ability to regenerate lost tail or arm respectively. We have also noted that this natural or poetic formula of therapy which conforms to naturopathy has the advantage of not having any form of side effect; the reason being that this source of healing is traced to nature and produces unadulterated healing. Thus, in Nigeria's current political crises which have created myriads of illnesses triggered by the forces of hegemony, ethnicity, religious bigotry, gender inequality, class distinction, etc., poetry can be activated as therapy against these social ills. It is on this basis that I make the following therapoetic prescriptions in the following order:

Firstly, I will prescribe the melancholic or elegiac poetry which in its lachrymal mode will help us mourn the dying-state of our present Nigeria. This helps us purge our feelings of loss so as to experience catharsis. Secondly, I will prescribe poetry of optimism that will create hope in Nigerians about the coming birth of a new and better Nigeria. Thirdly, I will prescribe sensitization poetry that will wake the Nigerian masses who have been cleverly drugged with amnesia and idiopathic hypersomnia by those Nigerian politicians who are themselves morally deficient. Fourthly, I will prescribe revolutionary-inclined poetry that will energise the Nigerian masses to confront those unprintable criminalities, perpetuated with impunity by visionless Nigerian leaders infected with the virus of PAD - Primitive Acquisitive Disorder. Fifthly, I will prescribe epic

poetry to eulogise and massage the Nigerian heroes who put their lives on the line for a new Nigeria to be born. Lastly, I will prescribe a balladic poetry of love and tranquillity that will permanently sustain, not a utopic Nigeria, but an improved Nigeria where equity, love and justice will prevail in the system of governance. In summary, according to Trinya: "Poetry, couched in music, is in the hymns we sing at church, in the songs we sing to mourn the dead, in the chants we recite to celebrate the living; phrased as mnemonics, it is in the nursery rhymes we recite at school…" (24)

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"Therapoetics" or the Responsibility of Literary Communication

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Being Keynote Address presented at the First Symposium in Honour of Professor Kontein Trinya, at the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, on Thursday, the 17th of August, 2022.

Introduction

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

I do express my sincere commendation to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Okechuku Onuchuku, a distinguished and ebullient economist, for creating the enabling intellectual atmosphere for this robust exchange of ideas. And through him we must commend the Executive Governor of Rivers State, Chief Barrister Nyesom Wike, who when public universities in the nation, federal and state, are shut down, has done the needful, to keep the gates of this Ivory Tower open for this intellectual exchange. May I also congratulate the Department of English and Communication Arts for its thoughtfulness in sustaining the culture of continuous learning. I do express my gratitude to the Organizing Committee for its invitation to me to witness this inaugural symposium in honour of our senior colleague.

Theme

The theme of this Symposium is simply "Therapoetics: Affective Literature". The directness of the title reminds one of the practical nature of the character of the man, Professor Kontein. At the same time, the sub-title, "Affective Literature", though direct is complex in its content. Our concern is with "affective literature". Yet, is there a type of literature that is not "affective"? With this complexity in mind, I have couched my own topic from the main theme to read: "*Therapoetics* or the Responsibility of Literary Communication". As the keynote paper, I hope it provides as clearly as possible an overview for the diversity of exchanges that will follow from my colleagues. My goal is to frame a perspective through which my other many colleagues can enter into what a British poet had called the "fearful symmetry" of Therapoetics. Besides, I believe that a clearly defined frame of reference should equip other participants in this symposium to make sense of the conceptual depth of Therapoetics and the unique contribution of the celebrant, Professor Trinya.

There are two issues that need to be cleared before we can enter into my frame of reference. These are the issues of "affective literature" and "therapoetics". The word "affective" is commonly used

in the field of psychology in connection with emotions generally. Seen in relation with its Latin *affectus* it refers to feeling or mood. It conjures up many connotations both positive and negative. A typical example of the positive effect of the word is recorded in Psalm 23 in the Holy Bible. There we are told:

> The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
> He maketh me to lie down in green pasture…

In spite of their subjective tone, the words of this Psalm produce a deep sense of reassurance and peace in one's heart and serve to restore confidence and self-esteem while drawing one closer to God.This type of confidence, you will agree with me is ipso facto positive in nature. In terms of its negative effect, affective produces harmful emotions that may hinder good feelings. By "good feelings" here we mean that type of inner calm, a sense of poise and reassurance in any one. It is important to note, sir, that Professor Trinya in his inaugural lecture, has explained this negative effect by recalling a rare encounter with the late Nigerian playwright, Ola Rotimi. Rotimi had mesmerized his undergraduate class by telling the students of the reaction of a local audience to the performance on his play *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi.* According to Trinya: "the Bini audience [of Rotimi's performance] was out to lynch the white actors that had played the roles of the European characters who, over a hundred years before, had humbled their much-revered supreme Oba". It is also important to note that this kind of spontaneous response by members of an audience to a performance can in some other contexts produce positive effect. We cite the example of the reaction of the audience to the premier performance of the play, *I Will Marry When I Want* by Ngugi waThiong'Ó and Ngugi wa Miri at the Kamiruthu Theatre in Kenya. In this instance, it was reported that members of the audience rather than attacking the actors, as in the performance by Rotimi, were galvanized into a spontaneous protest against the agents of the State that had perpetuated contradictions in their context.

The second issue that needs to be cleared is in the word, "therapoetics". The word itself may not be found in any standard dictionary of the English language. It appears as the combination of two words: "**Thera** and **Poetics**". Poetics is about the theory or principles of literary art and not just about poetry. It was used in this general case in the Classical tradition especially in Aristotle's *Poetics* which outlined the general principles and elements of literary representation especially drama and not only poetry(that is, lyric).

In a primary sense "Thera" is used as proper noun to designate an island and tourist centre in Greece close to the northern part of Crete. However, one doubts that Professor Trinya has used this "Thera" in connection with this tourist haven.It is apparent that he has used it in relation to therapy and therapeutics."Therapy" is used in relation to the practice of healing especially in medical care. As such it connotes the following: make better, make well, cure, treat, restore to health, get better, get well, be cured, recover, mend, put right, etc. As an adverb it suggests curative, therapeutics,

corrective, restorative, and reparative. Apart from these set of primary significance, therapy can be both of primary and secondary relevance. It is in this dual significance that it appeals to literature. Aristotle suggests this dual significance in his account on the dramatic form of tragedy especially in the theory of catharsis. According to him the goal of tragedy as an art form is to achieve catharsis. Catharsis is a Greek word which is translated into English as correction, purgation, or purification.Recall, Vice-Chancellor Sir, that one of the primary significances of the word therapy is found in the word "corrective". It is in this sense that in his inaugural lecture delivered in 2019, Professor embarked on the painstaking task of describing "therapoetics" as the critical delineation of the potential therapy offered by literary arts.To put it in a more critical sense, Sir, since criticism is understood as *kritikos* that is judgement, then I announce to you today that Professor Trinya has preoccupied himself with the painful yet enormous task of judging and describing for numerous students and fellow colleagues over the years the nature and method of therapy, of healing and correction of the human concealed in the works of literary communication.In other words,he has pursued with elan the possibility that literary communication unlike other forms of communication exists because it produces healing and therefore restoration to the human and to society. How does this matter? It matters because this is his main contribution to knowledge, a contribution that has placed him in the footsteps of scholars and philosophers like Aristotle, Chinua Achebe and Salman Rushdie.Vice-Chancellor Sir, if Professor Kontein Trinya appears before His Maker today and the Almighty God affirms, "My dear son, tell Me, what was your contribution as a teacher?" Professor Trinya has a story to tell. This, Sir, makes me to fear and to tremble. Why, you will ask? It is because if I appear before my Maker today; if all us as teachers and students appear before the Good God today and He asks: show me my son, my daughter, what did you contribute as a teacher, as a researcher? Will I be in the number? Will you be in the number?

In delineating a contribution for himself Professor Trinya has equally shared the insights of an emerging field of literary scholarship widely recognized as Medical Humanities. Briefly, this theoretical standpoint underscores a prevailing belief that art generally and specifically literary communication, and entertainment should perform some kind of therapeutic function. Such function has gained prominence in the United States, for instance, in the context of the outbreak of COVID 19 which has exacerbated the outbreak of mental illness thereby paving the way for the arts to gain acceptance as veritable source of cure. In spite of the COVID 19 pandemic, there is general acceptance that our country is pathetically sick and this condition of sickness is exacerbated by the harsh economic realities of the moment. Given this kind of malady literary scholars like Professor Trinya are convinced that literary communication cannot but be engaged by providing the needed therapy and as scholars agree, it is tempting to perceive literary communication, especially poetry, as a solution. At the same time, we should equally be aware that some scholars, especially those whose orientation is animated by ideological-cum-political discourse, accuse critics of Professor Trinya's leaning of being inspired by the "spirit of eager solutionism" which pursues the case that literature and the arts can mend conditions of trauma,

teach effective coping strategy, and precipitate healing. They argue, in addition, that "No doubt, creating and consuming stories can provide therapeutic relief from the difficulties we encounter in our lives, and mental illness has long been fertile ground for storytelling. But such a narrow framework excludes the countless other ways that fiction can illuminate the complexities of human experience."

Vice-Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is such de jure perspective that keeps literary scholarship alive. While the outsiders may cringe at the counter rhetoric the practitioners like Professor will flash a wane smile knowing that in critical discourse there are no final vocabularies.

My main topic is on the responsibility of literary communication. It encapsulates what I have called my frame of reference. But having realized and perceived the path Professor Trinya has cleared for us, you will agree with me that the point has been made. Indeed, literature is ultimately answerable to different aspects of life even providing therapy to a condition of sickness. Yet the answers it provides must be in conformity with its nature as an art form and a unique form of communication. A group of scholars identified as the Russian Formalists agree that its answers manifest through its **poetic function**. Thus, unlike other forms of language use it manipulates the resources of language in order to reveal the underlying sickness in life. It does this not only by revealing affliction but by leading us as readers from ignorance to knowledge. In a world that is in flux, literature responds to our needs by providing healing understood in its general sense but also by equipping us for creative and critical thinking.

Thank you.

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A PRIZE FOR LITERATURE: WHERE DOES POETRY *NOT* FIT? - A CRITIQUE OF THE 2022 NLNG PRIZE FOR LITERATURE LONG LIST

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Abstract
Literary awards, like others of its kind, are usually characterised by complaints of mischief. While this view of conspiracy theorists, cannot be wished away; a critique of the online conversation anchored by Kola Tubosun on twitter@olongoaafrica on August 23rd, 2022; with the eleven long listed poets for the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature, lays bare the tell-tale signs of the merit behind the eventual shortlist. That conversation, separated the emerging 'boys-to-men' from the waning poetic war horses in Nigeria's ivory tower. Mere listening to these *Gen-Z* poets - Romeo Oriogun (*Nomad*) Saddiq Dzukogi (*Your Crib, My Qibla*) and Su'eddie Agema (*Memory and the Call of Waters)* sharing their ideological leanings on how poetry fits in contemporary Nigeria, one would be taken aback by how fast these yesterday's boys have become today's men in literary circles. They are multifaceted and literary savvy with a knack for the intelligentsia. They are not moved by exuberance but by the blue blood of their forebears. Their poetry is a cocktail of the academic poetry most of the outgoing generation of professors - Remi Raji (*Wanderer Cantos*), Joe Ushie (*Yawns and Belches)*, Segun Adekoya (*Ife Testament*), on one hand; and doctorate laureates - Dr Obari Gomba (*The Lilt of the Rebel*), Ogaga Ifowodo (*Augusta's Poodles*), are known for - with a blend of performance poetry of the new order - 'the spoken word' - as being practiced by Amu Nnadi *(The Love Canticles*), James Eze (*Dispossessed)* and the only female on the long list, Iquo Diana Abasi (*Coming Undone as Stitches Tithen*). The poetry of the short listed laureates is like old wine in new bottles - diverse in themes and multi-cultural in stylistic delivery. This critique is a re-reading of the poems of these eleven laureates on the long list for the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature (Poetry Genre) giving credence to the eventual shortlist.

Keywords: NLNG, Prize for Literature, Poetry, Long List, Shortlist, Nigeria Poetry

"Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." - Shelley

"Hear a poem, heal your heart; write a poem, help your soul." (Trinya *29*)

Introduction

It was barely three days to the announcement of the final shortlist for the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature (Poetry) when I bumped into an online link as I opened the ANA National Platform on WhatsApp. I saw a post by @IquoDianaAbasi informing literary enthusiasts of a scheduled twitter conversation @olongoAfrica with the eleven long listed poets for the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature (Poetry Genre). I clicked the link to the twitter handle and registered to be part of the talk shop. I was duly alerted a day after at about 4:30pm Tuesday, August 23rd, 2022, when the conversations started. Right after the opening formalities, the chief host, Kola Tubosun, introduced the long listed poets for the Literature Prize, and set the rules for the discourse. The poets on the long list are listed in alphabetical order below:

Augusta's Poodle - Ogaga Ifowodo

Coming Undone as Stitches Tighten - Iquo Diana Abasi

Dispossessed - James Eze

Ife Testament - Olusegun Adekoya

Memory and the Call of Waters - Su'eddie Vershima Agema

Nomad - Romeo Oriogun

The Lilt of the Rebel - Obari Gomba

The Love Canticles - Chijioke Amu Nnadi

Wanderer Cantos - Remi Raji

Yawns and Belches - Joe Ushie

Your Crib, My Qibla - Saddiq Dzukogi

The eleven long listed poets, can be categorised into three - Academic dons, performing poets and the up and coming new generation poets whose poems are spiced with a cocktail of both worlds - the literary academic poetry and those of the performing poets as 'spoken words'. These three segments comprised three professors - Professor Joe Ushie, Professor Olusegun Adekoya and Professor Remi Raji. Other five dons - Obari Gomba (University of Port Harcourt), Ogaga Ifowodo (legal luminary and social rights activist who had a stint lecturing poetry at the Texas State University, USA)); and three young, up and coming academic research fellows (academic nomads of some sort in the diaspora) - Saddiq Dzukogi (*Your Crib, My Qibla*, University of Nebraska, USA); Romeo Oriogun (*Nomad,* Iowa State University, USA) and Su'eddie Vershima Agema (*Memory and the Call of Waters,* who only recently returned to his homeland, Nigeria, after a nomadic-literary academic sojourn in the United Kingdom). The other three are better described as spoken word performing poets - Amu Nnadi (T*he Love Canticles)*, James Eze (*Dispossessed*) and the only female performing poet - Iquo Diana Abasi (*Coming Undone as Stitches Tighten).* Their stock in trade is more on performance poetry than the aforesaid intelligentsia. Eze did admit in the course of the discourse that only recently he has taken to music as a form of poetry for his past time.

Tubosun laid the foundation for the conversation as he averred that it was a continuation of the Book Party in honour of the eleven long listed poets for the NLNG Prize for Literature as put together by the Committee for Relevant Arts and Literature (CORAL) in collaboration with the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG). Due to time constraints and limited access to that venue, there was need for a wider discourse to generate more concerns that might compel action on the relevance of arts and literature with specific reference to poetry in building new blocks for Nigeria's democracy in quest for good governance that seemed to have eluded the nation.

This critique, as an ongoing conversational narrative, gives credence to the flair and flaws that could have influenced the adjudicators' verdict on the long list of eleven poets. It could also shed some light towards the final pick, if taken seriously, on who becomes the eventual winner of the $100,000 booty for the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature - Poetry Genre!

This piece is segmented into three parts. The first part is a review to introduce the discourse. The second segment of this critique, appraises the twitter conversation on where poetry fits in contemporary Nigeria? It x-rays the responses by each poet; the strengths and faux pas such answers exhibit on the literary competences deserving of a poet laureate. Here, the reader gets a first hand feed on how the mighty - "big names" - have indeed fallen flat and how they have been intellectually out shone by the "Gen-Z" age - who eventually clinched the slot on the shortlist, and deservedly so.

The third part of this piece is a re-reading of the poems of each of the long listed laureates. Identifying the flaws of their choice poems - having more literal, rather than literary inferences - as read during the discourse. Other shortfalls of wordy titles and poor renditions also give structural defects as to why the eight other poets deserved to be dropped from the final list as they were no match to the final three poets eventually shortlisted.

The Conversation: Where does poetry fit?
It was an engaging discourse owing to the varied views of the poets bordering on the vexed issue of *Poetry and Politics in Nigeria*. To what extent has poetry contributed to the cause of leadership and good governance for national development? This seemed to be the underlying thread of the discourse as the moderator threw the poser to the floor for the poet laureates to take a bite. Apart from Chijioke Amu Nnadi who was unavoidable missing due to network challenges as relayed by the moderator, the rest ten long-listed poets hooked online to vent their views on the topic of the conversation - *Where does poetry fit?* The rest of us as audience-participants listened with rapt attention. Around sixty or more participants tuned in at different intervals from different parts of the globe.

Professor Joe Ushie, one of the long listed poets, author of *Yawns and Belches* took the first salvo. His response was indeed mind boggling as it sets the tone for a robust session. Ushie was of the view that poetry fits in perfectly. And to buttress his point succinctly, he reversed the poser as he rhetorically stated: *where does poetry NOT fit?* This forms the crux of the heading of this piece as it really captured any reader's fancy. Ushie recalled the impart of traditional oral poetry in African societies before the evolution of written poetry in English by Africans. The work songs, lullabies, and dirges in local traditions in Nigeria and Africa, have been on for ages and had - and still have - utilitarian roles in the everyday lives of indigenous people. Poetry, beyond the written verses in English, that have been glamourised by the quest for Western education by Nigerians and Africans, according to Ushie, it has played and shall continue to play definitive roles in contemporary Nigerian society as a means of socialisation.

Professor Olusegun Adekoya, author of *Ife Testament,* followed suit. He was no different. He spoke of poetry being life; and making life more beautiful than it already is. He quoted Shelley thought on poets as: "the 'unacknowledged' legislators of the World" (794). Adekoya cited instances of more traditional poetry that has been with Africans from ages past. Beyond that, Professor Adekoya's inputs were more on the use of poetry in the social and corporate world. He gave instances of traditional and modern advertisements. By the *akara* seller in the motor parks who uses catchy phrases to attract customers to her wares. As the Yoruba rice seller might say: "*ofe ni iresi, eran ni owo.*" meaning, "rice is free, meat is money." And on billboards and other broadcasts where the craze for catchy phrases and short, simple pick-up lines are poetry used in modern society to captivate and prompt positive action from audiences and prospects.

Ogaga Ifowodo's side of the conversation was even more daunting. He highlighted the use of poetry as catharsis against the myriads of daily aches that perturb the average Nigerian. The bastardization from the ruling class, the desire to escape from such social burdens, as suggested by Ifowodo, poetry is that stop gap for many who needed to let off steam. He spoke of his new interest in environment poetry and issues of family, homeland and childhood reveries as against his earlier works where he had been confrontational on political dictatorship and had even paid the ultimate price for his writings. He was incarcerated by the military junta of General Sanni Abacha, Nigeria's military Head of State (1993 -1998) for his vocal agitations against miltary rule in Nigeria as at then.

For Iquo Diana Abasi - author of *Coming Undone as Stitches Tithen* and the only female on the long list - her contributions were no less incisive. She was glad that the conversation was not bordering on comparison between generational poets or writers which seemed to be the trend in most literary discourses when literary enthusiasts relate. She neither emphasized gender as an issue as many might want her do for being the singular female poet on the plum long list. Abasi was more concerned with the new ways poetry has taken toll to find a place in the polity. For her,

poetry fits in as it is able to reflect issues of social concerns in deeper ways as a means of catharsis. According to Abasi, poetry has its own peculiarities of wordings and structures that bests places it in a primal place in the annals of Nigerian literature.

For Professor Remi Raji (author of *Wanderer Cantos)*. It was about the generational concerns that are non-existing (as Abasi might be averred not to discuss). He opined that regardless of the generational gap of poets on the long lists or plying their art of poetry as a calling, there is only one Nigerian poetry. The issues of concerns were one and same - social issues plaguing humanity begging for answers! Professor Raji raised objections to that effect of being titled as professor or an academic doctor - PhD holders - as a toga of ascendance in scholarship as being irrelevant in such intellectual gathering where all were competing for a choice prize for literature. According to Raji, such appendages were quite burdensome and unnecessary. Raji stressed the oneness of poetry as tool for social change regardless of generational drifts.

Obari Gomba (author of *The Lilt of the Rebel)* shares similar opinion as Raji. He believed that Nigerian poetry is the sum totality of the writings of poets of Nigerian heritage not withstanding the nuances of shades and style adopted. Rather than group poets into generational trends, Gomba was of the view that doing so would not be able to lay claim to the real gamut of Nigerian poetry which encompasses even the spoken word performing artistes as well as well as those in the academic domain who teach poetry in theory and practice in Nigeria's ivory towers. For him, so long as the issues of concern have some social relevance peculiar to the Nigeria social milieu, then poetry fits in perfectly as an elixir to the plight of the masses.

For Romeo Oriogun, author of *Nomad*, who joined in from Iowa, in the United States, his concern was on poetry going beyond being utilized as art-for-art-sake aesthetics. He also cherished the rich variety of Nigerian poetry and called for poets to be more circumspect in their craft. Citing how the works of poets in modern day have a kaleidoscope of beauty that should be cherished and adored as there are more varieties to dance to the rhythm of the poetic beats. In so far as his poems might not have the deep local colours of traditional Yoruba poetry as those of Raji, Adekoya, Ojaide and others, it still has its own multi-cultural flair which takes into account the multi-ethnic diversities of cultures, people and places around the world which comes to bear in the Nigerian polity. That for him is how poetry fits beyond and across generational or linguistic delineations. To him, poetry fits in succinctly at all times and in every place.

For Saddiq Dzukogi (author of *Your Crib, My Qibla)*, his thrust was on the need to see poetry as social tool for comfort and change. His poetry collection was borne out of his grief over his daughter's demise. In so far as his poems were on grief, he still sees in them the anguish of a nation in chains and pains in dire need of comfort. To him, the poet had a duty to teach and to cheer up her citizenry. He debunked the notion as mentioned by Professor Raji, in error that Nigerian

poetry is about a hundred years old with several generations of six or so. To him, that should not be seen as the crux of concern.

For Dzukogi. And rightly so, Nigerian poetry goes beyond its written equivalent in English but also comprises her oral traditions of lore, ballads, praise chants, incantations, proverbs, riddles, and other components of Nigeria's traditional oral literature that dates back to time immemorial. As such, Nigerian poetry cannot be boxed into being a hundred years old. For the young Dzukogi, Nigerian poetry in all its ramifications has come to stay. The present crop of contemporary poets in their generational gaps fits in just fine to give a dying nation the needed voice of comfort to cheer up amid grief in the nation's social malaise.

James Eze (author of *Dispossessed)* spoke of lyrical poetry. The music poetry that has taken Nigeria and the world by storm as Nigerian music artist adopt poetry in their songs. According to him, it is the peculiarities of poetry that the music artists use in their crafts to sell Nigeria to the world and this fits in perfectly as poetry plays that huge role of catharsis. It uses the artistic medium to reach out to myriads of audiences across time and space. Eze concurred with other speakers on the significance of poetry not just in politics of governance, or the lack of it, but also as an artistic tool of creativity and fulfillment for the Nigerian youth. He cited and sang Tu Face Idibia's hit song, "African Queen" as a typical example of the brilliant adoption of lyrical poetry by Nigerian youths in their creative enterprises.

For Su'eddie Vershima Agema (author of *Memory and the Call of Waters)* it was a convergence of ideas and the role of poetry cannot be over emphasized. He sued for poets not to relent in using their arts as a means to mirror the realities of our times and the need for change. His work recall the plaguing scourge of societal woes through the rays of memories and water imagery. Agema's line was breaking so could not get his points across as much as he would have wanted to.

A Re-Reading of Laureates' Poetry
The reading session of the laureates' poems gave the audience the opportunity to appreciate their art. They all read from their collections to give the audience a peep into their poetry. The audience was able to appraise the level of their art as word smiths. The readings lay bare the beauty or otherwise of their poetry. Candidly speaking, I have not read most of the works by these poets on the envious long list, but listening to them read one poem each out of their poetry collection, I dare say this gave me, and majority in the audience, some insights into the level of work done and also a good appraisal of which poets might not make the next round for the short list of three.

No doubt, one would expect each poet to have read his best piece as this was only days away from the release of the short list. So I had envisaged that whatever poems were read were among the best - if not the best - of their poetry collection. Some of the poems read aloud fell short of an award

winning standard. Indeed, they were quite disappointing as some were way off the mark to be termed poetry in its real sense of emotions on words; crafted in imaginative colours to provoke thoughts. Some were watery and mere prose works as their meaning and inferences were so direct and literal and as such questions the veracity of such pieces to be termed poetry?

Ushie read a poem, titled: "If Words" from his collection, *Yawns and Belches. T*he crux of it was about different scenarios were words can be likened to various things and the significance of words to solving societal issues - what words could do in various circumstances. Ushie's poem was so direct that one could easily tell what it was all about at first reading without bothering to be imaginative. It was more of an essay than a poem saves for the lines in verses. It was more *prosaic* than poetic. From the choice of the poem he read, it was obvious, even to the blind, that the distinguished professor had no chance to be on the shortlist. If that poem was Ushie's best to be presented at such auspicious moment, then there was no basis of him being among the three top finalists - albeit, a professor of literature regardless.

Professor Adekoya read his poem, "Mama one wonder if it was the word "satire" or "Sataya?" that where meant, Whatever it is, the poem was also not far from Ushie's rendition. Not so impressive considering its literal inferences that an ordinary reader can easily decipher without deep imaginative leanings that award winning poems are known for.

Professor Remi Raji's poem "Flicker" was also, in this writer's humble opinion, another wrong choice for such occasion. Intermittently, it had the word, "pause" to give the reader that reverie to stop and think about actions that should not be glossed over. But on the whole, the poem was not so strong enough to compel reverence and awe deserving of an award winning art, in spite of its tacit use of parallelism and appetizing lyricism.

Ushie's poem, "If words," Raji's "Flicker" and Adekoya's poem, "Mama Satire" were too direct to be termed poetry. Yes, it can be argued that it is their style, but for an award winning competition such as the NLNG Prize for Literature, such choices were off the mark. How do they distinguish such so called poems from prose narratives or essays? If poetry can be very apt and descriptively detailed such as those read, then what is prose fiction about as a genre of literature? That complex contrition of words used creatively to provoke imaginative thoughts is what distinguishes poetry from its sister genres of prose, drama or essays. These poems as read by the three professorial poets were found wanting of such contrition, intuition and creative ingenuity.

For James Eze, reading a love poem from his collection, *Dispossessed*, on such occasion was way out of line to be taken serious in times like these. Regardless of its beauty, talking about romanticism and amorous themes might not be the best, it is not a social scene for catch ups and hook ups. It is the most prestigious literary prize for literature at the moment. Why display such

such poem with such mild theme of love when Nigeria is on the precipice with the electioneering for the 2023 General Election just at the corner? Amu Nnadi's *The Love Cantacles,* and Iquo Diana Abasi*, Coming Undone as Titches Tithen,* too, exhibit such inherent thematic weakness. It was clear from this weak theme of love and romance that Eze, Nnadi and Abasi cannot make the shortlist for this obvious reason regardless of the form and structure of their poetry.

Ogaga Ifowodo, too, from his own comments showed he had the intuition that his work might not meet the desired yearnings to be on the shortlist. He did acknowledge that his work was on childhood memories. And from the title of his poetry collections, *Augusta's Poodles,* it was clear his work cannot match the prevailing expectations to beat the short list. He read a poem on childhood reminiscences that was more individualistic than what can provoke a communal thought that is shared and universal to the beat of the moment.

Iquo Daina Abasi read her poem, "Staccato." Well it was beautiful, but the literal inferences were not so poetic to be an award winning poet deserving of the shortlist. It was comforting, as she was the only female on the long listed to compliment the gender imbalance. That was enough consolation for the only female among the pack.

Book titles were some shortcomings of some works that could have eliminated them from the shortlist. A work like that Iquo Diana Abasi, has a very wordy title. Too many words in her choice book title that make her collection less attractive. A word or phrase from the lengthy "Coming Undone as Stitches Tithen*,"* would have been more appropriate. The POF Publishing online platform gives some hints on: "What makes a good title?"
> Most memorable titles are usually short and straightforward.
> It's tempting to catch the attention of your target audience   through longer titles. However, it's a known fact that people   have short memories—making long titles hard to remember   despite how many powerful words you use. Moreover, readers   are more likely to recall words and phrases that are easy to
> understand and pronounce. Hence, next time you compose   a story title, keep in mind to keep it short and simple yet impactful   (sic). (7)

This is one obvious flaw of Abasi's poetry collection. Gomba's collection too has this noticeable faux pas from its title: *The Lilt of the Rebel.* This is a poetry collection and not a prose work that needed more illustrative and descriptive details. Poetry is contrite. And titles too must be simple and contrite with words. Why not the use of the phrase, "The Rebel" or "A Rebel's Lilt?" why go the whole nine yards to inscribe the title with its determinants inclusive - "The Lilt of the Rebel?"As reiterated in the quote above, titles, especially poetry collections, should be catchy, punchy, short and simple! Oriogun's title: "Nomad" best exemplify what a good title should be -

short but direct and provocative. He stands a great chance of clinching the choice booty with the simplistic beauty of his poems and his captivating title! The publishing site states further on titles:

> If there's something noticeable about best-selling books,   it's   their unique and evocative titles. Evocative titles compel   readers   to   pick   the   book, hooking them through the use of   wordplay   and   imagery. On   the   other   hand, distinctive titles   keep your book identifiable from others, so avoid popular names to make your project stand out from the crowd. (5)

Saddiq Dzukogi read his poem on grief in his collection, *Your Crib, My Qibla."* it was gripping. It was emotional and imaginatively provokes thought. He maintained that though his poetry was not on direct political concerns of governance and corruption prevalent at the moment, but since grief is a universal phenomenon, it also has an impact on the nation's prevailing woes. The citizens are in grief, grieving over the lack of good leadership and taking solace in the "therapeutics of poetry" - as Professor Kontein Trinya would have us believe in his inaugural lecture monograph, *Therapoetics: Perspectives on Affective Arts*.

> We could refer again to the informed perspective of a physician, who   says   that although writing, reading, or listening to poetry could be   therapeutic,   poetry   does   not essentially provide answers to life's questions, but "in its compressed use of language to express universal   truths, in its bursts of insight, poetry provides glimpses of beauty that can put the challenges of life in perspective." (27)

Adiogun, read his title poem, "Nomad" from his collection, *Nomad*. It was a thrilling poetic travelogue recollecting cultures and traditions as picked up along the line across borders. His poem was simplistic and engaging. With provocative thoughts of home and longing as the culture shock experienced by the personae gives the reader an imaginative sojourn, which is what poetry is about. Regardless of the wishes and longing, the despondency at homeland leaves the reader at crossroads of depression and despair. Romeo's choice poem was apt as it really captured the hearts in more ways than one.

For Su'eddie Vershima Agema, his line was breaking. Participants could not listen to the title of his poem. But he read on anyway. It was a longing. A reminiscence of memories; "memories recollected in tranquility" - to put it in Wordsworth's words in his definition of poetry. Obari Gomba, could not read from his works as he came in later in the discourse. Nnadi was unavoidably absent so the audience could not get a taste of his mouth watering poetic delicacies too. However, the general reading of the laureates' poems gave the audience a glimpse of what to expect in the final shortlist. Most persons who listened to the poets read their works and gave their stances on the significance of poetry in contemporary times; could sense the direction the shortlist might take.

From the readings, several poets among them definitely must have had the inkling to know their fate. They only wished for luck. They already knew they were not cut out for the shortlist. Ifowodo made an excuse for his theme not taking on contemporary issues as he had done in earlier works. Professor Raji was quick to humbly request that the use of professors and doctors - PhD holders - references to some of them might not be necessary in that context as contestants for the choice prize for literature. They were mere poets plying their art in their word crafts and such appendages to their names are far fetched.

From this reading and conversation, one can separate the boys from the men as far as this year's poetry prize is concerned. Immediately after the conversation on twitter I had shared with two other colleagues of mine my permutations regarding the expected shortlist. I was not far from the reality when three days later, two out of the three poets, I had hoped shall be on the shortlist emerged. True to my predictions as prophesied. The verdict was not far fetched. Not because of the generational shift, but like present Nigerian political class who have failed us in governance, I felt strongly that the ageing intellectual dons too have not fared any better. A critique of the works of these poets show how the judges did justice to arrive at a very fair list.

A Valid Verdict?
If the choice poems as read by some of the laureates were anything to go by, it is obvious that they do not deserve the shortlist going by the quality and turgidity of the poems read. Oriogun, Dzukogi and Agema, gave a good account of their poetry. Their readings were compelling and creatively more endearing compared to the others and as such deserved a place on the shortlist. When Dzukogi respectfully corrected the notion as erroneously stated by Professor Raji that: "Nigerian literature which was barely a hundred years old having several generation of poets, as not too comforting," it only reassures literary enthusiasts that there is more than a glimmer of hope for Nigerian literature.

Dzukogi was able to show that Nigerian poetry or literature cannot be defined from the limitation of its Western definition. Just because writing is alien to our culture does not take away the fact, as cited by Ushie and Adekoya, in their contributions, that orature (orality and literature) as Ngugi Wa Thoing'o puts it - which has been Africa's traditional literary medium, does not alter the impart of traditional poetry such as in incantations, praise chants, work songs, war songs, dirges and so on. Nigerian poetry is as old as the origins of our indigenous communities as far back as time immemorial and not in a century ago when Western education came through colonialism, slavery and missionary missions to Africa. Literature, nay, poetry has always been part of Africa's culture and shall continue to be an integral part of it.

In all, the young poets, of this "Gen-Z" era, who made the eventual shortlist, gave a good account of themselves in their quest for poetic scholarship. Romeo Oriogun (*Nomad*) Saddiq Dzukogi (*Your Crib, My Qibla*) and Su'eddie Agema (*Memory and the Call of Waters*) Romeo Oriogun (*Nomad*) Saddiq Dzukogi (*Your Crib, My Qibla*) and Su'eddie Agema (*Memory and the Call of Waters*) are the three short listed popets for the 2022 NLNG Prixe for Literature. They are more than ready to occupy Nigeria's literary space. Their craft, as read, and their contributions in the course of the conversation exhibited a sense of purpose and commitment to the literary cause. Their art is ingeniously compelling. Their poetry is more multi-cultural and diverse in thematic preoccupations that endears joy and excitement. At a time where professions are crying for youthful proteges to take over some day, these young poet laureates, have assured that they are more than ready for the future.

This piece concludes in line with Professor Remi Raji's thoughts on the poser: *where* does poetry fit? Poetry fits everywhere. *Who* does poetry fit? Poetry fits everyone. *How* does poetry fit? Poetry fits anyhow. The NLGN Prize for Literature has indeed come to stay. Regardless of people's opinions on the shortlist, it is only normal to get mixed reactions to such prestigious awards. Like it, hate it; this is a critics humble view, from a stand point of an unbiased observer. One that it is believe to be a fair and balanced verdict by the adjudication panel made up of: erudite Professor Emmanuel Egya Sule of Ibrahim Badamosi University, Lapai, Niger State; Toyin Adewale-Gabrie - poet, critic and media mogul; and Dike Chukwumerije - a spoken word performing artiste of repute committed to his art and style in his Made-In-Nigeria (MIN) literary shows. To the Advisory Board, Professor Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo; Professor Olu Obafemi and Professor Ahmed Yerima, - gracias to NLNG for keeping Nigeria's literary space aflame with hope for a thriving generation of wordsmiths.

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THE WOUNDED HEALER: A THERAPOETICS OF "TALKING CURE", "SUBSTITUTE GRATIFICATION" AND "TRANSFERENCE" IN THE POETRY OF OJAIDE AND OSUNDARE

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Abstract

Although a plethora of literary studies have been carried out on psycho- analytical criticism, little attention has been paid to the archetypal concept of "The Wounded Healer". "The Wounded Healer" archetype is a concept postulated by a Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung, to describe how a neurotic can access therapy through the works of literature. Thus "Talking Cure", "Substitute Gratification" and "Transference" have been considered aids to Therapoetics and Affective Literature. Using selected poems from Ojaide's anthologies, *Invoking the Warriors Spirit* and *The Fate of Vultures and other Poems* and Osundare's *Moonsongs* and *The Katrina Poems,* this research establishes that, like typical neurotics, these poets exhibit the worries and pains of their generation. This paper seeks to show how Ojaide and Osundare, through their creative artistry have laid bare a therapy for the psychologically wounded, by making use of three psychological concepts: "Talking Cure", "Substitute Gratification "and "Transference".

Introduction

This paper concerns itself with the psycho-analytical reading of the poetry of Niyi Osundare and Tanure Ojaide. The term "wounded healer" is an archetypal concept coined by a Swiss psychiatrist and scholar, Carl Jung, to describe a phenomenon that takes place between the analyst and the analyzed. In this archetype, we see a wounded personality that is also supposed to be the needed healer. Studies have shown that the poetry of Ojaide and Osundare are dominated by the archetype of the "wounded healer" —a symbol of a wounded personality who also doubles as the messiah. Therefore, analyzing Ojaide and Osundare's poetry through the orbits of this archetype will help foreground their poetry as therapy.

Ojaide and Osundare are both poets of the "second generation". This class of poets are called the ideological and sociological poets. They are the poets who demystified poetry to make it speak the public language. Scholars call them poets of the "alter-native tradition". The second generation of poets belong to the Anglophone African poets who advanced the course of African literature by going deeper than the much the generation before them have done in expanding the thematic focus of African literature. It is through the effects of this generation of poets that literary ideologies like Marxism, Feminism, Eco-criticism and many others are incorporated into African literature.

On one hand, Osundare is a poet devoted to serve the exploited African peasantry. His works address a deluge of themes which include nature, corruption, poverty, colonialism and post colonialism, administrative incompetence, Marxism, animist materialism, and class struggle. Osundare's poems are characterized by limpidity of diction, multivalence of forms, adroit deployment of style, neologism, wordplay, innuendo, revolutionary ideas, and many others.

On the other hand, Ojaide's poetry shares lot of characteristics with Osundare and other poets of his contemporaries in terms of thematic focus and other ideological matters. Ojaide is known for his unique way of poetic literary expression and for his sharp criticism of ecological and environmental injustice, political marginalization, social justice, religious fanaticism, extremism, and other issues related to the Niger Delta regions and Nigeria in general. He creates literary works to help solve problems, especially those involving environmental issues that are facing his people in the Delta region, Marginalization, whether political, social, economic or environmental has been Ojaide's main focus in most of his works.

Literary texts, like dreams, express the secret unconscious desires and anxieties of the author (Delahoyde, 1). Even when an author is not writing autobiographically, the speech and behaviour of the author's charades, and the description of settings and events are usually imbued with some of the author's personality, desires, and fears.Carl Jung clarifies this link when he posits that the poets' expressions "contain images and thought associations which they do not create with a conscious intent but arise spontaneously without their assistance and are representatives of a psychic activity withdrawn for their arbitrary will" (75).

Psycho-analytical Theory
Within each piece of literature, there exist clues to guide the reader to a deeper understanding of the literary work, of the author, and even of the inner workings of the individual reader. Using psychoanalytical theory to analyze a work of literature allows the reader to consider how the writing represents the author's repressed desires, fears, and impulses. Psychoanalysis also considers how literature presents the author's isolation from events or even the denial of the existence of certain events and circumstances through identification of the inner workings of the mind. Modern psychoanalytic theory based largely on the works of Sigmund Freud, which provides the literary

critic with theory, and a guide to discovering, revealing and examining the truths that are hidden in literary works.

After 1950, Psychoanalytic critics began to emphasize the ways in which authors create works that appeals to the reader's repressed wishes and fantasies (Murfin and Ray, 3). In addition to appealing to, and revealing the unconscious desires of works to anticipated audience, authors reveal their own unconscious desires in their writing. Psychoanalysis as a literary theory has helped to improve understanding about "human behaviour and human mental functioning". This is achieved through its perception of the human race as neurotic. However, with its application in poetic interpretation, poetry is perceived as an expression of displaced neurotic conflict; a consoling illusion, symptom, socially acceptable phantasy, or substitute gratification. With the psychoanalytic reading of the poetry of Ojaide and Osundare, poetry is understood as an expression of symptoms of the poet's personal and societal neurotic tendencies. Analyzing Ojaide and Osundare's poetry through the orbits of the archetype of the "wounded healer" will help to foreground the poetry as a consoling illusion or substitute gratification. The study reveals that Ojaide and Osundare's poetry are dominated by the archetype of the "wounded healer". lt is depicted that the dominant nature of the archetype of the "wounded healer" is a result of the poet's experience which is at the centre of his poetic expression.

According to Phillip Rice and Patricia Waugh, "as a literary theory, psychoanalysis offers a new account of representation and human subjectivity" (13). In affirmation of Rice and Waugh's assertions, James Mann points out that "all that we know about mental functioning and human behaviour comes from psychoanalysis, its lessons are equally applicable in the conduct of any kind of psychotherapy" (xi). Terry Eagleton also asserts that "the revelation of the human behaviour and mental functioning is part of psychoanalytic practice" (159). Eagleton has attributed this to the fact that psychoanalysis represents the human race as neurotic. This is also the reason poetry is seen in psychoanalysis as an "expression of displaced neurotic conflict; a consoling illusion, symptom, socially acceptable phantasy, or substitute gratification which compensates us for the inevitable renunciation of desires involved in the necessary accession to reality principle" (13).

This is also linked to the fact that as James Strachey reveals, "psychoanalysis had its origin in connection with the study of hysteria hence it is referred to as a symbolic method of interpretation which works with a manifest narrative (talk, dream, phantasy) in order to uncover its latent and buried source of meaning" (viii). It uncovers its latent source through such term as "talking cure" — a process through which "repressed and painful memories" and "negative energies" are unlocked or "cathartically released". However, scholars like Sigmund Freud, Lionel Trilling and Martin Gross have argued in their different essays that there is a major link between psychoanalysis and poetry. While Freud describes poetry as a "substitute gratification" (149), Trilling says that psychoanalysis has helped to reveal that poetry "serves the purpose of a narcotic" (2805). More so,

Gross points out that the poet shares some attributes with the neurotic - somebody experiencing psychic disturbances as a result of his accumulated, either tyrannical or blissful experience, and schizophrenia — a disorder of a type involving breakdown in the relation between thought, emotion, and behaviour, leading to faulty perception, inappropriate actions and feelings, withdrawal from reality and personal relationships into fantasy and delusion, and a sense of mental fragmentation.

The Wounded Healer Archetype in OjaideandOsundare's Poetry

In analyzing Ojaide and Osundare's poetry through the archetype of the "wounded healer", it is important to note the basic qualities of the "wounded healer". First of all, the "wounded healer" looks at all experiences as opportunity for growth and development. Secondly, He is a life long seeker who has a strong sense of purpose. Furthermore, people call on him when in crisis because he is capable to find calmness in a chaos situation.

In "Song for my land", Ojaide captures the pitiable state of the land through the invocation of the "primordial archetype" known as the "wounded healer". This is made possible through the persona's repetitive usage of the words "I", "my" and "me" in almost all the stanzas of the poem. For instance, in lines five and six, where the persona says, "Wherever I pass, mockery of the land;/naked trees flaunt sterile bodies at me" (41). The persona presents the feeling of a wounded personality before us. This personality that is wounded in these lines is no other personality than the personality of the persona. In the third stanza of the poem:

> Every step I take on the land
> Is fraught with torments –
> My clan no longer contains me,
> Where I am the adopted son
> I am asked for marks I don't possess
> Before I can be embraced
> I need the entirety of the land (41).

We see a wounded personality who is also supposed to be the healer of the land. From the first two lines of the stanza, where the persona tells us, "Every step I take on the land is fraught with torments" (41), to the fifth and sixth lines of the stanza, where the persona laments, "I am asked for marks I don't possess/before I can be embraced" (41), We are presented with the extremity of the persona's wounding. It is in the last line of the stanza: "I need the entirety of the land" (41), that we are made to know that the same wounded persona is the hope (healer) the land needs. In the fifth stanza of the poem, the "healer" aspect of the "wounded" persona is also brought to focus:

> I have sat through harsh winds
> And alternating hot and cold seasons

> But have not lost my skin;
> My nerves are better guards than ever,
> I have made love to all tribes
> And absorbed the strength of their warriors (41-42).

By saying that he has "sat through harsh winds/ and alternating hot and cold seasons", the persona means that he has undergone the necessary training to qualify to be the "healer" the land needs. In lines five and six, where the persona says, " I have made love to all tribes/ and absorbed the strength of their warriors", the persona wants us to know that he has visited many tribes and has learnt the skills of their different "healers" as to qualify to be the "healer" of his own land.

In Ojaide's "The music of pain", again the primordial archetype of the "wounded healer" is invoked. In the Poem, there is also the repetition of such words as, "I", "my", and "me". The first four lines of the poem reads thus: "Listen/ I do not cry in vain/ For my song, I sought the chorus of resistant cries" (2). The persona begins by putting the archetype of the "wounded healer" to use. When the persona says, he does not "cry in vain", he is as well saying that he does "cry". The word "cry" here is put to use to depict that he has been "wounded" and beyond this wounding he wants us to know that with the pain that goes with the wounding, he can help heal the "communal pain". In the same poem, we are made to realize that to "heal the land's scurvy conscience", he puts his songs to use. In line thirty-three, where he writes, "listen to my song" (3), he makes emphasis on the healing power of his song. Here, he is saying it is not just anybody's song that can provide this healing but his. In these two poems, Ojaide's use of words does not go beyond the limit of our comprehension, the poet's neurotic state at the time of creation is not in any way removed from the one perceived in Osundare's poetry. In Osundare's "The city will not die" the event that gives rise to the illusion with which the poem is created is purged. And in the poem, we are made to believe that, the event in the poem is the city's destruction. Hence, in the poem, the persona invokes the primordial archetype of "the wounded healer" to intervene and help regain the rebirth of the city.

> The footless floodwalls shall soon
> Be replaced by well manicured pavements
> And the flood-scorched trees will bloom again
> The wounded oaks will stretch it's limbs
> And revelers back to sweeten up the streets
> …sick, not dead, this betrayed city deserted, not forgotten.

In this poem, Osundare describes his hopes for New Orleans, ravaged to the rubbles by Hurricane Katrina, with images of newness, renewal and rebirth. The poet predicts a cosmopolitan renaissance in which New Orleans "will rise again". This scenario of revitalization is helped by such word builders like: …sick, not dead, this betrayed city deserted, not forgotten. Here, the poet invokes the Jungian archetype of the "wounded healer". By giving the city a new birth that befits

the city and her glory, the poet has given hope to the hopeless city and healing to the wounded citizens of the city. The poet here assumes the position of the "wounded healer" who also double as the "messiah". His anticipatory text world becomes indelible to the reader. In the closing stanza of the poem, the poet predicts a world where the destruction and malice of Hurricane Katrina will be forgotten.

> This city will rise again
> This Big city, this neglected treasure (115).

From the analysis, we have likened poetic engagement to neurosis and have clearly stated that both poets (Osundare and Ojaide) share some attributes with the neurotic since what we study as poetry are products of their different psychological experiences. Now, one may want to know what these psychoanalytic concepts mean: what is neurosis? who is a neurotic? and how does these help us to understand Osundare and Ojaide's reproductions of their experiences as poetry? It has been noted time and again that the human race is neurotic but not that the human race is psychotic. There are great differences between a neurotic and a psychotic. According to Terry Eagleton, "neurosis is when there is a conflict in the mind of an individual" or "when the unconscious is most damagingly at work, when the person is in psychological disturbance of one form or the other" (158). Eagleton however explains, "psychosis is when an individual "has lost contact with reality at key points" (159), or when an individual is unable to repress his unconscious desires and actually comes under its sway". Gross lists eleven neurosis to which mankind is ostensibly prone, thus: "anxiety neurosis, hysterical neurosis, conversion type, dissociative type, phobic neurosis, obsessive compulsive neurosis, depressive neurosis, neurasthenia neurosis, depersonalized neurosis, hypochondrical neurosis, and order neurosis" (320). While Eagleton mentions two kinds of psychosis; paranoia and schizophrenia. However, Neurosis mostly appears as the stress caused by anxiety. Hence, Gross tells us that:

> anxiety is the chief characteristic of neurosis. It may be felt and expressed directly, or it may be controlled unconsciously and automatically by conversion, displacement and various other psychological mechanisms. Generally, these mechanisms produce symptoms experienced as "cross-subjective distress" from which the sufferer desires relief (Gross, 320).

It is with the knowledge of this distinction that Gross notes in his book, *The Psychological Society,* that "we live in the age of neurosis (318). Explaining this, he further states:

> Virtually everyone speaks of being somewhat neurotic. It is not that we see ourselves as an isolated example. For in addition to diagnosing ourselves as neurotic, we see those surrounding us as suffering from this same gnawing undefined ailment. Our mates, friends, business associates, the thousands who touch our lives seem to be living in a heroic fruitless, struggle for stability (318).

Gross' assertion reiterates the popular argument that we are all sick, and Freud claims that normality is almost unattainable (216). Man is preoccupied with the unending search for normality which he cannot attain. In man's course to attain normality, he seeks cure from different sources, which include talking, seeing a psychiatrist, and engaging in creative writing. According to Gross, "NIMH researchers recommends creative writing as Psychotherapy" (315). Trilling makes a similar assertion when he says that creative writing (or literature as he preferably puts it) serves as a narcotic. Trilling goes on to explain how Creative writing (poetry) serves the purpose of narcotic by saying that since the creative writer "is virtually in the same category with the neurotic", as the neurotic patient is confronted with the illusion of painful past experiences, the poet also suffers from this disturbing experience but provides a cure for it by recreating them as poetry. By recreating that which is disturbing him, the poet gets healed until there is another pain or disturbance. However, Carl Jung calls this cure, or the attainment of the healing, "individuation". Little wonder, Chinua Achebe has written in his book, *Morning Yet on Creation* that "the creative writer (the poet) is a good man, having purged himself of every pain and every disturbance through his writing, he, the poet, becomes free again to look at things even the things that once caused his pain from an unbiased view point" (13).

Like every neurotic, the poet's painful poetry is conditioned by the weight of the painful experience his unconscious is to recreate, and the time or generation in which he lives since man's experience cannot be detached from the generation in which he belongs. Because no one generation of human race can account for same experience as another, we cannot as well say that the experience that caused the illness in one poet of one generation is the same experience that caused the illness in another poet of another generation. Hence, the poetry, which we have noted as the product of the poet's experience, becomes a revelation of the realities of his generation. This is what comes to our mind as we look at Osundare and Ojaide's collection of poems. Through their different collections of poems their different experiences are revealed.

Talking Cure (Free Association)

The first form through which Osundare and Ojaide realized their experiences as poetry is "talking cure". "Talking cure" is a psychological form or a process through which an individual or a poet talks or writes himself free of all feelings of pains and worries. It is a process through which repressed and painful memories and negative energies are unlocked and cathartically released. In other words, it is the act of talking or writing oneself to normality. "Talking cure" has helped in revealing that creative writing or the ability of a poet to narrate his experiences through his poetic creation helps to calm him. This is because the poet uses his poetic creation as a means of engaging himself in talks, as Ernest Emenyonu once argued, "poetry is a creative art that is born out of the poets worries and pains and by engaging himself in his writing, the poet is engaging himself in talks" (1). A poet who is a talkative in his unconscious, writes a voluminous collection of poetry or

laboriously put some symbols and archetypes to use, while a poet who is not a talkative writes a less voluminous collection.

In their different collections, both Osundare's persona and Ojaide's persona have shown that they are both talkative in their unconscious. In the poem entitled, "The Lake came to my house", for instance, Osundare's persona acknowledges that he is "Suddenly becoming talkative like weaverbird (13). In the second, third and fourth stanzas of the poem, he demonstrates his talkativeness through the use of the figure of speech known as "circumlocution". Circumlocution as a figure of speech allows the poet to play around with words as a talkative does while still trying to say what he has said earlier.

In Ojaide's "Waking", a poem which is divided into the conscious and the unconscious aspects of the persona, we also see how the persona engages in too much talk in his unconscious, even more than he did in his conscious. In the first three lines of the first stanza of the same poem, just as we have seen in Osundare's "The Lake came to my house" the persona acknowledges his talkativeness, when he says "Suddenly I wake from a nightmare to the chorus of the wind and birds" (71). In these lines the persona is of the view that in his unconscious, he joins the wind and the birds in their noise-making activities. However, through these free-for-all talks, these poets also talk their disturbing memories and hallucinations responsible for their different illusions out. For instance, in Osandare's "The city will not die" the event that gives rise to the illusion with which the poem is created is purged. And in the poem, we are made to believe that, the event in the poem is the city's destruction. Hence, in the poem, the persona invokes the primordial archetype of "the wounded healer" to intervene and help regain the rebirth of the city.

In Ojaide's "Waking" the event that gives rise to the illusion of the poem is an unmentioned African internal problem. This is evident in the second stanza, where the persona notes, "After waking from the nightmare/I shed tears/ for the daybreak of Africa" (71). In his book, *The Psychological Society*, Gross has explained that once talked out, the poets become well again because at this time the poet's "symptom(s)" immediately and permanently disappear. If these problems, pains or memories persist in the poets' minds and the poets are unable to find outlets for them either in creativity or other means, the poets' condition become worst, the pains reappear in their minds in the forms of destructive illusions and can lead them to madness. In most circumstances, the situations that are captured in the poets' illusions are to a great extent more intense than what are in reality. Trilling captures a similar situation with reference to a typical neurotic patient, thus:

> The patient comes to the physician to be cured, let us say, of a fear of walking on the street. The fear is real enough, there is no illusion on that score, and it produces all the physical symptoms of a more rational fear, the sweating palms, pounding heart, and shortened breath. But the patient thinks that there is no cause for the fear, or rather that

there is, as he says, no "real cause" there are no machine guns, man traps, or tigers in the street. The physician knows, however, that there is indeed a "real cause" for the fear, though it has nothing at all to do with what is or is not on the street, the cause is within the patient, and the process of the therapy will be to discover, by gradual steps, what this real cause is and to free the patient from its effects. (2806).

The relationship between the patient and the physician in Trilling's assertion represents the relationship between the poets and their readers. The illusion of the fears in the street is like the same experience which the poets reproduce in the form of poetry. As we have seen, just as the fears of experiences are conditioned by physical symptoms, so also are the fears expressed in Osundare's "The Lake Came to my House" when the persona was rendered homeless by the Hurricane Katrina.

Substitute Gratification

The second form through which Osundare and Ojaide reproduced their experiences as poetry is "substitute gratification". "substitute gratification" is a psychological form or situation in which the poets use their poetry as alternative to reality. By alternative, I mean, those things the poets are unable to achieve or do in reality, which they achieve or do by putting their personas to use in their poetry. In Osundare and Ojaide's Poems, we have seen that the poets make their poems substitute "opportunity" to talk to people they could not talk to in reality. For example, in the poem entitled "The Lake Came to my House" Osundare addresses the politicians and the city administrators, who built "levees with levity" that could easily be overrun by angry waters while collapsing like helpless mound. In lines one and twenty, Osundare is of the view that with the greedy and restless politicians in power the country is doomed.

In Ojaide's "When Soldiers are Diplomats" we see a similar situation, in the poem, the persona addresses the soldiers with words and symbols that reveal his anger and worry over the involvement of soldiers in the politics of the country. Hence, he calls them "bed bug" in lines twelve and thirteen: "The bedbug doesn't care for the taste of your blood" (4), and in lines thirty-four and thirty-five, he says "And the bedbug, that smug cannibal doesn't care for the rank smell of blood" (5).Thus he used his poem as substitute gratification to confront the soldiers and tell their evil activities to their faces. This, he could not ordinarily do by himself because the military regime may have him killed or jailed.

Sometimes, the poets also use their poems as "substitute society" where they do things they could not do in reality in order to escape worries. For instance, in *Moonsongs*, Osundare's persona finds himself in feast with the moon, he says: "we called the statue to a talking feast" (7). It is possible that in reality, Osundare wishes to see himself float with the moon (8). We see a similar situation in Ojaide's "NO". In the poem, Ojaide expresses his wish to be protective of any one good. In the words of Nietzche:

> Who does not do violence, does not attack or retaliate, who leaves vengeance to God, who like us, lives hidden, who shuns all that is evil, and altogether asks very little of life – and then punish the bad – those like Nietzche says, "out of that instinct of self-preservation… notoriously justifies every kind of lie" (495).

Since Ojaide could not do so in reality due to some constraints, he resorts to doing so in his poem. In the poem, Ojaide tells us through his persona that if your "friends", "enemies" or "the public" are always after you with one trick or the other to run you down. "before they devour you for their own reasons; your own fears, stop them with an instant "No " (43). In his essay, von Franz affirms that, when the poet engages in substitute gratification, he makes progress only when in the process of creation, he "lives out his innate human nature" (164). Most times, the poets do not just engage in substitute gratification out of their own will, they are forced to embark on this by the forces that are responsible for poetic creation. When this happens, the poets lack the will power to say no; so they cooperate because their lack of cooperation might result in some kind of psychic conflict. Franz goes on to make us realize that the feeling of cooperation is an intrinsic feeling in the minds of the poets that engage themselves in substitute gratification (164).

Transference

The third form through which Osundare and Ojaide realized their experiences as poetry is "transference". According to Eagleton, "transference is a psychological form or the process of ascribing to others, the feelings and wishes which are actually our own" (159). In the course of their writing, the poets begin to unconsciously transfer unto their personas, the physical conflicts from which they suffer. If they had difficulties with their fathers for example, they may unconsciously cast their personas in that role. If they had a problem with their wives, for instance, they make their personas punish the wife-characters in their poems – the way they wished they should have done it in reality. In Osundare's *Moonsongs* for instance, the worry about his double personality is cast on the personality of the persona. In the poem, Osundare has made it known that he is torn between two personalities which he describes through putting the symbol, "mask" to use. Even though this worry is that of Osundare, it is expressed using his persona in the poem. In "A City Without a People", Osundare also expresses his hate over the destruction left behind by the 2004 Hurricane Katrina of New Orleans. Even though it is Osundare's hate, it is also given expression through the use of his persona. In "The City will not Die", Osundare acknowledges that he attains a rebirth of the city which in other words, means a state of satisfaction, oblivion or individuation. And as we have seen in the poem, even though it is Osundare who had attained these states of self-realization, it is given expression through the personality of his persona.

In "Now That I a am Forty', Ojaide is of the view that at forty, he has become even more meticulous and courageous with the issues of life. In the course of expressing how meticulous and courageous he can be, he casts his persons on a role where he has to "stand on a termite heap

gazing at a cricket hole" (98). In the poem entitled "visiting Home", Ojaide captures a situation where the beautiful spring from where he drinks whenever he visits home is suddenly left in ruins. Even though, it is Ojaide who visits home and the spring, the whole actions that are described in the poem are transfered unto another personality, -his persona. For instance, in line one of the poem: "I have gone back to the spring at its abandoned/Source" (158), the pains that are inherent in Ojaide's action and expressions are transferred unto the persona. At the end of the poem, especially in lines twenty-three to twenty-six, where it is written: "I stand before the home land's spring I can neither drink of its present state nor will I throw away the calabash – I must fashion ways to drink of it without its dirt, drink it only clean" (158). Ojaidetransfers the burden of clearing the ruined spring unto the personality of his persona – an act which maybe he wishes he could do by himself. Again, In "Delta Blues" Ojaide transfers the anger of what has become of the Delta unto the personality of his persona. Even though it is Ojaide who is pained, in the poem it is the person who laments: "The inheritance I sat on for centuries now crushes my body and soul" (159). In lines one and two of the poem "My nativity gives immortal pain masked in barrels of oil" (159).Ojaide transfers these pains to his persona who in turn expresses it in the poem.

Jung is of the view that during transference, the poets learn how important it is to listen to their inner-selves. Franz reiterates Jung's view that "in order to learn what the inner totality of the Self wants them to do, they give in to this almost "imperceptible, yet powerfully dominating, impulse – an impulse that comes from the urge towards unique, creative self-realization" (167). When the poets have successfully transferred all their anguishes upon their persona or have successfully paid back wrong or aggression for aggression through their personas unto the representative enemy or friend (poetic characters of those who have wronged them in reality), they become calm again.

Conclusion

From the analysis of the poems of Ojaide and Osundare, this research has shown that the poetry of both poets embody the psychic crisis of their generation, and that the poems are products of their different experiences. The beauty of these experiences is that they are recreated as poetry. Through the archetype of "the wounded healer", we do not only see the pains and worries that are registered in the minds of these poets, but we also see the poets' conscious importation of therapeutic measures to resolve issues. The primordial archetype of "the wounded healer" has been an indispensable tool in the hand of Ojaide and Osundare, and with the aid of "Talking cure", "Substitute gratification" and "Transference", these poets have succeeded in incorporating therapy into their poetry.

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THE EXPERIENCE OF THERAPOETICS IN AMERICAN COUNTRY MUSIC

By

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Abstract

Music as literature is one form of therapoetics, an exercise that effects healing through creativity. For the purposes of finding relief from depressions individuals turn to music as self-therapy. American country music claims healing powers. This study investigates those potentials and the relevance of songs in postmodern society. The aim of this paper is to interpret The Everly Brothers as an instance of psychological healing through their musical expression as a form of well-being through the arts. The paper's theoretical framework is premised on Reader Response theory to interpret the nature of therapoetics in American country music in selected songs of The Everly Brothers. The paper concludes that our understanding of therapoetics foregrounds the impact of music as a prevalent therapeutic form of healing. And the utilization of the Reader Response theory intrinsically reveals the effects of the lyrics of the American country music as an expression of affective art.
Key words: Creativity, Music, Popular Culture, Reader Response theory, Therapoetics

Introduction

The need for relief from depressions occasioned by the twentieth-century World Wars defined American popular culture. Popular culture, or mass culture, is a life style associated with the downtrodden, and originated during the Industrial Revolution when there was massive migration and urbanization resulting in men and women working harder for better living. It was a period of depression facilitating the emergence of affordable, simple and available forms of relieving entertainments, like country music, rock, 'n' roll, swing, hip-pop, ragtime, and others. Unlike popular culture, high culture referred to the ruling or elitist entertainments. The main attraction is with the highbrow: the food, fashion, architecture, music (such as jazz and blues) was designed to suit a wealthy lifestyle.

In the late 1950s, The Everly Brothers had such songs as "Claudette", "Since You Broke My Heart", "Let it Be Me", "Oh What a Feeling", "Devoted to You", "Bird Dog", "When Will I Be Loved", "Till I Kissed You" and "Take a Message to Mary"; country music that interpreted life in the country side. The target of the songs was the subordinate class, and the performance was in

public places where the masses were found: restaurants, coffee shops, saloons, barbers shops, buses and such other ordinary places. Country music was popular because its message fitted into the daily lifestyle of the ordinary people.

Similarly in Africa, especially in Nigeria, the popular culture, in the late 1950s and the early 1960s, had such renowned names as Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Sunny Okosun, Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey, Rex Lawson. The Kolokuma/Opokuma region of southern Nigeria has had such artists as SonduSuokiri of Sampou, Gbadu of Igbedi, Fred Zibo of Odi, whose music is themed on the social and economic affairs of the masses.

This study aims to highlight the place of American pop culture even in contemporary times, as a relevant medium of healing art for the dejected, exploited and desolate masses to redefine their psyche. The selected songs of the "The Everly Brothers" chosen for analysis include: "Takea Message to Mary" and "Let it Be Me" which significantly have strong impact on the audience. Thus, music's sentimental power lies in the evocative attribute to convey soothing relief.

Conceptual Clarification
From literary practice, therapoetics involves the turning to literature as self-therapy from physical, mental, or spiritual pain and suffering to achieve wellness. Country music inspireideal outcomes since they are written as a mental means of addressing pain and suffering; thus foregrounding country music as a popular therapeutic creativity in contemporary times. As therapeutic imagination it effects catharsis/release or the purgation of emotion in the mind of the audience as it is able to "transport the reader or hearer into that 'other world' of alternative realities" (Trinya 21-22).

The term "therapoetics" is considered by critics to mean healing through creative work. Therapoetics as Kontein Trinya brings to the fore is "conceived as the interdisciplinary and clinical application of poetry to diagnosed conditions, as music has been" (31).Trinya makes clarification of this catch all phrase, therapoetics as "on the one hand, a perspective on utilitarian affect in therapeutic terms whether or not the therapy had been an authorial or poetic intent" (30). He goes on to state that: "on the other hand, in a psychoanalytic sense, an interest in the therapy that the creative process offers the poet; the healing or health or palliation that comes from the 'expressive' release of toxic pent up emotions" (30). In this connection then, therapy is perceived as "curative, preventive and palliative respects, addressing mental and behavioural wellness as well as physiological wellness that is ultimately achievable from the state of mental balance" (Trinya31).

Theoretical Framework
The Reader-response theory which is the framework of this study underscores the role of individual readers of literary works as producers or creators of meaning (Abrams and Harpham 266). This

assertion prompts this paper to state here that as a literary theory, reader-response focuses attention on the reader as an active and worthy contributor of meaning. Implicated here is that meaning of a literary work is viewed from the perspective or experience of the reader. Reader-response recognized as affective criticism denotes the "emotional effects or dispositions" which creative writings "arouse in the audience or readers akin to catharsis" (Trinya 17). Trinya adds as a modifier that affective criticism is the "power of art to stir psycho-physiological responses from its audience" (17).

This theory explains what occurs in the readers' minds in the course of interpreting meanings of texts; and thus reveals that reading as identical to writing is an imaginative process. According to reader-response critics, "There is no universally determinate meaning of a work; two readers will agree in their interpretation only insofar as their "identical themes" are sufficiently alike to enable each to fit the other's re-creation of a text to his or her own distinctive responses" (Abrams and Harpham 267). Reader-response theory, then, stresses how each reader adds meaning to the text that completes it and that makes each reading different. Clearly, using the reader-response theory enables readers manifest texts into what they mean.

To construct meaning, there is the realization that "literary texts frequently contain social dilemmas and conflicts. Such reading demands personal responses from readers" (Yang, 50). These responses have the power to evoke our sensibilities towards the therapeutic. It is supremely important to note that healing is not only for the audience but for the writer/ music composer as well.

Literary   **Analysis**

We shall now turn our critical attention in the reaming section of the paper to the therapoetics analysis of the selected songs of The Everly Brothers and enriches our present understanding of healing and literature as a prevalent therapeutic enterprise in our contemporary era.

Country Music's Message of Hope

Popular culture is expressed in music, sports, fashion, the mass media (TV, Radio and Internet advertisement, magazines, presentations), and the visual arts. Terry Eagleton describes it as "political life … transformed to a kind of aesthetic spectacle" (202), and Ogaga Okuyade says it is "an artistic form and a broad based cultural phenomenon" (369) that "not only provides entertainment for its teeming enthusiastic publics, it is equally becoming a very formidable vehicle for political education and mobilization" (370). Tim Woods identifies its background in America and Britain, in the 1950s and 1960s (165). It provided a voice to the masses, to express their disaffection with the elitist class that took advantage of the massive urban migration.

The messages of the Everly Brothers elevated the soul in the Great Depression of the era. Woods explains that "popular culture became the expression of, as well as the construction of, youth

culture and ultimately enabled the formation of sites of enunciation for a variety of 'marginal' groups" (165). People sought alternative means of emotional freedom. David Ewen cited the "proliferation of burlesque and sporting houses, beer halls, penny arcades, restaurant" in those times (4), for the entertainment of the depressed people. There was low production because fewer and fewer persons possessed the purchasing power. The people use pop culture to encourage themselves.

The Lyrical Therapy in The Everly Brothers "Take a Message to Mary"

These are the words of a frontier lad
Who lost his love when he turned bad

Take a message to Mary
But don't tell her where I am
Take a message to Mary
But don't tell her I'm in jail
You can tell her I had to see the world
Or tell her that my ship set sail
You can say she better not wait for me
But don't tell her I'm in jail
Oh don't tell her I'm in jail

Take a message to Mary
But don't tell her what I've done
Please don't mention the stagecoach
And the shot from a careless gun
You can tell her I had to change my plans
And cancel out the wedding day
But please don't mention my lonely cell
Where I'm gonna pine away
Until my dying day

Take a message to Mary
But don't tell all you know
My heart aching for Mary
Lord knows I miss her so
Just tell her I went to Timbuktu
Tell her that I'm searching for gold
You can say she better find someone new
To cherish and to hold

Oh, Lord, this cell is cold
Mary, Mary
Oh, Lord this cell is cold (http://genius.com).

It is a letter from prison to a lover; one of the most emotional songs of The Everly Brothers. The story not only tells the trauma of a broken-hearted lover but the unawareness of the partner's imprisonment. It tells the Biblical annunciation story of angel Gabriel's message to Mary, to relieve her anxiety. The song not only interprets the message of hope to Mary, who was betrothed to the simple Joseph, but also provides an insight into the mental state of the victim. Okuyade argues that popular art assists minority groups to trace their identities as the 'other,' "as a means of embodying and elaborating ethnic/regional identities" (374). The song shows that though both Mary and her lover both suffer victimization, her imprisoned lover suffers identity problem and hides his status as a convict.

Mary suffers trauma from her absent lover because of her feelings of true love. This country song heals the emotionally disturbed, providing solace in the lyrics. Roselyne M. Jua and Kelvin N. Toh describe it as "redefining what has been defined" (63).

Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan explain the dual function of culture as "a means of domination, of assuring the rule of one's class or group over another, and a means of resistance over such domination, a way of articulating oppositional point of view to those in dominance" (1233). *The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* states that popular culture "provides a window into the public consciousness, and is an important element of solidarity within social classes and division within them." In the same vein, Adam Krims argues that "gangstar rap has precisely been the symbolic collapsing of the MC onto the artist – the projection that the MC himself (with the gender-specific pronoun purposefully unmodified) is a persona – a voice from the 'streets', speaking from authentic experience" (1286). Krims further states:

> Ice Cube's (one of the original public rapper in the genre) entire early persona straight down to the ubiquitous scowl, depends on the collapsing of the angry, aggressive, and politically charged figure of O'Shea Jackson (Ice Cube's given name); thus, while the identity formed in the song "The Nigga Ya Love to Hate" is a virtual, in a sense, as that of any singing or rapping voice in a song, the production of that identity serves a dual purpose (1286).

It shows the question of black American identity as most of the popular artists propagate sensitive political issues under codenames, to disguise in their songs. Others struggle for identity, not minding the consequences. According to Frantz Frank Fanon, "without a Negro past, without a

Negro future, it was impossible for me to live my Negrohood …sin is Negro as virtue is white" (166,177). It implies the dignity of the black race. Fanon is of the view that blacks must not feelsecure. Sigmund Spaeth states that "every period of American history has had its own characteristics songs, from the days of the Revolution, when patriotism and politics were leading themes to the reckless distortions of the Jazz Age, with its hysterical flouting of all convention or tradition" (30). Spaeth further argues that "slang, clothes, coiffures, inventions, games, food and songs were of the same type … popular music kept time with the mood" (30).

Therapy and Ideology in Everly Brothers' "Let it be Me"
In the Everly Brothers' "Let it be Me," arouses feelings of longing for 'the other.' The song has six stanzas, with rhyme scheme of aab, ccd, eef, ggh, iij and kkl.
"Let it be Me"

> I bless the day I found you
> I want to stay around you
> And so I beg you, let it be me
>
> Don't take this heaven from one
> If you must cling to someone
> Now and forever, let it be me
>
> Each time we meet love
> I find complete love
> Without your sweet love what would life be
>
> So never leave me lonely
> Tell me you love me only
> And that you'll always let it be me
>
> Each time we meet love
> I find complete love
> Without your sweet love what would life be
>
> So never leave me lonely
> Tell me you love me only
> And that you'll always--- let--it--be—me (http://genius.com).

The song is one of the curative means of the American at that period in history because of the assurances of love and hope for one another. Okuyade states that the message of the song shows the challenges of the blacks and the need to be in touch with the realities in a white dominated

society like America and this "form of music continues to make functional the essential role of popular arts; it records the frenzied chronicle of the collective meanderings, ambitions, pains, joy and dreams of the masses" (371). Okuyade explains that "the music is often syncretic but nevertheless contributes positively to the development of a new social order" (371). It means that the songs dwell on the theme of love, which is the predominate issues of the everyday lifestyle of the ordinary citizen and it is freely expressed without superfluous modus operandi. The song is American popular country music of the 1950s and 19960s, which features as an alternative means in the proclamation and voicing of the emotional state of a people. For these reasons, the songs are mass produced to satisfy the demands of the teeming laypeople.

Popular culture, according to Norton Frey, uses offensive language, which affects the audience, "then it begins to emerge into the softer lighting of 'quaint' and cultivate people become interested in it, and finally it begins to take on the archaic dignity of the primitive" (108). The language might offend the elitist class, because the messages are political. It is a people-oriented art form that exploits ordinary words to make meaning to its audience. Stephen Connor argues that "in popular culture…the postmodern condition is not a set of symptoms that are simply present in a body of the sociological and textual evidence, but a complex effect of the relationship between social practice and the theory that organizes, interprets and legitimates its form" (184).

With The Everly Brothers, meaning reflects society. In the words of Okayed popular culture "is public-oriented especially at the level of language"; language that is "adaptive and flexible" (370-371). For William Cole, "music occupies a certain length of time, and the only physical means of measuring it is … through the ears. What will give a series of impression … Music is a succession of sounds, simple or complex…the ear hears" (1).

Conclusion
This paper analyses music as a therapoetics exercise in contemporary literature. The study focused on American popular county music as literature for the purpose of intensifying therapeutic knowledge. Employing the reader-response literary analytic approach reveals that our understanding of therapoetics foregrounds the impact of music as a prevalent therapeutic form of healing of both writers and the audience. And the utilization of the Reader Response theory intrinsically reveals the effects of the lyrics of the American country music as an expression of affective art; thus enriching our present-day understanding of healing and literature and as a current therapeutic enterprise in the contemporary times.

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THE DYNAMICS OF CORRUPTION IN SELECTED NOVELS OF NNAMDI ANUMIHE

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Abstract

This paper investigates the dynamic indices of corruption in the Nigerian society. It observes with great dismay that corruption has already become a brand name; institutionalized in all facets of the Nigerian society in particular and Africa in general. It is a cankerworm that has eaten so deep and dwarfed the development of the nation. Chinua Achebe lamented that "corruption in Nigeria has passed the alarming and entered the fatal stage; and Nigeria will die if we keep pretending that she is only slightly indisposed"(38). Achille Mbembe's strand on postcolonial theory encapsulates the gamut of the trend of corruption in the novels under study. Thus, using this theory, this research provides a qualitative analysis on the indices of the dynamics of corruption in Nnamdi Anumihe's *The Lockdown* and *The Plane Crash* which have been appropriated by the leaders from the literary lenses of the artist and if nothing urgent is done, the society will, in no distant time, be enveloped in the ocean of total collapse.

Keywords: dynamics, corruption, indices, selected novels, Nnamdi Anumihe

Introduction

> It is clear to me that an African creative writer who tries to avoid the big social and political issues of contemporary Africa will end up being completely irrelevant – like that absurd man in the proverb who leaves his burning house to pursue a rat fleeing from flames
> - Chinua Achebe.

(L)iterature involves our deepest responses to the facts of human existence and intervenes in those areas of experience where we assume consciousness of our situation with regard to others and to the world.

-AbiolaIrele, The African Experience in Literature and Ideology.

Every society has her own narrative; her history to tell. A nation without a narrative exists in a vacuum. There are ups and downs in every narrative. Surely, they help to shape, restructure and situate in continuous restructuring for a better and more harmonious existence. This is why literature generally performs a very critical role of mirroring the society with the sole aim of placing its searchlight on every facets of life for proper appraisal. Deducing from J. O. J. Nwachukwu Agbada's words, "A nation of 'pen-pushers' is a nation where the intellect prevails' (407), which implies that creative writers who are supposedly the 'pen-pushers' are the true lenses through which the nation sees properly. As the creative writers unveil the works through fictions, drama (plays) or poetry, actions and in-actions are brought to bare for the ultimate benefit of the society. This informs us why Scheneider et al had expressed that a creative artifact should be:

> Good fiction in the realistic mode is concerned primarily with human character and motives and with human values. These elements … are more important in the long run than any account of social conditions for the characters, their actions and their values remain meaningful long after particular social conditions have changed (29).

As an emerging creative artist in the eyes of the critics, Nnamdi Anumihe has six novels to his credit: *Chartered Messenger* (2009), *Street Merchants* (2010), *The Plane Crash* (2014), *The Last of the Patriots* (2015), *A Handful of Dust* (2017) *and The Lockdown* (2021). He has two epic poetry collections: *The Toddlers* (1983) and *Beyond the Threshold* (1984) and a collection of poems which is *The Town Crier* (2013). Besides, he has also published a collection of short stories titled – *The National Flag* (2006). He has many other English, Communication in English Textbooks and Literature Textbooks. He has won many awards like; The Mamam Vasta Poetry Prize UNN (1982/83), Omabe Poetry Prize UNN, (1982/83), National Merit Award, 2000 (NAPS), Award of Excellence in Oratory and the Teaching of English (2008) – JCSUG) and Ahiajoku: Pan – Igbo Colloquium Lectures Laureate, etc.

In this regard, a handful of critics have delved into the reading of Nnamdi Anumihe's creative works to finding some literary substances of great importance in purging and restoring our long infected society. Very young literary critics like Nwokeneme Longinus Onyekachi, Mishael Nwaiwu, Clementina Aigbologa, Smart Achazie Chijioke, Henry Eberechukwu Macaustin and a few others, have given/rendered a handful of critiquing towards some of Nnamdi Anumihe's novels which dwell on a lot of social ills that have really bedevilled the total growth of this nation

and Africa at large. Nwokeneme Longinus Onyekachi, for instance, has extensively explored thematically some contemporary social problems on Anumihe's novels. Thus, he said,

> Thematically, Anumihe tackles contemporary social problems, problems that have permeated into the fabrics of the nation. This is the syndrome of god fatherism or having Abraham as father (a term/phrase) often to qualify sentimental closeness or disposition which has unfortunately affected the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation (2224-3266).

Really, it is no longer news that one of the core reasons why Nigeria is at this highly deplorable state is this social syndrome of 'god fatherism' as pointed out by Nwokeneme. More often than not, the real or qualified people who are supposed to be at work delivering qualitative and dedicated services are consciously left out to rot in the society because they do not know any 'big man'/politician to make a phone call, sign a complimentary card, give a short note, send a text message and the likes. All these and more have in no mean measure dwarfed the rate at which Nigeria in particular and Africa in general should have developed all rounds. Nwaiwu reverberated on the motivating reformation power of Anumihe's novels in spite of the tortures in the face of reality which the society offers (2009). From their own perspectives, Aigbologa, Ogbedeto and Chinedu-Oko had observed that Nnamdi Anumihe had demonstrated himself as a writer whose creative vision reveals a caution and a moral guide in human interest and relationship (102).

The critics so far discussed above have endeavoured to critique Anumihe from their own lenses and have not been able to critically examine another destructive cankerworm that is angrily devastating all the strongholds of our society which is ***the dynamics of corruption*** as mirrored/surveyed in Nnamdi Anumihe's *The Lockdown and The Plane Crash.* Although Anumihe's *The Lockdown* is a very current novel (2021) and as at the time of this paper, there is no single critiqued work on it available. This is the main research drive of this paper.

The Dynamics of Corruption in Nnamdi Anumihe's *The Lockdown and The Plane Crash*
 The main causes of the problems that have *kwashiokorized* our country Nigeria in particular and Africa at large is dinning with corruption. Corruption is seen as "dishonest or illegal behaviour, especially of people in authority; the act or effect of making somebody change from MORAL to IMMORAL standards of behaviour (Hornby AS 347).

The word CORRUPTION has become so common in the Nigerian daily language use parlance and lexicon that the claim for its fight has also become so much abused that it has become accepted and institutionalized in all facets of Nigeria. This explains why it is painfully lamented that "corruption in Nigeria has passed the alarming and entered the fatal stage; and Nigeria will die if we keep pretending that she is only slightly indisposed" (Achebe 38).

From the on-going views, it is quite imperative to note that this 'new creative artist'- Nnamdi Anumihe, needs to be given some attention and brought to the slaughter table of our more experienced literary critics in order to consummate the taste of this upcoming 'pen-pushers' according to J. O. J Nwachukwu Agbada.

The Lockdown and The Plane Crash

The Lockdown is a novel. It is the latest creative work of Nnamdi Anumihe. As earlier noted, as a new entrant into the creative cult, the imminent social issues he raises in his fictive works and the way(s) he does them are the reasons why more critical attention(s) should be given to them. The story of *The Lockdown* is highly topical. In fact, in Nigeria we are still battling/struggling with them and of course, the global world. They are the endemic corruption and COVID 19 pandemic. The novel gives highlight on the global pandemic- COVID 19, from the Nigeria's Perspective. The novelist, Nnamdi Anumihe, is quite eschatological and highly educating on the insight he provides in relation to characterization and thematic explorations especially, the bone of contention which is- Corruption. Corruption is so rooted in the country so much so that even the unborn in the country is already infected with the deadly bacteria. It has terribly mixed with the blood of a greater percentage of Nigerians that the remaining 'elect' is doubtful if symptoms will not be found should a good laboratory test be conducted. The most annoying part of it is that it protrudes from the hands of those who are expected to salvage the problem. Anumihe's *The Lockdown* sadly notes:

> They were surprised when they saw medical staff of National Disease Control Agency (NDCA) wearing face masks and gloves, testing returnees at Murtala Mohammed Airport, Lagos. But attempts by the staff to subject the governors and their entourage to the tests were repulsed by the governors' aides that used their security details to shield their masters and flout the rule of compulsory 14 day quarantine for returnees into the country. Chief Melford followed them and as they entered their cars and departed in convoys, he took uber taxi to a nearby hotel where he spent the night having a good time with some friends (pp. 1-2).

Charles Nnolim had decried of this ugly leadership impunity that it,

> Depicts a society adrift and a people lost in the imbecilities of fertile optimism; hoping that materialism and the pursuit of dirty lucre will compensate for the loss of nation's "soul" for the Nigeria we encounter in its contemporary fiction is a nation without a soul, without direction, without a national ethics – it is a rudderless ship a-sail amidst the jetsam and flotsam of a directionless voyage to nowhere (230).

The dynamism of corruption in the country has become so alarming that it really "depicts a society adrift and a people lost in the imbecilities of fertile optimism …" Again, Anumihe's *The Lockdown* disappointedly notes that:

> Tony learnt that in the neighboring communities, some politicians brought out some old women to the primary school football field and spaced them in social distancing order. They were photographed, each woman holding aloft a small tuber of yam and the picture uploaded to the social media. In another community, the women came with wheelbarrows to pack home the promised largess, but all they got was one packet of indomie noodles, and a small loaf of Agege bread, Abusi reportedly bitterly (pp. 113).

It is quite pitiable even the absurdist dynamic nature of corruption being applied by the so called leaders of the people. It is so barbaric that it has even gone beyond the alarming and gone to the fatal state (38). This shows why a leader, instead of distributing the palliatives given to the citizens to alleviate their frustrations, would keep back the greater part of the largess and still goes ahead in pretence of providing those things by taking a photograph of the beneficiaries being posted to the social media for self-glory.

Similarly, Anumihe's *The Plane Crash* is another creative piece that depicts this very social ill of corruption which has really brutalized our country – Nigeria. As the name reflects, it unveils some very critical aspects of our nation that actually demand urgent purgation before this country collapses. In bringing some of the antagonistic issues of high concern to bare, Macaustin and Achazie had given a critique of Anumihe's *The* Plane *Crash* that;

> In his approach to social realism, Anumihe delves into the aviation sector to recreate impeccably, the rot, corruption, insincerity, etc, that have beclouded and be-devilled the sector. He endows the characters with qualities that make them true archetype of our nation's state. Guyanada Airlines is where the scourge of corruption plays out (98).

The Lockdown thus reveals that:

> According to information from the rumour mills, before he embarked on his Annual Leave, the Chief Engineer, Engr. J. J. Apex, submitted a detailed report to the MD based on comprehensive tests carried out by a team of engineers led by him. It was a decision reached by the chief engineer and his deputy. But because of the urge to maximize profits at the expense of safety, the MD and the Deputy Chief Engineer decided to schedule the plane for a flight to Abuja. They felt that with Engr. Apex conveniently out of the way

through his annual leave; there would be no ethical obstacles on their way to culling corners and maximize profits (89).

"But because of the urge to maximize profits", a professional and highly technical advice to foreground the plane is neglected and the price becomes the unnecessary deaths of the innocent souls who are constantly in air crashes – *The Plane Crash.*

At this point it becomes necessary to note that one of the imprints of postcolonial theory as postulated in Achille Mbembe's, O*n The Postcolony* is untold corruption through either direct or indirect oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. Mbembe opines that state power creates a new set of meaning which it forces on the people's consciousness thereby gaining a high level of power over the people (103). The creation of a new set of meaning is in other words, the dynamics of corruption and oppression which the bourgeoisie have continued to employ in order to achieve a perennial oppression on the proletariat.

In summary from both Nnamdi Amimihe's *The Lockdown* and *The Plane Crash*, this paper has shown/demonstrated that our politicians/leaders do not have the welfare of their subjects at heart. Instead, they are hardened; audaciously out to maximize their antics and dynamics to ensure the perennial suffering and frustration of the common Nigerians – the proletariat. The paper therefore recommends that the citizenry should also audaciously sit up to thorough reading especially creative works to be well informed for a better strategy to adopt to neutralize the antics/dynamic strategies of the bourgeoisie. When this is done, the mindless usurpation and demonstration of power rage of the bourgeoisie would have been checkmated for progressive and responsible society which happen to be the collective dreams and aspirations of the masses – *the common man.*

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LEXICO-FUNCTIONAL AND AFFECTIVE STUDY OF SELECTED POEMS FROM IBIERE KEN-MADUAKO'S *SOUNDS OF MOTHERHOOD*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the lexico-functional and affective nature of two purposively selected poems from Ibiere Ken-Maduako's *Sounds of Motherhood*. As the poet beats the drums of the sounds of motherhood she constructs the experiences of the typical African, nay Nigerian female right from the innocent childhood to teenage and to the matured and supposedly brave, yet timid womanhood-cum-motherhood. This paper aims at describing how the poet's choice of words, phrases and sentences portraying the cultural expectations of womanhood/motherhood and ideologies of sex preference, domestic violence, bride price, women's right are capable of evoking feelings of love, hatred, regret, docility, submissiveness, subjugation, aggressiveness, bravery, strength and weakness in the readers. The method of analysis is descriptive and interpretative, employing the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar Theory and the theory of Therapoetics as the bases for analysis. The findings reveal that the poems are incredibly affective deriving from how the poet's choice of appropriate words and expressions depict the peculiar challenges and experiences of the female in a predominantly patriarchal Nigerian society. The paper concludes that language as the meaning-making resource through which every society translates and transmits its ideologies and cultural expectations has strong therapeutic effects on the attitudes and behaviours of men and women in a society, which could be positive or negative. The poetic language use is influenced by the society's complex cultural stereotypes and ideologies which have the power to liberate and as well enslave its users.

Keywords: lexico-functional, affective imports, cultural ideologies, patriarchy, cultural stereotypes

Introduction

The patriarchal nature of the African society, particularly Nigeria, has well defined cultural expectations and ideologies that dictate and sustain the behaviours and conducts of the male and female child. Culturally, unlike the male folk, the female is to be 'seen not heard' and they do not inherit their fathers. Thus qualities such as gentleness, tenderness, submissiveness, timidity, humility, perseverance, home-maker and keeper are considered as effeminate while aggressiveness,

dominance, strength, bravery, outgoing are masculine traits. Similarly, the females are not accorded equal opportunities, ratings and training with the male child; even in naming the segregating patriarchal dictums are visible in female personal names. Such gender based ideologies that relegate the female folk to 'second class citizen" have been the subject of gender-oriented writers and critics.

The peculiar challenges and experiences of the female folk right from the innocent infancy to teenage and adulthood in a dominant patriarchal African society constitute the dominant thematic base of some contemporary Nigerian writers of whom Ibiere Ken-Maduako is one. This paper, therefore attempts to do a lexico-functional and affective study of two selected poems of Ken-Maduako with a view to unravel how the choice of words, phrases and sentences translates cultural expectations and ideologies on domestic violence, sex preference, women's right, bride price, etc thereby showing how affective the poems are and can be in arousing feelings of love, hatred, regret, docility, submissiveness, subjugation, aggressiveness, bravery, strength, weakness, etc.

Ibiere Ken-Maduako's *Songs of Motherhood* is a collection of 84 poems, first published in 2014 with a second edition in 2020. In the preface, the poet acknowledges the gender-sensitive nature of the poems as she notes 'this collection of poems is written for the women, the African woman who has passed through diverse experiences in her lifetime' (p. v). Though the African man is not left out as some poems also reflect experiences from the male's perspective, the majority of the poems echo and resonate with images of the female 'second class citizen' status right from innocent infancy stage (childhood) through teenage life to adulthood stage of womanhood-cum-motherhood in the home, marriages and the society at large. She constructs with appropriate words and expressions the sweet and bitter experiences of the typical frail, weak and timid African/Nigerian female who endures and enjoys different shades of 'unimaginable experiences' such as despair, dominance, subjugation and docility imposed upon her by cultural expectations and stereotyped ideologies. Drawing from the 'painful experiences' of different women and men including hers 'as a Christian or as a mother', the poet systematically couches in plain language the ideologies that perpetuate the painful experiences of life which have the possibility to evoke different shades of feelings in the readers. Thus, her poetic expressions are not mere statements for communicating 'painful experiences' they are capable evocative enablers of physical and psychological emotions.

Studies of Ken-Maduako's poems have been basically on gender ideological issues and the graphological features of one of the poems. Obi (2014) examines the issues of gender roles and gender ideologies/stereotypes such as sex preference, domestic violence, women's right etc in relation to 'the experiences of women at different stages of life from infancy, teenage life to adulthood'(p. 307) and the gender sensitivity of the poet. Kontein and Bakuyai (2020) deploy feminist critical discourse analysis to investigate gender ideologies and the lexicalization of gender violence, naming strategy as depicting sex preference, issues of bride price and women's right in

the collection arising from the poet's use of language in a critical manner in responding to these social vices. Elekima (2021) is a stylistic study of the graphological features of *Courage,* one of the poems in the collection as devices through which the poet conveys her message and also for the interpretation of the meaning of the poem. Apart from Kontein and Bakuyai (2020) that examined the poet's use of language as a response to the stereotyped gender ideologies, Obi's (2014) focus is on the gender-based ideologies and stereotypes while Elekima (2021) focuses on stylistic devices deployed by the poet to convey her message in the poem *Courage.*

This present study differs from them as it does a lexico-functional and affective analysis of language use in two purposively selected poems examining how the poet's choice of words, phrases and sentences   portraying the cultural expectations of womanhood/motherhood and ideologies of sex preference, domestic violence, bride price, women's right are capable of evoking feelings of love, hatred, regret, docility, submissiveness, subjugation, aggressiveness, bravery, strength and weakness etc in the readers.

Conceptual Clarification
Lexico-functional
The term lexico-functional, as used in this paper, is a binary concept that delineates the lexical composition and functional realizations of grammatical constructions in relation to the contextual meaning of expressions. It refers to the fact that the lexis of a language and the functions it performs in grammar constitutes a continuum of grammatical resources from which the users of the language can select for the construal, construction and expression of their perception of the world, ideologies, consciousness and social relations in different communicative contexts and for different purposes. Thus, the choice of words, phrases and sentences used in any discourse, spoken or written, literary or non-literary are context-bound and purpose-dependent. In other words, lexico-functional showcases how the choices, functions and meanings of grammatical constructions are created and understood in language use.

Theoretical Framework
This study is anchored on two theories, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar theory (SFGT) and the theory of Therapoetics. Halliday's SFGT is a socio-semiotic theory which sees language as a meaning-making social artifact comprising network of systems, the choice and use of which is context-bound. Through the systems language serves a means of representing the world, perceived or imagined. With language human beings encode experiences and it plays a crucial role in people's involvement with one another. Hence spoken and written texts construe meanings, and the lexical and grammatical resources of language are organized in open systems that are functionally bound to meanings. The systems relevant to this study are the MOOD and the metafunction.

The mood system involves making choices from the different functional types of sentences. SFGT categorizes the mood system into two, indicative and imperative, with the indicative sub-divided into declarative and interrogative. The context of language use is a crucial factor in the choice of linguistic elements and the mood of the sentences for the construal and construction of any text and the interpretation of the text. The context ranges from physical such as academic, political, family contexts to non-physical situations such as the language users' socio-cultural norms, values, ideologies, physiological and psychological contexts. Considering of context together with the linguistic elements and the mood of the sentences deployed for the making of meaning in a literary or non-literary text helps to unfold how the meanings couched into a text is being controlled by some extralinguistic factors such as the writer's experiences or that of others, social relationships, societal ideologies, perceptions, attitudes, communicative purpose, and the target audience. Hence poetry can extract from the society all tendencies, attitudes, worldviews, ideologies, perceptions and visions. This is possible because the poets themselves are members of the society.

SFGT describes the meaning-making functions of language in construing, constructing, enacting, shaping and maintaining social systems, social relations, ideologies, experiences and organizing these in discourse as the metafunction system of language. The metafunction is categorized into ideational metafunction, interpersonal metafunction and the textual metafunction. The ones relevant to this study are the ideational and the interpersonal metafunctions.

The ideational metafunction, categorized into experiential and logical modes, refers to how language is used to 'organize, understand and express our perceptions of the world and of our own consciousness' (Bloor & Bloor, 2013, p. 10). The experiential mode is concerned with content or idea; the logical is about the relationship between ideas. The lexical and functional elements used for the realization of the ideational function are within the transitivity structures of the clause as representation. The functional elements comprise participants, a process and optional one or more circumstances. The lexical elements are the nominal groups which realize the participant function; the verbal groups realize the process role and the adverbial group or the prepositional phrase that realize the circumstance role.

The interpersonal function captures language as a means for enacting personal and social relationships; that is how language enables its users to participate in communicative acts with one another, take on roles, express and understand feelings, attitudes and judgements. The interpersonal meaning realized in the mood structures of clause as exchange has two composite parts, namely Mood and Residue. The Mood is the component of the clause which "embodies the proposition" while the Residue is "the remainder of the clause" (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.114). The Mood consists of two functional elements, the subject and the finite. The subject is a nominal group, and the finite is part of the verbal group. The Residue comprises three functional structures namely the predicator, complement and adjunct. The predicator is realized by a verbal group

(lexical verbs) minus the finite operator in the Mood element. The complement is typically realized by a nominal group and it has the potential of being subject. The Adjunct is typically realized by an adverb group or a prepositional phrase.

As the lexical and functional elements (words, phrases and sentences) of language are the resources for the realizing of these metafunctions and mood, the choice of words, phrases and sentences which writers make in order to convey their message are indicative of the perceptions, attitude and/or consciousness in relation to the subject of discourse. Hence, for this study the analysis is on the grammatical elements (words, phrases and sentences) that are used to realize the ideational and interpersonal functions that are likely to have affective imports on the readers.

The theory of therapoetics is hinged on the notion that 'art crosses defined boundaries of aesthetics to pursue relevance outside itself' (Trinya, 2019, p.15). Thus literary works such as poems, drama, novels have influence over the emotions of the readers and/or can redefine the perception of readers. The affective potency of such literary works derive from the choice of words, phrases, sentences and literary devices the writers deploy in constructing the message of their texts. Whether the writer's intention is to inform, question, instruct, persuade, criticize, entertain, literary works therefore have the power 'to stir psycho-physiological responses from its audience, making them to laugh, cry, smile, exclaim, raise a hand, jump'(Trinya, 2019, p.17). This means that the choice and semantic import of words, phrases/groups or sentences deployed by the writer and their respective discourse functions revealed through syntactic constructions impinges on the reader's psyche, and thereby can evoke some effects which could be positive or negative. The affective power of poetry therefore 'lies … in the shared codes between text and reader or hearer; it lies in the appeals of language, … by which poetry is able to transport the reader or hearer into that other world of … reality' and the images evoked 'stir up latent but familiar fireplaces that release the affective forces' in the reader's or hearer's recesses (Trinya, 2019, pp.21-22).

The two poems analysed in this study takes every reader or hearer into her or his own 'journey on the inside' and outside of the home, marriage and society where (s)he recognizes the imaginable and unimaginable landscape of experiences and challenges in a patriarchal society. Hence this paper's focus on the grammatical elements through which the poet portrayal of cultural expectations and ideologies enabled the readers to embark on this journey. To find out the affective import of the choice of words, phrase and sentences (language use) is to inquire how a specific configuration of language used for a specific artistic purpose is capable of evoking some feelings, negative or positive in the readers. What is of interest in this study is how the poets choice of lexico-functional structures as specific linguistic configuration successfully conveys her message and affects the readers emotions, feeling, attitudes, etc. To achieve this, the analysis of the linguistic structure of the selected poems explores how the general meanings of the poems are

conveyed and then figure out the cultural and ideological values reflected through the poems, and the possible effects on the readers.

Methodology

This study is purely descriptive. The data comprises extracts from the following two purposively selected poems, and abbreviated as indicated in parenthesis for ease of analysis:

WHAT'S IN A NAME (WIN); IF YOU GO (IYG)

For the analysis the words, phrases and sentences that portray cultural expectations and gender-based ideologies are extracted. Using SFG ideational and interpersonal models of analysis, the lexico-functional constituents of the words, phrases and sentence are identified and their affective imports are indicated. If the grammatical element the poet uses to construe the cultural expectations and gender-based ideologies is a sentence, the mood of the sentences is indicated. Declaratives are indicated as DECL; interrogatives as INTER and imperatives as IMPER.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Lexico-functional and Affective Analysis of WIN and IYG

Experiential	Participant	Process		Participant	Circumstance	Cultural expectations(CE) & Gender-based ideologies(GBI)	Possible affective imports
Interpersonal	Mood	Residue					
	Subject	Finite/Predicator		Complement	Adjunct		
WIN INTER		's		What	in a name		
		Asked		Icheke			
DECL	Nothing Mine I	Says Makes am		Obidiya no reference the heart of a man I am yet to know	to me	Role in marriage(CE);SEX preference(GBI); Predictive about a woman's role in marriage: fulfilling of the	Self-rejection, self-limitation, dependency attitude to life, lack of ambition, despair; love, peace,

					husband's desire	harmony, cordiality, indispensability, pride, submissive, dependable, reliable, trustworthy
Something I	Says Am	Ikenna my father's strength			Strength, bravery, sex preference (GBI)	Bravery, pride, dependable, ambitious, aggressive, assertive, self-worth
Nothing Mine	Says Is	Ogbenyealu a prophesy that I am for sale	to the highest bidder		High bride price (CE), greed, marriage not for love but for material gains	Object for sale, marry for money not love; separation, divorce, lust, materialistic tendencies, lack of self-assertion and commitment
Something Mine	Says Says	Ikemefuna My father's strength			Inheritance, patriarchal	Reliable, trustworthy,

			shall not be lost		hegemony (GBI)	dependabl e, bravery
INTER	Nothing	Says	Ikodiya		Concubine, extra-marital relationship, polygamy (CE)	Loss of self confidenc e, strife, rivalry, woman as object of man's sexual pleasure
	I	should remain	a concubine	For why forever		
	I	confined to	friendship	to a man I do not know	Goodness, friendship in marriage (CE)	Subjugati on, love, valuable
		says	Enyidiya			
	I	am	his possession	Worse still	Woman as her husband's property; Possession; property	Object of decoration , replaceabi lity, indispensa bility, admiratio n, care
	I	am				
		says	his clothes			
	There	's	Ngwahudiy a	in my name		
			Nothing			
	There	's	Something	in my name	Inheritance (GBI)	Love, peace, harmony, pride, cordiality, indispensa bility, trust, dependabl e, reliable, fulfillment
		says	Obinna			
	I	am	my father's heart			
	There	's	nothing	in some names	Inconseque ntiality and	

			Something	in others	consequentiality of names	
IYG				If	Domestic violence	Fear of desertion, separation, divorce, suffering; emotional and physical abuse; despair, depression; embarrassment, regret; fear of being married
INTER	you my heart my mind	go shall crave shall cruise	What pain What memories			
			The pains of your inflictions	upon my tender heart	Frailty, intimidation	
			The blows of your imposition	Upon my tender will	Subjugation	
			The squeeze of a hardened grip	Upon my tender flesh	Physical violence	
			The grinding of the knuckles Knuckle upon knuckle Knee upon knee		Physical violence	
	Cacastic catastrophe	Cocooed hinged		Upon a master plan A clever plot		
INTER	What remembrance of catalystic catastrophe	Crystallized and plotted				

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My heart	Shall cringe	What pain
		The
		loneliness
		that you're
		gone
		The pain of
		remembran
		ces

The poem, 'What's in a name?' (WIN) is dialogue started with an interrogative sentence 'What's in a name? asked Icheke' pondering over the meaning of names given to male and female, moving on through with statement answers to the meanings of names from male and female NP (Subject) participants respectively. It reveals the level of unfairness in the traditional Igbo society and how gender stereotypes and roles influence naming

Four of the responses from the bearers of female names are declaratives, lamenting and asserting the "nothing in some names" and their inconsequentiality (ken-Maduako, 2020, p.8). The only interrogative 'for why should I be confined to friendship to a man I do not know?' queries the nothingness in the name, 'Enyidiya'. The NP, 'Nothing' responses from the bearers of the female names, 'Obidiya, Ogbenyealu, Ikodiya, Enydiya, Ngwahudiya', corroborates the "inconsequentially" of naming. However, the names as marks of identity have ideological bases and cultural connotations that are likely to evoke affective imports on the readers. They reflect the cultural expectations and gender ideologies of the typical traditional Igbo society in relation to sex preference, marriage, and inheritance. The meaning of each female name can evoke both positive and negative feelings. What the bearers of the female names question is the negative impact of giving innocent female children marriage-oriented names that attaches them to men they do not know right from infancy. Such names are limiter and inhibitors to self development that make the female cares about nothing but to get married and become the what I describe as 'the dotting and indulgent care-taker' of her husband.

On the other hand all the responsive interpretations of the male names are declarative sentences asserting the positive impact of the 'something in others'. The NP, 'Something', responses in the male names connotes the patriarchal hegemony of gender preference that favours male children as the inheritors of family, achievers, symbols of power and self fulfillment of the father, giving them an invaluable edge over the female children. Such names affect positively the bearers' world view, ego and personality and could as well impinge on the minds of the readers of the poem.

However, there is a turning point if the pragmatics of the female names is considered beyond the patriarchal hegemony of second class citizen status of the female child. For instance, Obidiya

meaning the 'heart of her husband' connotes a sense of love, fulfillment, indispensability, value; Enyidiya meaning 'confined to her husband's friendship' could evoke love, inseparability, peace, compassion, cordiality, harmony; Ngwahudiya as her husband's 'clothes' evokes indispensability too as she covers his "nakedness" .

The second poem, IYG reveals the impact of domestic violence on the physical and psychological minds of the victim. It begins with a conditional clause which questions the consequences of desertion, separation or divorce and ends with an interrogative the questions the gravity of the consequences. It declares through NPs a complex release of emotional and physical violence, 'the pain of your inflictions upon my tender heart', 'the blows of your imposition upon my tender will', 'the squeeze of a hardened grip upon tender flesh', 'cacastic catastrophe' of probably the female victim who loves her husband which is powerful enough to cause desertion, separation or divorce. These NPs have high propensity to evoke negative affective import – despair, depression, regrets, fear of being married, embarrassment, discomfort, arising from domestic violence, physical and emotional violence. The poet's coining of the adjective 'cacastic' and the verb 'cocooed' to describe the enormity of the 'catastrophe' and the depth of the violent acts respectively stirs up images of physical violence which can make some readers become afraid of being married.

Conclusion

This study has shown how the lexico-functional resources deployed by poet to convey the meaning the poems are capable of evoking affective import. The declarative sentences and NPS, as linguistic resources proved powerful in shoving how the literal and hidden meanings of the poems are achieved. The patriarchal hegemony and ideology of the African society in relation to male and female children and the issue of domestic violence are determinable of the choice of sentences, phrases and words used throughout the poems. The dominance of NPs in the second poem, IYG gives evidence supporting the ideational metafunction as being the system through which experience, ideas and relation between ideas are construed and constructed in language use. Language use in a literary work, such as the poems is not only the carriers of the writer's intent but also releases varying streams of interpretation to the readers, especially as meaning and import of a text cannot be alienated from the context of the discourse. The poet's choice of words, phrases and sentences in the poems therefore are not mere statements that portray the consequences of domestic violence on the victims; they gives credence to language use as representation of ideologies and cultural expectations and an exchange of concepts, events, phenomena in a given society. Such representations and exchange couched and captured through the poet's choice of words, phrases and sentences stir up emotions in the readers; hence the poems are capable of having affective imports, which could be positive or negative.

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A PRAGMA-STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION TOXICITY IN SAM OMATSEYE'S "OBI-TUARY"

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Abstract

Communication toxicity is a tool used by politicians and their media consultants to undermine the opponent's popularity to secure some advantage during the build-up to elections. This paper analyses Sam Omatseye's article captioned "Obi-tuary,"in which the author uses the name of the presidential candidate of the Labour Party to coin a notice of death of the candidate's presidential ambition. The Speech Acts Theory of Austin Searle and the stylistic principle of foregrounding by the Prewar Prague School of Linguistics establishes the article as a classic representation of the verdictive illocutionary speech act, which predominantly makes an assessment of judgment about the acts of others; in this case, Peter Obi, the addressee. The findings indicate that the term "Obi-tuary," as coined by Omatseye, is both a lexical and semantic deviation that signals the supposed end of Peter Obi's presidential ambition. The paper draws its data from an online publication of the Nation Newspaper. The paper further demonstrates that when politicians are desperate in their quest to ascend a public office such as the presidency, they perceive communication toxicity as a veritable tool to push their agenda, which may inadvertently turn out to be an avenue for their self-immolation. Hence, the paper concludes that speech acts aid the interpretation of speeches, political and otherwise. As such, the spokespersons of political candidates should consider the linguistic implications of their speeches before making them public.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Stylistics, Pragma-stylistics, Obi-tuary, Communicative Toxicity.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an indispensable communicative resource that enables human-to-human interaction, without which communication is null and void. It is the bedrock of human communication, and like a pendulum, it oscillates between one extreme and another according to the dictates of the users, positively or negatively, implicitly or explicitly. The multifaceted nature of language (verbal and non-verbal) enables it to perform several functions across boards. A mere utterance could influence multiple reactions and diverse interpretations based on the context in which it is used and the mutuality of the background between the speaker and recipient of that piece of communication. Obuh and Omenogor (2012), quoted in Okafor and Olanrewaju (2017), note that language is an

instrument of communication that may be used to influence personality, declare war, oppose ideas, and intentions and actions.

Furthermore, language could scatter, condemn, generate violence, entertain, inspire, educate, establish cordial relationships, settle disputes, and make peace with people or communities. Language dynamism features prominently in political communication before, during, and even after a particular electoral dispensation. Agbogun(2011) observes that the relationship between language and politics has become too intertwined to be indispensable. The role of language in disseminating political information is crucial to realising political goals and resolutions within the political terrain.

One of the heightened features of campaigns in any democratic setting is publicity and mass mobilisation, of which language is the chief purveyor. The way language is used in communicating publicity for and against political candidates or their opposition could be toxic or benignant to either the personality of the political candidate, his party, or his publicists and followers. At this juncture, it is pertinent to note that communication is a two-way phenomenon that involves an encoder (sender) and a decoder (receiver). Atolagbe (2004,p.180), quoted in Auradola and Ojukwu(2013), defines communication as a two-way process involving an encoder(i.e .a, speaker/source) and a decoder (i.e., a listener/receiver) through whom language is used to pass across some message (e.g., information, idea, expression of a need)and some response elicited, whether positive or negative. A piece of communication could be harmless or harmful depending on the content, context, and the mutual background of interlocutors. Littlejohn and Foss (2008:293) opine that one of the functions of the media is agenda-setting, that is, having the potential for structuring issues for the public. This agenda-setting function, according to them, is described by Shaw, McCombs, and their other colleagues:

> Considerable evidence has accumulated that editors and broadcasters play an important role in shaping our reality as they go about their day-to-day task of choosing and displaying the news…the impact of the mass media – the ability to effect change among individuals, to structure their thinking – has been labelled as the agenda-setting function of the media…The mass media may not be able to tell us what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about.

This means that as gatekeepers of information, the media chooses what to report and how to report it because whatever is reported, Atolagbe(2004) noted, will elicit a certain kind of reaction. Nai (2022) notes that one of the defining features of contemporary politics is a high degree of hostility in the communication dynamics which features political attacks, negativity, and uncivil language in a bid to trigger a negative emotional response of either anger or fear or confusion. Anger from the opposition camp which would naturally revolt against such attacks in the same measure with which

it was served. Fear and confusion in the hearts of the electorates could either dissuade them from voting for the maligned candidate or instill a profound dislike and loathing for the opposition (affective polarization). This implies that any kind of communication that expresses the aforementioned is toxic and can heat the entire polity.

Therefore, communication toxicity is a tool used by politicians, their parties, media consultants, and followers to undermine the opponent's popularity to secure some advantage. Thus, Ayoade's (1982) submission cited in Okafor and Olanrewaju (2017) succinctly expresses this fact by stating that language is the conveyor belt of power that moves people to vote, debate or revolt.

Buening(2021) asserts that one misplaced word can spur an immediate explosive response. A case in point is the 2015 attack on the French Satirical Newspaper Charlie Hebdo shooting for merely publishing a cartoon of the founder of Islam, Prophet Mohammed. While this may not be directly political, it shows how far-reaching a single act of communication toxicity can get.

The 2015 general elections in Nigeria witnessed extreme cases of communication toxicity in which highly inflammatory and acerbic commentaries were used to tarnish the candidacy of President Goodluck Jonathan by the All Progressive Party(APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) hit back in the same linguistic rascality that was accorded their presidential candidate. However, the APC used communication toxicity to wrest political power from the PDP in a widespread campaign of slander, which was pernicious and threatened the peaceful coexistence of Nigerians.

Szanto (1978:7) cited in Nikade (2021) describes the language of politics as a "lexicon of conflict and drama, of ridicules, and reproach, pleading and persuasion, colour, and bite permeated. A language designed to valour men, destroy some, and change the mind of others." This implies that an element of violence is infused into the language to influence such actions if the need arises. So, to achieve these power yearnings and aspirations, a context-dependent form of the language is formulated and spread in written texts, verbal speeches, electronic and print broadcasts. Though some scholars have tagged this form of communication alinguistic reform vis-a-viz linguistic rascality, it is communication toxicity in its entirety. This paper analyses the communication toxicity embedded in Sam Omatseye's article captioned "Obi-tuary" from a pragma-stylistics perspective to determine the contextual meaning associated with it using the speech acts, how the readers reacted to it as well as evaluating the writer's style. Omatseye is a Nigerian poet, novelist, playwright, journalist, and senior writer with The Nation Newspaper. On August 1, 2022, he published an earth-shattering article that initiated an unprecedented clap-back and charged the political discourse between the followers (the Obidients and the Battalions) of two major contenders, Peter Obi and Bola Ahmed Tinubu, in the current race for the office of the president of Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This paper aims to analyse the speech acts and stylistic foregrounding embedded in Sam Omatseye's "Obi-tuary" article.

The objectives of the study are to:

a. determine the types of speech acts that manifest communication toxicity in the selected article.
b. ascertain the extent to which the stylistic principle of foregrounding was established in the article.
c. evaluate the outcome of communication toxicity in political communication.

Research Questions

1. What are the speech acts that manifest communication toxicity in the selected article?
2. How is the stylistic principle of foregrounding established in the article?
3. What is the outcome of communication toxicity in the political discourse?

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

According to Abuya(2012),a pragma-stylistic approach to meaning is a linguistic approach that bothers on the intended meaning of the speaker, together with the distinctive style of the speaker or writer, and this is believed to be the individual's mode of expression which makes it distinct with characteristic features from others. Leech(2013:85) opines that pragmatics may be understood as studying meaning in speech situations, especially, speaker's intention and audience's recognition and interpretation of that intention. This recognition of the nature of the intentions constitutes the hearer's interpretation of the utterance. The intention is usually goal-oriented. Al-zubaidi(2022) notes that pragma-stylistics is stylistics with a pragmatic component concerned with showing the extent to which pragmatics can contribute to the study of literature. Verdonk(2006), cited in Gibbsons & Whiteley (2018: 1), explains that the term "style derives from the Latin word *stilus*, originally meaning an ancient writing instrument made of metal, wood, or bone. He further argues that it is likely that the evolution of the meaning of the word style was extended from an instrument of writing to a manner of writing, first in a writer's characteristic way of shaping letters and next in the figurative and deeper sense of a writer's characteristic mode of expression in terms of effectiveness, clarity, beauty, and the like.

Short and Candlin (1989), cited in Ogum(2017:20), opine that stylistics is a linguistic approach to studying literary texts. Thus, stylistics embodies one essential part of the general course-that of combining language and literary studies. Similarly, Babajide (1990) cited in Abuya (2012) defines stylistics in its simplest form as "the study of style."

Suffice it to say that pragma-stylistics is a branch of stylisticsthat applies ideas from linguistic analysis to the analysis of texts and their interpretation and that forms the basis for this study. The

theoretical framework for this study is enunciated in Austin, and Searle's speech acts theory and the Stylistic Principle of foregrounding by the prewar Prague School of Linguistics and Poetics culminating in a pragma-stylistics approach.

Austin introduced the Speech Acts Theory in his book of 1962 titled: How to do things with words. According to him, every utterance is an act. Any language user is said to be actively performing an act, such as stating a fact, issuing an order, making a promise, a prediction or a request, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making an offer, giving permission or a piece of advice, thanking or condoling someone. The level of outcomes (locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary) that can be achieved using words is almost unimaginable. An utterance (locutionary act) is often made with an intention that is expected to elicit a certain kind of effect (illocutionary) from the hearer. An act is performed every time an utterance is made, which goes beyond the word's grammatical/literal meaning. This is because people mean more than what they say, and meaning can be easily deduced from how they say what they say. The effect of the speaker's utterance on the hearer becomes a perlocutionary act. Searle (1969) bases his classification of the speech acts on the illocutionary, which he perceived to be central in meaning interpretation. He reviewed and expanded Austin's speech as five illocutionary forces: assertives, commissives, directives, declaratives, and expressives.

Assertives (expositives): According to Wardaugh (2010),assertives, in Searle's opinion, commit the hearer to the truth of a proposition. Assertives state what the speaker believes to be true, such as describing, predicting, insisting, claiming, etc.

Commissives: This happens when a speaker makes an obligatory statement that commits them to undertake an action. The commissives do not have any direct effect on the hearer because it is the speaker who is committing themselves to a given line of action. E.g., making a promise, offering, threatening, volunteering, etc.,

Directives (verdictives): As the name implies, a directive compels the hearer to get to do something. Directives get the hearer to behave in such a way as to make his or her behaviour match the propositional content of the directive. Verdictives predominantly make an assessment of judgment about the acts of others via condemning, commanding, requesting, judging, forbidding, suggesting, etc.

Declaratives(exercitives): Declaratives are like pronouncements. They can change the status of a thing or person from one stage to the other at the moment of speaking. In Searle's words (1977), quoted in Mey (2006),"declarations bring about some alternation in the status or condition of the referred object or objects because the declaration has been successfully performed.

Expressives (behabitives):   These are used to express the inner state of the speaker. Expressives express the sincerity of speech acts (Searle (1999; Wardhaugh,2010). E.g., regretting, praising, apologising, congratulating, etc. a common feature in written texts which, according to Simpson(2014:52), refers to a form of textual patterning motivated specifically for literary-aesthetic purposes. Kamalu (2018: 181) notes that the word foregrounding is derived from a free translation of the Czech term, aktualisace, a concept that originated from the prewar Prague School of Linguistics and poetics under the Russian formalist doctrines. The notion of foregrounding is to defamiliarise textual composition to enable people to view the world from a different perspective with a new sense of awareness. Leech and Short(1981) cited in Kamalu (2018:182) note:

> The Prague School of poetics has distinguished the poetic function of language by its FOREGROUNDING of DEAUTOMIZATION of language code. This means that the aesthetic exploitation of language takes the form of surprising a reader into a fresh awareness of, and sensitivity to, the linguistic medium, which is normally taken for granted as an 'automatized' background communication (28)

The notion of deviation is heavily embedded in foregrounding as Simpson further notes that foregrounding involves a linguistic distortion of some sort, either through an aspect of the text which deviates from a linguistic norm or alternatively, where an aspect of the text is brought to the fore through repetition or parallelism. The linguistic deviation may be lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, or graphological(Kamalu,2018).

Lexical deviation occurs when a writer makes up a new word that did not previously exist or ascribes a new meaning to an existing one. This is called neologism, according to Short (1996: 45).Budiharto (2018:86) describes grammatical deviation as when a sentence breaks the rules of grammar. Usually, these grammatical violations enable the piece of writing to become more appealing and distinctive. Semantic deviation shows that a word or phrase can have many meanings. Phonological deviation reflects the ungrammatical abnormalities in the pronunciation of regional dialects, and this exposes the class of the speakers. Graphological deviation occurs when a writer deviates his writing from the usual way of writing. The rules of academic writing are often neglected in graphological deviation. (Tayd,2022)

Much research has been done on the stylistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis of campaign and hate speeches. Still, none has been carried out on this recent article by Sam Omatseye, which further heightens the discourse of communication toxicity before and during campaigns. More so, the combination of the speech acts theory, and the stylistic principle of foregrounding is not common with the previous research using the pragma-stylistic approach to linguistic analysis. Omatseye is an avowed critic of political candidates, especially from the opposition, using his primary medium, The Nation Newspaper. He featured prominently in the campaign of calumny

against the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan. Awonuga (2005)did a stylistic analysis of Olusegun Obasanjo's speech-"Sustenance of Democracy," while Adetunji (2006) studied Olusegun Obasanjo's speeches by examining the deixis. Ayodabo(1997) carried out a pragma-stylistic study of Abiola's Historical speech on June 24, 1993, to identify the type of speech acts present. Okafor& Olanrewaju(2017) examined the speech acts present in hate speeches during the 2015 general elections to establish the extent to which calumny(communication toxicity) could affect the peaceful coexistence of various ethnicities in Nigeria.

Research Methodology
The article captioned "Obi-tuary" was downloaded from the online publication of The Nation Newspaper and analysed based on the speech acts Theory of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) and the stylistic principle of Foregrounding by the prewar Prague School of Linguistics and Poetics and 48 sentences were extracted for the purpose of this analysis and presented in pieces of data labelled 1-15. The analysed data is presented in both qualitative and quantitative analysis. A table comprising the percentages and frequencies of the speech acts is drawn based on the calculation:

Total number of speech acts x 100
                      Total number of sentences   x   1

The Speech Act Analysis
Data 1
Locution: Suddenly, all is quiet on the eastern front. No street heckles or flags waving over a yellow sun, no hooting or baying in public. The rabble no longer raves.
Illocutionary:
  i.   Direct: asserting (stating)
  ii.   Indirect: verdictive(mocking)
Expected perlocutionary effect: hopelessness

Data 2
Locution: They just swapped icons, rechristened the shrines, and rewrote the rites
Illocutionary:
  i.   Direct: assertive (stating)
  ii.   Indirect: verdictive (judging)
Expected perlocutionary effect: sadness and anxiety

Data 3
Locution: May be all is not quiet. Wecan hear and feel the cacophony. The chants and caterwauling are everywhere, especially on the phones. The Twitter bees, the Instagram grimes, the Facebook freaks.
Illocutionary

i. Direct: expressive (saying)
ii. Indirect: Verdictive (condemning, mocking)
Expected perlocutionary effect: anger and resentment

Data 4
Locution: It's farewell, Kanu. Welcome, Obi, at least until the new priest peters out. They are at his worship.
Illocutionary
i. Direct: assertive (predicting)
ii. Indirect: Verdictive (assessing)
Expected perlocutionary effect: hopelessness

Data 5
Locution: They can say they have a legitimate tribe and rhetoric. They may pretend to love Nigeria. They may claim to embrace INEC and cling to a political party no one in the police or DSS will harangue.

Illocutionary
i. Direct: assertive(stating)
ii. Indirect :directive(warning)
Expected perlocutionary effect: resentment

Data 6
Locution: They have transferred the temperament of their former master into the new. And they have not spared any incoherence, any lack of finesse, threats and tantrums, any show of rabid, primitive chants, or any ululation.

Illocutionary
i. Direct: verdictive (insulting)
ii. Indirect: assertive(stating)
Expected perlocutionary effect: resentment and loathing

Data 7
Locution: They have abused, cursed, thrown imprecations. They have hugged lies about their candidates. They have pelted lies about others.
Illocutionary:
i. Direct: assertive (stating)
ii. Indirect: Verdictive (accusing)

Expected perlocutionary effect: caution and discouragement from voting for the opposition candidate

Data 8
Locution: Obi has turned out to be for every closet Biafrans to betray open emotions about Biafra without being accused. It is like wearing a colour beneath another colour. Obi has become a shelter for both miscreants and activists of the crowd.
Illocutionary:
  i.   Direct: assertive(affirming)
  ii.   Indirect: Verdictive (judging)
Expected perlocutionary effect: incitement

Data 9
Locution:Obi knows this. He is happy to be their catharsis, to be their excuse for unfurling their bile at the system for acting like revolutionaries. He is playing to it by acting as the saint of Nigerian politics.
Illocutionary
  i.   Direct: assertive(claiming)
  ii.   Indirect: verdictive (accusing)
Expected perlocutionary effect: caution

Data 10
Locution: The video clip referred to him as a sort of sexual being on the fringe. You can imagine as Aso Rock sweltering with romps of the evil flesh. His so-called Obidients know this. But it counts for nothing.
Illocutionary:
  i.   Direct: expressive(complaining)
  ii.   Indirect: directive(warning)
Expected perlocutionary effect: caution

Data 11
Locution: This is the man they call stingy because he dared to on himself and his family, his wife being accused of spending 1.5 billion on tours. The man admitted he placed Anambra money in his family account and was not ashamed to confess when confronted. He did not follow due process.
Illocutionary:
  i.   Direct: expressive (scolding)
  ii.   Indirect: verdictive(criticising)
Expected perlocutionary effect: caution

Data 12

Locution: He is now on a weekly pilgrimage to churches. Jonathan did the same. The pastors, ever opportunistic, see him as a darling. He is visiting a sectional hue of pews.

Illocutionary:

   i.   Direct: assertive(saying)

  ii.   Indirect: verdictive(condemning)

Expected perlocutionary effect: caution and hatred

Data 13

Locution: The Obi followers accept Biafra but reject Nigeria. They abandon the mystic of the cause and follow Obi as the inauthentic saint. It is the pragmatism of the cause.

Illocutionary:

   i.   Direct: assertive(stating)

  ii.   Indirect: verdictive(accusing)

Expected perlocutionary effect:provocation

Data 14

Locution: Those in the south have been seduced as by the cooing of Obi's voice as by evangelism of the Biafrans. Mind you, and they have not abandoned Kanu. But their icon has no power for now. Obi is likeZik, Kanu is like Ojukwu. One is a flair, the other, a flare.

Illocutionary:

   i.   Direct: directive(warning)

  ii.   Indirect: verdictive (accusing)

Expected perlocutionary effect: caution

Data 15

Locution: That will last until their last call at the polls. This is not the time to properly interrogate the false intimations of Obi's agenda and hypocrisies. But it is safe to say one thing. Before he peters out and hurtles towards an electoral Obi-tuary, the country knows the content of the crowd and its origin.

Illocutionary

   i.   Direct: assertive(predicting)

  ii.   Indirect: commissive(promising)

Expected perlocutionary effect: incitement

Table 1: Data Analysis
Foregrounding and Deviation in the text

Speech Acts(Direct and Indirect)	Frequencies	Percentages
Assertives	11	22%
Commissives	1	2%
Directives	7	21%
Verdictives	15	45%
Expressive	5	10%
Total number of speech acts	**33**	**100%**

Lexical and graphological deviation: The lexical and graphological deviations in the selected article are expressed in the caption, "Obi-tuary. The word "obituary" literally denotes the passage of life, death and it is written without the hyphen, but in this context, a hyphen is introduced to create a new word out of an already existing one. By so doing, the natural meaning of the word is lost on the reader, who may still perceive it within the denotative context. Meanwhile, the semantics of the word has also changed from being a notice of the death of someone to meaning the end of the presidential ambition of the presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Peter Obi, which an envisaged colossal loss would characterise during the elections in February 2023. This brings a new sense of awareness of the word obituary. The lexical deviation introduces a neologism, while the graphological deviation is visible in the new word's alteration in writing (spelling).

Grammatical and semantic deviation: Grammatically, the name Peter is a noun. That means it is the name of a person. By classification, it is a proper noun. Still, in Omatseye's article, the name Peter is used twice to connote verbal actions and further violates the capitalization rules as the first letter is written in lower case. E.g., "Welcome Obi, at least until the new priest peters out…Before he peters out and hurtles towards an electoral Obi-tuary, …" This is taken to mean that before he eventually exits the presidential race via an anticipated failure at the polls, he is at liberty to make the most of the festival called the campaigns and tours.

Interpretation of the Analysis
The speech acts identified in the selected article interpreted the writer's intended meaning, Sam Omatseye. The researcher discovered the manifestation of four out of five of Austin's (1962) Speech Acts and the verdictive from Searle (1969) ranking highest in the frequency of occurrence at 45%. This implies that the writer intended to vilify, malign, and criticize the personality of Peter Obi, the presidential candidate of the Labour Party, in the hope that the electorates will begin to resent him to the extent of withdrawing their support from him and perhaps, transferring it to the writer's preferred candidate. The article was meant to demarket Peter Obi in exchange for support

for Bola Ahmed Tinubu. As toxic as the article may appear, it raised some salient issues, such as the contentious Biafra debate bedevilling the nation. Hence, he calls for caution, using the directives at 21% to warn Nigerians to rethink their clamour for the third force called Peter Obi, which might very well signify the end of Nigeria's political entity. Omatseye makes a lot of assertions stating, affirming, and accusing the addressee of fraudulent practices during his tenure as the governor of Anambra State. He dares to call out a politician whose strength and popularity have almost flown overboard. The assertives come second in ranking at 22%.While the expressives rank 3rd and the commissive, expressed in the last paragraph promising the end of Obi's electoral dream at the polls, ranks lowest at 2%.

Though the expected perlocutionary effect of the article was to incite resentment for the candidacy of Peter Obi, the reverse was the case as many of the reactions the researcher stumbled on in the course of the research did not resent, counter or disprove the indictments of Obi. But rather, they whipped up sentiments with scathing tantrums. Some responders further exhibited total ignorance of Omatseye's use of the caption"Obi-tuary," highlighted at the article's end. People got more upset with the captionbecause the message was falsely represented as a death wish for the presidential candidate as against an electoral obi-tuary.

The peculiar style of the author establishes the article as a classic representation of the verdictive illocutionary speech act, which predominantly makes an assessment of judgment about the acts of others, in this case, Peter Obi, the addressee. However, the linguistic creativity of the writer in applying the stylistic principle of foregrounding, which brought about a new sense of the word 'Obituary,' is cerebral regardless of the toxicity it initiated in the political discourse at the time.

Conclusion
In this paper, the researcher established the connection between utterances and the reactions they elicit from the populace when communication toxicity is employed as a tool for undermining the popularity of a given political candidate, especially during the build-up to elections. The speech acts and stylistic principle of foregrounding, which aided the interpretation and analysis of the data, showed that different messages are being transmitted through the direct and indirect illocutionary forces(in the process of performing a particular communicative function) and linguistic deviations. By so doing, a diversity of interpretations is given, which may defeat the sender's intentions. The paper also demonstrated that the elements of incitement and hatred have far-reaching consequences and could serve as a catalyst for violence. Furthermore, the desperation of politicians and their followers to publicise their agenda in the media promotes incivility and that could lead to self-immolation. Hence, this paper recommends that politicians, their spokespersons, and followers should always consider the linguistic implication of their speeches and publications before churning them out to the public.

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS PRAGMATIC TOOLS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By

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Abstract

Language, culture and development are intricately linked. These three elements are drivers of national development, growth and cohesion. This paper examined the role of language which is the major instrument used to coordinate the citizens' efforts and joint actions towards a nation's set goals and objectives. Without a common language, a nation may degenerate into a collection of mere tribal enclaves as evidenced in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR); just as the abundance of cultural ideas and good ethical and moral values rooted in the culture of the people can give rise to national development as in the case of China and Japan as springboards for national development. The paper, therefore, identified the nexus between language, culture and national development. On the basis of the foregoing, the paper concluded that for development to take place in a country such as Nigeria, there must be attitudinal, moral and value change as well as the need to develop a national language that will make the citizens see themselves as one with one purpose and goal. Through this, the country will be united and issues of suspicion may be reduced to a point where self-interest is suppressed for the common good.

Introduction

Language is the life blood of human existence. It encapsulates the whole essence of man. Emenanjo and Bleambo (1990) argue that language is the key to the heart of the people and if we lose the key we lose the people; a lost language is a lost tribe. It is important to note that most of the things which make human existence important- the culture, historical artifacts, heroic deeds, etc are handed down through language. The implication of is that language is an expression of culture. Culture is embedded in the language. The language and culture of a people are also pointers to a people's level of development. A simplistic language is a reflection of a simplistic culture and the level of development of that linguistic group. Language, culture and development are intricately intertwined.

The focus of this paper is to examine the role of language and culture as instruments for national development.

Language

Language is a means of communication among a linguistic group. Ifode (2019) views language as " the unique, exclusive and peculiar possession of man used in formulating or expressing thoughts, feelings, desires and conveying the same to fellow men, through a structured arrangement of morphemes, which are, in turn, organized into words and later into larger units of phrases and sentences" (11).

For Olaoye (2007) as cited in Ofoegbu (2017),language is a"'purely human and non-instinctive way of communicating ideas, emotions and desires, by means of a voluntarily produced symbols"(p.3).

The above two definitions identify language as a purely human property and as a means of expressing thoughts, feelings and desires, by means of symbols which are organized into morphemes, words and other higher categories such as a phrase, clause and sentence.

Language, being a distinctive form of communication among humans, remains a central feature of the culture of any community. It is actually the reflection of the values, feelings, beliefs and experiences of a linguistic group. In other words, it is language that makes it possible for humans to reason together, to act together and to feel together which is a precursor to development. Language and society live together. Language has a rhythm of evolution in time with a given society. As the society grows, the language develops with it as it accepts new lexicon to reflect the changes and reality in that society — linguistic relativity. Oyebade (2013) succinctly captures the close relationship between language and society thus: "the social relationship of solidarity, cohesion and social inclusion/exclusion (in human society) is expressed primarily through the medium of language"(p.17). The importance of language to human existence cannot be down-played. Language is precious because it promotes community cohesion and vitality. It engenders pride in a culture and gives a community and its work force self-confidence (Crystal, 2000). For Emenanjo (1998), learning is more meaningful, more effective and more creative when conducted in the mother tongue. Learning as we all know is the springboard of development. A man or society that stops learning is either stagnated or "dead". There cannot be a meaningful development in that society.

Culture

Culture is the totality of a people's way of life. Language is used to express culture. It is an embodiment of culture. This is true because the two have a homologous relationship although complex relationship. Language and culture develop together and influence each other as they evolve.

According to Olaoye (2007), cited in Ofoegbu (2017) language helps to ensure a great amount of cultural uniformity as a society, thereby facilitating interpersonal and cognitive communication. He further states that, "without language, the development and transmission of shared values and traditions would be impossible within a given community"(p.4). Shared values, traditions and functional communication are vital ingredients to achieve a cohesive society. A cohesive society in turn is a precursor of development. The implication of this is that when people think and act as one it follows that those people are more likely to make progress in life. It is important to note that " the major function of language in national development is to facilitate communication among its citizens and to coordinate the citizens' joint actions and efforts towards a nation's desired goals and objectives" (Ofoegbu, 2017, p.30). This may give rise to development.

Culture unifies a community although there might be a diversity within that unity. For instance, older people's speech may be different from the speech younger people use. This is in line with the principle of linguistic relativity which informs us that language directly influences the way people view the world (Language influences the way people think). Edward Sapir observes that the language habits of specific groups of people built the real world. He further argues that no two languages are similar in such a way that they would represent any society. The world for each society is different (darytranslations.com). Aziza (2021) did not agree less with David Crystal (what did he say?). She opines that every language has a homeland and native speakers and it captures the totality of the culture, native knowledge and world view of its speakers. This language she calls mother tongue, native tongue. She adds that it is the language with which the people understand their environment most, identify themselves with and can make contributions towards societal development.

Development
Development means different things to different people. Rodney (1972) asserts that, "development in human society is a many-sided process". He believes that "development at the individual level has to do with increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being"(p.9). These features when taken together can become an aggregate for societal development. It is individuals who make up a society.

Aziza (2021) is also of the view that development is the advancement or growth of an individual. She, however, goes further to say that the systematic execution of progressive programmes and procedures by a group or society which leads to changes that produce more organized, more complete and more advanced individual, group or society may be described as development. For Owolabi (2013), development is the advancement of the people, for the people and by the people. He is of the view that development is a mirage if the people are not involved. These people, according to him, can only be reached through their language.

Language is the key in any discussion on development be it at the individual, group or societal levels. The developmental programmes and procedures, apart from being inclusive of the majority of the population, must be relevant to their values, needs and aspirations and must be owned and supported by them — developmental communication. To achieve any level of development, communication is a key factor and its primary vehicle of transmission is a shared language (Aziza, 2021).

Nexus between Language, Culture and National Development
Language, culture and development are intertwined. These three variables can give rise to national development and cohesion of a country. The Tower of Babel signifies the important place language occupies in national development and cohesion.

Just as language is an effective weapon for emancipation, it is also a powerful tool for domination (Bamgbose 2001). A people whose language is dominant will typically be dominant politically, socially, economically, culturally and psychologically; conversely, a people whose language is neglected and despised also feel neglected and despised (Aziza, 2021).

Ike (1998) considers national development as the steady rise of a country economically, culturally, socially and politically. For Elugbe (2004), national development has to do with the growth of a country or nation with regard to education, economic well-being, unity and mass participation in government. Ofoegbu (2005), on his part, describes national development as the gradual or stage-by-stage growth of a country economically, culturally, politically and socially.

There is a common thread linking the three definitions provided-above with regard to national development. First, every national development must involve a steady growth. Second, the growth must be systematic and consistent. Third, the growth should reflect in the socio-cultural, political, economic, educational, the unity and the general well-being of the people as well as a mass participation in governance. A close observation of the variables for national development shows that countries such as The United States of America (USA), Britain, Germany, China, Japan have achieved national development; conversely, countries such Nigeria and Ghana are yet to achieve national development. Ofoegbu (2005) argues that the steady development of the physical infrastructure is a sign of national development. The optimal development of a nation may place it among developed nationsin the world. On the other hand, a nation which is inconsistent with its physical infrastructural development may be categorized as a least developed country in the world.

Some scholars such as Ike (1998) believe that national development goes beyond physical infrastructure. They opine that there should be an individual change (positive change), the harnessing of resources for the development of the nation, a reorientation on the part of the individual, towards national goals and government commitment towards the welfare of its people.

He explains that physical infrastructure is not enough to achieve national development; rather, the attitudes of the citizens geared towards national development, a sense of patriotism or value system are more important and all-encompassing than infrastructure.

Ike proposes two forms of national development: physical and non-physical. The physical component comprises physical infrastructure of development and the non-physical has to do with ideas, values and needed attitudes which may not only usher in peace, unity and tranquility, but also the attainment of the national goals and objectives.

It is important to note that culture which constitutes part of the non-physical aspect of national development should be given a pride of place in national development. The people's cultural values should not be forgotten. A good political leadership should ensure the projection and spread of the people's cultural ideas and values. The political leaders should strive to instill the necessary ethical and moral values rooted in the culture of the people. These values should be inculcated, preserved and promoted both within and outside the country.

The major role of language in national development is the communication function it performs among citizens of a given country. Language is the major instrument used to coordinate the citizen's efforts and joint actions towards a nation's set goals and objectives. Citizens who speak a common language are usually more united and forge a common front to achieve national goals and objectives for the development of a country. This is attested to by Genesis Chapter 11:1-9 on the Tower of Babel. Immediately God confounded their language, they became disunited. Without a common language or national language, a nation may degenerate into a collection of mere tribal and ethnic enclaves. Each of the tribal and ethnic enclaves may wish to pursue its own selfish interests at the expense of the others. There is no iota of doubt that the country may disintegrate. This is true of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) which disintegrated into fifteen (15) different countries along ethnic and tribal lines like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukrain and Uzbekistanall.

It is also important to note that a nation without a common language or national language may face general insecurity due to suspicion, lack of faith among citizens (on the government too) and general distrust. A common language or national language is a prerequisite for national cohesion and development. Apart from the threats posed by the absence of a common or national language, national language is the key to the educational development of a nation. Language provides a people with a unity of purpose which makes the citizensregard themselves as one. Furthermore, the citizens will embrace a common culture that will foster national unity and cohesion in that country.

On the economic front, language is capable of slowing down economic development. It can "break occupational mobility, reduce the number of people available for mobilization into modern sectors of the economy, decrease efficiency and prevent the diffusion of innovative techniques" (Adesina, 2013:296). Nigeria is a country blessed with so many human and natural resources, but since various aspects of the transformation agenda are available mainly in English which reaches just about 20% of the population, the stark reality today is that a large proportion of Nigerians cannot access the programmes in their language and so cannot participate and benefit from them (Aziza, 2021). She goes on to say that this has led to a paradox in which the so called biggest economy in Africa and one of the fastest growing in the world is reported by the National Bureau of Statistics to have 40% of her population (82.9 million) living below the poverty line (News report by Channels Television News of May 4, 2020).

The result of poverty includes high wave of criminal activities, brain drain of some of the best brains, suicidal tendencies and dependency on foreign goods and services, and as the saying goes, he who pays the piper dictates the tune. In the hey days of Nigeria when the indigenous languages held sway and indigenous traditional knowledge ruled the system, the country was well known for groundnut pyramids in the North, cocoa in the West, coal in the East, and rubber, boat making and oil palm technology in the South-South(Aziza, 2021). (Was it because of the language? Language is a factor because of the level of development although the discovery of oil is largely responsible for it). To drive home this point, let us consider the data on Table 1 below which contains the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rankings of some countries according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) calculations for 2018. The IMF ranking covers a total of 204 countries.

TABLE 1: 2018 IMF GDP Rankings of Selected Countries and their language (s)

S/N	Country	Indigenous language (s)	Official language (s)	GDP Ranking	(million of US dollars
1.	United States	Multilingual	English	1st	20,544,343
2.	China	Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin Chinese	2nd	13,608,152
3.	Japan	Japanese	Japanese	3rd	4,971,323
4.	Germany	German	German	4th	3,947,620
5.	United Kingdom	English	English	5th	2,855,297
6.	France	French	French	6th	2,777,535
7.	India	Multilingual	Hindi	7th	2,718,732
8.	Italy	Italian	Italian	8th	2,083,864
9.	Brazil	Multilingual	Portuguese	9th	1,868,626
10.	Canada	Multilingual	English and French	10th	1,713,342

11.	South Africa	Multilingual	English (main)	30th	397,270
12.	Nigeria	Multilingual	English (main)	33th	368,289
13.	Angola	Multilingual	Portuguese	62th	105,751
14.	Kenya	Multilingual	English kiswahili	66th	87,908
15.	Ghanlica	Multilingual	English	73th	65,556
16.	Tanzania	Multilingual	English	80th	58,001
17.	Zimbabwe	Multilingual	English	100th	31,001
18.	Senegal	Multilingual	English	110th	24,130
19.	Liberia	Multilingual	English	166th	3,264
20.	Central African Republic	Multilingual	French	177th	2,220

Notice that the best developed economies are also those in which their indigenous languages and knowledge systems feature prominently in governance, education, the media and commerce. The people are able to mainstream their traditional indigenous knowledge systems into new realities in their own languages. Of the ten best economies of the World, three are in Southeast Asia. Some of which just a few years ago were with Nigeria in the group of Third World Nations that gained independence from European colonialists (Aziza, 2021).

Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been on how language and culture constitute a springboard for national development. We believe that these two elements are critical to national development. Development in the true sense of the word which affects the majority of the population will continue to elude a nation if there is no moral value and attitudinal change as well as a national language that will make the citizens see themselves as one with one purpose and goal. Through this, nation will be united and issues of suspicion may be reduced to a point where self-interest is suppressed for the common good.

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CURBING PHOBEA FOR POETIC ANALYSIS: A STUDY OF RICHARD NTIRU'S THE SHAPES OF FEAR

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Abstract

The concern of literature is affective since it uses language to create impactful scenarios in the human mind. The ornamentation and versification in poetry make this genre of literature the most dreaded and challenging one. There is a phobia of this genre among scholars and newcomers to its world. Richard Ntiru's poem, The Shapes of Fear, was used to explicate and establish the factors that cause the phobia of poetry. This phobia is predicated on the premise that poems are highly connotative and have heightened usage of words; familiar words are made to become unfamiliar. It, therefore, behooves the learner of literature to be at par with the conscious state of the poet so as to gain an understanding of his deep sayings. The authors suggested that to reduce the phobia of poetry, among other things, both the teacher and the learner should develop a consciousness of enjoying poetry. Poetry is meant to be enjoyed.This article hinged on Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis and posits that educators of poetry gain adequate knowledge and competence in teaching poetry.

Keywords: Phobia, Poetry, Psychoanalysis, Curbing.

Introduction

Literature has been recognized as an art form that manifests itself through the creative use of language. This creative art form is constructed from the depth of imagination, which is stimulated into action by Mother Nature. The aim of literature is to manipulate and influence language so as to create powerful scenarios that leave a lasting impact on the human mind. According to Kalu (2004), as cited in Onukaogu and Okpara (2004), literature is described as a body of imaginative works that are crafted in verse or prose. It is imperative to study and appreciate literary works of art, as it enriches one's vocabulary and enhances one's awareness of the environment.

Poetry is one of the most challenging genres of literature, particularly for students and new scholars who are passionate about literature. This is because poetry is characterized by figurative language, complicated grammar, and intricate structure. Mallet (2001) as cited in Syed and Wahas (2020) points out that poetry is the most challenging kind of literary writing due to its complex features. Studies show that poetry can generate a phobia among scholars who are not well-equipped with the use of words, hence they find it difficult to understand the aesthetics of words in poems. As one of the three genres of literature, poetry gives meaning and context to words that have been creatively put together by a poet.

Wordsworth, one of the renowned poets, defined poetry as, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility" (Reed, February 2022). Wordsworth (Reed, 2022) further stated that a poet is a person speaking to people, gifted with a more heightened perception. This means that for a poem to be understood, both the poet and the reader must approach it with an elevated mindset.

Poetry is primarily concerned with the manner in which the message is conveyed, rather than the message itself, hence the embellishment and manipulation of words, all in an attempt to capture the minds and interests of all those who come into contact with it. Ogum (2017) emphasizes that words are the basic tool for literature [poetry], and it is not so much about the message that words convey, but about the beautiful and imaginative appeal of words.

However, there are many recent scholars in the field of literature who are not intimidated by it. They can easily glide over pages of other genres, but they have no interest in poetry. This paper aims to explain how the phobia of poetry can be overcome, using Richard Ntiru's poem, "The Shapes of Fear." The paper is anchored on the psychoanalytic theory propounded by Sigmund Freud.

The Psychoanalytic Theory

The psychoanalytic theory was propounded by Sigmund Freud in the year 1896. The theory is also called "depth psychology". The theory came about in his bid to treat mental disorders emphasizing the relevance of the unconscious mental process. He further developed what he thought of as the three agencies of the human personality namely the id, ego, and superego. (Bradford, May 2016).

Similarly, McLeod (2018) stated that the core assumption of the psychoanalytic theory is that, "the unconscious mind governs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect. Indeed, the goal of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious conscious".

It is critical to mention that Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis has lent credence to the appreciation of creativity in poetry. Poems are said to be "thoughts" recollected in tranquility. This is in seeming agreement with Freud's development of the three levels of consciousness – unconsciousness, precociousness, and consciousness. Poetry is highly imaginative and worse, highly connotative. Therefore, appreciating poetry is a mind-centered activity possessing the capacity of affecting the tripartite parts of an individual – the spirit, soul, and body. And so, perceiving and understanding poetry should go beyond mere exploration of narratives to allowing symbolic expression to afford one opportunity for deep reflections.

Ntiru's poem *The shapes of fear* explores some ways the central theme of fear manifests itself within the human subconscious mind which eventually, gives birth to confusion and disharmony in the human conscious mind. And until fear is handled and taken control of, an assumed or perceived fear about anything may come to fruition. The poem as is the nature of poetry is highly connotative. To understand it, therefore, the reader must be in sync with his tripartite state of consciousness.

Ikechi (2005) seems to think that the Freudian theory's interest is in literary works that are, "dream-like or that contain accounts of character dreams, or, even that which lay heavy emphasis on complex or unusual character". Psychological theories have not only helped to show the nature of characters and their actions but also how readers are affected by what they read. From the vast reservoir of mental processes fed by what is read, is the man himself. So, simply allowing the mind to soak in the lines of poetry and reflecting on the same can help curb the fear of the verse form and the actual reluctance to appreciate poems.

Some Causes of Phobic Feelings towards Poetry
There is no doubt that poetry is considered to be the most challenging genre of literature among all the other genres. The use of connotative language plays a significant role in poetry, allowing the poet to create new words to succinctly express their message while maintaining an aesthetically pleasing form. According to Johnson (2022), poetry is considered an art form that combines imagination and reason in a pleasurable way to communicate truth. In the same vein, Akirika (2021) sees poetry as a tool for effecting positive change in society.

Despite its power to evoke emotions and provide comfort, there seems to be a growing reluctance among some scholars to engage with poetry. This may be attributed to various reasons such as

difficulty in understanding the diction used, unfamiliar grammatical structures, and difficulty in deciphering the messages conveyed in poems.

It is imperative to address and mitigate this fear and antipathy towards poetry among students, particularly in the classroom setting. This can be achieved by providing a supportive learning environment that encourages critical analysis and interpretation of poetry. Additionally, providing adequate resources and tools such as dictionaries and grammatical guides can help students better understand the language used in poems.

Furthermore, the use of interactive and engaging teaching methods such as poetry workshops, creative writing exercises, and poetry appreciation sessions can help students to appreciate and understand the genre better.

In conclusion, poetry plays a significant role in society, and it is essential to encourage students to engage with the genre and appreciate its unique qualities and potential. With the right resources and teaching methods, students can develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of poetry, leading to a more well-rounded education in the arts.

Richard Carl Ntiru
Richard Ntiru, the famous writer of the poem *The pauper*, is a Ugandan who has his poems woven around themes of black identity; cultural nationalism and alienation; moral decay; corruption, and mental timidity. His poem, *The Shapes of Fear* falls within this bracket. The poem pictures mental timidity arising from perceived fear; realities falsely aggravated to create wrong perceptions, causing fear in the individual.

<div align="center">

SHAPES OF FEAR
By
Richard Carl Ntiru

Like an arrested breath
when breathing makes silence imperfect
and the ear cannot differentiate
between the conspiratorial whispers and the wind's singing

a twig in the courtyard snaps
and the report of a gun is understood

Like the suspended step
when a mouldy piece of wood lies across the path

</div>

and the weary eye cannot separate
the snake supple slipperiness from the clumsy presence

the loan traveller sees the mirage on the road
and thinks again of Noah and the flood

Like the drawn vacuum moment
when the inmate half-expectantly says Karibu
and the eye relieves the ear
to a welcome the caller who does not enter

(Culled from: <u>Poems of Black Africa</u> edited by Wole Soyinka)

A Discuss of the Symbolisms in the Poem
The poem opens with imagery of a person thought to be dead, but who is actually quietly asleep, and then, the contrast of the sound of the gentle breeze discerned as evil plotters' whispers.The couplet that follows stanza one reports the sound of the breaking leafless branch of a tree, imagined to be the sound of a gunshot instead. And in the third stanza, "a moldy piece of wood" is mistaken for a snake; while the fourth stanza tells the illusory reflection usually observed on hot, dry, and vacant roads, to be thought of as a great body of water. The final stanza depicts the lonesome prisoner who, perhaps, in a fearful expectation of his executioner, observes with relief that he perceived wrongly, for there is no one at his door. These different scenarios, the poet sums up as the shapes or shades of fear, generally evincing the unwholesome demeanor of the typical pessimist.

Many times, fears are unfounded: the forms that beget them are largely figments of the imagination so preconditioned, and so unreal. The Poet, Ntiru, displays these pairs of divergent portraits to demystify the matter of fear. Fear – False Expectations Appearing Real – can develop and become palpable due to some deep-seated witnesses in the pre-conscious mind that give it impetus. Likewise also is a phobia of poetry.

Poetry is variously perceived as a lackluster difficult genre, incomprehensible, and lacking clear-cut meaning, and so the new scholar and the bystander would take flight at any suggestion to regard it critically. This should not be the case. A phobia is an inexplicable fear that cannot be accorded any logical justification. The phobia regarding poetic appreciation or criticism is at best ludicrous and should be promptly disregarded by everyone so deluded.Poems are beautiful arrangements of choice diction bearing poetic devices and employing such figurative language as to solicit the admiration of the eyes, the enjoyment of the hearing, and the reflection of the mind.

Conclusion

An attempt at appreciating poetry may start with getting a good grasp of the different poetic devices and how they are exemplified. Then, it would be helpful to allow oneself to be consciously expunged from the deep recesses of the mind, of negative feelings and experiences about the genre by regarding it as coming from the environment of life and living; being other people's situations portrayed to impact one beneficially.

One should read the verses of a poem over and again; absorbing the different scenarios pictured by the words, and allowing oneself to reflect on those images in the mind's eye in order to come to terms with them.

Moreover, the teacher of poetry must rise up to the responsibility of adopting creative pedagogies that would be provoking and engaging for his students. Versatile, playful, and resourceful learner-centered methods should characterize the learning sessions and not dreadful drills that could be easily forgotten. Similarly, the teacher's attitude to his subject matter can be so contagious, hence, aside from possessing the requisite knowledge of his content and competence to disseminate hislecture, he should be seen as enjoying poetry, too. Poetry is fun!

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BROADCAST MEDIA NEWS BULLETIN: ERROR ANALYSIS OF CREEK FM'S 'NEWS BITS AT ELEVEN'

By

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Abstract

Many news editors in the traditional media in Nigeria, who are mostly second language (L2)

speakers of the English Language are not oblivious of the basic rules of the grammar of English—rules of agreement (concord), tense, aspect, mood, collocation, etc. However, because of their surface knowledge of syntax, they unconsciously allow ungrammatical sentences in their news bulletins. The problem is that many L2 speakers including journalists are not very equipped with the knowledge of syntax—the study of sentence formation. This paper attempts to error analyse the May 3, 2021 'News Bits at 11' (only the **lead** of the first three stories) of Creek 106.5 FM Yenagoa with a view to analysing and ascertaining some issues that Traditional grammarians would see as ungrammaticalities or errors with regard to word order, and possible semantic and syntactic errors or issues in the news bulletin. The theory of Generative Grammar influenced the study in determining whether or not the lead was rid of syntactic and semantic errors. It was observed that the news editor contravened the rules of word order and choice in his editing. It therefore recommends that news editors learn the rules of syntax to ensure professionalism.

Keywords: news, bulletin, lead, error, word order

Introduction

News is a precise, balanced account of the important details of a timely incident that interests the audience or society. It is an account of something real (Campbell and Wolseley, 1976). Gans (1979) says it is information conveyed from sources to audiences, with journalists summarising, filtering and modifying the item(s) that is accessible to them with the intention to make the information   apt   for   their   audiences.   A   news   bulletin,   therefore, is 'a short television or radio programme that broadcasts the main pieces of the news' (Macmillan Dictionary, n.d). Every news bulletin or story begins with a Lead**;** the lead is the

first, opening or introductory paragraph that offers the audience the main information or gist of the news story in a terse and lucid style that would be of interest to the reader (print) or listener (electronic) as the case may be (Northern Michigan University Writing Center, 2021).

The society depends chiefly on the 'traditional' media (radio, television, newspaper, magazines) for their daily consumption of news and information, even though the advent of the new (social) media have in a way posed a competition to the traditional media by making the mass of the people to rely on them. However, the traditional media have leveraged on the advantages of the new (social) media to expand their reach and audience by disseminating their reports on new media platforms, so that information now travels with the speed of light. Having succeeded in getting people to receive information through the available channels (print, electronic, internet), there is the challenge of defective sentence constructions and meaning in the information that are being propagated.

Many news editors of reputable media organisations who gate-keep and ensure the news is vetted and certified good-to-go are found wanting and blunder in the rules of the grammar of the language of communication, which here in Nigeria is English. There tends to be the challenge of news editors struggling with the order of words in sentences, incorrect grammatical expressions, agreement, tense, voice and collocation, which is not supposed to be if they hope to maintain professionalism. This is what this paper seeks to address; the issue of grammatical correctness and acceptability in news bulletins. It will examine a news editor's ability in ensuring the bulletin is devoid of ungrammaticalities by analysing possible errors in structure, word order, collocation, voice, meaning, etc. in the 'lead' of the first three stories of the May 3, 2021 'News Bits at Eleven' of the *Creek 106.5*, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The 'News Bits at 11' is a 5-minute news bulletin that comprises at least six stories—two local (state) stories, a national story, a story from a sister-state (optional), a foreign story and one sport story. For this paper, only the lead (the introductory paragraphs) of the first three stories will be examined.

Invariably, the study aims at investigating issues of word order and giving lucid representation of the order of words in sentences; discovering grammatically incorrect constructions that have gone unnoticed by news editors; knowing why constructions in the news bulletin are correct or incorrect using the rules of word order, agreement, tense/voice/polarity, and collocation; identifying frequently used semantically and syntactically unacceptable sentences that have been seen overtime as appropriate due to the news editor's lack of syntactic knowledge.

The study is guided by the following questions: what are the possibilities that there are issues of word order in sentence constructions of news bulletins? To what extent do news editors produce ungrammatical and unacceptable sentences that do not follow the rules of agreement,

tense, and collocation? How well do news editors eliminate ambiguities in their news bulletins for media consumers not misinterpret their information?

The study motivates news editors to address issues of word order in sentence constructions; gives a clear illustration of the order of words in sentences; spurs news editors to make effort to ensure their bulletins are grammatical and acceptable; ensures sentence constructions are correct by following the rules of word order, agreement, tense/voice/polarity, and collocation; identifies inappropriate expressions that have been frequently used in the reportage of news stories because of no knowledge of syntax will be unlearnt.

The study adopts a qualitative and an analytical approach (the use of analysis to break a problem down into the elements necessary to solve it; the same as formal analysis) to scrutinise the sentences of the first paragraphs (the lead) of each story in the May 3, 2021 'New Bits at 11' news bulletin of *Creek 106.5 FM,* Yenagoa, Nigeria to check for ungrammatical and possible unacceptable constructions that the news editors are, perhaps, ignorant of.

Theoretical Connection

In analysing possible errors in the news bulletin for consideration in this paper, the theories of Generative Grammar (TGG & GB) will be relevant. The central argument or idea of Generative Grammar (GG) as postulated by American linguist, Noam Chomsky, in spite of the revisions it had undergone and is still ongoing, is its placement of *rules* in the formation of sentences above *meaning*. This is where the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), a model developed by Mike Halliday, but first introduced by J.R. Firth became relevant. This theory opposes TGG by placing emphasis on *meaning*, *context* and *culture* as essential ingredients in the study and understanding of language, since language is assumed to be "a social tool of human development and interaction" (Nwala, 2016). SFG adopts a *descriptive* approach to the analysis of language— describing structures of a language in its unique state, thereby seeing language from three primary levels: Substance (the raw materials of language—actual sounds and texts), Form (structure of the language signs or sounds) and Situation (linguistic/social circumstances surrounding language use). GG, otherwise, is more prescriptive *in* nature because of its insistence on rules. This, however, in no way means GG does not see meaning as important, as some of its revised theories consider the meaning of structures.

Understanding Error Analysis

Unarguably, English language is a second language to many news editors in Nigeria. This means they would be prone to making errors in vocabulary, word order, collocations and other issues regarding sentence structure and meaning. Assessing a news bulletin to discover issues of grammaticality and acceptability as this paper sets out to do would mean delving into a branch of

applied linguistics (the study of the collation and scrutiny of errors committed by second language speakers) called Error Analysis.

Error analysis, according to Akidi (2016), provides a way for second language learners to discover the rules of a particular language and work in internalising the said rules. Hopefully, this is what this paper aims at achieving as it would help news editors to be more deliberate in the effort to ensure error free bulletins. Ibid asserts that "errors" should be distinguished from "mistakes"; whereas mistakes are possibly caused by ignorance, fear, slip of tongue, inferiority complex which could be detected and corrected by the learner, errors are not easily noticed and corrected by the learner. Errors are simply a departure or defiance of the rules or codes of a language.

In the 1960s, proponents of error analysis, Pit Corder et al, intended to use it in identifying the types, manners, sources and causes of errors (Akidi, 2016). They designed this technique to explain and appraise the errors gathered from the language that is to be scrutinised. These errors are described or categorised according to issues related to *word ordering, omissions, additions and substitutions* (ref. Corder 1967 & 1973; Akidi, 2016). They are further graded into *Global errors* (errors that take a toll on the entire sentence, making it incomprehensible) and *Local errors* (errors that affect a portion of the sentence without causing it to be meaningless).

Interestingly, error analysts look beyond mother tongue interference when analysing the errors of second language speakers, because they believe there would be no learning if learners did not make blunders. And this is the very reason for the proposition of error analysis. Corder (1981) proposes that for error analysis to be successful, the rules of the language that has been flouted must be spotlighted or considered. In this work, errors of the news editors will be assessed using the syntactic rules of the English language which satisfies Chomky's emphasis on rules for the formation of sentences of the target language (Chomsky, 1957).

 But there is the school of thought that maintains that second language learners are bound to commit errors because they could acquire language only by imitating another speaker/teacher. This is the thinking of the school of behavourism led by Leonard Bloomfield, which emphasises errors occur as a result of mother tongue interference and unhelpful pedagogical methods to the learner. For them, the learner is likely to acquire the language and commit less error if he is exposed to different skills and reflex activities until he becomes a master of the language. However, Chomsky's proposition of the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that is innate in every normal human being flawed the behaviourist theorists with the mentalist reasoning that acquiring a language goes further than observation, imitation, modeling, and reinforcement—the language to be learnt or acquired is prepared in the learner's mind together with the data in his possession which must be guided by rules (Ndimele, 1999). Chomsky and his followers maintain that

inasmuch as the data in the learner's possession is in order, the sentences that would be produced will be correct; otherwise, the sentences would be in error.

Analysis and Discussion

This section scrutinises the lead (first paragraph of a story that contains the main elements, actors and central idea) and reveal the knowledge of the news editor in producing grammatical and acceptable constructions that are devoid of ambiguity (meaning).

Story one (S1)

Nigerians will today join the international community to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day.

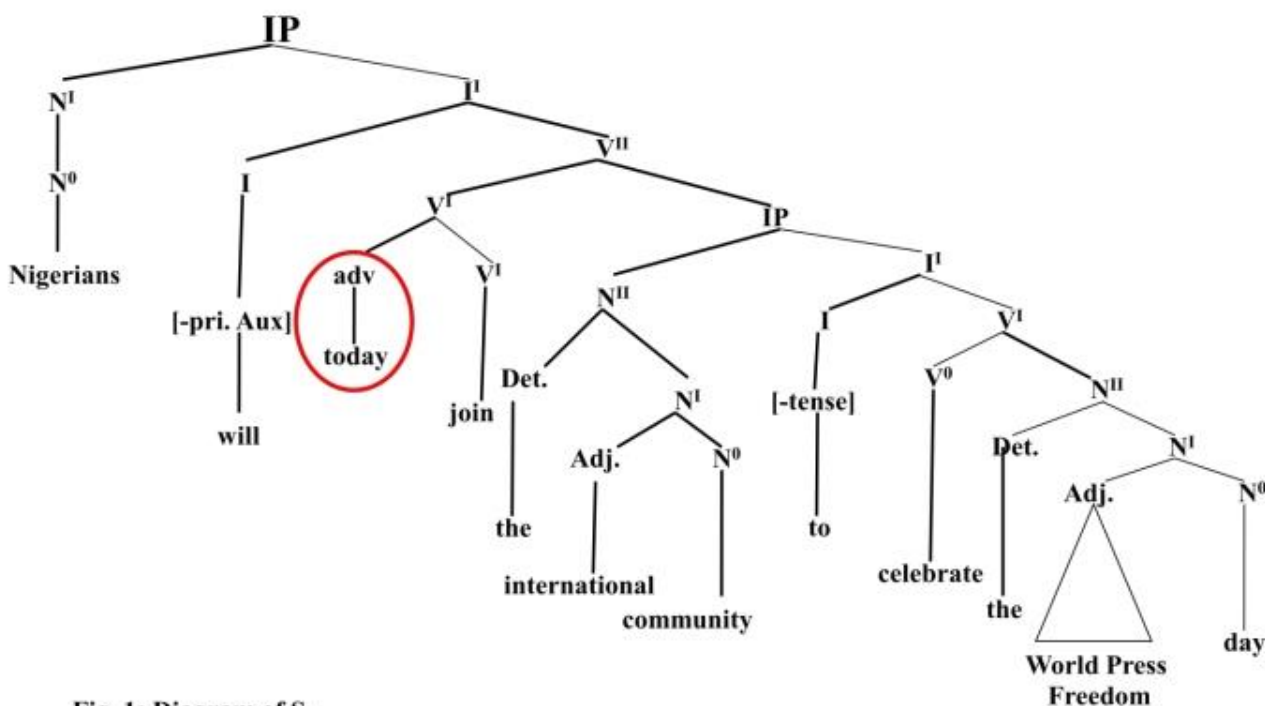Fig. 1: Diagram of S₁

Analysing S1

Query 1:   **Ungrammaticality/Word order?**

On '**today**'

Going by the rules of sentence structure which traditional grammar emphasises, **S1** has an issue with word order: the word '**today**' appears medially. Drawing from Aremo (2019) explanation of adverbials, the word TODAY falls into the category of ***Adjuncts***—adverbials that more often

than not give information with regard to time, place, manner of the action, event, etc explained in the rest of the sentence. In that case, TODAY is a ***Time Adjunct,*** and as Aremo (2019) noted, the normal position of manner, time and place adjuncts is **Sentence-final**. So, if TODAY were to be used in that sentence, it would have occurred thus:

Nigerians will join the international community to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day *today* (Aremo, 2019) further notes that they sometimes take place at **sentence-initial** position. Hence, the sentence would have been

Today, Nigerians will join the international community to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day.

(Aremo, 2019, p. 244) also mentioned that the **sentence-medial position** is rare for most manner, time or place adjuncts; however, for single-word manner adjuncts (as in: *carelessly, quickly, suddenly*) and time adjuncts that address the questions of ***'How…often?', 'How…many times…?', 'For how long…?'*** (such as: *always, frequently, generally, just, never, often, rarely, seldom, sometimes, usually*) the medial position is acceptable.

Examples (ibid, 244):

She *carelessly* broke the mirror   (manner adjunct)

He *always* comes   (time adjunct)

Nonetheless, this is not common with time adjuncts that address the question of ***'When…?'*** which TODAY falls into; adjuncts in this category are grammatical at the initial or final position. Therefore, it was ungrammatical as it were for the news editor to approve this:

Nigerians will ***today*** join the international community to celebrate the World Press Freedom day.

The rule of word order does not approve the adverbs of time, especially those that address the 'when' question to come medially as the news editor did in S$_1$. See below (fig.2) how adverbs could occur in a sentence:

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Fig.2: Source:
http://thebattlenglish.blogspot.
com/p/adjective-adverbs-
comparison.html

In the sentences presented in Fig.2, the adverbs of time (dawn, supper, lunch) did not occur after the verbs (swims, walks, naps) let alone disrupting the sequence of primary, modal and lexical verbs. ttp://thebattlenglish.blogspot.com/p/adjective-adverbs-comparison.html

Query 2:   Ambiguities?
Aside from 'today' occurring medially, which has been proven to be erroneous, there happens to be another syntactic issue that only a discerning mind would identify. It is the use of the modal auxiliary verb '**will**' that shows futurity in the sentence together with the time adjunct 'today', indicating present time.
Since the story was reported on the D-day of the celebration, using 'will' only introduced meaning contradictions to the sentence. The point is that if the celebration had been slated for some other day, the use of 'will' would have been very appropriate. In that case it would have been something like this:

{ f.

Nigerians will join other peoples of the world to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day tomorrow. next week. next year.

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Or:

Nigerians will join other peoples of the world to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day *later in the day*.

The adverbial phrase of time 'later in the day' is a better way to express the future—that the celebration would be observed sometime after the moment of speaking. All the same, if 'today' must be retained, then a much better and more appropriate sentence would be:

Nigerians *join* other peoples of the world to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day today.

Thus, in concluding this error analysis on S**1**, the possible grammatically correct alternatives to *"Nigerians will today join the international community to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day"* include:

i.   Today, Nigerians join other peoples of the world to celebrate World Press Freedom Day.
j.   Nigerians join other peoples of the world to celebrate World Press Freedom Day today.

k.   Nigeria joins sister (other) nations to celebrate World Press Freedom Day today.

l.   Nigerian journalists join their counterparts in the world to celebrate World Press Freedom

Day today.

Note: The determiner (definite article) 'the' preceding 'World Press Freedom Day' could be optional; hence, its omission in all four sentences (j, k, l and m).

Story Two (S2)

Meanwhile, President Muhammadu Buhari says he is committed to freedom of the press, and urges media professionals to wield freedom responsibly.

Fig. 3: Diagram of S₂
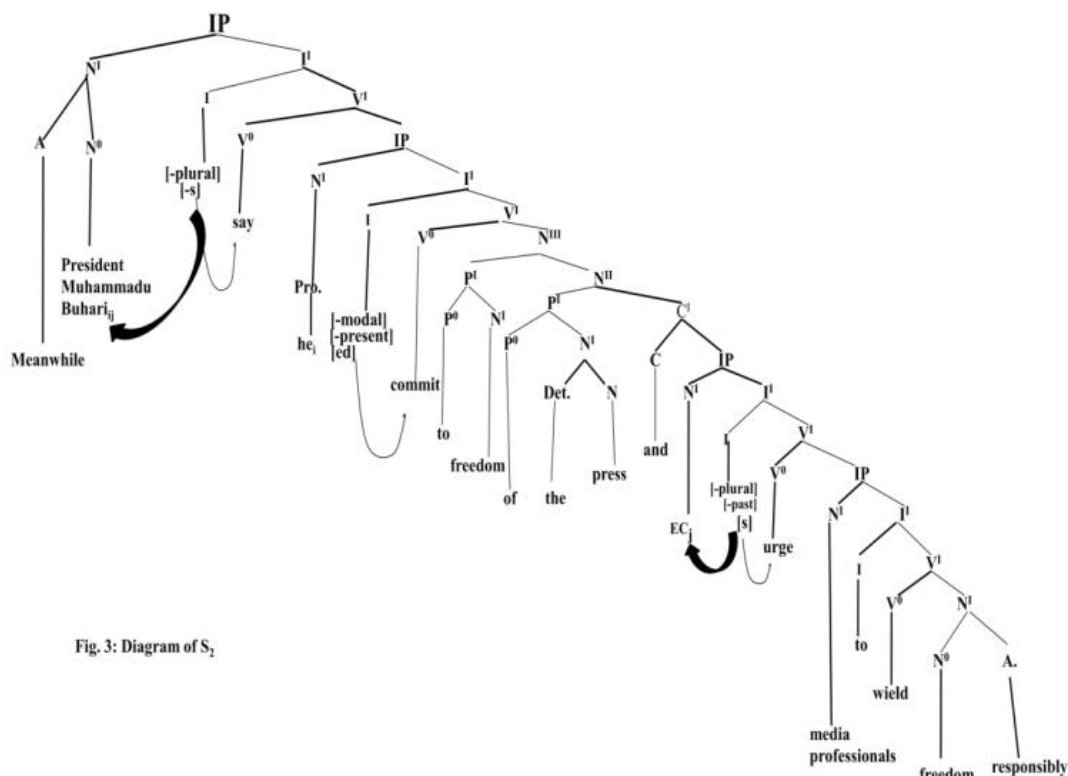
Analysing S2

Query: Acceptability/ambiguity?

 So far, on the level of grammaticality, the lead of this second story has less grammatical and semantic errors and the news editor should be commended for it. However, in respect of collocation and acceptability, there is an expression that may have resulted in semantic problems. Although ambiguity was not noticed in the lead, the use of WIELD in the news bulletin may not have been appropriate as it would have caused some audiences to contemplate on the lexical meaning; some audiences would struggle to decipher the meaning of the word. And this is not encouraged for a transient medium as radio. Radio audiences comprise both the less and well educated; hence, news editors are obligated to be cautious with their choices of words—they are advised to employ short and simple expressions.

The Cambridge Advanced Learner's English Dictionary (3rd edition), defines WIELD as 'to have a lot of influence or power over other people.' As was mentioned earlier, the **lead** had no issues with word order, but rather, *collocation*.

First, WIELD is not supposed to collocate with FREEDOM, as 'wield freedom' is more or less a contradiction; instead, one 'wields power or influence'. Second, even if it could collocate with it, it is unacceptable to use words that would make media audiences to struggle in figuring out the meaning of words which negates Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar that places premium on meaning. Third, the listeners might be faced with lexical ambiguity as a result of the pronunciation of the newsreader. What if the listener had thought the newsreader had pronounced WEED? Surely, that would definitely lead to a misinterpretation of the information.

So, subjectively, the appropriate expression should have been 'use freedom'. This would not confuse the listener; it would eliminate any form of ambiguity.

That is:

> *Meanwhile, President Muhammadu Buhari says he is committed to freedom of the press, and urges media professionals to **use** freedom responsibly.*

Story Three (S3)

> ***Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri, has called for the abolishment of Local Governments in the country, saying the system is not recognized by the 1999 constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria as amended.***

Fig. 3: Diagram of S_3

S^1 = SC (Subordinate clause)
I = INFL
IP = Inflectional Projection

Analysing S3

Query: **Ungrammaticality/Word order?**

On '**saying**'

First of all, this is a complex sentence where the: Main clause is: *Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of Local Governments in the country* and Subordinate clause: *saying the system is not recognised by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended*

Of course, the lead could have been written in several other ways by replacing certain words with more suitable words; however, sticking to this sentence exposes us to few grammatical issues. Mind you, the other possible ways of writing the lead will be stated later in this paper. As a matter of fact, the *main clause* is grammatical; there are no issues with word order, as the structure is SVOP AA

Where:

S, Subject = Bayelsa State Governor, Douye Diri appositive

V, Verb = has called
OP, Prepositional Object = for the abolishment

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A = of Local Governments

A = in the country

On the other hand, the subordinate clause is problematic. Subordinate (dependent) clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions (subordinators). Conjunctions fall into the closed-class system, which *"cannot normally be extended by the creation of additional members" (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973).* Therefore, it is somewhat inappropriate for SAYING to be admitted in the closed class system, but the news editor used it as a subordinator that introduced the dependent clause. This is an anomaly that results in ungrammaticality. Instead, the subordinators such as *because, since* could have been perfect. In that case, the subordinate clause is an *Adverb clause of reason.*

The subordinate clause then will be:

> *…**because (since)** the system is not recognised by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended*

Thus, the complex sentence becomes:

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of local governments in the country **because (since)** the system is not recognised by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended.*

On '**as amended**'

The concern is with the function and location of the phrase *AS AMENDED* in the sentence. In discussing Adjectives, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) said syntactically, adjectives function *Attributively, Predicatively and Postpositively.*

Attributive adjectives appear before the nouns they modify: e.g. The <u>beautiful</u> lady is here, where 'beautiful' is the attributive adjective. Predicative adjectives occur in the predicate whilst they modify the subject or function as subject complements: e.g. The lady is <u>pretty</u>. Postpositive adjectives follow the item they modify: e.g. Belemo said something <u>nice</u> to Ibiye. All the words <u>underlined</u> (beautiful, pretty and nice) are the adjectives.

'As amended' in our lead is invariably an adjective phrase modifying 'constitution'. Its position of occurrence makes it a postpositive adjective. However, 'as amended' did not follow 'constitution' postpositively; positioning it after the two prepositional phrases (1) <u>of the Federal</u> <u>Republic</u> (2) <u>of Nigeria</u> violates the word order and makes it ungrammatical.

Therefore, if 'as amended' must be maintained, it should be as follows:

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of local governments in the country **because (since)** the system is not recognised by the 1999 constitution **as amended** of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.*

An alternative structure in respect of the adjective **amended** is**:**

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of local governments in the country **because (since)** the system is not recognised by the **amended** 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.*

This is by far more preferable as **amended** occurred attributively: '…the **amended** 1999 constitution…'. On '**the system**'

This is simply about entities that are co-indexed (share the same reference). The NP '**the system**' apparently shares the same reference with 'local governments'; i.e. bound to 'local governments' outside its local domain according to the binding theory, but there is everything wrong with it. First, the antecedent is plural (local governments), but 'the system' connotes a single entity. The knowledge of syntax would have informed the news editor to go for the personal plural pronoun 'they' as an anaphoric proximate. Therefore, the sentence would have been:

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of local governments in the country because (since) **they** are not recognised by the amended 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.*

Better still, if 'the system' must be maintained, then the construction should have taken this form:

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of the third tier of government (local government) in the country because (since) **the system** is not recognised by the amended 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.*

Generally, there are no acceptability or ambiguity issues with this lead. Apart from the few errors identified in the sentence, there was nothing particular that would have caused meaning challenges for the listener. Therefore, the researcher would suggest the lead to be any of these below:

> *Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of local governments in the country because (since) they are not recognised by the amended 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.*

OR

Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri has called for the abolishment of the third tier of government in the country because (since) the system is not recognised by the amended 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study error analysed sentences of the first paragraph (the lead) of the first three stories of May 3, 2021 'News Bit at 11' news bulletin of Creek FM Yenagoa. It asserted that whilst grammaticality is viewed as the arrangement and structure of sentences where words are put together to generate sentences that conform with the rules that oversee a language, acceptability refers to expressions that are seen as appropriate by the speaker and the listener of the language without paying attention to rules, as long as the sentence is meaningful, natural and appropriate within the speech context. An error analysis was carried out on the lead of the first three stories of the news bulletin with the theories of generative syntax and system functional grammar in mind. The assessment showed that the news editor flouted the rules of word order, particularly, and his choice of words were questionable in some areas, perhaps as a result of ignorance or negligence, but he may be pardoned if Halliday's SFG should be championed.

As a way to go, news editors who decide what the people eventually consume should:

1. Avail themselves of the syntactic rules of English grammar as they not only disseminate information but also indirectly teach their audiences in the course of information dissemination.
2. Be careful with their choice of words so as to ensure unambiguities in their news bulletins.
3. Make certain the number and gender of the antecedent and anaphor correspond to avoid ungrammaticality.
4. Note the placement of adjectives when modifying the noun.
5. Ensure that the order of adverbs conform to the rules of the English grammar

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CORONAVIRUS AND OTHER POEMS

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AFFLICTION
By
Igani, Boma Brian

Affliction
From a far country you brought the dead
Having died by a pandemic all dread
Gathered in multitude were some without bread
Eulogizing the dead

Affliction
Were you with the multitude with skin so black
To cause their glimmer of hope look so bleak
Why raise your ugly head looking their way
When they thought their walls of defense built with brick
Have from them, shaded you away

Affliction
The soul you touched has died in your hands
And has been brought to be buried by the hands
Of those who for fear of you
Kitted themselves with garments up to their hands

Affliction
Did you in the multitude create a loose end
To destroy those who predicted your end
So that their prediction will never trend
As predicted by those who on you their money spend

Affliction
What really was packaged in the package
Can a single soul
Spread the dreaded pandemic
If true
Then what was the unguarded doing with the guarded without guards

Affliction
Upon God's own people
You shall never rise again

NEVER WITHOUT HEALING
By
Igani, Boma Brian

It was meant to kill
It was meant to maim
It was meant to sweep
It was meant to wipe

It killed
It maimed
It swept
And yes, it sure did wipe

The world stood at attention
Governments were in confusion
Many went into self-detention
Everywhere was crowned with unequivocal tension

But at last
It's being tracked down
It's being clamped down
It's being brought down
It is down

Though it brought with it

Hunger, pain and deaths
Though trackable
Yet made and still makes
The most intelligent look stupid
Having been made a hero
By those who put the spotlight on it

Though all these happened
Yet, the world shall heal again
God keeps His promises
There is always a way of escape
We are never without healing

A RADIANT STAR
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TRIBUTE TO A RADIANT STAR

A star in the distant past emerged
From the womb
To the world, unnoticed
A spectacular creature indeed
From the blues of the metaphysical
With impressive brilliance and quintessential intelligence
Like a grain sowed in deep earth
Sprouting out unclassified
Until the dew, the rains, and the radiant sun
Exposed its species.

His whirling brilliance and inestimable intelligence
Soon began to settle down
Like the delicious oyster of a cooked bone
Waiting to be sucked out of it
For relish.

Soon the fruits
From which humans fed
And which I, stupefied, was a part

From the fed and yet-to-be-fed
From knowledge through this rare gem
From the interplay of his creativity and excellence
I emerged, clothed with
Brilliance and intelligence.

A poet of renown, Kontein, thou art
Humility - personified, devotion-and-philanthropy-embodied
A metamorphosed icon
Like a radiant star that illuminates the earth
Your brilliance and knowledge

Water the arid and unsaturated
Brains of ever-anxious generations.

Soaring high while savouring
Poetry with joy
Like a sponge in soapy water
Like therapeutic antiseptics
To clean the body
Like medication for the mind
This Star radiates beyond its orbit
Revolving around other celestial bodies
In complete revolution of the poetic earth.

This accolade, well-deserved, you must
On your shoulders hang high
A hood to sway proudly
In defiance to oppositions

OMOPHONE FOSSILIZED ERRORS IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: PREVALENT ISSUES IN NIGERIAN ENGLISH

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Abstract
Communication is the quintessence of life and so society's need to communicate is crucial for its very existence. Any breach on communication will not only impede and incapacitate the communication process but can also alienate any such society in the trend of global affairs. On the global scene, for instance, written communication is used for informational transactions. For L2 users of the English language, meanings in what is being communicated are more often than not breached or impeded due to fossilized errors. Fossilized errors are errors that have become a habit, part of an L2 user's repertoire, and used subconsciously as if it were the correct form. These errors in written communication are considered very pertinent and too virulent to ignore in present day Nigerian English. Issues of fossilized errors tell negatively on international intelligibility of what is communicated. This position paper reports on the description of fossilized errors and their various manifestations in written communication. It also provides some of these commonly practiced errors making recommendations on how they can be corrected and their corrections formally adopted, especially by young L2 learners and users.

Key words: Communication, Written communication, Fossilized errors.

Introduction

It is a general notion that communication is a defining characteristic of life and that is no secret. A harmonious world cannot exist without it but communication can be disrupted. There, certainly, can be chaos in all types of communication – speech, writing, visual and non-verbal. One factor that may cause a breach in communication is language fossilization. It is important to note that language fossilization may contribute to or hinder the process of understanding what has been communicated; particularly among L2 English language learners. Language

fossilization can occur in all types of communication. Homophones are largely fossilized in Nigerian English. Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings. An L2 learner who has not mastered the orthography and usage of homophones may, to a great extent, have the meaning of his communication distorted and breached. Fossilization may be responsible for incorrect homophone usage. Lovinger (2000:169) pointed out that:

> The English language contains an abundance of
> words (or linguistic units) that are pronounced
> or spelled like other words but have different
> meanings. Let us define three such categories:
> Homographs, words that are spelled alike but
> pronounced differently (e.g., wind, moving air;
> and wind, to coil or turn), Homonyms, words
> that are spelled and pronounced alike (e.g.,
> bear, an animal; and bear, to carry or
> withstand). And Homophones, words that are
> spelled differently but pronounced alike.

Christmas wishes during that festive season have appeared on gift cards and letters as, "Mary Christmas" rather than "Merry Christmas". Expressions about the brightness of the weather have appeared in print as "the son is shining" rather than "the sun is shining". Now, it is fundamental to communicate meaning, but issues of fossilization can lead to a total breakdown in this process.

Language fossilization occurs when incorrect language becomes ingrained as a habit and is difficult to change. Some may argue that fossilization does not prevent learners from being; understood nonetheless, its negative consequences outweigh the positive. Language fossilization can make a non-native speaker of the English language appear less educated or even incompetent in their usage. Language fossilized errors in written communication are considered very pertinent and too virulent to ignore in present day Nigerian English. Issues of fossilized errors affect the international intelligibility of what is communicated.

An overview of homophone fossilized errors and their manifestations of written communication are presented in this paper. In addition, recommendations are made on how these errors can be corrected and formally adopted by young L2 learners and English language users.

The Concept of Fossilization
There are different scholarly ideas and definitions to the concept of language fossilization and they refer to one thing – ingrained language errors practiced as the norm./Fossilization is difficult to predict with certain users. An individual's learning of a language depends greatly on the environment in which that language is acquired. A poor learning environment is most likely to

lead to fossilization. Languages are generally learned in classrooms instead of in native countries where students get to interact with the native speakers of the language to gain competence, first hand. An academic version of a language, as opposed to colloquial and conversational language, cannot cover every aspect of a language. Fossilization, according to Selinker (1972) is, "a mechanism [that] underlies surface linguistic material which speakers will tend to keep in their interlanguage (IL) productive performance, no matter what the age of the learner or the amount of the instruction he receives in the target language."

From the foregone, one can aver that fossilization occurs only during productive/speech performance of a speaker. Also, that fossilization can occur in anyone irrespective of the age of that person and no matter how long he/she takes to learn or acquire the target language.

Chen and Zhao (2013) stated that, "fossilization can be summarized as the phenomena whereby the learner creates a cessation of interlanguage learning before acquiring the standard target language". Correspondingly, Selinker (1972) the pioneer of the notion of language fossilization stated that,

> Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules
> and subsystems which speakers of a particular native
> language will tend to keep in their interlanguage relative to a
> particular target language, no matter what the age of the
> learner or the amount of explanations he receives in the target
> language.

Selinker and Lamendella (1978) later redefined fossilization as,

> a permanent cessation of IL learning before the learner has
> attained TL norms at all levels of linguistic structure and in all   discourse
domains in spite of the learner's positive ability,   opportunity, and motivation
to learn and acculturate into   target society.

The term fossilization in language learning refers to errors that a non-native speaker makes so often in the target language they become ingrained over time. (Ellii Blog, 2022). Since the idea of language fossilization was proposed, scholars have interpreted it in various ways. The various ways fossilization manifests are: the transfer of the syntax from a mother tongue (L1) onto a target language (L2) – English language. Another case is the wrong conjugation of verbs. Lack of formal and accurate pedagogy of the English language can cause fossilization. Similarly, a subconscious mind that has reached the peak of its learning capability will more likely than not, experience issues with homophone fossilization.

Homophone Issues

In the words of Josiah (2009),

> The English language, like most other natural languages, has
> one major plague - that of managing the meager 26 alphabets
> to represent all the lexical and grammatical forms in the
> language orthographically. The ultimate implication is the
> inevitable creation of homonyms and homophones in the
> language to the extent that many L2 learners, and even
> uneducated native speakers in the language, easily get
> confused at the level of usage of such words.

As mentioned earlier, Christmas wishes have been written as "Mary Christmas" rather than as "Merry Christmas" on gift cards and letters. Correspondingly, in print, "the *sun* is shining" has been substituted for "the *son* is shining". Even some L2 teachers of English commit these errors unknowingly. It is undeniable that these errors could cause a breach in communication if they are not addressed.

Commonly Observed Homophone Fossilized Errors in Written Communication

There are some homophone errors that are easily detectable but others that may not be. The below list presents some commonly observed homophone fossilized errors in the written expression of Nigerian English language users.

Table 1:

Table 1 (Igani & Karibo, 2022) provides a summary of the data gathered on commonly fossilized errors in Nigerian English in this study.

Commonly Fossilized Errors in Nigerian English

S/N	COMMON HOMOPHONE FOSSILIZED ERRORS
1	The confusion between : Son and sun
2	The confusion between : Abel and able
3	The confusion between : Marry, Mary and merry
4	The confusion between : Bound and bond
5	The confusion between : Principal and principle

6	The confusion between : Dead, death and dearth
7	The confusion between : Jug and jog
8	The confusion between : U and you
9	The confusion between : Hear and here
10	The confusion between : Beat and bit
11	The confusion between: There, their and they're
12	The confusion between: his and he's
13	The confusion between: who's and whose
14	The confusion between : Post pond and Prospond
15	The confusion between : Lagging behind and lacking behind
16	The confusion between :/Never and neva
17	The confusion between : Sea and see
18	The confusion between : Decree and degree
19	The confusion between : May and may
20	The confusion between : Artist and Artiste
21	The confusion between : Bow and bow
22	The confusion between : Sit and seat
23	The confusion between : Rise and raise
24	The confusion between : Slip and sleep
25	The confusion between : Calvary and cavalry

S/N	
26	The confusion between : Secular and circular
27	The confusion between : Comity and committee
28	The confusion between: Where , were and we're
29	The confusion between : Coma, comer and comma
30	The confusion between : Travail and travel

Table 2:

Table 2 (Igani & Karibo, 2022) provides a summary of the data gathered on correct usage for the aforementioned homophone fossilized errors in Nigerian English in this study.

Correct Usage for the Aforementioned Homophone Fossilized Errors

S/N	CORRECTIONS
1	Son – a male child Sun – the star at the center of the solar system
2	Abel/– name of a male human Able/–/ability to do something
3	Marry – to join in matrimony Mary – name of a female human Merry – to be cheerful
4	Bound – to wrap Bond – relating to finance
5	Principal/– the first in order of importance Principle/– a fundamental truth
6	Dead (adjective) – something that is no longer alive

	Death (noun) – state of being killed Dearth – the scarcity of something
7	Jug/– a container used to store liquid Jog – a form of exercise that involves running
8	U/– the 21st letter of the alphabet You – 2nd pronoun
9	Hear –/organ of the body used to perceive sound Here – the position at a place
10	Beat – to strike someone. It can also be related to music Bit – a small part of something
11	There – referring to a place Their – third person pronoun They're – contraction for 'they are'
12	His – masculine possessive pronoun He's – contraction for 'he is'
13	Who's – contraction for 'who is' Whose – a possessive adjective
14	Post pond – to move to a later date Prospond – wrong form of the above
15	Lagging behind – to advance slowly Lacking behind – wrong form of the above
16	Never – not at all

	Neva – snow
17	Sea – an expansion of water
	See – ability to visualize something with the aid of the eyes
18	Decree/– an official order
	Degree – an academic qualification or the measurement of temprature
19	May – the 5th month of the year
	May – expressing probability
20	Artist –/a painter
	Artiste – a professional entertainer
21	Bow – a bending of the body to indicate worship or respect
	Bow – a weapon for shooting arrows
22	Sit/–/to rest the buttocks on something
	Seat – an object used for sitting
23	Rise/– to go up
	Raise – to increase the level of something
24	Slip – to slide unintentionally
	Sleep – the resting state of the body over a long period of hours
25	Calvary – the place where Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world
	Cavalry – soldiers who fight in armored vehicles
26	Secular – no connecting to any religion
	Circular – having a form of a circle
27	Comity/– an association of nations for mutual benefits

	Committee/– group of people tasked with a responsibility
28	Where/– indicating a place
	Were – plural form for 'was'
	We're – conjugation for 'we are'
29	Coma – the state of the human body being unresponsive
	Comer – a person who arrives at a place
	Comma – a punctuation sign
30	Travail/– to make a painful effort
	Travel –/to embark on a journey

Causes of language fossilization

What causes language fossilization are quite intriguing. Ellis (2000) noted Selinker's argument on the five causes of language fossilization which are, "language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and over generalization of TL (Target Language) linguistic materials." Consequently, Xie (2008) names these factors as, "language transfer, training transfer, learning strategy, communication strategy, overgeneralization and others."

L1 interference: Problems of language fossilization can arise when the rules of L1 are transferred onto the target language. This has been observed in the writings of students and young learners of the English language. Xei (2008), having studied Selinker and Lakshamanan's work on fossilization, posited that this transfer can be negative or positive. When it is positive, it means that the similarities of the L1 and the target language are shared but when it is negative, it means that the dissimilarities are shared. Some examples of the negative manifestations are: Clauses with no tenses (this more often than not, is a feature of transliteration), L1 morphological forms (issues with base forms, singular and pluralisation, etc), etc./He further explained that,

> The negative transfer of L1 is what the behaviorists
> believe to be proactive inhibition; that is to say, the
> influence of what has been previously learned appears
> in the context of and interrupts what is learned
> afterwards.

Pedagogy Methodology: Another major cause of fossilization is the methodology of teaching the English language. Written English, ordinarily, has the problem of being easily misunderstood and issues of fossilization can further escalate this confusion. It is the view of Graham (1981) that, "learning simply by contact has led many students to devise IL or idiosyncratic languages with rules often wildly different from those of Standard English."

In addition to Graham's view, Valette (1991) made a dichotomy between "street" learners and school learners. According to her,

> fossilization often occurs among 'street' learners who
> have had extensive opportunity [sic] to communicate
> successfully albeit with inaccurate lexical and syntactic
> patterns. As a result, their errors have become
> systematized and are almost impossible to eradicate"

Valette, buttressed the above argument by stating that, "Street" learners are never corrected, nor do they correct themselves and this is because they do not know the correct or standard form to use during speech performance. For them, what is most important is communication more than anything else. The question then is, how can they possibly effectively communicate with L1 speakers when they do not know these standard forms? From the argument above, the use of inadequate and insufficient methodology of pedagogy can also account for the occurrence of fossilization and prevent successful second language learning.

Intrinsic methodology of learning: This approach is learner-based. It describes how the learner understands the second language through the intrinsic methods he or she implores or adopts. Admittedly, the way we write is divergent from how we speak. In speech, for instance, misunderstood expression can be explained. However, we are most times absent when we submit our write-ups. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that how a learner processes and executes the instructions received in written English can either allow him make progress in it or cause fossilization. Unquestionably, there is a possibility that learners of a second language can ingest, encode and assert incorrect information or a piece of wrong expression without knowing it. Sims (1989) stated:

> Some place along the IL continuum,
> inappropriate or misapplied learning strategies
> could lead to fossilization of some features
> (phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical,
> psycholinguistic, or socio-cultural).

Language Usage and Abusage: There is a difference between communicative competence and language competence. Some learners may actually find it easy to express themselves but they do so in the midst of incorrect application of grammatical rules. The words "sun and son" are homophones but with written communication, without knowing the standard forms or the difference in meaning, these words may be used incorrectly. For instance, "the *son* is shining brightly" (communicative competence). One could look at the context and understand the meaning of the word '*son*'. The correct form should have been, "the sun is shining brightly" (language competence). Another example is, "this is *d* bag I talked about" rather than "this is *the* bag I talked about".

Xie (2008) asserts that:

> The learner declines [resorts] to simplify the target language, especially to simplify the grammatical rules, for instance, the use of the articles, plural forms and the use of tenses. And this reflects the unsatisfactory effect of communicative teaching methods. If the learner pays too much attention to the fluency but neglects the accuracy, some language errors can be easily fossilized.

Language Overgeneralization: This gives an explanation to the over-extension or generalization of language rules across all levels and aspects of language – semantics, syntax, morphology, etc. It is critical to note that although the English language has rules that guide its usage, there are exceptions. A generalization of the rules may lead to fossilization if it is not corrected immediately. An example will be the use of the "-s" suffix to indicate the plural forms of the nouns "child" and "ox". The standard forms are *children* and *oxen*.

Reducing Homophone Fossilization

Reducing homophone fossilization is possible. Sims (1989) stated:

> proposed relationship of fossilization and learning strategies...could be a key to the remediation of systematized errors, as the role of the learner information processing in the second language acquisition process becomes more clearly understood.

To begin with, the fossilization of homophones can be reduced by ensuring that pedagogists who give instructions in homophones have both communicative and language competence. The instructors should be well trained so that they can gain mastery of the topic as well as adeptly deliver the instructions on it. Furthermore, it might be necessary to expose L2 learners to the

culture of native English speakers, as it is with those who study French or other languages. This will enable second language learners to interact with native speakers in order to gain sufficient confidence in the use of the language. Moreover, constant tests and assignments should be given in class to evaluate and ascertain the extent to which a learner has imbibed the different shades of homophones and how they are used. Finally, constant oral drills would help reduce over-dependence on L1 which could lead to fossilization.

Conclusion

Fossilization is a common problem among language learners and can occur in any area of language use. Homophone fossilization is particularly common, as homophones can be difficult to differentiate when spelled down. In order to avoid the fossilization of homophones, language learners should realize the possibility that this could happen and take measures to prevent it from happening.

To further explain how to prevent homophone fossilization, language learners should be aware of the context in which they are using a homophone. This will enable them to make sure they are using the correct one. Additionally, they should make sure to practice their pronunciation regularly and be open to feedback from native speakers. One of the most effective ways to avoid homophone fossilization is to read written texts aloud. This allows the learner to hear the words as they are written and identify any incorrect homophone use. It is also critical to compare the context of the sentence to the meanings of the homophones. This can help to determine which homophone is being used incorrectly, as the erroneous use may not be immediately obvious. For example, the homophones "there," "their," and "they're" can be difficult to distinguish without considering the context. Once the incorrect homophone has been identified, checking a dictionary can confirm the correct usage. This is an invaluable language tool and should be used whenever possible. Once the correct homophone has been identified, it should be corrected in the text.

It is also imperative for language learners to be aware of other methods that can help to prevent homophone fossilization: Exposure to L1 users, research and constant practice are some other methods that could help reduce or solve issues of language fossilization even as it relates to homophones.

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SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND MOBILIZATION OF RURAL DWELLERS FOR PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN IKWERRE LGA, RIVERS STATE

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Abstract
The study examined how social media platforms (Facebook and WhatsApp) can be mobilization of rural dwellers to participate development initiatives in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers state. The study anchored on technological determinism theory. The study adopted survey design and a sample size of three hundred and eighty four (384) was drawn from a population of 138,904 through Krejcie and Morgan formula and multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents. A questionnaire tagged social media platforms and mobilization of rural dwellers for participation in community development initiatives was the instrument used for data collection. Analysis was done using weighted mean score. The findings revealed among others that Facebook and WhatsApp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers in participation of community development initiatives. Based on the findings, the study concludes that utilization of social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp can foster community development which will help minimize the flux of rural-urban migration. The study recommends that telecommunication companies should provide adequate internet facility which is the soul of social media usage in rural communities and also subsidize the cost of data to enable rural dwellers harness the various opportunities Facebook and WhatsApp offer for community development initiatives.

Key word: social media, rural dwellers, community development initiative

Introduction

Social media have been acclaimed the most far reaching advancement in information dissemination. They are platforms that provide virtual community for users to interact and share their experiences, interest in a particular issue with family and friends and also increase their circle of acquaintances. Social media powered by the internet has significantly changed the way people interact, work together, create and maintain relationship.

The utilization of the various platforms of social media has brought significant advancement in several areas of human endevours. Chux-Nyeche (2021) noted that the advent of social media have adversely affected the way we do things as well as our behaviour, mode of communication,

job performance, the way we socialize, do business and interact with one another. In the education system, they have moved teaching and learning process from mere confined classroom activity to a virtual forum where people from far and near can participate. In the business arena, it tremendously transformed business transactions. Nkenchor (2017) averse that social media powered by the internet have revolutionalized business around the globe by bringing people from various backgrounds together In polities, political gladiators see them as veritable tools for politicking and propagating political ideologies. In social life, they have changed how people interact, establish and maintained relationships. Despite these advancement recorded in these areas, not much has been done on how social media can be used to advance community development initiatives.

Community development is as old as man, and man has always come together to see how they can improve their standard of their standard of living using all manner of resources. First, they had used manual efforts in clearing bush path, construct village arena and playgrounds. The major communication process for initiating these projects was interpersonal communication process (town crier, market place, drum beats etc). As primitive as that society was, much were still achieved in terms of community development initiatives.

As more advances were recorded in communication technologies, men improved on how to disseminate information in their communities for the achievement of community development. During this period in history, better community development projects were initiated and accomplished. From the above, it can be seen that community development initiative is not a recent phenomenon; it is as old as man in the society. With advances in information and communication technology and its attendant impact on social development in all facets of human endeavours, it has become pertinent to bring in a more advanced communication in rural development initiatives. Thus, the social media becomes handy here.

It is on record that social media platforms have served as means of initiating interactive forum to achieve objectives in the areas of education, religion, politics, social interaction, etc. The thinking here, is that these social media platforms can also be used to initiate community development projects for improved lifestyle of rural dwellers. This provides that backdrop behind this present study which seeks to investigate how social media platforms such as facebook and whatapp specifically can be employ in mobilization of rural dwellers for participation in community development initiatives.

Statement of the problem
Man has always strived to improve his environment in order to make his life easier and worth living. Thus, from when man started living in clusters and as communities, they have always pooled resources together for their collective survival and development. Hence, it was possible for men in society to develop from primitive society to a more advanced city state. The quest for

improved society has led men into discovering new and better ways of solving their immediate needs. This has given rise to various community development initiatives, hence, today, a modern society.

With advancement in science and technology amongst which is social media, it has become necessary to explore how social media platforms such as *Facebook* and *WhatsApp* can be employed in the mobilization of rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives. This study therefore aims at identifying how social media platforms can be use to mobilize rural dwellers in participation of community development initiatives. Specifically, the study seeks determine how Facebook and WhatsApp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives in Ikwerre local government area, Rivers state.

Theoretical framework
This study is anchored on technological determinism theory. The technological determinism theory was coined by Thorstein Verblen and was made popular by Marshal MacLuhan in the 1960s. The theory postulates that technology and communication shapes and directs the way people think, act and feel, and how societies mobilize and organize themselves and operate. The advancement in information and communication technology and the invention of the use of internet on mobile phones has greatly changed the human society. Today, people have information on any issue at their finger tips. Obiora and Asadu (2015) had noted that 'the use of mobile phones for mass dissemination of information has changed the society tremendously' (p.25). It is quite obvious that with mobile phone and other internet gadgets, people can do a whole lot of things such as watching videos/films, sending pictures, recording and downloading music as well as reading online newspaper publications. An indication that there is a paradigm shift in communication channels which has caused change in the perception of individuals and the society at large.

This implies that advancement in communication technology especially the advent if social media has provided primary platform for people to organize and mobilize themselves for common cause and engage in critical discussion which enhances their ability to undertake collective action (community development).

Social Media
Social media are the various means of communication that employ mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which communities and individuals with common interests share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated contents. In other words, they are group of internet based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) described social media as group of internet based applications that builds on the ideological foundations of web 2.0 and allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Describing social media, Haida and Rahim (2015) explained

that social media is made up of two words 'social' and 'media'. To them, the word 'social' simply means the interaction of people and groups who belong to different sects or society, while 'media' means a system of communication and interaction. Hence, they defined the social media as 'an interaction between people who share, create and exchange information and ideas in a virtual communities and networks.' The department of military sociology of Ce.Mi.S.S. (Military Centre for Strategic Studies) cited in Montagnese (2011), defined social media as 'new generation mass tools which not only enable people to obtain information but also to share, comment or more generally, interact with it.' Similarly, the Chief Information Officers Council (CIO council), a US governmental body which supports the president and federal agencies in the field of information security, recalling a study carried out by the National Defence University (NDU), defined social media as 'applications that inherently connect people and information in spontaneous, interactive ways. Social media initiates innovations with communication technology platforms that allow knowledge sharing, digital storytelling, collaboration and relationship building among a community with common interests and needs (Al-Deen and Hendrick, 2013: 83). It is a wide range of online, word-to-mouth forums where users connect and discuss pertinent issues that interests them. Social media provide many ways to disseminate information in a fast inexpensive and efficient manner. In other words, it provides a free and easy way to disperse large amounts of information to large group of people very quickly and efficiently. Sweetser and Lariscy (2008) defined social media as a 'read-write web, where the online audience moves beyond passive viewing of web content to actually contributing to the content.

Connie (2012) defined social media as 'form of electronic communications through which users create online communities to share information, idea, personal message and other media content.' That is, social media create opportunities for users to connect to other users using the internet and a host of services. With social media, information can be collected, developed, exchanged and disseminated. Again, with social media, individual users can create information in multiple contexts to be shared through one-to-one, one-to-many or many-to-many communications. This is to say that, with social media, individuals not only receive information through these platform but they can create their own content or forward content to others. By so doing, individuals can contribute directly to the media products by providing eyewitness perspectives of an event, often bypassing the professional reporters on the scene, and providing unfiltered views of what is happening around them (Gordon,2007). Social media according to Ogbe (2014) is the new media that speed up conversation in a more interactive way; that make communication more effective and worthwhile. Nkenchor (2019) sees social media as hyper interactive media, thus defined social media as highly interactive online medium which provide users great opportunities and freedom in providing and reproducing various contents and forms of information during interaction.

Social media platforms are used to connect group of people scattered around the globe. These platforms include: social networking sites such as Facebook, whatsapp and Google plus (+); microblogs like Twitter; photosharing sites like Instagram and Pinterest and Video sharing sites such as Youtube and Vimeo. All these platforms enhanced with multimedia through Ipad, computer, tablet, smart phones or phones enable social media users to engage in real-time conversations. Hence, social media can be used as a primary means of communication or as an alternative or additional method of communication that promotes participation, conversation and connectedness. Social media to a great extent is a reflection of the social group around an individual. Hence, users have the ability to connect to people with whom he/she may have a common interest. When group of people come together on social media platforms outlining common goals and work as a virtual community, it produces a synergistic effect that has the capacity to further enhanced the way group members work and learn; and provide massive amount of training materials that could be used by everyone and eventually lead to actualization of self help development programme.

Community Development
Community can be described as a place where group of people with the same biological origin and similar psychological make-ups live together in the same location, share common interests and ideologies. Community is made up of group of people who live close to each other, share similar interest, depend on each other and realize that they important part the community. Kenny (2011) opines that communities are formed based on peoples' shared interest, mutual concerns and identity formation.

Development on the other hand can be described as improvement on something or making something more effective. According to Haddad (2006) development encompasses 'change' in a variety of aspects of the human condition. Thomas (2004) describes development is a process of structural societal change. Therefore, community development is the act of growing, expanding or making more effective group of people who have mutual interest (Retrieved from www.louislanacommunitynetwork.org). according to United Nations in Chhay lecture note defined Community Development as a process of social action in which the people of a community organized themselves for planning and actions; define their common and individual needs and solve their problems; execute the plans with a maximum of reliance upon community resources; and supplement these resources when necessary with services and materials from government and non-government agencies outside the community and to help people to develop economically and socially viable communities which can assist, strengthen and adequately support individual and family growth and enhance the quality of life. According to NACDEP (2014), community development is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes participative democracy, sustainable development, right, equality, economic development and social justice, through the organization, education and empowerment of the people within the community, whether these people whether these be of locality, identity or

interest, in urban and rural setting. . It is a process whereby those who are marginalized and excluded from society are enabled to gain self confidence and to join with others. They are encouraged to participate in action to change their situation and to tackle the problems that they face in their community (Emeh, Eluwa and Ukah, 2012).

This implies that the basic objective of community development is to improve the standard of living of every member of the community. The goal have always been pursued and achieved to a reasonable extent via interpersonal communication and the mainstream media. The question is, if the mainstream media and other channels of communication could record such level of success on community development, how much more social media platforms.

Social media and mobilization
Social media have proven to be a viable tool for mobilization of people for social change. Lope (2014) stated that the introduction of social media such as blogs, Facebook, whatsapp, Twitter as a new way to social network, has become the new catalyst tool in the formation of social movements-mobilization. In the same vein, Howard (2010) opined that 'social media serves as an instrument of local and national mobilization, communication and coordination; helps propagate international revolutionary contagion .... Similarly, Soengas-Perez (2013) observed that in this new way of communicating, 'individual actions focused towards group communication, personal suggestions and ideas working for common goals'. Focusing on the role of Facebook in the Tunisian revolution, Müller and Hubner (2014) agree that the social media offered a forum that promoted transparency and built shared awareness, creating a common caused and understanding that kept mobilizing Tunisian 'netizens' to reclaim their rights as citizens, and, in the end to Oust Ben Ali's regime .

Social media as a means of mass communication has made citizens to be better informed, turning them to activists, facilitating public mobilization, organization and collective action. Shedy (2011) say 'social media are tools that are used to give people the ability to connect and unite in a crisis. They raise awareness of an issue worldwide, and usurp authoritarian government'. This implies that social media increases awareness among people allow them to interact and help each other irrespective of geographical location.

For Weist (2011), new communication technologies have become recourses for mobilization of collective action and the subsequent creation, organization and implementation of social movement around the world. The new communication technologies referred to here is the social media powered by the internet. He also highlighted that the development of social media has fuelled cyber activism, a process of using internet based socializing and communication to create, operate and manage activism of any type including self-help initiatives. Langman (2005) also stated that computer-savvy activists use the internet to initiate and organise a broad spectrum of dissection activities and these include execution of developmental projects. This

suggests that social media is an influential media, capable of creating collectivism among community members. It also means that activists use social media to communicate, coordinate, mobilize and create awareness among members in decentralized networks.

Prior to the use of internet (social media) as a mass media, mobilization of members of a group or community for social change has been limited and restricted within exclusive members of the community, making it difficult for such development messages to reach and arouse support from people outside the group. Thus, Shirky (2011) argued that social media replaced the old mobilization structure and became the new coordinating tool for nearly all of the world's popular movement in the recent years, because of its ability to encompass certain characteristics such as communication, organization, mobilization, validation and scope enlargement. 'Social media introduces speed and interactivity that were lacking in the traditional mobilization techniques, which generally include the use of leaflets, posters and faxes' (Eltantawy &Wiest 2011). Shirky (2011) opined that the rise of the internet and social media has altered the landscape of popular mobilization system; it has allows individuals to play by a different set of rules. The interaction between social media and the different social, political and economic aspects of life can also create a multiplying effect that can stimulate the creation of and implementation of self-help development initiatives (Leenders and Heydemann, 2012).

The forgoing has shown that social media platforms such as facebook and whatsapp can to use to mobilize rural dwellers for participation in self-help development initiatives.

Methodology
The study adopted survey design because it is an efficient method for collecting data for a broad spectrum of individuals. The population comprises one hundred and thirty eight thousand, nine hundred and four (138,904) adults dwelling in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers state (INEC register, 2022). A sample size of 384 was drawn from the population using Krejcie and Morgan formula. The multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents, first, cluster sampling technique method was used, thereafter the purposive sampling was used to select respondent from each stratum. Data collected were presented in tables and the analysis was done using weighted mean score.

Results and Discussion
Objective 1: To determine how facebook can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives in Ikwerre local government area, Rivers state.
Table 1: Mean statistics of respondents' responses on areas facebook can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives.

Areas Facebook can be used to mobilize rural dwellers for participation in community development initiatives

S/n	Assessed items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\bar{X}$	REMARKS
1	Facebook can be use to create group for the purpose of mobilization of rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives	78	188	104	14	384	2.86	Accepted
		312	564	208	14	1098		
2	Facebook platform can accommodate large community members needed for community development initiative.	88	165	100	31	384	2.81	Accepted
		352	495	200	31	1078		
3	Facebook can be use to share ideas on community development projects	94	200	72	18	384	2.96	Accepted
		376	600	144	18	1138		
4	Facebook can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in	98	184	90	12	384	2.94	Accepted
	initiation of projects for community development	384	552	180	12	1128		
5	Facebook can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in fund raising for community projects in the community.	76	199	102	7	384	2.89	Accepted
		304	597	204	7	1112		
6	Facebook can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in the implementation of community projects.	85	183	103	13	384	2.89	Accepted
		340	549	206	13	1108		
7	Facebook can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to monitor the level of progress of community projects.	76	169	133	6	384	2.82	Accepted
		304	507	266	6	1083		
8	Facebook can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in the commissioning of projects in the community	98	177	98	11	384	2.94	Accepted
		392	531	196	11	1130		
	Grand mean						**2.89**	**Accepted**

This table shows the areas Facebook can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives.

Objective 2: To determine how whatsapp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives in Ikwerre local government area, Rivers state.

Table 2: Mean statistics of respondents' responses on areas whatsapp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives.

S/n	Areas whatapp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers for participation in community development initiatives Assessed items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\overline{X}$	REMARKS
1	WhatsApp can be use to create group for the purpose of mobilization of rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives	156	206	14	8	384	3.33	Accepted
		624	618	28	8	1278		
2	WhatsApp platform can accommodate large community members needed for community development initiative.	152	209	18	-	384	3.31	Accepted
		608	627	26	-	1271		
3	WhatsApp can be use to share ideas on community development projects	215	139	14	16	384	3.44	Accepted
		860	417	28	16	1321		
4	WhatsApp can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in	188	184	-	12	384	3.43	Accepted
	initiation of projects for community development	752	552	-	12	1316		
5	WhatsApp can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in fund raising for community projects in the community.	114	166	100	4	384	3.33	Accepted
		576	498	200	4	1278		
6	WhatsApp can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in the implementation of community projects.	114	201	69	-	384	3.12	Accepted
		456	603	138	-	1197		
7	WhatsApp can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to monitor the level of progress of community projects.	170	133	75	6	384	3.22	Accepted
		680	399	150	6	1235		
8	WhatsApp can be use to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in the commissioning of projects in the community	159	177	37	11	384	3.26	Accepted
		636	531	74	11	1252		
	Grand mean						**3.31**	**Accepted**

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This table shows the areas whatsapp can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives.

Discussion of findings

The study examined social media platforms and mobilization of rural dwellers in participation of community development initiatives in Ikwerre local government area of Rivers state. The facebook and whatsapp were the major platforms investigated. The study found that the two platforms can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in community development initiatives. All the respondents were in agreement that facebook and whatsapp can be used to create chat group for the purpose of mobilizing rural dwellers to participate in community development initiative. They also in agreement that these platforms can accommodate large community members needed for community development initiatives as well as share ideas on community development projects.

The study also found that both platforms can be used to mobilize rural dwellers to participate in fund raising for shared or common community project and in the actual implementation of such project. It was further revealed from the responses that faebook and whatsapp can also be used to mobilize rural dwellers in monitoring the level of progress of the community project initiated. Finally, it was found that rural dwellers can also be mobilized through social media platforms (facebook and whatsapp) to participate in the commissioning of developments in rural communities.

The present finding corroborates earlier study by Mbagwu, Ekwealor, Okide, Koledoye, Okeke, Osilike and Okeke (2019) on the place of social media in community develop which found that social media play bigger role in building community and catalyzing neighborhood co-operation and social action. It is also in tandem with the study of Anusar and Gregg (2012) which revealed that social media are utilized by many individual and organisations in achieving community development. The present finding is equally in agreement with an earlier study by Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp and Agnihotri (2014) which found that social media platforms such as twitter and facebook helped to mobilize several people who are actively involved in community development process.

Suffices it to say that since the advent of social media as communication tools, several advancements have been recorded in area of their efficacy in mobilizing people into groups for several purposes. Today, politicians and their various political parties use facebook, whatsapp and other social media platforms to mobilize members for political discussion. In the current dispensation, there are several social media political platforms where members/supporters are drafted into for the purposes of sharing political ideologies. Religious bodies also have social media platforms were religious information are disseminated to their members, share ideas and also raise funds for church development. Entrepreneurs see the various social media platforms as

veritable tools for marketing their products and services as the platforms afford them the opportunity to reach wider prospects at lower cost. Mainstream media are not left behind in this trend as almost all the media outfits now have social media handles augment their efforts in information dissemination and agenda setting. The platforms have equally been used to mobilize and raise funds to support families and friends during burial arrangements, inaugural lectures, weddings and many others. Evidence abounds of how the various social media platforms have positively impacted on various aspects of people socio-economic lives.

The present findings confirm that similar efforts can be directed at using social media platforms for community development projects without members of such community having one-on-one contact. What this means, is that groups members of a given community can share ideas on community project desired by their, cost the project, share the cost among members, create an account, pay in money into such account, commence the project, supervise it and commission it, without the hassle of travelling from far and near to meet before decisions are taken.

These findings have serious implications for rural development initiatives; groups in the rural communities such as women groups, clubs, youth groups, etc could key into this arrangement and initiate and execute several community projects that will be beneficial to larger members of the community.

Conclusion

The major concern of this study was to determine how social media platforms can be used to mobilize rural dwellers for participation in community development initiatives. Within the framework of the study, it was found that facebook and whatsapp can be used for mobilization of rural dweller in participation of community development initiatives. Based on the findings, the study therefore concludes that utilization of social media platforms such as facebook and whasapp can foster community development which will help minimize the flux of rural-urban migration. This in turn will go a long way in minimizing the rate of insecurity in the communities and the nation at large.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that telecommunication companies provide adequate internet facility which is the soul of social media usage in rural communities and also subsidize the cost of data to enable rural dwellers harness the various opportunities facebook and whatsapp offer for community development initiatives.

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UNDERCURRENTS OF PEDOPHILIA INNAWAL EL SADAAWI'S*WOMAN AT POINT ZERO*AND ALICE WALKER'S *THE COLOR PURPLE*

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Abstract

This article examines the paraphilia known as pedophilia represented in Nawal El Sadaawi's *Woman at Point Zero* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple.*It explores the concept and menace of pedophilia in our society and how sexual preference for minors poses a major threat to the society. The thrust of the paper centres on the way by which pedophiles sexually molest these minors without consideration for their mental wellbeing. Accordingly, the paper looks at the ways these perverts affect their victims and the risk, danger and trauma it leaves behind. It goes further to divulge the inhuman and cruel treatment meted out to these minors as the pedophiles take undue advantage of them. Sadaawi and Walker present victims in their novels who are unmistakably rendered traumatized, confused and violated. To achieve this investigation, the paper leans on the psychological approach and suggest that pedophilia has a long-term impact on the molested minors, rendering them somewhat damaged for life. This paper concludes that by highlighting the dangers of this menace, it creates a measurable awareness which in due course will eventually bring about an end to this deviancy.

Keywords: Pedophiles, Pedophilia, Minor, Sexual Trauma

Introduction

The media is often awash with the news of minors being sexually molested by persons who have preference or whims for young children. A pedophile is someone who is often sexually attracted to minors. This is a paraphilia which involves an adult having an exclusive or primary sexual attraction towards a child. These categories of persons include prepubescent, adolescents or teenagers. Sadaawi and Walker present two minors who find themselves caught in the webof pedophiles. The consciousness of pedophilia can be seen through the lives of Firdaus in *Woman at Point Zero* and Celie in *The Color Purple.* These minors were constantly molested by pedophiles and these acts totally affects their mental well-being. In the texts under study, the perverts take undue advantage of these minor without any consideration whatsoever for their wellbeing. Consequently, leaving both Firdaus and Celie traumatized and utterly confused. Sadaawi and Walker through their works, appear to jointly suggest that pedophilia has long term impact on the lives of these minors as seen in their mental progression.

In *Woman at Point Zero*Sadaawi depicts a female prisoner at the Quanatir Prison whose childhood was altered by the sexual activities of her uncle. This uncle takes a sexual interest in her before and after the death of her parents. These sexual acts of molestation left her mentally confused and conflicted since she is a minor and could not fully grasp the entirety of what was happening to her body. Whereas in *The Color Purple* Walker examines the life of Celie, another

victim of pedophilia, who faces similar sexual molestation under the care of a depraved step-father. This minor could not understand why her mother's husband chose to do the things he did to her. Her mind is constantly in turmoil and on the edge because she is wheedled and inveigled the entire time.

According to Michael Seto "Pedophilia is defined as a sexual interest in prepubescent children. It is empirically linked with sexual offending against children… sex offenders with child victims are more likely to be pedophiles basedon self-report or objective measure of sexual interests" (391). This paper on the undercurrents of pedophilia leans on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. B. Janse discusses the Freudian theory as a theory about personality organization. He adds that Freud's studies lay emphasis on the recognition and impact of childhood events and how those experiences can affect the normal functioning of their adulthood. Janse adds that 'in many cases, this led to a neurotic disorder, Freud attempted to understand the nature and various forms of these disorders and began his research'. Janse reveals further that Freud simply wants to understand what the wishes and desires of the patients were, their experiences of love, shame, hatred, guilt, fear and how they coped with these emotions.

The Menace Called pedophilia
Pedophilia is presently one of the problems of humanity today and the victims are basically children. From the news media one is able to gather daily reportage of children being sexually abused by adults whose preference for minors is evident within this vulnerable target. These set of persons have fantasies and cravings for sexual relations with children under the age of eighteen. They are pedophiles whose victims are young, susceptible and one can clearly see that their deviant interest in these minors is of major importance to them. They are fondled, raped, impregnated by their abusers. Unfortunately, the lives of the minors remain shattered and altered by this divergent act of pedophilia.

According to Shawn Michael Dove pedophilia is "…a psychological personality disorder which is learned. A person may believe that they have an uncontrollable fixated desire, a compulsion to have sex with children. This person will go to great length to temporary satisfy these desires" (5). This suggest that the victim is a minor and the offender is clearly an adult. Randolph Quirk describes a pedophile as "someone who is sexually attracted to young children" (1018). The pedophiles have other good behavioral traits that help to mask their evil intention towards these minors. And so, this makes it harder for the unsuspecting sexual motives of the offender to be exposed.

Walker's *The Color Purple*is an epistolary novel that scrutinizes the life of Celie; a timid minor whose life is miserable because of her pedophiliac stepfather. Celie is terrified out of her wits and barely dares to mention her troubles to any mortal. The pedophile constantly threatens her, saying "*You better not tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy*" (1). She is left with no other option but to complain to God through her letters simply because she is petrified to death. Dove asserts "The pedophile may go as far as to physically threaten the victims that if they would ever tell, the pedophile will harm/kill a family member or them. The child lives with this ongoing fear all of their life, because some victims may never tell [until] some decades later (14).The pedophiliac stepfather Alphonso, takes pleasure in what he does as he reminds Celie while choking her "He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it" (2).

Sadaawi's *Woman at Point Zero* uncovers the immoral fantasy of Firdaus' uncle with regards to his niece. Her parents are right there in the same house but no one suspects or attempts to protect Firdausfrom his sexual advances. According to Dove: "Pedophilia is hard to detect, because if a person doesn't expect an adult being up to something, the behavior of the adult will honestly look like a person that truly cares for and enjoys being around children" (10). Firdaus is the object of her uncle's fantasy for a while and the aftermath leaves her somewhat confused and conflicted. Her mind is jumbled and troubled after such sexual experience with her uncle and she eventually carries her turmoil way into adulthood.

Parental negligence provides one of the loopholes for Firdaus to be molested right in her home. This deviant behavior continues right after her parents passed away and she is left in the custody of the same pedophile. He did not spare any more time but quickly pounces on the prey, Firdaus who happens to be his victim. When shegets a chance to share her experience with the psychiatrist, she admits that "I was trembling all over, seized with a feeling. I could not explain, that my uncle's great long fingers would draw close to me after a little while, and cautiously lift the eiderdown under which I lay. Then his lips would touch my face and press down on my mouth and his trembling fingers would feel their way slowly upwards over my thighs" (21). He inflicts more confusion and imposes misperception in the mind of this young girl supposedly under his care.

Howbeit, Muckenhoupt notes that "Psychoanalysis, the therapy Freud developed for treating mental illness…" brings to mind the number of traumatized minors whose mental health has been affected due to their contact with one or more pedophiles. She points out "his writings on children sexuality" and "emphasizing the sex drive above all other human motivations" (10) As these youngsters attempt to share their stories, one can clearly see that the minors' encounters with the pedophiles obviously affected their lives tremendously. This morbid secret comes out in the open as Firdaus reveals her story to the prison psychiatrist while Celie embrace the epistolary approach. Muckenhoupt further reveals one of the basic assumptions of psychoanalysis, that "every action has a cause. Freud did not believe in 'random' actions or accept that anyone ever said anything for "no reason at all" (82). This is evident in the way Firdaus ends up feeling abandoned and neglected or Celie grappling with timidity and fright as a result of their encounters with these deviants.

The impact of child-sexual trauma
This aberration called pedophilia is a leading cause of a range of mental health problems faced bythese minors and perhaps may be revealed through their tendency towards isolation, aggressiveness, withdrawal tendency, timidity, anxiety, fear, poor social interaction amongst others. The minors cannot speak for themselves out of fear or the extent of the sexual trauma going on in their lives. According to Margaret Muckenhoupt "… Freud wrote, 'We do wrong to ignore the sexual life of children entirely…' He always believed that some neuroses were caused by genuine trauma…he was certainthat at least two of his female patients had been assaulted by their fathers" (84)

Celie appears to have poor social interactive skills and often seem mal-adjusted in the company of other people due to the impact of sexual trauma. It took the friendship of Shug Avery and

Sophia to bring her out of her shell. Through her letters, it is worthy of note that Celie struggles mentally with this gloomy concern and can hardly utter the words of her abuse to any confidant. The same thing appears to befall Firdaus as she feels like a recluse and a loner. Having repressed her pain and anguish over time, she gives the impression of someone who withdrawn and somewhat troubled. When her uncle shifts his interest away from her, it becomes clear that she is apparently heartbroken and emotionally distraught. She does not get closure or answers to why she was set aside by her pedophiliac uncle. And this is one of the mental pains she carries into adulthood.

The pedophiles responsible for the traumaor mental upset inflicted on these minors are not total strangers to their victims. Pedophiles are often the regular fellows who live amongst their victims. They can be male or female adults having the label of uncles, aunts, father figures, mother figures, teachers, imams, pastors, caregivers, security guards, domestic servants, amongst others. They are responsible for causing emotional damage to these minors thereby leaving them mentally battered and bruised. Firdaus was constantly abused by her uncle while Celie had her fair share from her stepfather. Sexually man handled right under their own roof and within the reach of either their care givers or primary care providers such as mothers, fathers, grand parents, siblings, amongst others. Their molesters are persons well known to them- Stepfather to Celie and Uncle to Firdaus.

Sadaawi captures the moment succinctly as Firdaus's uncle manipulatively carries out his act "My *galabeya* often slipped up my thighs, but I paid no attention until the moment when I would glimpse my uncle's hand moving slowly from behind the book he was reading to touch my leg" (13). Considering the fact that Sadaawi exposed the age gap between the minor and the pedophile, by declaring "My uncle was not young. He was much older than I was" (13). It becomes glaring and obvious that a pedophile is on the prowl and very close to his prey who is much younger and just a child. He is cunny and premeditative because he knows what he actually wants. Frits Bernard reveals that "pedophilia may be found all over the world, among all races and people. It has existed in every era. It is not confined to particular population, group or classes" (3)

The incessant molestation and act of deviancy from her uncle eventually leads to more confusion and conflicts for the young girl. Sadaawi points out that her mind remains unstable as she is often seen seeking for acceptance and love. The sexual abuse from her uncle left her terribly in a muddled state of mind. She says "And because I am a prostitute, I hid my fear under layers of makeup" (10). In her attempt to overcome her troubles, sheembraced the commercial sex trade and amasses so much wealth, but it did nothing to erase the vacuum she felt nor did it profferany solution for her need to be made whole again.She states clearly "And because I am a prostitute, I hid my fear under layers of make-up" (10). Saul McLeod states that "Freud believed that events in our childhood have a great influence on our adult lives, shaping our personality. For example, anxiety originating from traumatic experiences in a person's past is hidden from consciousness, and may cause problems during adulthood (in the form of neuroses)". This probably explains why these minors often show 'surface manifestation of deeply repressed conflicts'.

Firdaus is repeatedly withdrawn, shows signs of aggression and has trust issues. This suggests that she probably tries to lock away these painful or frightening childhood experience by simply

repressing them. The moment her uncle is bored with her, he moves on and gets married leaving Firdaus feeling thoroughly confused, abandoned and emotionally drained She confesses her hate and resentment towards men, saying "I became aware of the fact that I hated men, but for long years had hidden this secret carefully" (96). After a while Firdaus becomes depressed and develops suicidal tendency. She wants to die and appears to welcome the idea of death with open arms. She exultantly declares "I have triumphed over both life and death because I no longer desire to live, nor do I any longer fear to die. I want nothing. I hope for nothing. I fear nothing" (110). She willingly beckons death as a way out of her situation and dilemma.

Dove affirms that "This abuse that the person has gone through has or will in some way affect that person's life…" (39). In her epistolary reveal, Celie disclose her pregnancies sired by her abusive stepfather. To cover up his immoral tracks, he sells both babies to 'unsuspecting buyers' without the consent of Celie. Her instincts confirm this, she writes in her letters: "He took my other little baby, a boy this time. But I don't think he kilt it. I think he sold it to a man [and] his wife over Monticello" (4). Through her excruciating and agonizing letters to God, one can vividly see that she is troubled and concerned about the babies and their whereabouts leaves her in despair and maternally disturbed. Both youngsters never fully recovered from the sexual abuse their lives were exposed to. Whereas the pedophiles walk free and move on smoothly with their own lives as if nothing ever happened.

Conclusion
Pedophilia is a serious paraphilia and the victims here are Firdaus and Celie. Seto concludes that: "There is no evidence to suggest that pedophilia can be changed. Instead, interventions are designed to increase voluntary control over sexual arousal, reduce sex drive, or teach self-management skills to individuals who are motivated to avoid acting upon their sexual interest" (391). This leaves the victims scarred, wounded and impaired emotionally because of this morbid secret that they are forced to carry through life. And so, it is probably safe to draw the attention of absentee parents, care givers and guardians to watch out for the mental wellbeing their wards and children. Apparently, they should be on the lookout for pedophiles who try to groom their victims and emotionally bait them with one primary goal in mind. Most of the emotional turmoil and chaos that Firdaus and Celie faced would have been averted if they never crossed paths with these sex offenders who end up only creating agonizing undercurrents of pedophilia.

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THERAPOETICS OF PROTEST: A STYLISTICS STUDY OF OGBOWEI'S ART

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Abstract

This essay is an attempt to portray how the poet Gilbert Ebinyo Ogbowei in his art crafts his displeasure at the social disequilibrium, ecological terrorism and economic privation using schemes and tropes of language. The study examines nine poems from three poetry collections of Gilbert Ogbowei; *the town crier's song, the heedless ballot box*, and *song of a dying river.* The literary investigation is conducted using KonteinTrinya'stherapoetics critical perspective. The study reveals that the poet's masterful strokes is employed to sooth the numerous and excruciating pains of the Niger Delta region and her people and at the same time satirize, and protest the eclectic injustices perpetrated in the Niger Delta. The study concludes that Ogbowei's art through stylistics devices both sooth the oddities and protests the socioeconomic, political and ecological inequalities.

Keywords: Therapoetics, Poetry, Niger Delta, Protest, Style, Art, Language.

Introduction

It is through the school of literature that language obtains its stylistics function. A writer's individuality, mannerism, mode of presentation and his voice all add up to his or her style. The creative or critical writer of literature expresses his or her style through the emergence of his artefact, text, or script. The work of art of the writer reveals his style more than any other single factor. It is no doubt that we cannot disassociate language from style or accept one and reject the other. Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short had observed that; "in its most general interpretation, the word *Style* has a fairly uncontroversial meaning: it refers to the ways in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, or a given purpose, and so on" (10). When we refer to style we are inadvertently referring to language dressed up in a particular form; either linguistics, literary or otherwise. Style is both internal and external. By internal we mean the stylistics implication derived at the semantics level and by external we mean stylistics implicature at the graphological level. Since there is a connection between language and style and the style of a

writer is accessed through his use of language. Leech and Short in *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*collaborates.

> In its most general interpretation, the word style has a fairly uncontroversial meaning: it refers to the way in which language is used in a given context by a given person (for a given purpose,and so on). To clarify this, we may adopt the Swiss linguist Saussure's distinction between langue and parole, langue being the code or system of rules common to speakers of .a language (such as English), and parole being the particular uses of this system, or selections from this system, that speakers or writers make on this or that occasion. (10).

Our understanding of Ogbowei's style will thus be hinged upon his use of the English language in an individualistic pattern that is seen to be peculiar to him.our study shall attempt to portray how Ogbowei engages the vehicle of language to arrive at the destination of stylistics meaning by examining the linguistic and poetic devices employed in the poems. A very careful observation and rereading of Ogbowei's literature will reveal a certain penchant for a distinct graphological patterning. Stylistics is not a single notion concept but an eclectic one. Often in our attempt to undertake a stylistics study of a text or an authors' work we undertake the dual form of stylistics inquiry. Odingowei M. Kwokwo holds that,

> Stylistics as a branch of linguistic study has two broad strands of language use to analyze. The first strand is concerned with the way writers use language to express meaning and emotions while the second strand is concerned with the aesthetic embroidery of the literary work. These two concerns literally divide into linguistic and literary stylistics. Linguistic stylistics refers to the description and explanation of the formal or structural features of language found in a literary text. This is the use of structural linguistics as espoused by Halliday (1961). It involves the study of the linguistic forms that perform the transitive or ideational metafunctions of language which convey the content or ideas of the writer. The aesthetic strand of stylistic study is concerned with what aspects of language use create the most aesthetic impression on the reader or listener. This approach is the realm of literary stylistics. (3).

In order to cover the major span of his art we shall engage in a study of three poems each from the three poetry collections of Gilbert Ebinyo Ogboweinamely; *song of a dying river*, *the town crier's song*, and *the heedless ballot box.*

Review of Related Literature
Very many scholars have written on the peculiar nature of Ogbowei's writing. His style as a major Niger Delta poet has been the focus of several critical commentaries. We shall examine some below.The style of Ogbowei's writing is complex and the text is easily accessible to young and new readers of literature. This is so because of the peculiar features of his script. KonteinTrinya in the introduction to *the heedless ballot box* posits that "one huddle that tentatively confronts the young newcomer to Ogbowei's poetry is his characteristic omission of punctuation marks, except the imperative possessive or hyphen. No capitals, no commas, no full stops."(9), this clearly shows that Ogbowei has a distinct style of his own through the deliberate abandonment of certain graphological principles and the insistence and consistent use of others. Kontein goes further to liken Ogbowei's style of writing to that of the American poet E.E. Cummings. He avers that,

With Ogbowei, it is an adopted style, and perhaps a function of a similar vision of the world so blurred by tears of pain that no capital theme looms out merely on the tiptoes of punctuations but through the craft of metaphor and no commas impede the rhythm of the reader's poetic path. One finds very appropriate here Mortimer's description of the poet (although in a context other than the typographical variations of our present interest) as one who "does not so much as seek to free his versification from set forms but to construct units within the structure that convey his thoughts and feelings" (43). Ogbowei's mature craft is a poetic ocean awaiting the deep-seadiver of pearls. (10).

It is significant that Ogbowei's style of writing without certain punctuation signs like commas and full stop are deliberate stylistic choices made in order to foreground the peculiarity of his art. When the poet makes a deliberate choice on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axis of language the result is the stylistic rendering that we see as the text of Ogbowei's writing. Odingowei M. Kwokwo describes the style of Ogbowei's art in these words:

> Ogbowei has dexterity in manipulating the resources of language to communicate his thoughts using a myriad of complex strategies such as graphological violations, clausal manipulations, lexico-semantic choices as well as imagery and symbolism. Although there is over-boiling anger that nearly marred the aesthetic pleasure of the poems, the poet, Ogbowei has demonstrated that he is a master of (poetic) language. (13).

The style of Ogbowei's art is such that it is not only unique but also a form that sets him apart from the crowd. Steve Okpalefe Ogude in the foreword to the poetry collection, *song of a dying river* affirms that "they stand out, especially as they defy traditionally accepted forms and follow the seemingly unobtrusive and self-effacing style of e.e. cummings." (8). It will not be wrong to say that Ogbowei writes with the adopted style of e.e. cummings.

Schemes and Tropes in Ogbowei's Art
There are certain stylistic literary devices that are employed to make speaking and writing spicy and fresh. Figures of speech as they as also known make our writing fore grounded as the normal take on the abnormal and language is made to draw attention to itself by attaining literariness. There is so much of these poetic devices in the literature of Gilbert Ogbowei. Edward P. J. Corbett in his essay "Adding Fire to Your Argument: Tropes and Schemes" writes that,

> In classical rhetoric, the tropes and schemes fall under the canon of style. These stylistic features certainly do add spice to writing and speaking. And they are commonly thought to be persuasive because they dress up otherwise mundane language; the idea being that we are persuaded by the imagery and artistry because we find it entertaining. There is much more to tropes and schemes than surface considerations. Indeed, politicians and pundits use these language forms to create specific social and political effects by playing on our emotions. (1).

The poet displays mastery of the craft of schemes and tropes in his poetry and does not hesitate to apply them when the need arises. It is also true that the tropes and schemes make his writing take on a new cloak of novelty. It also brings perspective and engages the imagination of the readers when we consider the use of imagery and other poetic devices. Edward P. J. Corbett further posits that, "Trope: The use of a word, phrase, or image in a way not intended by its normal signification. Scheme: A change in standard word order or pattern. Tropes and schemes are collectively known as figures of speech"(1). We shall examine the poet's use of these figures of speech in the three poetry collections one after another.

Theoretical Framework

Our choice theoretical perspective for this study is therapoetics as set forth by Kontein Trinya. Accordingly, this critical perspective therapoetics in the words of Kontein Trinya;

> Is, on the one hand, a perspective on utilitarian affect in therapeutic terms whether or not the therapy had been an authorial or poetic intent. It also, on the other hand, in a psychoanalytic sense, an interest in the therapy that the creative process offers the poet; the healing or health or palliation that comes from the 'expressive' release of toxic pent up emotions; the relieving pleasure of a fantasied escape through the passage of poetry into a dream land of bliss or other; the healing of the soul through a creative 'confession' of acts that in a somewhat Freudian sense, it might have been 'unsafe' to declare except through the disguise of art (30).

It is apparent from the foregoing that therapoetics is an eclectic theoretical framework that incorporates principles from diverse disciplines. Kontein emphasises this by holding that; "therapoetics is also conceived as the interdisciplinary and clinical application of poetry to diagnosed conditions, as music has been." (31). Therapoetics as a critical perspective according to the proponent has three cyclic and interwoven parts thus:

1. The self-'medicating' employment of poetry, whether or not poetry had been sought or applied consciously for the purpose (patient-focused');

2. The caregiver's conscious clinical application of poetry to target a given condition (physician-focused);

3. The 'healing' prospects in the creative process of poetry (poet-focused).

From the above core tenets of therapoetics as a literary perspective for undertaking the explication of texts we infer the following features of the critical theory:

a) That literary works exhibit a trans-textual affective ability or influence on the audience or readers.

b) Literary criticism is purposed in the discovery of the extra-textual realization of art.

c) It supports the notion that literary art is founded on the bipolar conception of form (aesthetics) and its function (sociology)..

d) It emphasizes the emotional affect or disposition of literary works on readers or audience.

e) The critic studies the power of art to stir psycho-physiological response (laughter, cry, smile, frown etc.) of the audience/readers.

f) Seeks to describe the affective power of literary art that exist between the shared codes between the text and the reader.

Metaphors of Protest in *the town crier's song*
The poet of "the town crier's song" is also a critic, this earned him both experience and literary style in his creative writing endeavour as portrayed in his literature. The poet engages in the deployment of certain metaphors that accurately relays the protest of the poet and his people at what he considers unjust. According to JosefStern in his work*Metaphorin Context*holds that,

Like any utterance, a metaphor typically conveys more information than its interpretation; one knows that the speaker is speaking metaphorically, in English, addressing someone, in a tone expressing a particular emotional attitude, etc. Of these various conveyed pieces of information, the interpretation is the information that is either semantically encoded in or determined by the utterance relative to specified contextual parameters. (2).

The implication of the above is that the poet applies certain stylistics device with the intention that the metaphors will further convey beyond the reach of his lines the information, tone, and portray the context as it his audience will be able to infer. The following literary and poetics devices are identified and regarded as metaphors as implied by Josef Stern and such interpretation alluded in the poems "letter to the minister", "lament of an over cropped land, and "heroes of the wasteland" the poetry collection *the town crier's song,)*.

Refrain: there is the use of three lines lyrics that serves in the poem for a refrain. These lines are repeated and serve as a chorus in the poem. These lines add to the musicality and songlike nature of the poem.

"sickness will not kill me/death will not kill me/only agadagba shakes hands with me".

Personification:

The following instances portray the poet's use of personification.

1) "only the dollar speaks a parable they like". Here the 'dollar is regarded as being human and possessing voice to speak parables.
2) "when shadows fall over flood". Here the 'shadow' is said to fall like an animate object.
3) "sickness will not kill me" this statement from the refrain is a personification of 'sickness' as possessing the ability to kill.
4) "death will not kill me". Here 'death is regarded as a person who possesses the power to kill, but will not do so in this instance.
5) "funeral drums begin a tale". The funeral drums are personified as engaging in narrating a tale. "martial drums begin a parable". Martial drums are personified as speaking in parables.
6) "hunger playing a threnody". Hunger is in this line of poetry personified as singing a lament.
7) "sickness takes the dance from our feet". Here in this line of poetry, we see sickness give the animate quality of taking something from us. In this instance, it is the dance that sickness takes away from our feet.

Repetition: there is the use of repetition in the poem. In the first movement of the poem and its ninth verse, the line "menstrual rags for flags" is repeated twice for the purposes of emphasis and musicality.

Alliteration: there are several instances where the initial consonant sound is repeated in the line of poetry. This occurrence adds to the songlike feature of the poem.

a) the song searchlight scanning a mined field". The consonant /s/ alliterates in this line of poetry.

b) "baby doc bandabokassabothabourgibaetc". the consonant sound /b/ alliterates in this line of poetry.

Simile: there is the use of 'like' in comparison of two things. The following similes are identified in the poem.

   a) "like drift seeds/we have travelled long journeys". Here the poet and his companions are liken to seeds.

   b) "to grow here on conditionalities/like resurrection plants". The poet persona also compares the people to resurrection plants.

   c) "we are cut down for sale/light timber nectar for tea/like snuffbox fern". The poet and his companions are here in this line of poetry compared to snuffbox fern.

In the poem entitled "heroes of the wasteland" the following literary and poetics devices have been identified:

Rhetorical question: the poet persona directs some rhetorical questions to his audience in the poem. This is obvious when we read the syntactical construction of the sentences, regardless of the poet's style of not using punctuation signs or marks. The questions are concealed protest issues for example:

a) "where are the men who wearing eagle feather". Here the poet is searching and looking for the men who wore eagle's feather. It is a sign of cultural identification and distinction in Africa. The next line is also a rhetorical question

b) "can write their names on the sharp edge/of the machete". These two lines are actually a single line of thought but through the poetic device of enjambment or run-on-lines the poet completes the thought is the next line. The line of poetry is a question seeking for such great warriors of the region who in time past wrote their names on the edge of the cutlass.

Refrain: the poet utilizes three lines of expression in the poem to serve as a break, repetition and a sort of musical chorus in the poem. The refrain is repeated four times in the course of the entire poem.

"easter would not enter our port/in the next boat/though it has come past fantuo door"

Personification: the poet assigns animate qualities to inanimate objects thereby personifying them thus:

a) "and blood spilled cry from back streets". The poet personifies the blood spilled as crying out like humans with voices.

b) "the talking drums have gone on sick leave". The drums are personified in this line of poetry and given the human quality of both talking and going on leave like a worker or staff of a company who take annual leave.

c) "the talking drums have caught aids". The poet persona are gives animate quality of possessing the ability to catch to the drums, the drums like human person (s) is said to have caught or contacted aids.

In the poem "lament of an overcropped land" the following literary and poetic devices have been identified.

Simile: these expressions are comparison by the poet using 'like or as' to compare two things.

a) "like a land overcropped/you'd leave me fallow/ to cultivate another/lush and fertile". The verse one of the poem is a simile expression that runs from the first line to the fourth. The poet foresses that like a land s/he will be forsaken for a lush and fertile land.

b) "you care so much for my longevity/ not my fecundity/that's gone like milk from my chewing-gum breast". The fourth verse is also a simile that runs through the entire three line that comprises that verse of the poem. The poet persona compares the wasted and dryness of the regions' land to his flabby breast.

Rhetorical question: the poet asks a very nagging question that does not actually await an answer.

a) "can I regenerate sufficient vegetation/to attract again the farmer". This rhetorical question is one that the region's leaders must bear in mind knowing well that once the land has yielded all its resources to the farmer it will be left fallow and dry.

Stylistics of Protest and Unrest in *the heedless ballot box*

In the poetry collection titled *the heedless ballot box* we shall look at three poems and the stylistics and poetic devices that are identified are fore grounded as tropes of protest and unrest by the poet. Protest is a complaint or objection against an idea, an act or a way of doing things. It is also regarded as, an event in which people gather to show disapproval of something. https://www.merriam-webster.com. Hence, the poet engages in the application of these stylistics schemes as an image to depict the dislike of the people against political disequilibrium. There are different forms of unrest but we shall consider social unrest which according to OrtwinRenn, AleksandarJovanovic and Regina Schröter entails:

> Social unrest can be viewed as a risk: depending on its manifestations objects that people value can be threatened by violence or other forms of social outrage. Social unrest, however, can also be the trigger or the initial hazard leading to damage in other areas, for example economic losses due to technological sabotage or boycott. Social unrest is hence cause and effect in a complex risk web that links technological, natural, social and cultural drivers. (1).

The stylistics devices are therefore props in the hands of the craftsman of the heedless ballot box. EbinyoOgbowei lines are undersized placards that represent the protest and unrest occasioned by the corruption which mars the political process of the nation and the Niger Delta subregion. It is from this perspective that we explore the poetic use of devices in the poetry collection.

Metaphor: the poet in the expression "odi's the sector/ that killed our faith" engages in the use of metaphorical statement where one item is said to be another. In the above statement odi is regarded as a military sector that killed the peoples' faith.

Alliteration: there is the use of repeated initial consonant sound in the line of poetry. For example:

a) "where contentious constituents". Here the consonant sound /k/ alliterates as it appears in initial position in the line of poetry.

Constriction: the poet constricts the expression 'Odi is the sector' to be 'odi's the sector'. This literary device is a graphological tool use to compress expression and achieve brevity of expression and neatness of presentation.

The poem entitled "may 29, 1999" reveals some literary elements and poetic devices. Including the following:

Personification: the poet persona personifies certain inanimate objects in the poem giving rise to the poetic device of personification.

a) "cruelty enters through the kitchen door". Here the concept cruelty is personified as being capable of entering a house through the kitchen door. This is a figurative way of saying that cruel people who could enter or access the political arena or platform or the persons who should go the house through the front door has opted for the back door which is in the kitchen.
b) "repression arrives buzzing the doorbell". Here the poet is speaking figuratively and likens the emergent civilian president who is a former military president to repression. Thus, repression is personified as having a hand and buzzing the doorbell like a human being would do.
c) "anger and fear fanning/the coals of nationalism". Here the poet personifies anger and fear as the fuel for nationalistic fervour.

Alliteration: there is the utilization of initial consonant sounds in the line of poetry in the following instances:

a) "mired in the maligned marshland". Here the consonant sound /m/ alliterates as it appears in initial position in the line of poetry, adding musical and rhythmto the poem.
b) "made master of this house of slaves". The consonant sound /m/ appears in the initial position and therefore alliterates.
c) "dancing down the road to ruin". In this line poetry there are two alliterations. The consonant sound (s) /d/ and /r/. The consonant /d/ alliterates in the expression 'dancing down', while /r/ alliterates in the expression 'road to ruin'.
d) "and discontent detonates a bomb". Here the poet persona alliterates the consonant sound /d/.
e) "a conquered colony". The poet uses the initial consonant sound /k/ in the above line of poetry.

Allusion: a reference to something in literature, history, mythology, religious texts, etc., considered common knowledge. We have on instance of some reference in lines (8),

a) 'judasthiefs'. This expression is an euphemistic way of saying that the chiefs in question are thieves and capable of betrayal like the Biblical Judas Iscariot. The expression is thus a Biblical allusion.

In the poem entitled "africa's largest party" (*the heedless ballot box,* 53) we find the following literary and poetic devices:

Metaphor: a figure of speech in which a comparison or analogy is made between two seemingly unlike things, as in the phrase "evening of life." The first line of the poem,

a) "this party's a crippled train", is a metaphoric expression where the qualities of the party are transferred to that of a train that is crippled. Considering the subject 'party' and the object to which it is compared 'train', one may infer that the poet persona implies that the party is unable to move as expected.

Alliteration: the repetition at close intervals of consonant sounds for a purpose. The poet engages in the use of alliteration as expressed in the following lines:

a) 'a mangled mass of metal'

b) 'dance deranged…'

c) 'grinding down a money-mad mob'

d) 'dumped in the parking place of pain'

In the expression 'a mangled mass of metal' the consonant /m/ alliterates as it is repeated in initial position within the sentence. In 'dance deranged' the consonant sound that alliterates is the sound /d/. in the expression 'grinding down a money-mad mob' we hear the consonant sound /m/ repeated in initial position. In the expression 'dumped in the parking place of pain' the consonant sound /p/ the bilabial plosive and stop is the sound that alliterates.

Enjambment: the carrying of sense and grammatical structure in a poem beyond the end of one line, couplet, or stanza and into the next. The poem 'africa's largest party' is a clear instance of run-on-lines from the very first line to the last of the poem.

In the poem 'the heedless ballot box' in the poetry collection *the heedless ballot box* (56), there are several literary and poetic devices among which are:

Imagery: words and phrases that create vivid experiences or a picture for the reader. In this instance the poet uses words that create vivid visual imageries in the following expressions:

a) 'the heedless ballot box/drunk dances to a choir'

b) "clapping cutlasses joining in the stampede dance'

c) "a cold sniper rifle/adjusts its sight/spits once'

The expression first line expression of 'the heedless ballot box/drunk dances to a choir' is one that provokes a visual mental picture of a ballot box dancing to the music of a choir. The expression 'clapping cutlasses/joining in the stampede dance' conjures in our minds eyes mental images of cutlasses clapping and dancing in a stampede. The expression 'a cold sniper rifle/adjust its sight/spits once' invokes mental pictures of a sniper hidden in his lair and about to assassinate someone by sniper fire.

Personification: a figure of speech in which human qualities or characteristics are given to an animal, object, or concept. Some instances of the use of personification in the poem include:

a) "the heedless ballot box/drunk dances to a choir'

b) 'a cold sniper rifle/adjusts its sight/spits once'

c) 'the obscenity is stunned by blows'

d) 'the gangrenous ballot box/ feverish/tramps into the twilight'

In the first expression the ballot box is given the human quality of being drunk and also dancing under in the influence of alcohol to the music of a choir. The second expression personifies the rifle as spitting which is a human quality. In the third expression, obscenity is given the human attribute of being stunned from blows suffered. In the final example, ballot box is said to be feverish, tramps or walks drunkenly or unsteadily into the twilight. These adjectives used are rather human qualities that are used on the ballot box.

Conclusion

Language is therapoetic when it employs its ability to offer succor, soothing relieves, transposition from the object of hurt or pain to a sublime state of bliss and peace. In Ogbowei poetry the poet employs language in a therapoetic fashion that allow for the (re)presentation of human experience in the context of the Niger Delta. His choice of stylistics devices is not only literary and contributes to the aesthetics of his art but a vehicle or metaphor that conveys the ideal by contrasting it with the ordeals of the hapless Niger Delta and her people. The therapoetic effect of Ogbowei's art lies in the beauty of reading the unfortunate and odious incapacitation of the Niger Delta environment and the people and yet enjoying the lyrical smoothness of his diction.Ogbowei places on the pedestal the multifaceted quagmire of his people in a language that is barricaded from overt interpretation. This strangeness which is a function of his therapoetic diction makes the hellish occurrence common place and ordinary. However, upon a close reading of Ogbowei's art, the activist and intellectual militant in him rises to the surface through the interplay of language, imagery and contextual meaning. Conversely Ogbowei's art solicits a better deal for the Niger Delta region and Nigeria at large. Whether the voice of his art will be heeded is the subject for further investigation.

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THE THERAPOETICS USE OF DISASTER-INSPIRED SONG POETRY AT AN ABURENI FUNERAL

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Abstract

Abureni is spoken along the southern borders of Rivers State and Bayelsa State of Nigeria. It is common to see people wail and weep at funerals, especially close relatives of the deceased, resulting to psychological complications in certain cases. The objective of this paper is to investigate how disaster-inspired song poetry was used therapeutically to manage emotions at a funeral in Abureni where communication is dominantly by oral tradition. At funerals, the people often recall historical events, recentincidents, and reflect upon the qualities of the dead. The occasion of the 2012 Nigeria flood disaster and the events at a 2013 funeral at Emago Kugboare used as case study. According to media reports, the cost of that disaster was enormous in terms of property damage and material loss. It impacted Abureniin various ways. However, an indigenous singing group translated the episode into song poetry that rekindled an age-old oral tradition and revived many depressed minds at the funeral.This study applied Pierce's theory of sign to explain the meaning of the metaphors and codes contained in the poems. It concludes that the investigated suite ofsong poetry is emotionally rendered, in both context and style, to encourage the relatives of the deceased person and those who suffered other forms of loss. It is anticipated that a comparative discourse of similar indigenous oral traditions would provide more insight to the therapeutic use of disaster-inspired song poetry at funerals.

Keywords: Abureni, disaster-inspired, indigenous song poetry, funeral, therapeutic.

Introduction

Poetry is defined as "literature that evokes a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience or a specific emotional response through language chosen and arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm"(Nemerov, 2022, par. 1). The *New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary* (1992:774) describes poetryas "a type of discourse which achieves its effects by rhythm, sound patterns and imagery," and that "it may also serve to convey loftiness of tone, or to lend force to ideas". Furthermore, the *New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary* (1992:946) defines song as "a short composition in which words and music together form a unity." The above definitions guided the discourse on the collection of song poetry contained in this study. Song poetry is one of the genres of oral literature used by Abureni people to communicate socio-cultural values, which is reminiscent of an age-old African oral tradition.

About Abureni

Abureni in language classification is in the Benue-Congo, Cross River, Delta Cross, Central Delta (Williamson, 1989) in Bendor-Samuel (ed. 1989). However, Kari (2019:8) cites recent studies by Cornel et al (2015) and Cornel (2016) positing that Central Delta Languages, where Abureni belongs, are within Eastern Benue-Congo sub-family instead of Cross River. The

communities that constitute Abureni are located along riverbanks in the southern borders of Bayelsa State and Rivers State of Nigeria. The Abureni speaking people in Bayelsa State are in Nembe and Ogbia Local Government Areas (LGA), while those in Rivers State are the Kugbo people in Abua/Odual LGA. Etire (2015) observes that the language is being documented under a common orthography despite the linguistic and geographical delineations. The geographical area of Abureni is rich in biodiversity. Edoghotu, George and Hart (2016) notes that the environment is tropical rainforest with freshwater and saline ecosystem that supports human activities.

Background of the investigated funeral song poetry
The practice of conducting funeral rites for a deceased person, especially the elderly, is common in Abureni and is communal in nature. A funeral attracts members of the immediate and extended families, sympathizers, and visitors from within and outside the community to gather and give their last respect to the dead. Often, artists entertain the audience with various art forms such as traditional dances, storytelling, eulogy, and song poetry.

The suite of song poetry investigated was about the flood disaster that occurred in Nigeria between the months of June and October 2012whichaffected several states in the country. Amangabara and Obenade (2015) observes that the identified communities in Bayelsa State at substantial risk were because of the distributaries of the Niger-Benue in the State. Communities in Abureni were among the places in Niger Delta that the incident impacted, especially those located along the Kugbo Creek and its tributaries, as floodwater came from the Orashi River via the Kolo Creek. The Abureni communities devastated mostly were Akani Kugbo, Amurukeni, Amuruto Kugbo and Emago Kugbo and their environs. The disaster sacked entire settlements, residential areas, institutional structures, sacred sites, farmlands, fishing ports, and fishponds, causing the inhabitants to flee for safety under unprepared emergency conditions.

The cost of the incident was enormous in terms of property damage and material loss according to local and international media reports. For example, Oladokun and Proverbs (2016) observe that "Nigeria suffered losses of more than $16.9b in damaged properties, oil production, agricultural and other losses." On their part, Earth Observatory (October 13, 2012) stated that "Between July and October, flooding in Nigeria pushed rivers over their banks and submerged hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland." However, according to The Nigeria Voice (May 27, 2013), a post-incident review by Nigeria's Emergency Management Agency(NEMA) put the cost at N2.6tn, and that it affected 7 million people, displaced 2.3 million others, and damaged 597,476 houses.

Abureni people tasted much of its effect in various ways with individual and group accounts that were an admixture of positive and negative feelings. Nevertheless, *Ogbo Ạlibhon Ologi Emago*' The Joyful Singers Club of Emago Kugbo, members of which are all women, were unique in their own response. They translated the episode into song poetry, rekindling an age-old literary culture, which subtly revived the minds of people who felted pressed. They used lines of poetry to point out that the flood had come and gone, but life continued as people tell the story. They related it to death as an inevitable occurrence that every human must face, yet the Creator allows survivors to continue with life. The indigenous singing group used the occasion of the 2012 flood

to sing tunes of encouragement at the funeral. The intent was to instil hope and heal the minds of those who had suffered loss, especially the bereaved persons.

Problem Statement and Objective

The problem of wailing and weeping is common at funerals, especially among persons who are closely related to the deceased, resulting to psychological complications at instances. There is also lack of indigenous literature on Abureni song poetry and related genres which some scholars attest to.For example, Ndimele, Kari and Ayuwo (2009) note that they do not know of any published work on Abureni but acknowledge the existence of a wordlist on Kugbo. That situation is changing gradually as interested native speakers are now documenting aspects of the language. The objective of this paper is firstly to investigate the therapeutic use of disaster-inspired indigenous song poetry in managing emotions at funerals in Abureni, being a culture with dominant oral tradition. Secondly, it intends to use the results of the study as input to the indigenous language documentation work and contribute to the narratives about the sociocultural aspects of Niger Delta people.

Literature Review

The use of poetry to therapeutically manage depression is age-old. For example, Longfellow (1838)'s *"Voices of The Night: A Psalm of Life"* carried lyrical lines of poetry, which the poet reportedly penned while rallying from depression:

> Art is long, and Time is fleeting/ And our hearts, though stout and brave/ Still like muffled drums, are beating Funeral marches to the grave/ In the world's broad field of battle/ In the bivouac of life/ Be not like dump, driven cattle! / Be a hero in the strife.

The practice of using song poetry to heal depressed minds has continued till the present day and African cultures are not exempt. In a discourse of indigenous song poetry and lyrics from funeral scenes in Abureni, Etire (2017:147) observes that when the people mourn over their dead,

> They tell stories, laugh and exchange pleasantries; but they still create time to eat and drink in the process... It offers another opportunity to perform an age-old culture of communal funeral practice. However, what remains significantly enduring in all of it is an incredible language exposition in both style and context.

Indigenous people such as those of the Niger Delta clamour for an inclusive narrative about their regions. The Niger Delta has been thrustin to global limelight because of resource extraction and conflict, butit is also a region with a rich culture and heritage. According to Ojaide and Ojaruega (2021), the creative imagination of the area's artists has been fueled by the pressing concerns of the indigenous people, minority discourse, environmental degradation, and climate change. Indigenous song poetry at funerals rekindles the use of oral tradition to reinforce cultural values. There is need to preserve the originality of the cultural content of the genre of oral literature that is being transcribed to other forms such as fiction and folklore, with expert input.Trinya (2015)in The Dawn Journal(2015:1041), notes that "unskilled attempts at such incorporation of oral literary materials into fiction could reduce a work into a mere string of folkloristic episodes."Other scholars have similarly expressed notable thoughts on the significance and uses of song poetry in the preservation of indigenous tradition. According to Alagoa (1977:34), "There are traditions that are preserved through being passed down through instruction or

apprenticeship. And mnemonic devices are also common among African communities. Music and song rhythms serve as memory enhancers."

In Nigeria, indigenous people also presentsong poetry along with other genres of literature. Finnegan (1970)notes that pre-colonial Nigeria operated an oral literary culture that consisted of poetry, folksongs, myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, and other forms of dramatic and theatrical productions. On his part, Ong (1982:33-34) observes that in an oral culture, the restriction of words to sound determines not only the modes of expression but also the thought processes.Historically, the composer of a song poetry is not always known by the listeners and the occasion at whicha song is sang depends on prevailing circumstances. Nyangu (2017) avers that oral poetry is synonymous with traditional songs composed by known and unknown composers who sing at specific occasions. Song poetry, as a genre of oral literature can serve to exhort or counselmembers of the society over the way the society expects them to behave when faced with the challenges of life. According to Sone (2018:5), "oral literature exhorts us to put our intellect and technical competence at the service of our society." The suite of the investigated song poetry aligns with this viewpoint as it aimed to encouragebereaved people who felt depressed at the funeral, and those who had suffered other forms of loss.

Theoretical Framework
The study notes that majority of the song poetry investigated ere allegorical in context and style. The singers presented the songs were in form of imagery, metaphors, signs, and symbols, such as the features of creatures in the ecosystem and how they relate to human behaviour. There are lines of poetry that contain nonverbal codes requiring interpretation or decoding. As such, we decided to apply Pierce's Theory of Sign to analyze the meanings of the songs. This is based on the understanding that sign is encoded in three elements: the object, the referent, and the interpretant. Scholars have used Peirce's theory of signs (semiotic) for literary criticism. For example, Atkin (2022) describes it as "an account of signification, representation, reference and meaning." Focusing on the way the theory helps to provide meaning, San Juan (2011:51) stated that, "A sign is always a relation of three parts: the sign itself, its object (what it stands for), and an interpretant. The latter is of utmost importance: the interpretant determines how the sign represents the object. It is the meaning of the sign."

It means that where imagery appears in a song poetry, the object, the referent, and the interpretant will be discussed to bring out the literal and real meanings for the benefit of both native and non-native speakers of Abureni. This approach was applied by some indigenous scholars of other cultures in Nigeria. For example, in a discourse on the link between practical codes and non-verbal communication,Adésànyà(2015) in Ndimele (2015:143) stated that "Practical codes perform crucial roles in deciphering interpersonal relationships portrayed in the seemingly esoteric behaviours of characters in Yoruba novels thus revealing the culture and tradition of the Yoruba people." Similarly, Iorhemba (2017) in Taiwo (2017:34) applied Pierce's semiotic triangle in explaining the use of artifacts in communication in Tiv.

It is anticipated that applying the same approach will contribute to the efforts aimed at understanding the therapeutic uses of song poetry in Aburenioral tradition and extend to other indigenous languages with similar cultures. This will also be an input to the ongoing documentation of The AbureniLanguageand for interested researchers on the language and its oral tradition.

Methodology

The study highlights the way *OgboAlibhonOlogi*'TheJoyful Singers' used the issues associatedwiththe 2012 Nigeria flood disasterto send a therapeutic message, inAbureni song poetry,to the depressed mindsat a funeral that took place at EmagoKugboon 5th January 2013. The following activitieswere conducted as part of the process:

a) Random sampling
b) Field visit to selected Abureni sites that were impacted by the flood disaster in the month of October 2012.
c) Field visit to the funeralsceneon 5th January 2013.
d) Face-to-face interviews were held with of some members of the immediate and extended family of the deceased, the elders who were administering the funeral rites, and members of the indigenous singing group.
e) Digital communication with the ICT-literate respondents.
f) The use of photographs, audio and video recordings of song poetry expositions and related scenes. All photographs of persons were taken by consent of the individual or groups.
g) Reference to literature and media reports in the public domain.
h) The author's intuition as a native speaker of Abureni, and knowledge of the indigenous practices at funerals were applied.
i) Review and testing with the indigenous singing group and selected elders of the community.

Data/Data Analysis

This paper used the 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria and the events at a 2013 funeral at Emago Kugbo as case study. According to media reports, the cost of that disaster was enormous in terms of property damage and material loss. Abureni experienced its impact in various ways. The following formed the suite of data that was elicited:

a) Funeral scene recordings
   i. Photographs of elders of the immediate and extended families performing the funeral rites of the deceased.
   ii. Photographs of members of close relations of the deceased at the funeral.
   iii. Photograph of the members *Ogbo AlibhonOlogi* 'The Joyful Singers' at the funeral.
   iv. Video clip of song poetry (praise song) about the mourners.
   v. Video clip of song poetry about the life of the deceased.
   vi. Video clip selected song poetry on the 2012 Nigeria flood disaster.
b) Data related to the 2012 Nigeria flood disaster
   i. Selected impacted sites in Abureni
   ii. Photographs before and during the incident
c) Archived files from the author's data base
   i. Photograph of the deceased dancing before her demise.
   ii. Video clip of a song poetry exposition by the deceased before her demise.
   iii. Photographs of the investigated areas before the 2012 flood disaster.
   iv. Photographs of selected impacted sites at the time of the 2012 flood disaster.
d) Other reference material
   i. Media reports (audio/visual/print) about the 2012 Nigeria flood disaster.

ii.   Reference literature in the public domain.
iii.   Written/transliterated scripts of the suite of song poetry investigated.

Excerpts from the funeral scene
Given below is the suite of song poetry that was rendered by the indigenous singing group in memory of late Madam Adienite Virginia Ogonigbo on the day of her funeral. She was popularly called *Ate* by younger people locally, was herself a great entertainer with the indigenous oral tradition in her lifetime.

A song poetry by the deceased during her lifetime
In Abureni, it is common practice for children who live in the diaspora to visit their parents and elders of their communities whenever they go home. Usually, such children are expected to present some gifts to their parents or elders, while the later blesses and wish them well in return. In response to a visit to Grandma *Ate* by some members of the extended family on 6th November 2011, she sang and danced stylishly in her usual humorous displays, using the lines of a song poetry titled:

Inyinna ami odum /Ìɲìnnə̀ àmì òɗŭmè/
'You and I should live long'

Inyinna amiodum e-e... /Ìɲìnnə̀ àmì òɗŭmè/
2PP.You and Ishould.live
'Live and let us live'

Inyinna ami odum e-e... /Ìɲìnnə̀ àmì òɗŭmè/
2PP.You and Ishould.live
'Live and let's live'

Inyinna ami odum! /Ìɲìnnə̀ àmì òɗŭm/
2PP.You and Ishould.live!
'Live and let us live'

Aghudum! /ə̀ɣùɗŭm/
Life!
'Long life!'

Meaning: 'My wish is that all should live long. Long life to all of us!'

Anwana aguo gie ka amutuma
'Go on your own and present yourself'

Abureni	English gloss
Anwana aguo gie ka amutuma /ánʷà nə̀ àgwɔ̀ gjè kə́ ə́mùtúmə̀/	'Go on your own and present yourself'
Anwana aguo ka amutuma /ánʷà nə̀ àgwɔ̀ kə́ ə́mùtúmə̀/	'Go alone and present yourself'

Anwana aguo ka amutuma
/ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/

'Go alone and present yourself'

Anwana aguo ka amutuma
/ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/

'Go alone and present yourself'

Eguiny okai bho onin/ègúɲ ɔ́kàì βɔ́ ònîn/

'It is a single bunch of plantain'

Yagai /jɔ́gɔ̀j/

'Truly so'

Obe kere kere /ɔ́bɛ̀ kèré kèré/

'Yet, in separate finger groups'

Igiel ugbebh okai bho /ìgjèl ùgbĕβ ɔ́kàì βɔ̀/

'At the time of planting'

Ugbebh onin/úgbĕβ ònîn/

'It was a single sucker'

Idi obhel ina ta arubhe bha
/ídì òβèl ìnà tɔ́ ɔ́rúβè bɔ̆/

'Often times when it bears fruits'

Arubhe onin eguiny/ɔ́-rùβé ònîn ègûɲ/

'It yields but a single bunch'

Anwana aguo ka amutuma
/ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/

'Go alone and present yourself'

Anwana aguo ka amutuma
/ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/

'Go alone and present yourself'

Anwana aguo ka amutuma
/ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/

'Go alone and present yourself'

Eguiny okai bho onin /ègúɲ ɔ́kàì bhɔ́ ònîn/

'It is a single bunch of plantain'

Yagai /jɔ́gɔ̀j/

'Truly so'

Obe kere kere /ɔ́bɛ̀ kèré kèré/

'In separate finger clusters'

Table 1
Sign chart of song poetry No. 7.2

Object	Referent	Interpretant
okai/ɔ́kàì/ 'plantain'	crop (plant)	It signifies the progenitor.
Igiel ugbebh okai /ìgjèl ùgbĕβ ɔ́kàì βɔ̀/ 'When plantain is planted'	Sowing	It signifies the process of procreation, starting from the ancestor.
Ina ta arubhe /ìnà tɔ́ ɔ́rúβè/	Harvest	It represents the offspring of the ancestor from one generation to the other.

'When it bears fruit'

Eguiny ọkaị	family	It symbolizes humanity.
/ègúɲ ɔ́kàì/		
'Bunch of plantain'		
Ọbẹ /ɔ́bɛ̀	sub-family or family unit	It signifies the people from the immediate and extended families of the deceased.
'Cluster of fingers of plantain'		

What is the moral to the above?
God has created human race. From it, families have sprung up in strong bonds as single units. A person's family is distinct. Yet, when they depart from the earth to meet their Creator, they do so as individual souls. Thus, the rendition persuades the dead to march forward and present herself to her Creator, by urging *"Anwanạ agụọ giẹ kạ ạmutumạ,"* being an emotional thrust in the language of her birth.

Ebhebhiạ onweni!
'Oh, how I miss grand ma!'

Aburenị	English gloss
Ebhebhiạ Onweni /èβèβìɔ̀ ónʷènî/	**We miss Mother greatly**
Eeye Ạte o /éjè ɔ́tèò/	'Oh Ate!'
Eeye Ạte o /éjè ɔ́tèò/	'Oh Ate!'
Ebhebhiạ onwenio	'How we miss our mother'
/èβèβìɔ̀ ónʷènîò/	
Onweni ạkoko mạ otu	'Such a caring mother to all family
/ònʷènìo ɔ́kókó mɔ̀ òtù/	members'
Ạkoko mạ ẹma	'Extended care to the entire town'
/ɔ́kókó mɔ̀ èmà/	
Ebhebhiạ onweni	'Oh! How we miss a mother'
/èβèβìɔ̀ ónʷènî/	
Ạte Ẹbẹlẹma	'Ate of humour'
/ɔ́té ɛ́ɓɛ̀lɛ̀mà/	
Eeye Ạte/éjè ɔ́tèò/	'Oh Ate!'
Ạte Edègh	'Ate the marvellous entertainer!'
/ɔ́té édèɣ/	
Ạte Ẹbẹlẹma /ɔ́té ɛ́ɓɛ̀lɛ̀mà/	'Ate of fun and laughter'
Ạte!/ɔ́tè/	Ate!
Ạdạmạ ubụman bọ	'Never a day of quarrel'
/ɔ̀dɔ̃mɔ̀ óɓúmán bɔ̌/	

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Eeye Ate /éjè ɔ́tè/   Oh Ate! (How we miss her)

Ebhebhia onweni – o...

/èβèβìə́ ón^wènî/   Oh, what a sweet mother we miss!

Amin anwiiny ogbo 'Wine for age mates'

By custom, the mourners are expected to recognize their agemates by entertaining them with drinks and snacks, otherwise referred to as '*amin anwiinyogbo,*' that is, 'wine for agemates.'Theagematesreceive the wine with shouts of excitement and they regard generous hosts as good mourners. Singers are careful to acknowledge the mourner by using his or her name to punctuate the tune, and good mourners are showered with encomiums in a medley. We have presented one of such songsis in section 6.3.

> **Awa odi da ikunu onweni**
> /àwa ódì dɔ́ íkʊ́nʊ́ ón^wènì/
> They are in sorrow mother
> 'They mourn the death of their mother'

> **Yaa, anwnom ya iru ma amadi bho na ekpomeni ma rologi dawa**
> /jə̀ə̀ ən^wúnòm jə́ írú mə́ ə́mə́dì bhɔ́ nə̀ èkpòménì mə̀ ròlògì dăwá/
> But people   that come to   funeral the are strengthening to   heart   their.
> **'**But they feel encouraged by the kind words from sympathizers and well-wishers.'

Anwa na adi ma onweni
'You are burying your very well'

> **Abureni**/ə̀βùrénì/   **English gloss**
>
> Abebi anwaagir o   'Well done, Baby.'
> /ə̀βèβí án^wà nə̀ ə̀gírò/
> Abebi anwaagir o   'Well done, Baby.'
> /ə̀βèβí án^wà nə̀ ə̀gírò/
> Abebi anwa na adi ma onweni   'Baby, well donefor the way
> /ə̀βèβí án^wà nə̀ ə̀dì mə̀ ón^wènìò/   you are burying your mother'
>
> Adien aguo anwa iru ma isen bho   'You conducted yourself well when
> /ə̀dìèn ágwò án^wà írú mə́ ísèn βɔ̀/   you came.'
> Anwa na obara do ma opuru oyom   'You never waited to be asked before
> /án^wà nə̀ òβárə̀ dɔ́ mə̀ òpùrù òyòm/   doing the needful.'
> Anwana agir o...   'You are doing well.'
> /án^wà nə̀ ə̀gírò/
>
> Anwa na adi ma onweni   'Well done for burying your mother
> /án^wà nə̀ ə̀dì mə̀ ón^wènì/
> Anwana agir o...   'Well done for a good job'
> /án^wà nə̀ ə̀gírò/
> Anwa na adi ma onweni o...   'You are doing great at your mother's

/ánʷà nə̀ ə̀ɗì mə̀ ónʷènìò/   funeral'

Meaning of key phrases:
Anwana̱ a̱gir o/ánʷà nə̀ ə̀gírò/
'You are doing great' or 'You have continued to work hard.' Specifically, 'Your good worksat your mother's funeral areacknowledged.'TheAbureni statement: *an'a̱giro*/ánàgírò/,which is the elided version of*anwana̱ a̱gir o*/ánʷànə̀gírò/, may not have a direct English equivalent, but it means 'well done' in present continuous tense. It connotes that the recipients of the gift encourage the giver to sustain the good will to do greater things in the future.To whom much is given, much is expected! In this case, the expectation may be the ability to give generously to the satisfaction of sympathizers.

Anwa na̱ a̱di ma̱ onweni o... /ánʷà nə̀ ə̀ɗì mə̀ ónʷènìò/
'What better way is there **to bury a mother** than to lavish available fund in entertainment during the funeral?'The target recipient of the gift items is normally the public, but the trick is to focus more on your agemates as they would spread the goodwill faster. Of course, every member of the deceased family has agemates to give the special entertainment drink described as:

> Amin anwi̱i̱nyogbo /ə̀mìnànʷíŋóg͡bò/
> Wine children age
> 'Wine for agemates'

As a result, the public becomes the end beneficiary at the end of it.Despite that, the response is still *Anwa na̱ a̱di ma̱ onweni o...* /ánʷà nə̀ ə̀ɗì mə̀ ónʷènìò/,that is, 'Welldone for burying your mother thus far' in present continuous tense.If the audience really felt impressed, they would return home with positive remarks by saying:

> E̱di ma̱ onweni awa!
> /éɗì mə̀ ónʷènì àwá/
>
> E̱dima̱ onweni awa! /éɗìmə̀ ònʷèní áwǎ/
> 3PP.buried.well to mother their.
> 'They buried their mother very well!'

Note that in Abureni, the atmosphere around the funeral of aged parents is that of funfair and merriment and not that of sorrow. On the other hand, it would be a different story if the expectation of the agemates was not met by failing to entertain them well. Thus, if relatives are seen weeping and throwing themselves to the ground at such funeral events, the general suspicion would be that they lack the finances to throw around a culture they believed in. This may cause the sympathizers to murmur by saying,

> Na̱ eleghe ma̱ e̱diigoiny
> /nə̀ ə̀lèɣè mə̀ èɗí ígòîɲ/.
>
> Na̱ eleghema̱e̱diigoiny /nə̀ èlèɣè mə̀ èɗí ígóiɲ/
> 3PP.are crying a.cry.of poverty.
> 'They are weeping out of poverty,' which portrays a poor funeral outing.

However, the scene offers opportunity for any close associate (from among the groups of agemates) to offer the host with strong words of encouragement. For example,

Ko   oleghema̲ediigoiny /kǒlèɣè mə́ édí̃ ígóìɲ/
2PS.Do.not be. crying a.cryof poverty
'Do not cry the cry of poverty

Meaning:
'Avoid giving the impression that you do not have money to bury your mother well.'
Or 'Come on, you may not let yourself down!'
The admonition would continue, and the host is expected to rise and clean his or her tears. Such response demonstrates that he or she is not a weakling at all, even if the customary obligation contributing to the funeral and entertaining her guests may not have been fulfilled.

Amu̲m abu̲gh o̲ni̲ A̲zi̲ba̲ a̲nigha̲ ma̲alimon!
/àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì ə̀ʒìɓə̀ ə̀níɣə̀ mə́ ə́lìmôn/
'What a great man whom God has given power - Water!'

Here, **'water'** refers to '**flood water'** and it is personified in the song. Photographs of some impacted areas in EmagoKugbo community were taken by the author on 26th Oct 2012.

A̲bureni/ə̀ɓùrénì/	**English gloss**
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲ /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'Water! What a great man'
A̲zi̲ba̲ a̲nigha̲ ma̲alimòn! /ə̀ʒìɓə̀ ə̀níɣə̀ mə́ ə́límôn/	'That God gave power!'
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲! /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'What a great man Water is!'
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲! /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'What a great man Water is!'
I̲se̲ bha̲, o̲li̲la eka̲ na̲akpudia̲n /ísè βə̌ ɔ̀lìlà èkə́ nə̀ ə̀kpùdíə̂n/	'Even the rich bow down in submission'
Ò̲gbo ya̲ na̲eko̲la̲ru̲ruṉa̲ekpudia̲n /ògbò jə́ nə́ ɛ́kɔ́l ə̀rùrù èkə́ nə̀ èkpùdíə̂n/	'Even idol worshipers crumble to their knees in respect'
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲! /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'What a great man Water is!'
E̲mago̲! /ɛ̀màgɔ̂/	'Oh, inhabitants of Emago!'
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲! /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'What a great man Water is!'
Amu̲m abu̲gh O̲ni̲! /àmòm ábǒɣ ɔ̀nì/	'What a great man Water is!'

Aziba anigha ma alimòn!　　　　　　　　　'Great Man that God gave power'
/əʒìɓə̀ ə̀níɣə́ mə́ ə́límôn/

Amum abugh Oni!　　　　　　　　　　　　'What a great man Water is!'
/àmòm ábŭɣ ɔ̀nì/

Olila eka na akpudian　　　　　　　　　　'Even the rich bowto him!'
/ɔ̀lìlà èkə́ nə̀ə̀kpùdíə̀n/

KaAmum asul da otudoyom　　　　　　　　'If water lands at the shore of your home'
/kə̌ àmòm ə̀súl də̌ ótù dŏyôm/

An'awele maisabiogbo naebhaianigha　　　　'You hand over the parlour and bedroom key'
/ánáwɛ́lê mə̀ ìsábí ógbò nə̀ ɛ̀βàì ə́nìɣə̌/

Amum abugh Oni!　　　　　　　　　　　　'What a great man Water is!'
/àmòm ábŭɣ ɔ̀nì/

Ogbo aruru eka na ekpudian　　　　　　　　'Juju priests also bow in respect'
/ògb͡ò ə̀rúrù èkə́ nè èk͡pùdíə̀n/

Ise bha, rapasto eka naakpudian　　　　　　'Pastors also bow in respect'
/ísè βə̌ ràpástɔ̀ èkə́ nè èk͡pùdíə̀n/

Amum abugh Oni!　　　　　　　　　　　　'What a great man Water is!'
/àmòm ábŭɣ ɔ̀nì/

Olila bo　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　'No concession to the rich'
/ɔ̀lìlá bŏ/

Onyigoiny bo　　　　　　　　　　　　　　'No concession to the poor'
/ònìgóîɲ bŏ/

Kaina asul da otu doyom obha,　　　　　　　'If he lands at your home,'
/kə́ ìnà ə́súl də̌ ótù dŏyôm/

An'abhorogh isabi ogbo na ebhai　　　　　　'You surrender parlour and bedroom keys
/ánáβɔ́rɔ̀ɣ ìsábí ógb͡ò nə̀ ɛ̀βàì/　　　　　　　To him and run away.'

Anigha, aghìl aduwa
/ə́nìɣə̌ ə́ɣìl ádʊ̀wà/

Amum abugh Oni!　　　　　　　　　　　　'What a great man Water is!'
/àmòm ábŭɣ ɔ̀nì/

Olila bo　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　'No concession to the rich'
/ɔ̀lìlá bŏ/

Onyigoiny bo　　　　　　　　　　　　　　'No concession to the poor'
/ònìgóîɲ bŏ/

Otu bho anwailo　　　　　　　　　　　　　'You built the house'
/òtù βə̌ ánʷá ílò/

Obha kaina asul　　　　　　　　　　　　　'But when he lands'
/òβə̂ kə́ ìnà ə́sûl/

Ise bha an'aghìl aduwaanigha!　　　　　　　'There and then you escape, abandoning it!'
/ísè βə̌ ánə́ɣìl ádʊ̀wà ə́nìɣə̌/

Amụm abụgh Ọnị!   'What a great man Water is!'
/àmòm ábŏɣ ɔ̀nì/

Azibạ anighạ mạ ạlimòn!   'Great man that God gave power!'
/ə̀ʒìɓə̀ ə̀níɣə́ mə́ ə́límôn/

Table 5
Sign chart of song poetry No. 7.5

Object	Referent	Interpretant
Amụm /àmòm/ 'Water' (personified)	Floodwater	It symbolizes the swirling and forceful effect of floodwater current under emergency condition.
Abụgh ọnị /ábŏɣ ɔ̀nì/ 'What a great man'	Respect	It symbolises the sufferings that the flood disaster subjected victims to.
Rapastọ/ràpástɔ̀/ 'Pastors'	Christianity	The statement *rapastọ ekạ nạ ạkpuḍịạn* /ràpástɔ̀ èkə́ nè èk͡pùdîə̀n/ 'Pastors also bow to him inrespect,' means that men of God, their homes, and churches were not spared.
Ogbo aruru /ò͡gbò ə̀rúrù/ 'Juju priests'	Traditional religion	The statement *ogbo arurụekạ nạ ạkpuḍịạn* /ràpástɔ̀ èkə́ nè èk͡pùdîə̀n/ 'Juju priests also bow to him in respect,' means that juju worshippers, their homes, fetish, and shrines were not spared.
Ọlịla bọ /ɔ̀lìlá bŏ/ *Onyigoiny bọ* /ò̀ɲìgóîɲ bŏ/ 'No concession to the rich nor the poor'	Justice and fairness	It signifies impartiality as the flood affected everything that stood on its path. People, property, environment, and corporate reputation were affected. This is likenedto death as a phenomenon thatis not selective.
ịsabị ogbo nạ ẹbhaị /ìsábí ógbò nə̀ èβàì/ 'Parlour and bedroom keys'	Property	Here, the flood is seen as a dangerous guest. *Kạ Amụm ạsul ḍạ otu ḍoyom, An'awẹlẹ mạ ịsabị ogbo nạ ẹbhaị ạnighạ, ạghìl aḍụwa*

'If he lands at the shore of your home,you surrender parlour and bedroom keys, and run away.' Meaning: The victims abandoned their properties and escaped under emergency conditions.

Ẹmagọ /ɛ̀màgɔ̂/   Town   It represents all the inhabitants of the towns, communities, settlements in the states that the flood affected. Meaning: The people are called to reflect upon the incident and understand that disasters andfunerals (death) come and go.

    'EmagoKugbo'

Ala onon obom/àlà ònón òbòm/
'This is a great year'

Aḅureni/ə̀ɓùréni/	English gloss
Ala onon obom/àlà ònón òbòm/	**This is a great year**
Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/	This is a great year!
Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/	A phenomenal year indeed!
Rigu na̱ eḅuga̱na̱ /rìgú nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	Mountains are uprooted
Ralagh na̱ eḅuga̱na̱ /ràláɣ nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	Oaks are uprooted
RiguNa̱Eḅuga̱na̱/rìgú nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	Mountains Are Uprooted
Obha̱a̱dieṉdọyọ /òβə̀ ə̀ɗìèndɔ̃jɔ́/	That is its name
Ralagh Na̱ Eḅuga̱na̱/ràláɣ nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	OaksAre Uprooted
	That is its second name
Obha̱ a̱dieṉdọyọ /òβə̀ ə̀ɗìèndɔ̃jɔ́/	
	Mountains Are Uprooted
Rigu Na̱ Eḅuga̱na̱/rìgú nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	Oak Trees Are Uprooted
Ralagh Na̱ Eḅuga̱na̱/ràláɣ nə̀ èɓùgə́nə̀/	That is its full name.
Obha̱ a̱dieṉdọyọ /òβə̀ ə̀ɗìèndɔ̃jɔ́/	My agemate
	I can tell you that this is a great year
Ọnyi̱ogbo/ɔ̀ŋì ógb͡ò/	
Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/	Brothers and sisters
	This is a formidable year!
A̱rumorna̱aru̱marani̱ /ə̀rùmòrnə̀ àròmàráni̱/	
Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/	Abureni!
	This is a phenomenal year!
	This is a formidable year!
Aḅureni! /ə̀ɓùréni/	Long life to all and sundry!
Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/	

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Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/

Konikoni adum... /kɔnìkɔnì ɔ́dṹm/

Amum bha ola abetina ma erile
 /àmòm ɔ́ɓètìnɔ̀ mɔ́ érìlé/
Saarile ma adede /sɔ̀ ɔ́rílé mɔ́ ɔ́dèdè/
Sa konikoni naaghil /sɔ̀ kɔ̀nìkɔ̀nì nɔ́ ɔ́ɣìl/

Ala onon obom!/àlà ònón òbòm/

Kònikoni adúm... /kɔ̀nìkɔ̀nì ɔ́dṹm/

Water embarked on a unique journey
Touring many lands and kingdoms
And everybody became terrified

What aextraordinary year!
Happy survival and long life to all!

Table 6

Sign chart of song poetry No. 7.6

Object or coded phrase	Referent	Interpretant
Rigu /rìgú/ 'mountains'	Elevation or high mass	It symbolises a range of vertical infrastructure with strong foundation such as buildings and monumental structures.
Ralagh /ràláɣ/ 'oaks'	robustness or sturdy roots	It is a plural word that represents the group of strong deep-rooted flora species in the ecosystem.
onyi ogbo /ɔ̀ŋìógbò/ 'agemate'	listener or recipient	It symbolizes the audience.The meaning is that flood incidents and funerals (death)impact both young and old people, a commonality that treats them as "agemates" in the discourse.
Rigu Na Ebugana - Obha adiendoyo 'Mountains Are Uprooted – That is its name.'	immense force	"The one that uproots mountains" is a given nickname or rhetoric that symbolizes the forceful and destructive effect of the flood. Mountains are used to represent the range of infrastructure that was damaged.

Ralagh N̯a E̯bugan̯a - Obh̯a a̯dien̯doyo 'Oaks Are Uprooted – That is its name.'	immense force	"The one that uproots oaks" is a given nickname or rhetoric that is used to portray the devastating impact of the flood on the ecosystem. Here, oaks represent the vegetation and farmlands that were washed off by the flood.
Am̯um bh̯a ol̯a a̯betin̯a m̯a erile 'Water embarked on a unique journey' (personified)	flow or spread or wetness	It refers tothe rushing movement of floodwater.The phrase "embarked on a unique journey" refers to the way the flood emergency occurred and spread across the states that are located along the Niger-Benue River trough.

In the lines of the song poetry, the 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria hardly left any land without its footprints. The floodwater washed the vegetation and topsoil swiftly. On the left shore of the above photograph, a giant tree has tilted at the verge of falling because of the eroding effect of water current. In fact, the inhabitants of Abureni expressed a common view that the flood of that year swelled the Kugbo Creek to its highest level since decades.Indeed, there was hardly any land area without the footprints of the flood disaster of 2012. For example, the floodwater submerged a popular road called*Anyu̯Ób'ò̯si*/áŋʊ́ óbɔ̀sì/ at EmagoKugbo,turning it to a waterway for transporting timber by floating them from*O̯pughu̯di* /ɔ̀pòɣòdì/Creek to the east end of the town.

Anwairu n̯a ekim̯a.Giye̯ n̯a ekim̯a
/ánʷà írŭnɘ̀ ɛ̀kìmɘ̀ gìjɛ́ nɘ̀ ɛ̀kìmɘ̀/
'You came in peace. Go in peace'

A̯bureni/ɘ̀ɓùrénì/	**English gloss**
Anwa iru n̯a ekim̯a /ánʷà írŭnɘ̀ ɛ̀kìmɘ̀/	You came in peace
Gi̯e n̯a ekim̯a /gìjɛ́ nɘ̀ ɛ̀kìmɘ̀/	Go in peace
Am̯um o /àmò̀mó/	Oh Water
K̯oni̯ko̯ni n̯a a̯rile m̯a a̯dede /kɔ̀nìkɔ̀nì nɔ́ ɔ́rìlè mɔ́ ɔ́dèdè/	Everybody embarks on a tour of the lands and kingdoms

Sa̲, ami̲ irile ani̲do̲

/sə̀ àmì ídɪ́ɣ ání dɔ̂/   And I joined the bandwagon

Ko̲ni̲ko̲ni̲ na̲ a̲digh 'a̲fim'

/kɔ̀nìkɔ̀nì nə́ ə̀dìɣ ə́ɸîm/   Everybody gets themselves
                               filmed

Sa̲, ami̲i̲digh ani̲do̲

/sə̀ àmì ídɪ́ɣ ání dɔ̂/   And Ijoined the bandwagon

Ko̲ni̲ko̲ni̲ na̲ a̲digh 'a̲foto'

/kɔ̀nìkɔ̀nì nə́ ə̀dìɣ ə́ɸòtó/   Everybody poses for photo
                               shots

Sa̲, ami̲ idigh ani̲ do̲

/sə̀ àmì ídɪ́ɣ ání dɔ̂/   And I joined the bandwagon

Onon abu̲gh ala!/ònón ábŏɣ álà/

                             What a formidable year!

The way Pierce's Sign theory is applied to explain the meanings of the metaphors and allegorical or coded statements in the above song poetry is illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7

Sign chart of song poetry No. 7.7

Object	Referent	Interpretant
Water (personified)	Floodwater	It symbolizes the swirling and submerging effect of water current under emergency condition. It means thatfarms and homes submerged, causing harm to people, and damage to propertyand environment., It reminds the audience at the funeral that death is an incident that every human will experience.
afim /ə̀ɸîm/ 'film' (nativized)	Moving images or audio-visual record	It symbolizes the movement of floodwater across the impacted sites, meaning that it had extensive footprints. Similarly, death affects all and sundry.
afoto /ə̀ɸòtó/ 'photo' or 'photograph' (nativized)	Picture or still image that is recorded for posterity.	It symbolizes the long-lasting impression of the flood disaster, although it has come and gone.It means that the photographs of incidentscenes would serve as demonstrable reference material for the future.Similarly, the dead of a loved one leaves a lasting

		impression in the hearts of the living.
ko̱ni̱ko̱ni̱ na̱ a̱digh afi̱m/a̱foto'**everybody** gets themselves filmed or photographed'(personified)	The entirety of the ecosystem, including animate and inanimate things.	It symbolizes the extensive footprints of the flood disaster as it affected many people and places. The message to the bereaved at the funeral or sympathizers is that death is an inevitable end for all. Therefore, they should feel encouraged as the dead has become a historical recordwhiletheylive.
Sa̱, ami̱ i̱digh ani̱ do̱'And **I** joined the bandwagon'(personified)	Floodwater as 1ˢᵗ Person Singular (1PS)	Man-made disasters and natural emergencies occur from time to time. Flooding is one of such incidents, so is the natural deathfor which the funeral was conducted. The meaning is that the living ought to be prepared to join the rollcall of those who have passed on when it comes to their turn.

Here, both*afim* 'film' and*afoto* 'photo' have a common index, which is image or visual record, while they symbolize long-lasting impressionand demonstrable evidence of an occurrence for posterity.

Application of Pierce's Theory of Sign (semiotic triangle) to explain the meanings of sample metaphors and codes in the song poetry

In most of the poems, the indigenous singing group used their historical knowledge of fauna and flora behaviours to communicate the occasions of certain incidents and the reality death as an inevitable phenomenon. There are instances where metaphors or codeswere used to present some of the songs. The application of Pierce's theory to these categories of song poetryis useful the three elements of the sign that appeared in each case: the object, the referent, and the interpretant. The analysis has tried to appropriate the properties of each of the selected objects or coded phrases to their corresponding elements, using what is regarded as "sign chart" or Pierce's semiotic triangle. The way the theory has been used to explain the meaning of a coded phrase in a song poetry is further illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8
Sign chart of selected coded phrases

Coded phrase	**Referent**	**Interpretant**
Anwana̱ agu̱o̱ gi̱e̱ ka̱ a̱mutuma̱ /ánʷà nɔ̀ àgwɔ̀ gjɛ̀ kɔ́ ɔ́mùtúmɔ̀/ "You should go on your own and present yourself"	Judgment	Like the occasion of the flood, death is experienced by all but there is still hope for the living. It points to the reality of potential extinction of certain rare species.
Ebhebhi̱a̱ onweni!	Absence	It symbolises death. Here, it refers to the dead person for whom the funeral was held.

/èβèβìə ónʷènî/ "We miss a mother greatly!"		It means that the mourners really cared about their mother and valued her.
Amụmarile mạ ạdede! /àmʊ̀m ə́rílé mə́ ə́dèdè/ 'Water toured several lands and kingdoms'	travel	It signifies the fact that the floodwater meant different strokes for different people, e.g., *For indigenous people:* many of their farms, homes, heritage sites, and settlements were sacked. *For lumbering merchants:* it created easy movement of timber logs from interior rainforests to the open river.
Anwa iru nạ ekimạ! /ánʷà írŭnə̀ èkìmə̀/ 'You came in peace.' **Giye nạ ekimạ!** /gìjέ nə̀ èkìmə̀/ 'Go in peace.'	guest	It symbolizes the 2012 flood disaster. What an irony, after such devastating impact. However, people still survived to tell the story and they ought to feel encouraged. Here, they have wishedfarewell to "Mr. Floodwater" as he receded peacefully without further destruction.In the same vein, the bereaved at the funeral should wish farewell to the dead,and long life to the living.

Findings

a) A flood disaster occurred in Nigeria between the months of June and October 2012, affecting several states in the country. Some Abureni communities were among the numerous places impactednegatively by the incident which was carried in local and international media reports.The indigenous singing group called *OgboẠlibhonOlogiEmago* 'The Joyful Singers of EmagoKugbo' translated the flood disaster into song poetry that they rendered at a funeralwith the intent of reviving the minds of those who feltdepressed.The occasion presentsan opportunity for people to use disaster-inspired song poetry to encourage the deceased or those who have suffered other forms of loss. However, apart from such expositions, there is no process in place to sustain the culture. For example,song poetry as a genre ofAbureni oral traditionis not captured in the existing curriculum of primary schools in the area to aid structured learning from infanthood.

b) Although the bereaved persons mourned over their dead, they did so with revived spirit following the encouraging words from the suite of song poetry that was rendered at the funeral on 5th January 2013. They laughed, exchanged pleasantries, and created time to eat and drink in the process.

c) The message of the disaster-song poetry was given at EmagoKugbo only, and it is not clear how the learnings would be extended to otherAbureni speech communities affected by the incident.

d) There is scarcity of research-based publications on Abureni oral tradition vis-à-vis its song poetry and related genres, either by native speakers or other scholars.

e) The study observes that the suite of disaster-inspired song poetry that was rendered by the Joyful Singers at the funeral are allegorical, emotional, and therapeutic in nature. It was only a tip of the iceberg representing hidden oral traditional works that need to be unleashed and researched upon for wider publicity.

Using the occasion of the flood disaster to encourage mourners and sympathizers at the funeral was the thrust of the song poetry in terms of its therapeutic relevance. They reminded the people about the severity of the flood incident and how they survived it to tell the story. It is common knowledge that floods occur from time to time. Just as the 2012 floodhas come and gone the same way death occurs as an inevitable that humans face.

Anwa iru na ekima'You came in peace.'
Giye na ekima 'Go in peace.'
Yes indeed! Farewell Mr. Floodwater as you recede. You should go in peace.

To the dead:
You lived a worthy life with indelible memories.
Rest in peace!

To the living:
Feel encouraged as challenges come and go.
With life there is hope.

The episode is an example of the therapeutic use of disaster-inspired song poetry at funerals in Abureni.

1. **Recommendations**
   a) People in the area should use the experience of the 2012 flood disaster, which has come and gone, to chart their responses to incidents with the intent of building hope on victims or bereaved persons instead ofgivingnegative narratives.
   b) The practice of rendering therapeutic song poetry at funerals and similar public functions should be communicated in homes and schools to reap from the potential benefits associated with the oral culture of the people.
   c) Document and publish various aspects of Abureni oral tradition, vis-à-vis its song poetry and related genres, as part of indigenous language development programmes in the communities and schools.
   d) Include in the primary school curriculum of Abureni (Kugbo) which is listed as one of the indigenous languages to be taught in Rivers State, in line with Official Gazette of Rivers State of Nigeria No. 2. Vol. 38 (2006: A11).
   e) It is suggested that a comparative discourse of similar indigenous oral traditions be conducted to provide more insight to the therapeutic features of song poetry at funerals or in situations where people have suffered disaster.
2. **Conclusion**
   The study concludes that the investigated disaster-inspired song poetry and related genres are emotionally rendered, in both context and style, and ameliorate the pains of the relatives of the deceased person or others who have suffered other forms of loss. This is of linguistic relevance that affects the hearts and minds of people positively. Thus, it is anticipated that a comparative

discourse of similar indigenous oral traditions would provide more insight to the therapeutic features of disaster-inspired song poetry at funerals.

The mutual interactions between the mourners, sympathizers and the song artists are noteworthy and highlights the therapeutic use of song poetry. The people involved in the funeral often recall the history of past generations and reflect upon the qualities a deceased relative under a communal atmosphere. The practice enhances interpersonal relationship and mutual coexistence among members of the immediate and extended family, with potential benefit to the wider society.

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LITERATURE OF SOCIAL CHANGE: THE *TRIYAN THERAPEUTIC POETICS* IN CONTEMPORARY NIGER DELTA POETRY

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Abstract

In his literary essays and other publications, as well as his socio-religious endeavours, Professor KonteinTrinya - in his over three-score and counting years - has been characterized by a deep sense of metaphysical and didactic overtures. This is motivated by his intellectual quest for equity, fairness and social justice against the backdrop of rampant socio-political cum economic and environmental woes plaguing the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This humanist trait of Trinya and his writing and critiques of contemporary Niger Delta poetry (which he has been teaching in tertiary institutions for over three decades) delineate him as a scholar with distinctive poetics worth studying. This paper explores Trinya's brand of literary scholarship, which has been dubbed: *The Trinyan Therapeutic Poetics;* and its strands as repleted in contemporary Niger Delta Literature across genres. His stylistics nuances of the paradox motif, tonal sermonisation, tactile imagery, and simplicity in writing bordering on a predominant thematic preoccupation of giving a sublime voice to literary writers and poets of the Niger Delta stock through his myriads of critical essays. This situates Trinya as a pluralistic intellectual; a social crusader, whose imprints have honed a new generation of scholars and proteges in the literary polemics of the Niger Delta.
Keywords: KonteinTrinya, Therapeutics, Poetics, Niger Delta Literature, Poetry and Social Change.

> … in the recent history of the Niger Delta of Nigeria, art, especially poetry, has made no 'aesthetic' pretences about its prominent engagement with social issues.
>
> **- (Trinya, *Therapoetics*13)**

Hear a poem, heal your heart; write a poem, help your soul.

- (Trinya, *Therapoetics 29*)

Trinya: The Man, His Life and His Scholarship

A detailed profile of Professor Trinya is here replicated to give readers a background of who he is and what he has accomplished in his academic sojourn for over three score years:

> Mr. KonteinTrinya, with a University of Ibadan Master's degree in English, was employed as assistant lecturer in January 1989 to teach literature in the Department of English in what was then the Rivers State College of Education. He had had a BA in 1985 from the University of Port Harcourt. In 2002 he earned his PhD from the University of Port Harcourt. His PhD dissertation, still adjudged one of the best that has been written in that University, was entitled "Oppositions in the Poetry of Dennis Brutus." In 1994, the American Embassy in Lagos, on the platform of the American Studies Association of Nigeria, awarded him the John F. Kennedy first prize for the best post-graduate essay in   Nigeria, in a competition that the Association and the United States Information Service (USIS) had initiated. In 2014 he was made a professor.

Prof KonteinTrinya has been head of the Department of English three times;   he has also been Associate Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Director of the General Studies unit. At present, he is the Director of the Institute for Distance Learning. He has served in various committees and capacities in the Department of English, at the Faculty of Humanities, and in the university. He was Chair of the University Convocation Ceremonials Committee,   Chair of the Senate committee set up to review terms for appointing Ignatius AjuruUniversity of Education emeritus professors. On the other side of the   classroom, he was also trusted treasurer of the Cooperative Society of the   University of Education branch of the Academic Staff Union of Universities   (ASUU).

Besides over seventy books and more than four hundred periodicals in a pen   name that he still would wish to keep discreet, Prof KonteinTrinya has   published several academic journals and written or edited five books on poetry   and   English grammar. He has attended and or presented conference papers in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, South Africa, Nigeria, and in a couple of other places across the globe that his passion often makes him to.

Prof KonteinTrinya is a Google scholar. His *academia.edu* pages are   frequently visited by researchers and scholars around the world. As at   9.00pm on August 26, 2019, according to statistics on the *Academia* site, his   publications had been read by 2,571 people across the world, 751 of whom were rated "highly engaged readers." *Academia* is used "by academics at   12,780 universities"   in the world, such as Oxford and Berkeley. Counting back just "30 days" from August 26, 2019, which was four days ago, the record   stood at a total of 829 visitors to his publications page, 471 of whom were rated "unique visitors," which could mean professors

or other reputable academics. The August visits alone were from such countries as the USA, the   UK, Nigeria, India, Cameroon, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Africa, Australia, Zimbabwe, Morocco, Tanzania, Jordan, Uganda, India, the Czech Republic,   Nepal, Ghana, Sri Lanka, the Republic of Ireland… and still counting.   Prof   KonteinTrinya has been an external PhD examiner in such foreign universities as the Bharathiar University at Coimbatoire, India, and editor for some foreign journals. Very frequently, he   receives mails requesting his publications; a request he is unable to keep up with. At the moment, he   has invitation to the team of contributors to the *Scholarly Research Document on African Literature, Languages & History. (Therapoetics 7-8)*

Methodology

To identify the poetics of Trinya as a literary scholar and critic of repute, this paper adopts a purposive census sampling technique to make a selection of essays and poems and articles to be adopted for this study. Trinya has written and published well over a hundred articles including poems, and critical reviews as used as forewords and introductions in published books of other poets and critics. A total of twenty of his critical articles, including his inaugural lecture paper as a professor of poetry and some of his poems shall be analysed to identify his style of poetry and literary criticism in the polemics of Niger Delta literature. Ten of his other abstracts and pieces used as introductions and forewords in books and excerpts shall also be dissected with a view to foreground Trinya as a pluralistic, multi-cultural critic in tandem's with the biological approach of literary criticism as theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework: The Biographical Approach of Literary Criticism

The biographical approach of literary criticism as an extension of the sociological confluence of literature and society. It analyses a work of art from the influences of the author's life on his art. It traces some influences and motivations of the author, or critic, on his work of art. To what extent does the life style of the writer impact on his art? That is the crux of the biographical theory of criticism as encapsulated by Bressler (2019) whose excerpt is quoted thus:

> In contrast to analyzing the structure, codes, or patterns in a literary text, biographical criticism emphasizes the relationship between the author and his or her literary work. Since the premise of biographical criticism maintains that the author and his or her literary work cannot be separated, critics look for glimpses of the author's consciousness or life in the author's work. Early childhood events, psychological illnesses, relational conflicts, desires (fulfilled or unfulfilled), among other things, may all arise in an author's work. Biographical criticism is not a new approach to literature. The overlap of biographical criticism with cultural studies, psychoanalytic criticism, and other schools of criticism has encouraged students and critics to approach literature from the perspective of the author's biography. (3)

Therefore, this paper takes on traces of Trinya's biography as a preacher, a teacher and social change advocate whose desire for moral rectitude comes from his pastoral background as he uses

simple solemn tone in his writings to dissect social issues from a literary purview to appeal to the innermost conscience of readers and compel positive action.

As a teacher, his pedagogy has always been student-based. Practical and hands on to give students a sense of belonging to whet their budding creative skills to bloom. Such endeavour gave rise to his recent edited anthology of poems titled: *Burbling Lines: A Collection of Student* (sic) *Odes* (2022);published in his honour.His paper on: "Teaching Poetry in Secondary Schools" uses a student based practical approach to get students to adore and adopt poetry and not be scared of it among other genres of literature such as prose fiction and drama. It calls for change of teaching methods by literature teachers in secondary schools from a theoretical stand point to more interactive methods so as to bring excitement and practical participation in classes. With this teaching method, Trinya believes, it prepares the students better for poetry at the higher tertiary levels of education.

Okoh, in his essay entitled: "Managing Change in ESP: A Pedagogic Perspective from Port Harcourt" aptly sums up this learner-centred teaching approach as corroborated and adopted by Trinya when he opines thus:

> The students' task here entailed discussing the sentences, with a view to presenting the pair's answers to the entire class at the end. Quite often, several pairs gave a reaction which could be summarized thus: "why is he asking us to discuss and give our answers: is he not supposed to teach us?" On display here is an attitude which this writer has called the "Teach us syndrome." (qtd. in Ngwoke, et al. 373)

"Style is the Man himself" - Comte de Buffon (1701 - 1788)

 When the nineteenth century French behaviourist described style as encapsulated in the introductory quote above, as being t*he man himself*, it is not just a mere expression of individuality but a form of identification that stands one apart in any venture. People exhibit individualism in diverse forms. It is that distinctive feature or attribute that carves a niche for any person. A writer, a fashionista, a stylist or whatever profession one occupies, there is some level of identity that delineates ones practice from that of others. This is what Riffetere (2015) defines as a "deviation from the norm." - that distinctive value that makes one uniquely different from the rest, is style" (37).

The *Oxford Language Encyclopedia* defines *poetics* as "the study of linguistic techniques in poetry and literature." in his inaugural lecture titled, "Therapoetics: Affective Art," Trinya defines *therapeutics* as using poetry or literature in addressing social malaise; assuaging the yearnings of the people with a view to bring succour and comfort to plaguing souls in want of positive social change. To quote him aptly:

> Poetry heals not only the 'physician-poet' who 'administers it; it also heals the one who receives it. Poetry may not cure, but it can heal. Poetry might not kill the malaria

parasites in the bloodstream; it might not perform the orthopaedic surgery that corrects a misshaped bone, but it can put the soul in such harmony with life as could hasten the cures. (27)

As cited further, Trinya quotes Lenhoff alongside himself, vividly when he posits that:

> We could refer again to the informed perspective of a physician, who says that although writing, reading, or listening to poetry could be therapeutic, poetry does not essentially provide answers to life's questions, but "in its compressed use of language to express universal truths, in its bursts of insight, poetry provides glimpses of beauty that can put the challenges of life in perspective" (qtd. in *Therapoetics* 27)

One poem of Trinya that stamps his imprints in literary polemics is entitled: "A State of the Nation." In it,Trinya copiously unveils his livid style that permeates his literary works and gives him away as one with distinctive therapeutic literary taste of value in the face of plagues and tribulations pestering the nation state and region:

> Without the innocent gait
> Of one unused to faecal outbreaks
> I reached for the painted latrine door
> And opened…
>
> Another blast of septic odours…
>
> I fled
> Pursued by a generous escort of smells
> And the receding siren of the threatening flies
> (Trinya "State" 53)

These instances as cited above display the signature tune of Trinya. They are composed of a resounding paradoxical motif and tactile imagery that bind the fibre embroidery of his art. Strewn with empathy for the plight of the downtrodden, Trinya's works are ridden with such stench of concern for the less privileged that gives it a Marxist twist. This paper explores these identifiable strands that serve as the poetics of Trinya in his varied critical essays that give him away as a therapeutic critic and poet with various forms of contrastive paradoxes, tonal solemnity, protest literature, lyricism, and local colours that permeate his discourses as captured in variety of his published works.

Although, in his earlier description of Niger Delta poetry back in 2011 when he presented his epochal essay at the 37th Annual Conference of the African Literature Association (ALA) in Ohio University, Athens, United States of America, entitled: "Shadows of Development in the New Poetry of the Niger Delta," Trinya's abstract maintains that the region's poetry had not got that identifiable specimen - as at then - to be able to give it a strong voice:

Although it is too early to speak of a Niger Delta literary style, the paper highlights several techniques by which the poets seek to draw attention to their theme of exploitation, and describes their content as a mirror of their context. ("Shadows" 1)

With that paper, Trinya was able to lay bare the footprints for some identifiable imprints that are now being deployed for the stylistics and thematic delineation of Niger Delta poetry. His work was one of such foundational stones that entrenched the poetics and therapeutic value of poetry towards the Niger Delta struggle for economic and environmental emancipation. This situates him as a social crusader in the quest of contributing his intellectual voice for social change in the region. He affirms his critical *therapeutic poetics* loudly in Niger Delta scholarship when he posits thus:

Beyond the identity in theme (the theme of the region's painful exploitation by external interests), it is difficult, at this point in the history of this yet developing literature, to speak of a characteristic Niger Delta poetic style, except, perhaps, the prominence of phonic devices such as alliteration in a number of works, particularly the works of those I wish to describe as the "Niger Delta University school of poets": Gilbert 'EbinyoOgbowei and EbiYeibo. That may be modified by recognising, on the one hand, that of Barine Saana Ngaage. ("Shadows" 13)

Beyond that descriptive-stylistics encapsulating posture of Trinya in identifying his poetics, the Trinyan poetics of criticism is applied in the appraisal of some published poems by some renowned contemporary poets of Niger Delta stock with a view to stamp the Trinyan*therapeutics* on the annals of the region's literary space in themes and stylistics as imbibed by literary contemporaries and other proteges of Trinya such as the late IbiwariIkiriko, EbinyoOgbowei, EbiYeibo, Humphrey Ogu, Amu Nnadi, Joe Ushie, OgagaIfowodo, ObariGomba, AmatareMozimo among other notable poets of the Niger Delta region.

The Concept of Literature of Social Change

Life itself is dynamic and change on its part is described as the only constant phenomenon on earth. True to this fact, is the reality that literature stands as a mirror of the society and change itself does not occur in a vacuum. It is an accumulation of experiences and in-experiences by individuals and an interaction between man and his environment.

Literature over time wearing the toga of a bridge between the present and the future in its best, disseminates the message of social change; subtly identified as thematic areas of interest conceptualised to project the society. By this singular act, social change is experimented using literature as a vehicle.

Mezieobi (2021) avers that "social change refers to any observed significant change or alteration in the social order of a society. or in the social structure of a society over time" (3). This is summed up in its modification structure and function of the social or organizational forms.

On his part, Professor Ake as quoted in Obanya (2002) views social change as "a radical (or significant) departure from the societal past" (54). This entails the transformation or discontinuance of old societal practices, or re-structuring, or rearranging. This may be subject to acceptance, adaptation or resistance.

In the lens of Ezegbe (2018) social change entails nothing more than "the alteration, transformation or modification of an existing social structure or institution, social orders, sociocultural processes or social systems generally over time from what used to be to what it is now" (126).

Social change considers the flux of the society either from the positive lens or the negative lens in a continuous social phenomenon. Over the years, globally, social change has been peacefully violent or revolutionary ignited to propel or quit social problems or some existing ones. For instance, the main thrust of BuchiEmecheta's*Joys of Motherhood* (1994) was aptly giving a voice to the struggle of women in the society. But today, we have a proliferation of even greater social troubles confronting the women folks such as post-colonial slavery, child and women trans-border trafficking; rape, child marriage and abuse, unemployment, injustice, gay rights, widowhood among other social malaise.

Dimensions of Social Change
Social change dimensions according to Mezieobi (2021) encapsulates the hotbeds of culture, international equilibrium and social. All points to one finger - the problem raised, caused or solved by literature through the use of the needed platform to familiarize support, cure or curse the course of action by the society. Ogbowei's Poetry Collections: let the honey run and other poems; the heedless ballot box. and *march boy and other poems* reflect the environmental hazards and economic hardship of the Niger Delta people. It harps on a social phenomenon seeking for answers and leading to different dimensions.

Change, itself is not activated in a vacuum and these factors stimulate literary writings especially in the Niger Delta region or they work hand in gloves in the interplay between one factor and the other. Okara's poem "The Call of the River Nun" exemplifies the pristine ambience of a typical riverine community blessed with natural beauty and abundance to relish. Nwaenyi (2010) posits that "change roams the entire human society naked as well as animates every sphere of nature." accordingly he maintains that: "No society is static without experiencing changes"(204). In sum, literature is interested in mirroring societal issues, either in its positive or negative lights.

Meziobi (2021:18) enumerates the *agents of social change* further to cover themes on health, religion, mass media, leisure activities, natural resources, (which covers most of the themes in the Niger Delta literature), international organizations and politics, power and the elite; social movements, ideologies, intellectual creations, and man himself.

One fundamental experience of human life is change (Chukwuezi 2006: 78). This is seen as normal in human environment which writers do not shy away from through their literary themes. Due to flux of nature, the concept of literature and social change one cannot stop to wonder on the role of literature to educate, inform and entertain, with the multi-disciplinary dimensions of social change itself.

Writers can adopt *The Triyan Therapeutic Poetics* in exposing and exploring a kaleidoscope of themes and sub-themes. The writer is at liberty to explore new trends of social issues and poetry is one genre that does justice to such in that it is contrite, densely vague with a mix of concrete tactile imagery. As according to Trinya in the headline quotes: "Hear a poem, heal your heart; write a poem, heal your soul" (*Therapoetics* 29). Niger Delta poetry and literary criticism of this body of artitself, is not in isolation to the global realities of which social changes in the region are varied.

Literature of Social Change and *The Trinyan Therapeutic Poetics*
Niger Delta literature is saturated with varied thematic preoccupations. A colossal fulcrum of Niger Delta poets and other writers have engaged audiences bordering on issues of pollution, oil spillages, impoverishment, land desecration, environmental degradation and contamination of the fauna and flora of its inhabitants. A cursory look at the symbolic relationship between literature and social change shall elicit the reader to conclude that the confluence between both concepts are intertwined like Siamese twins.

One outstanding strand in the polemics of *Trinya's therapeutic poetics* is the use of the paradox motif. Such contrasts are like ironies depicting conflicting concepts that interrelate against the backdrop of their seeming similarities. In Trinya's analyses of literary works, he does not fail to delineate the contrast in characterisation in words or through contextual analysis. Such is highlighted to underscore the opposites in society. The rich and the poor; the good and the bad; the bourgeois and the masses. These contrasts in his dissections are depicted in various ways depending on the piece in focus.

This type of paradoxical contrast is evident in Trinya's article entitled: "Racism, Sexism and African-American Literature," where class and racism are also depicted to portray a gender twist. Racism delineates people according to race and skin-colours while sexism emphasizes differences pertaining to gender. Such inter play to demonstrate how the literary writer portrays these aspects in fiction is abundant in Trinya's polemics.

Trinya's doctoral thesis in 2002 at the English Studies Department of the University of Port Harcourt titled, "Oppositions in the Poetry of Dennis Brutus" further stresses this duality of class, race and revolutionary ideology as a vehicle for hyping the crudity of apartheid in then

South Africa with a view to using poetry as tool for liberation as exemplified in the poetry of Dennis Brutus.

This dichotomy is also captured in his article: "Oral Tradition and Contemporary African Fiction: New Wine in Newer Bottles" Trinya's contrastive paradoxes are also prominent held dear in this work. The insertion of oral literary elements in written fiction, he argues, gives literature in its oral or written forms, that edge of significance of its distinctive literary African heritage as against what strictly obtains in Western literature.

Trinya's "Orality and Literacy: Re-assessing Congnitionist Criticism of Oral Literature" and "Scriptorial Aspirations to Orality" are other of his critical articles that raise cogent issues of paradoxical contrast in oral literature as against its written equivalent. Here, demonstrating with Clark's *Ozidi,* as study, the latter emphasizes the distinctive features of the oral medium that cannot be embedded in the written form no matter how hard the literate writer infuses oral traditions such us performances, audience participation, songs and dances as the written version compromises the import of these regardless of the ingenuity of the writer. Tone, lyricism, musical effects, mood are some distinctive values that give meaning to such oral literature that even for a play as successful as *Ozidi*that was a direct adaptation from its oral traditional equivalent.

Trinya's poser is that there are has some contrastive paradoxes embedded therein that compromise its literary import when oral literary pieces are translated to the written genre. That thin line between what is oral in a written piece and what can be written in an oral performance, delineates the research as one worth brooding over considering its interesting turns and twists.
Therefore, in Trinya's scholarly critiques, the paradox motif is so dominant that one cannot distance it from the critic himself to be adjudged one of his thematic concerns that permeate the fabric of his *therapeutic poetics.*
This contrastive paradox. in some analytical works of Trinya, take a Marxist leaning in works that display class stratification. As seen in some of these articles and even in a poetic piece of his, Trinya shows a detest for depravity evident in his condemnation of oppression, discrimination and suppression that negates social justice suing for fair and equitable distribution of resources in the polity.
His poem, : "Not Yet The Oily Tears" as a tribute to the late Niger Delta griot - IbiwariIkiriko - is apt on this contrastive paradoxical Marxist ideological strand:

> He wept our tears
> our "Oily Tears"
> the tears of an endowed people suckled dry
> with no tear left for their pain
>
> He mourned our shame

the shame of a lubricating Delta
abandoned to rust
on the scraps of the contraptions
that drilled and drained it

He lamented our error
the error of a deprived people
scrounging like mad jackals over offal
baring fangs dripping with each other's blood

This piece displays the subjugation of a blessed people in the midst of their own endowed wealth. Such contrast embodies the gamut of Trinya's concern for oppressed people using his art to raise consciousness and sing the ballards in praise of fallen heroes and martyrs of the Niger Delta agitations against exploitation from multinationals and the federal government. Denying the goose with the golden egg her social and economic rights.

Trinya's essay on South African playwright, Athol Fugard titled: "Protest Without Placards: Themes and Techniques in Athol Fugard's Anti-Apartheid Plays" again depicts his crusade against racial discrimination and de-humanisation. A trait of Marxist literature that emphasized revolution and protest literary literature is an off-shoot of such Marxist leanings symbolic of the contrastive paradox motif embedded as part of Trinya's signature tune.

Trinya's poem, "State of the Nation;" also displays his descriptive tact in condemnation of the decadence in the society similar to the stench motif adopted by Ghanaian novelist Ayi Kwei Amah in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.* it portrays the rot in the African continent and the need for a rebirth through a conscious effort of a people's revolution.

With the innocent gait
Of one unused to faecal outbreaks
I reached for the painted latrine door
And opened …

My first foot had provoked a pool
With amphibious maggots submarined in urine…
Miasmic waves of chocking putrefactions
Slapped my intruding face…
Balls of concrete smells exploded in my nostrils…
Fat green flies hovered
Sirening a threat…

Another blast of septic odours...

I fled

<div align="center">Pursued by a generous escort of smells</div>
<div align="center">And the receding siren of the threatening flies.</div>
<div align="center">("State, 53)</div>

Another characteristic trait of Trinya is his didactic sermonisation embedded therein. He writes softly as he speaks - simple and direct to the crux of the matter without unnecessarily dabbling up issues. His tone is formal and usually subtle with a solemn sermon that evokes empathy and compliance of the audience. Never in rush to prove a point but calm and punchy enough not to be misunderstood. His tonal undulation in his work is evident in several pieces where he clamours for patience, resilience in face of fierce opposition and depravity. While he highlights the plight of the masses and sues for a change of the status quo, Trinya maintains such sublimity that appeals to the reader's consciousness to act rightly.

This trait of sublimity, didactic solemnization of his discourse is laid bare in several of his scholarly works. In those already cited above, one feel the tone of appeal though suing for a change but not a radical one to cause unrest in the society. One which naturally can permeate through the system to bring about attitudinal sanity to quench the stench and whet the thirst. This lays bare the spirituality of his works that tilts towards that metaphysical brand.

In his essay on Niger Delta Poetry, titled, "Shadows of Development in Niger Delta Poetry," Trinya lays bare his characteristic vigour on the region's literary sphere when he describes it thus:

> The harsh environment of the Niger Delta has left diverse imprints on the creative consciousness of divers Niger Delta writers, nevertheless imprints characterised by the theme of lament for an endowed region spoiled by allied greedy strangers; lament for the goose that lays the proverbial golden egg, but whose head is being crushed with the egg it lays and by the masters for whom it lays it.

The sonorous feature in the new poetry of the Niger Delta may have a number of possible interpretations. It may be seen as a lyrical camouflage for the verbal missiles of the combatant poets, which is what happens to poetry in harsh and censorious creative environments. In this instance, the target enjoys and is hypnotized by the 'music' while being struck by the enemy missiles from which it becomes helpless to flee. Secondly, the lyrical feature could also be interpreted as the seeming distracted mirth of a warrior stalking his foe. It may be explained by the popular proverb that the one who is crying still sees through the tears. In this instance, the beauty of the music is in its ironic and tactical poise beneath its apparent nonchalant surface. Thirdly, the phonic and mellifluous response to social ugliness is sometimes also a way of highlighting ugliness by means of the sharp contrastive background of beauty against which the ugliness is cast. Fourthly, it sometimes can be interpreted as the expression of a triumphant soul that dares to sing in the midst of pain; that is able to create music out of misery and supplant terror with its lyrical calmness. (3-4)

This descriptive narrative of Trinya best encapsulates his purview of what Niger Delta Poetry exemplifies. His concluding paragraph of the essay summarizes the gamut of his critical stance on the flourishing brand of Niger Delta poetry and he states thus:

> It would be endless to attempt to chronicle the many emerging voices (strong and feeble) from the Niger Delta. It is unlikely that we can put all the writers of the region into one stylistic box; but we can describe the common features of their craft and catch their common message in spite of their differing chords and timbres in the orchestra of the Niger Delta. The lyrical feature in the poetry of the region is a significant observation, but we cannot compel all under that critical umbrella. However, the theme of protest against underdevelopment will not change too soon, so long as the denials that have provoked those songs have not significantly changed. It may be thought development that multinational oil prospectors should erect their derricks and offices in the Niger Delta, and make roads that lead to their business interests, which they are compelled to share at times with some of the people of the region. ("Shadows" 15)

This paper, re-emphasizes the position of literature in the equation of social change and no doubt, the *Trinyan Therapeutic Poetic*s in the last decade has re-echoed the position of BarineeNgaagi's "Rhythm of Crisis" with a new horizon for the society to hold on before "the birthday cake" like the days of Pentecost to give "a definition of peace," to wipe all our sorrows in our hearts even though we wallow in shame waiting to solve the puzzle as it is *not yet the final tears*.

According to Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*: "To show affection is a sign of weakness; the only thing worth demonstrating is strength." One humane character you cannot take away from the icon of peace and academic ingenuity of Prof. KonteinTrinya, is his infectious smile. Trinya ordinarily is possessed with humility, wisdom and innate passion to propagate the gospel of Christ by any available opportunity within the confines of tolerance for over thirty years as a classroom research scholar with results produced by his students and those who embrace his *therapoetic*school of thought.

The Triyan Therapeutic Poetics can be summed up in the golden phrase of: *live and let live!* At a point when Niger Delta poets such as BarineNgaage, Joe Ushie, Gilbert Ogbowei, EbiYeibo, ObariGomba, TaniruOjaide, Amu Nnadi, AmatareMozimo, OgagaIfowodo, amongst others, rent their voices to the roof tops on issues of environmental pollution, degradation, spillage, exploitation, malfeasance, and inept leadership, Trinya's voice was not only heard but is still vocal in the wilderness of hope in the Niger Delta region as a critical literary component of the new generation. As a malady to the plague scourge of deprivation, offering hope in despair like the voice of one crying in the wilderness of time. Make way, for the forerunner comes ahead in no time. Trinya has carved a niche in Niger Delta literary scholarship with a wide array of therapeutic research as a soothing balm of Gilead to budding literary souls of a burning region.Orji aptly describes Trinya in these choice lines: "Prof. Trinya has risen to stardom by

beaming his scholarly searchlight on "Therapeutics: Affective Literature" which amply conveys the soothing balm of poetry in our routine lives as mortals in a hectic world."

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DISSOCIATION: TRAUMATIC MEMORIES IN AFRICAN FEMALE LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at exposing the traumatic memories of African female characters in African female writings, which mirrors that society. The African society lacks proper and effective means of immediate response to women in trauma. Writers such as, Buchi Emecheta and Nawal El Sasaawi in their*The Joys of Motherhood*, *The Slave Girl*, *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile,* respectively, showcase the menace endured by African women due to patriarchal tolerance. The method employed in this research is Bassel A. Van Der Kolk and Onno Vsan Der Hart's phenomenon of 'disassociation' and Cathy Caruth's concept of 'remembering to forget' in trauma study. This work discovers that African women in numerous ways have concealed their pains through disassociation, which hinders productiveness to their immediate family and to the society at large. This research recommends the acceptance of trauma as a part of human existence and therefore a prompt proffering of psychological solution to embittered, disgruntled and mentally incapacitated women in African, through professional therapy.

INTRODUCTION

The African society does not particularly indulge the presence of trauma-related mental disorders such as traumatic dissociation, or even Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It would rather shove those signs and symptoms aside. Most Africans who undergo mental disorder end up taking their lives as a result of depressive mental disorder/dysfunction. However, before the suicide takes place, these individuals face one severe psychological struggle or the other, but because their symptoms have not been given a name traditionally, other than 'bewitchment', they suffer even in death, as the community will in turn be compelled to bury them in some 'evil' forest, as prescribed by culture.

In some cases, anxiety is seen in the behavioural patterns of these persons. They become anxious, apprehensive, obsessive, depressive and dissociative. According to Charles G. Morris, people "experience severe anxiety when they try to change various behaviour patterns that they find troublesome"(531). As a result of things that might have occurred, people try to change, adjust and crave for silence in order to move past their unpleasant experiences. While explaining Freud's definition of anxiety, Harold Bloom states that "…anxiety is a mode of expectations" as well as a

method of "remembering rather than repeating the past" (189). Seeking to forget the past, such persons do anything, sometimes disastrous. Clifford Morgan et al, posit that "A general feature of formal-operational thoughts is the ability to think in terms of the abstract concepts that link concrete objects or actions together" (467-468). In this regard, most of these patients suffering from anxiety have grown enough to be able to coordinate their thoughts. If they were children, dissociation would have been their only escape from psychological torture and torment. This has given African female writers the platform to relieve their pains through literature; a form of art that gives a sense of escapism from the harsh reality of their society. Ironically, while some writers are harsh and drastic, like Nawal El Saadawi, some are very mild, and they accommodate their oppressors through the momentary help of 'dissociation'.

Dissociation, Trauma and Dissociative Trauma
Dissociation over the years has experienced its own share of etymological changes. The beginning of dissociation did not commence with 'split personality'; rather, it came from a French pioneer and early investigations of animal magnetism and hypnosis. Different clinicians before now recognized it according to their findings or analysis. It was earlier seen as exchange of personality, two souls, doubling of the personality, double consciousness, double personality, dissolution of personality, dual brain action, duplex personality, altering personality, amongst others. So, dissociation can easily be seen as the existence of more than one personality in a human body, controlled by the mind, lacking in the integration of psychological functions.
In an essay on the history of dissociation, Onno Van der Hart states that the initial study of dissociation "…explained dissociation in terms of a doubling of consciousness (or a division in the personality or ego)" (6). This perception sees dissociation as two conscious entities existing in one body. While Christine A. Courtois and Julian D. Ford understand dissociation to involve "… the coexistence and alternation of psychobiological subsystems within an individual's personality that lack adequate cohesions and coherence (dissociative parts of the personality;)"(148). This reveals that these personalities exist alternatively, with one personality being dormant, while the other stands out. In some cases, the personality that exists during the day is different from the personality that appears at night.

Trauma
In Greek, "trauma" refers to an injury inflicted on the body, but in medical and psychiatric literature as expatiated in Freud's text by Cathy Caruth, "…the term trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" (3). ThoughRuth Leys opines that"Trauma was originally the term for a surgical wound, conceived on the model of a rupture of the skin or protective envelope of the body resulting in a catastrophic global reaction in the entire organism (19), trauma in the light of this article is the wound of the mind that is traceable to the repetition of an inflicted pain, unlike the wound of the body that can heal overtime with proper medical attention. Trauma is seen to exist at the second occurrence in the life of its survivor. When the second wounding takes place, it is merely visible in the subconscious, which

is where it manifests its dominance repeatedly through dreams, hallucinations, and flashbacks, which haunt the survivor. What in turn comes to haunt the survivor or victim is not only the reality of the incident, the violence of the event, but the fact that the truth is yet to be fully known. There is the urge to be heard, understood and empathized with. The constant reoccurrence of these incidents, whether violent or not, is like a bleeding wound, which the survivor or victim cannot simply let go of or overlook.

The reaction of people to issues differs in many ways. "In other words, not all people who experience the same traumatic event will become psychoanalysis traumatized"(Heidarizadeh, 789). It is very crucial to note that not every event in one's life creates traumatic dissociation. Rather, it is those bewildering experiences and other incidents involving a risk of life that lead to psychic trauma.

Trauma is subjective, because what an individual could be traumatized from, another could see as a mere occurrence of life and shove it off without being deeply affected to warrant future traumatic setback. Invariably, people react to traumatic experiences differently, as perceived through their emotional state and their level of cognizance. Trauma could be the outcome of psychological, political and cultural forces. It is also, "...an unsolvable problem of the unconscious that illuminates the inherent contradictions of experience and language"(Balaev, 1). What this means is that, from the onset, trauma was conceived as an experience that consumed the victim and made them lose sight of cognitive reasoning of that particular event. Thetraumatic event is a belated consequence of an encounter that was not given proper attention to at the time, or place of occurrence. The inability to cognitively handle a traumatic event has left many possessed by the constant reoccurrence through remembrance of the event. "Since the inception of its discussion, trauma has been associated with an image of a single devastating "blow" or an acute "stab" that breaks the protective shield of an individual and thus causes deadly and irreparable bodily and psychic damages"(Hwangbo,20).

Dissociative Trauma
This research views dissociation as one induced by a traumatic event that a patient, victim or survivor is unable to integrate at the time of its occurrence. Dissociative trauma can occur with the help of hypnosis, but the thrust of this research is its relationship with trauma. Dissociation is a split in consciousness or division in personality consciousness as a result of one traumatic event and experience or the other. Van der Hart and Nijenhuisin expressing their view on the relationship between dissociation and trauma posit that

> ...a division of an individual's personality…This division of personality constitutes a core feature of trauma ... (and) evolves when the individual lacks the capacity to integrate adverse experiences in part or in full ... The division involves two or more insufficiently integrated dynamic but excessively stable subsystems ... Each dissociative subsystem, that is,

dissociative part of the personality, minimally includes its own, at least rudimentary, first-person perspective. As each dissociative part, the individual can interact with other dissociative parts and other individuals, at least in principle. (418)

Andrew Moskowitz, Markus Heinimaa, and Onno van der Hart also view dissociation as a phenomenon that is triggered by trauma. They state that "… dissociation is the key concept to understanding traumatization"(14). This projects that in order for dissociation to be recognized and probably given professional attention, the genesis of the problem, which is trauma-related, should be considered importantly. They further claim that "The original idea that dissociation divided the personality has been carried forward to the present day"(41). This means that in spite of the numerous etymology, dissociation still maintains a 'division of personality.'

Cathy Caruth, Bassel Van Del Kolk and Onno Van der Hart's Phenomenon
Cathy Caruth's phenomenon deals with dissociation in trauma, which allows the subject to suffer and be haunted through dreams, flashbacks and hallucination. Caruth in her introductory essay in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, explains why trauma is not only a form of forgetfulness or departures we have all taken from ourselves, but also a call for survival through new contacts with others and sharing with professionals. She observes that "The final import of the psychoanalytic and historical analysis of trauma is to suggest that the inherent departure, within trauma, from the moment of its first occurrence, is also a means of passing out of the isolation imposed by the event: that the history of a trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another" (10-11).

In understanding the experience, referential reoccurrence, Caruth states, "Through the notion of trauma, I will argue, we can understand that a rethinking of reference is aimed not at eliminating history but at resituating it in our understanding, that is, at precisely permitting *history* to arise where *immediate understanding* may not" (11). The battle to remember the past or our historical pain is not for the mere notion of revisiting what should have been buried but for a proper understanding. Our immediate understanding can blind our judgment but revisiting the root, that genesis of the survivor's pain, can help in understanding the actual depth of things and the proper model for situating it: "...the physiological change from childhood to adulthood does not explain the *mental* fact that childhood is forgotten (29). Put in another way, being an adult does not automatically erase bad childhood memories that have been repressed.

Caruth emphasizes the need for the sufferers to dissociate their traumatic memories from their main memories in order to live normally, albeit temporarily it may seem, if not medically attended to. As it has been observed, the dissociated memory does not always remain in the oblivion, which brings us to the concept of 'Remembering to Forget'. The concept of 'Remembering to Forget' helps the patients, victims or survivors to systematically dig into their

dissociated memory to remember what has been hidden or buried to give room for healing. Any dissociated memory can hardly reappear in the normal memory of the patient, except the process of 'Remembering to Forget' takes place.

Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart in the article "The Intrusive past: the Flexibility of Memory" articulate that Freud's ideology of dissociative trauma exposes that 'trauma and dissociation is reflected in his concept of repression', which he uses in a scene of "...actively repressed conflictual instinctual wishes"(168). From another perceptive, he uses repression in a sense of "dissociated traumatic memories"(168). This second case is more vital in this research as it talks about dissociation of traumatic memories as a result of repression.

They further define repression, when it concerns trauma, as the "...image of a subject actively pushing the unwanted traumatic memory away. Personal consciousness stays in its place, as it were; it is the traumatic memory that is removed"(168). The victim or survivor completely erases or hides these traumatic memories. While some take time to hide, others immediately send memories to a place of no return."When survivors later on suffer from flashbacks and related phenomena and subsequently become amnestic again for the trauma, they keep dissociating the traumatic memory. As illustrated by Janets patient, Irène, the re-experience of the trauma itself re-evokes a dissociative reaction"(168). In order to move past the memory, that patient whose memory has been uprooted needs "...to be brought back to the state in which the memory was first laid down in order to create a condition in which the dissociated memory of the past could be integrated into current meaning schemes" (175). This is a deliberate process of trying to go back to the source of the dissociative traumatic memories.

Psychiatry is gradually recognizing the clear truth that the reality of trauma is so overwhelming that those memories cannot be integrated into the existing memories; rather, they are dissociated to return in the future intrusively. These memories need to be fixated into the physical mental ones in order for a narrative to be obtained. Most times, these victims exist in two worlds. The one where the nightmare, flash backs and hallucination exist and also the ordinary or real world.

The Phenomenon of 'Dissociation' and the concept of 'Remembering to Forget' in Selected Texts
Below are instances of some characters in the selected primary texts dealing with 'dissociation' and their efforts to remember, though unprofessionally to the best of their ability and knowledge, in order to get healed. In Buchi Emechata's *The Joys of Motherhood*, after Nnu Ego was slapped by the strange woman when she was about to commit suicide following the death of her son, she recollected her repressed memory by expressing, "But I am not a woman anymore! I am not a mother any more. The child is there, dead on the mat. My *chi* has taken him away from me. I only want to go in there and meet him"(65).As illustrated by Caruth, Nuu Ego's ability to remember and recognize the problem that had led her to desire ending her own life to avoid the

reality of her problem after the repressed memory, was a healing period for that character. Her ability to process her reality led her to eventually assimilate the situation and the excruciating pain she felt. In just that moment of her release and remembrance, she got momentary healing and gradually was helped through her depressive state by her loved ones. As Caruth suggests, remembering helped that character to have total healing from her agony and traumatic experience.

Also when Nnu Ego discovered that her husband was bringing in another woman, she suffered greatly from nervous breakdown and chronic anxiety. She had to practically remember her background and what was expected from her as an Ibuza woman, and Agbadi's daughter. When she thought about complaining to her father, she boldly told herself what he would have said to her

> Listen daughter, I have seven wives of my own. I married three of them, four I inherited on the deaths of relatives. Your mother was only a mistress who refused to marry me. So why do you want to stand in your husband's way? Please don't disgrace the name of the family again. What greater honour is there for a woman than to be a mother-not of daughters who will marry and go, but of good looking healthy sons, and they are the first sons of your husband and you are his first and senior wife. (119)

In this instance, Nnu Ego in her own way walked herself into remembering her roots and what was expected of her as an African woman, especially an Ibuza woman. This guided her momentarily to accept the presence of the other woman without verbal complaint, even though she had initially dissociated herself from the reality of her background, which discriminates against the rights and privileges of couples, by giving the man too much leverage. Being able to remember what was expected of her helped in calming when she accepted her place and position in her home and society.

In *The Slave Girl*, Chiago remembers her traumatic moments in the house when she was sexually harassed and molested by her boss' son, and later bythe boss himself. On this particular night, she shared with her fellow slave, Nwayinuzo,her past experiences in the hands of young Clifford. She remembered her past upon the return of the young master who had been away for years. She narrates: "...He fiddles with me. He use to make me do things... O my *chi*, help me in this household" (90). She broke down crying while Nwayinuzo tried to console her. She continued,

> ... I was foolish in those days. I was bending down sweeping the floor when he came up behind me and jumped on me. He pulled at the small breast I had then... I was not at all developed... It hurt so, and I screamed. Do you know what he did? He slapped me hard on both sides of my face. I cried and told his mother, but was ordered to shut up.(92)

She remembered how, after the son had left, the father took over. He visited her room at will and had his way with her without a care that his legally married wife as well as his mistress was in the same house with him: "...Each time their mistress had gone to another village to sell her abada cloth, Pa Palagada would call her to his room on any pretext. Many a time she had come out feeling physically ill and sick at heart" (93). Those were locked up memories that were brought to light because she felt the need to purge herself of these memories. What she had to do in the closed room was what kept her traumatized and secluded from others. Apart from a professional psychologist walking one through one's dissociative traumatic moments in order to be reminded of one's past to help in the healing process, confiding in a trusted ally can also bring about tremendous relief to the patient and in most cases, complete healing from sharing of the problems.

In *Woman at Point Zero*, El Saadawi, as a psychiatrist encounters a female prisoner in Qanatir prison, whom she had on countless times intimated about her desire to speak with her due to her research on neurosis for Egyptian women and especially those in prison. But she was refused. She eventually got the opportunity when the prisoner, Firdaus, decided to see her a few hours before her execution. Their meeting was a magnetic and electrifying. The prisoner was exactly how El Saadawi had pictured her to be, and much more, because of her unapologetic, daring and captivating personality in spite of being in her zero moment. Without waiting for much introduction, she began to remember and recollect her past. And indeed as stated by Caruth, "...the history of a trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another" (10-11). This was exactly the opportunity El Saadawi availed Firdaus as she un-bottled herself in the deepest sense ever imagined. She began to tell her story slowly with so much accuracy, and with time she increased her tempo rapidly, as though she could not ignore or move past the little time she had before her execution and at the same time had the urge to purge herself of the issues that have incapacitated her.

The character, Firdaus in *Woman at Point Zero*, had an overflow of impulsive surge of emotion, which arrived metaphorically as a sense of liberation after she had killed her pimp. She walks around in her supposed new found freedom, with an ironic ease not befitting the crime she committed. It was glaring that the woman that killed her pimp and the woman that walked out of the room were too different people. The new personality had the fearless and careless qualities of someone who had conquered. El Saadawi describes her state:

> My body was as light as a feather, as though its weight has been nothing more than the accumulation of fear over the years. The night was silent, the darkness filled me with wonder, as though light had only been one illusion after another dropping like veils over my eyes. The Nile had something almost magical about it. The air was fresh, invigorating. I walked down the street, my head held high to the heavens, with the pride of having destroyed all the masks to reveal what is hidden behind.(105)

This depicts the picture of a winner. There was absolutely no regret or shame for the murder committed. The expression, "my head held high," boldly reveals that her head had been bent down for years as her oppressors tookturns in objectifying her. The kill was a win for her. Strangely, taking a life can and should never be an act that one is nonchalant about, but Firdaus was bold to even ask herself, "… why was it that I had never stabbed a man, before?"(104). She arrived at the conclusion that the fear that she has dissociated herself from, had held her back.

For Zakeye, she suffered immensely from complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. She had numerous bottled up traumatic experiences which she had deliberately dissociated herself from over the years, but when the ugly head of her past came creeping in on her subconscious leading to her psychotic break down, she was oblivious of her environment.

 Her subconscious intensely seized and dominated her reality. In that state, she remembered a dream that had constantly repeated itself in the same manner.

> But she could still see the big iron bars moving towards her as she lay on her belly over the ground. They came closer and closer like long iron legs which would crush her at any moment. She licked the dust with her tongue, and a sticky wetness streamed from her mouth, her nose and her eyes on to the ground. She screamed as loudly as she could to make sure that her mother would hear her, and snatch her up quickly from under the long legs of the buffalo that looked as though they would walk over her at any moment. And her mother arrived just in the nick of time to save her from being crushed. It was a strange dream which had visited her many times in her sleep. Other nights she would dream that she was standing on a hill. Suddenly her body fell from on high into the river and started to drown. But she swam with all her might, although she did not know how, and managed to reach the river bank. (60-61)

As explained by Van der Kolk and Van der Hart, the repetition of the same dream can be compared to a victim, patient or survivor reliving their repressed memory since they cannot come to terms with the reality of the truth and deal with it squarely. These dreams hunt them at night or during the day as a constant reminder of a part of them that is being ignored, and required to be attended to. The Iron Gate has been the downfall of most female children in her society and still tortured her too in her dreams.

Also, her past intruded in her consciousness by the way her memory delved radically into her present through the remembrance of her past in a trance like manner. Elizabeth Howell refers to this trance like activities"…as depersonalization and derealization" (36). This simply implies that the patient in this case loses touch of reality and is oblivion to her reality. El Saadawi writes that

> She looked round to find her husband fast asleep, but he got up at once, and started to hit her on her head, and chest. Then he kicked her in her belly which was pregnant with child. She tried to scream again, but her voice did not come out and when she looked at him he had come very close and was busy tearing her galabeya down the front till her body was exposed. She could feel his fingers around her breast, feel them creep down to her belly and between her thighs. His heavy body bore down upon her with all its

> strength, pressing harder and harder down on her flesh, so that the ground beneath her began to shake. When she opened her eyes again the face of her husband Abdel Moneim had disappeared and in its place, right in front of her was the face of her brother Kafrawi. She screamed out as loudly as she could but no one seemed to hear her voice. (61)

No distorted emotional thought is as complex and complicated as the one Zakeye had to experience during her post traumatic outburst. She was undoubtedly in a world of her own, juggled with too many life time experiences that had been suppressed over the years. They collapsed on her one after the other like a tornado invading a city. Kathy Steele et al, believe that "Some patients with poor prognoses will never integrate and cannot resolve their traumatic memories, that is… These patients may be able to achieve some degree of stability, but they remain highly prone to crisis and decompensation[decomposition]" (480). Zakeye also suffered immensely in this regard as she is constantly drawn in by her past dissociated traumatic memories, despite the fact that her religious head tried to help her through hypnosis. However, since there was no permanent solution, there were still traces of "significant reasons for dissociation of the personality remain, the patient is at great risk of further distress"(Steele et al, 482).

Unfortunately for her, there was no professional to guide her through her moment of mental breakdown. To a large extent, her ability to remember her past was indeed a step towards her recovery, except that her temporary recovery was not given its due recognition as the intrusiveness of her dissociated memory was ascribed to spiritual manipulation. Her temporal healing after remembering her past was rather attributed to religious interventions. If proper medical caution was strategically put in place by way of counseling, Zakeye would have had her total liberation and healing from the mental illness, because she was obviously ready to revisit her past through remembrance.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates the imperativeness of mental evaluation, especially in women who have suffered in silence from patriarchal objectification, degradation, emotional abuse, social stigmatization, neglect and economic impoverishments. For every bold step towards liberation by a suppressed woman, there is a need for the purging of the mind towards psychological liberation.

This study further recommends Societal Recognition of Mental Illnesses.The society in which one finds oneself should not be excluded from its own definitions of dissociation. This would give its people the opportunity to expressly and closely observe the traumatic encounter, as advised by psychologists, then possible affective therapeutic measures may be taken to ensure the wellbeing of the subject for the benefit of the individual and the society at large.

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POLITICS AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE POETRY OF G 'EBINYO OGBOWEI

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ABSTRACT

Social Change is one of the major concerns of literature. Creative writers at different timeshave used their works to draw attention to social ills and advocate for change. This essay examines G 'Ebinyo Ogbowei's poetry and his use of poetry to pursue social transformation. Ogboweicondemns social ills and advocates for justice and a better society. The essay argues that Ogbowei has made remarkable contributions toNigerian literature.

INTRODUCTION

Every creative writer lives in a society and he or she is part of humanity. It is therefore not surprising that he or she will be concerned about that society in particular, and about humanity in general. In showing concern about his society, a poet uses his art as a weapon to fight social ills such as injustice, marginalisation, corruption, greed, electoral malpractices, abuse of power and so on, while also advocating social change, justice, fairness, honesty and the overall improvements of the lots of the people in the society. Nwabueze observes that "No art can better serve society as literature." (9). G 'Ebinyo Ogboweiknows that "politics is one major avenue of achieving national integration, but our politics borders on hypocrisy, and our politicians wallow in indiscriminate abuse of power (Nwabueze, 9). He therefore sets out to tackle this social challenge by advocating social change through his poetry. Umez advises that

> poetry should be taken seriously. Like every other work of art, poetry entertains and teaches. It has both literary and cultural values. A poem may help us better understand a historical or cultural event (Umez).

Ogbowei is a prolific poet with seven collections to his credit."Since 1978, his poems have appeared at various times in *Idoto, Matutu, PRISM International, Black American Literature Forum, Okike and Liwuram"* (Ogbowei, blurbs)*. Although he has been writing and publishing poems in journals from his undergraduate days at the University of Lagos, it was only at the turn of the 21ˢᵗ century that he published his first collection, which has been followed by other titles:*let the honey run* (2001)*, the town crier's song* (2003), *the heedless ballot box* (2006), *song*

*of a dying river (*2009), *marsh boy and other poems* (2013), *the pregnant shop grows* (2022)and *moods of the wounded river* (2022).

One distinguishing feature of Ogbowei's poetry is that he writes in all-lower-case and without punctuation marks. "One hurdle that tentatively confronts the young, newcomer to Ogbowei's poetry is his characteristic omission of punctuation marks, except the imperative???or hyphen. No capitals, no comma, no full stops" (Trinya, 9). Trinya further expatiates on Ogbowei's style in the Introduction to *the pregnant shop grows:*

> "We might connect his preferred style of discarded punctuation to E.E. Cummings (1894-1962), the radical Modernist experimental American poet the distinctive feature of whose poetry was the absence of capitalisations (even in writing his name), the abandonment of traditional punctuations and of sentence structure, besides other non-conformist typographical deviations ("Of Images and the Poet," xvi).

Ogbowei has remained faithful to his style. Another very important characteristic of Ogbowei's poetry is his social commitment and his apt expression of his disenchantment as well as his desire for change and development of society. This is in agreement with Nwabueze, who notes that "society needs literature for national development…because literature constitutes the best and brightest expressions of all humanity. It helps us to solve real problems, the problem of existence, the problem of human beings" (5) In the words of Tanure Ojaide, "There is culturally speaking, no art for art sake in Africa. Every literary work has a social function"(2). Yet "Most readers think that the creative writer is there mainly to tell a story and entertain" (1) as Nnolimobserves. It is rather a misconception to think that literature is all about entertainment. There is no denying that literature goes beyond mere entertainment. In an interview he granted in 2014, Ogbowei buttresses this fact:

> Literature does not only entertain: Its functions go beyond aesthetic to include the moralistic and affective. So, we write to stir the heart of the reader, to prick the conscience of the oppressor, to provoke good people at home and abroad…to do something about the environment and the structural imbalance in the Nigerian Federation. (Umez)

OGBOWEI AS AN OF AFFECTIVE POET

A proper study of Ogbowei's poetry will reveal that he is a poet whose works are best read through the lens of affective criticism. Hence this essay is anchored on the affective theory of literature. According to Chris Baldick,"Affective criticism or affectivism evaluates literary works in terms of the feelings they arouse in audience or readers" (4),which he likens to catharsis. "It is the power of art to stir psycho-physiological responses from its audiences, making them laugh, cry, smile, exclaim, raise a hand or jump" (Trinya, 17).

Beyond this, affective art can stir people to change their perspective or take certain actions against the leadership of an organisation or government of a state. This can take the form of civil

disobedience. There is no doubt that Ogbowei as a poet that is committed to affecting society through his poetry. He he observes that "The poet harnesses the affective power of poetry to help society understand, organise and regulate conflict so that liberal democracy may thrive" (Agema).

Closely related to affectivisim is Therapoetics, an emergent literary theory, proposed by Kontein Trinya, which explains the therapeutic characteristics of poetry. Trinya describes Therapoetics as "a perspective on utilitarian affect in therapeutic terms…[and] …an interest in the therapy that the creative process offers the poet; the healing or health or palliation that comes from the 'expressive' release of toxic pent-up emotions" (30). This hypothesis is relevant here. It clarifies and helps the reader/critic to better understand the affective features of Ogbowei's poetry. For the poet strongly believes in the healing power of poetry. He demonstrates this when he explains that "This is what poetry does: it helps us to look into our soul and to understand and heal the pain and trauma in our souls. Poetry isn't propaganda" (Umez).

This affective power of the art can be viewed from two perspectives. One, by examining the therapeutic effect of the work on the author. Two, by looking at how the readers or audiences respond to the work. Although both perspectives apply to this essay,the former seems to be more germane to what Ogbowei meant when he points out that "The affective value of poetry cannot be overlooked; they help us deal with certain emotions…"(Umez). Sometimes, a writer may feel disenchantment over certain social issues or situations, and can only find relief by expressing himself through composition of a poem, song or telling a story through art or writing. Ogbowei also writes love and romance poems which, perhaps, helps him "deal with certain emotions…"
In a poem entitled "to cry is not to shed tears" in *let the honey run and otherpoems*, Ogbowei laments the starvation and poverty in the land. He does this with such striking imagery that makes the reader identify with or rather feel the pains of penury, hunger, anger and regrets along with the poet persona. The imagery is not just sustained throughout the poem, it comes alive even more in the second stanza, where he aptly describes a man's helplessness in watching his "bleeding wife" die because hospitals are shut down as doctors are on strike. Yet he is too broke to afford the high cost of drugs at the pharmacy, where he searches the hole-ridden pockets of his already deteriorating "threadbare trouser". This moving poem provides a good example of the affective power of poetry that elicit pity from the audience or reader.

> to cry is not to shed tears
> to cry is to hear the drums
>   play the old anthem in your stomach
>
>   …
> to cry is not to shed tears
> to cry is to watch your bleeding wife
>   die with the dying footfalls of a striking doctor
>   to have your hands go through the torn pockets

of your threadbare trousers at the pharmacy (75)

The use of "asawana/wana" (Ijaw battle cry), as a refrain in "welcome to our smouldering swamps" (*marsh boy and other poem)* is meant to stir the reader or audience to action against thethe multinational oil companies and their local collaborators "…who kill.. [their ways] to oil wells and gas fields. This is affective power of poetry in display. This is also evident the title poem in the collection.

LITERATURE, POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Literature and society have had a standing relationship about which scholars have written copiously. Dennis Brutus is of the view that: "….a writer is a man who lives in a particular society and takes his images and ideas from that society. He must write about what he sees around him…." (100).

Examples also abound in the works of African-American poets such as Langston Hughes and Claude McKay who fought against racial discrimination through literature. Literature was a tool for fighting for liberation/independence in the colonial Africa. African writers of that period used their works to fight for independence. While independence was a major theme to writers in the pre-independent Nigeria, the focus of post-independent Nigerian writers has shifted to the political disillusionment that followed the independence. Achebe's *A Man of People* is a good example.

Trinya observes that "…in the recent history of the Niger Delta of Nigeria, art, especially poetry, has made no aesthetic pretences about the its engagement with social issues" (9). "In pre-Independent South Africa, art was inseparable from the freedom struggle against apartheid…" (Trinya, 8). As Ikiddeh points out, "…poetry, notably that of Agostinho Neto… became the most powerful cultural instrument of freedom in Portuguese Angola" (329 -330). Apart from demonstrating the liberating power of literature through his poetic creations, Agostinho Neto himself charges his fellow writers to:

> Take every advantage of those conditions that will permit our writers to work and
> produce and to observe every nook and cranny of our national geographic sphere
> as they live the life of the people…. I would hope that by bringing about these
> conditions we will aid in formation of Angolan literature that encompasses
> political circumstances and especially, the very life of the people (494-495)

Dennis Brutus has, in an essay on "Literature and Commitment in South Africa", quoted Chinua Achebe as saying that "Commitment runs right through our works…"(203) referring to African writers. "Almost all the works of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ngugi wa Thiong'O are criticism of negative social and political practices" (2) as Ojaide points out. The same is also true of later generation of African writers and their counterparts elsewhere. Julie Agbasiere corroborates this view:

> All writers from the pioneers to the younger generation share one objective which is
> to eradicate the ills of society in order to bring about a change for the better. They

want a society where there will be social justice, equity, and fair play, a society where the rulers and the ruled live in harmony and where peace and progress prevail (80).

Ngugi wa Thiong'O further explores and explains the link between literature and politics as he explains that:

> A writer's subject matter is history: the process of a people acting on nature, changing it, and in so doing, acting on changing themselves. The changing relations of production includes including power relations is a whole territory of concern to a writer. Politics is hence part and parcel of this literary territory (477).

Writing on the relationship between literature and politics, Nnolim observes: "… literature and politics are hardly separate and separable in the sense that political developments could determine the course of literature and in certain times, literary activities have been known to influence political developments" (5-6). Just as the quest for independence in Nigeria and the post-independence disillusionment gave birth to large body of literature, the same is also true of the Nigerian-Biafran civil war. Similarly, the challenges of environmental degradation and the politicalmarginalisation cum economic emasculation of the Niger Delta gave birth to plethora of literary works in all genres. Several collections of poems by individual poets and anthologies centred on the Niger Delta question have been published in the last two decades. It is worthy of note that a 619-page book of essays entitled: *From Boom to Doom: Protest and Conflict in the Literature of the Niger Delta,* edited by Chinyere Nwahunanya was published in 2011. The book parades some of the best literary scholars in Nigeria.

Ogbowei, like his counterparts in other climes and times, knows the power of literature in not just tackling social challenges but also in affecting humanity. He also knows that charity begins at home. He, therefore, uses his poetry in advocating a better deal for the land and people of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This is true of all his books of poems in print. On the strength of the thematic thrust of his poems, Ogbowei can rightly be described as a very important voice in what is now known as the poetry of the Niger Delta. He concedes that much of his poetry "is rooted in the Niger Delta, communicating the feelings of the people, and their cry for justice and for the recognition of their humanity" (Umez).

Explaining the connection between poets from the Niger Delta and their social concern in poetic creation, Trinya points out:

> Ibiwari Ikiriko, with alliterative lyricism in his *Oily Tears of the Delta* (2000), laments the paradox of the region's endowment with oil, but oil that cannot anoint the head to ennoble one; oil that instead pollutes the rivers that should have quenched "my thirst"(20). In a denser line, with similar rhythms, 'Ebinyo Ogbowei, especially in *let the honey run* (2001) and *marsh boy and other poem*s (2013) sustains the same themes. They have not been solitary voices (9).

Other voices that could be heard singing about environmental degradation, political marginalisation, economic strangulation, and sundry injustices from the polluted creeks and lands (ecosystem) of the Niger Delta include those of Tanure Ojaide (*Delta Blues & Home Songs)*, Ebi Yeibo (*Shadows of the Setting Sun)* Barine S. Ngaage (*Rhythms of Crisis)*, Ogaga

Ifowodo (*Homelands and Other Poems)*, Nnimmo Bassey (*We thought it was oil but it was blood*, Obari Gomba (*Pearls of the Mangrove)*, Humphrey Ogu (*Echoes of Neglect)*, and Magnus Abraham-Dukuma (*Drums from the Creeks)* amongst other poets. It should be noted that virtually all the poets listed here have three or more collections that dwells on the point at issue. Only one each of the poets' work is mentioned here and they are chosen randomly. These poets, like Ikiriko and Ogbowei advocate for environmental justice and social development in their homelands.

OGBOWEI'S WORLDVIEW AND THE THRUST OF HIS POETRY

To a cursory reader, Ogbowei poetry only bemoans the injustice, political marginalisation, economic neglect, environmental degradation meted out on his people in the Niger Delta. But this will be an unfair judgement and a hasty generalisation as his interest goes far beyond his immediate environment. For he is not only concerned about the welfare of his homeland, he is also committed to advocating for the welfare of other minority groups in other parts of the world. The poet confirms his commitment to global affairs thus:

> I see myself as an internationalist, for my concern, as you can see, is not merely the Niger Delta and its people, but the plight of the deprived, oppressed poor wherever they may be – in Argentina, Bosnia, Chechnya, Guatemala, Iraq, Nigeria, or the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, or in the refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. Because literature, like music and painting, is universal, I've learnt to broaden the canvas. (Umez)

S.E. Ogude echoes the view expressed by Ogbowei above. "Ogbowei is a sure son of the Niger Delta, but he is also a true citizen of the world who is fully involved in the drama that has defined the world." Ogude further notes that

> *songs of a dying river* is not just about environmental degradation and pollution unleashed on the Niger Delta by Western oil companies. It is also about the environment of global terrorism by centuries of world-wide injustice inflicted on the weak and helpless by the wealthy and powerful. ("foreword," 10).

Ogbowei has a number of tribute poems for writers and other personages from different parts of the world. The poet is concerned about the welfare of humanity. In the words of Trinya, "One thrust of Ogbowei's poetry, … is how it assumes a voice for the voiceless; its advocacy for the helpless" (xx). In "the dialectics of corruption", (*marsh boy and other poems),* he turns his attention to USA, Malaysia, Pakistan and elsewhere.

> the cruel capital is burning
> confusion and keening in kuala lumpur
> In kirkuk kabul and karachi
>
> …
> Marcelo moves to new orleans
> In the marshes of mississippi (54).

As he explains in an interview, *the heedless ballot box* (2006), *song of a dying river*(2009) and *marsh boy and other poems* (2013) are conceived as trilogy.

> "They all thematically linked, addressing two major problems--(1) environmental pollution that endangers our lives, threaten traditional sources of livelihood and quality of life; environmental pollution resulting from the unwholesome activities of companies like SPDC, AGIP, ELF, Chevron and Mobil, and (2) the human condition, dramatising our proclivity to treachery and savagery… (Agema)

POLITICS AND SOCIAL CONCERNS IN THE POETRY OF OGBOWEI

After over a decade of military rule, Nigerian craved for a civil rule. When in 1999, the military junta was replaced by a civilian government headed by retired General Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigerian heaved a sigh of relief. For the people of Odi, a community in Bayelsa State, the joy of the return to civil rule was short-lived.   Unfortunately, expunging Odi community from the face of the earth became the first project, the President Olusegun Obasanjo-led government executed in Bayelsa State. Expectedly, that grievous human rights abuse inspired a lot of poems from the poets of the Niger Delta extraction. The poems decried the injustice and condemned the inhuman action meted out on the people of Odi by the government. In a poem entitled "Odi", published in his collection, *Oily Tears of the Delta*, Ibiwari Ikiriko interrogates the razing of the community by the Nigerian military:

> O, how many corpses make a community of corpses?
> How much tears can fill a basket of calamities?
> What Marshal Plan can follow as enough recompense?
> What gestures can raise ruined relics back to mansion? (63)

Humphrey Ogu in "Litany of Woes", a poem in *Unheard Songs,* bemoans the Odi massacre thus:

> Widows, widowers and orphans
> Earned geometrical population explosion
> …
> Like butter in a hot frying pan
> Odi melted amidst anguished cries (33)

In "We Shall Look Each Hunter in the Eye", a poem in *Pearls of the Mangrove,* Obari Gomba, says "Let this song reach forth to Odi", … He asserts: "This land is ours; the waters are ours" / "our grips will be firm on our rights". Gomba's reaction to the Odi carnage is quite assertive. He warns, "We shall look each hunter in the eye/We shall fight them all until they run". The persona is determined to fight for his rights irrespective of the threat to his life.

> Guns point at our heads and order us to turn
> And order us to turn seventy times seven times (66).

Ogbowei captures the Odi carnage in a piece entitled "hero's day" in *let the honey run and otherpoems*, where he laments:

> odi is done
> sold at the bargain basement
> share sellers lead her through happy hunting-grounds
> to butchers billeted on aso rock (65).

Ogbowei's concern for Odi does not begin and end with the poem cited above. "From its beginnings written African literature in the 19th and 20th centuries…," according to Charles Nnolim, "was an unhappy one, it was lachrymal" (8). In yet another poem captioned "a failed federation" in *the heedless ballot box,*he observes:

> odi's the sector
> that killed our faith
> in a failed federation
> where contentious constituents
> disdainful of minorities
> mired in the maligned marshland (42).

In his response to a question during a newspaper interview, he explains:

> My disillusionment is there in my poetry… From *the town crier's song to marsh boy and other poems,* I've not stopped warning my nation of the dangers, booby traps ahead, which her favoured sons have laid in its path. I've put my poetry in service of the nation (*The Guardian 07,*2017).

Every page one turns in the poetry of Ogbowei, there is so much commitment to bettering the lots of humanity. Ogbowei lampoons corruption in Nigeria and decries the irregularities and malpractices that besets Nigeria's electoral process. He talks about "raped ballot" in the poem "we are the stay-at-home", (*Songs of a dying river)* apparently referring to a situation where the electorate would rather stay at home instead of wasting their time by going to cast votes in a process that is known to be fraught with frauds. To him, Nigeria is not just "a failed federation" it is "gated country/dissolving in its tapestry of tribes/ into patchwork of disconnected nationalities".

In *the heedless ballot box,* he metaphorically satirises the fraudulent electoral process, especially the snatching and stuffing of the ballot boxes. This is the focus of the poem from which the title of the collection is drawn. He captures the pandemonium occasioned by electoral violence and ballot box snatching thus:

> the heedless ballot box
> drunk dances to a choir
> of grieving guns
> clapping cutlasses joining
> in the stampede dance

He continues this in the poem, "april 19" where he expresses regrets that instead of having the electorate voting for the candidates of their choices in a peaceful atmosphere, they end up as a "victim(s) of the war for votes" fleeing from death. Ideally, the electorate should be exercising their franchise happily in a serene atmosphere. But that is not the case here, where elections are done in a very tense situation. Hence, he laments:

> instead of clappers and guitars
> daggers and darts
> instead of cornet and conga
> frantic carbines barking down office corridors
> bleeding cutlasses
> pursuing stuffed ballot boxes (46)

The poem "april 19" is another instance, he expresses disenchantment over the return of the civilian government. To him, contrary to the general expectation, not much has changed in terms of improvement of the living standards of the populace. As he points out: "Contrary to popular expectations, the return democratic rule has only produced chaos and empowered criminals and unprincipled opportunists. These are the painful truths *marsh boy…* grapples with" (Agema). The civilian government brings with a new wave of greed, crimes and corruption. The usual military brutality associated with military dictatorship is being replaced with high magnitude of greed and corruption. Hear him:

> they've gone
> the khaki green menace's gone
> but in its place
> a new plague
> in straw hat and woko
>
> the khaki green menace's gone
> but in its place
> a clan of jackals
> held together by convenant of greed (45)

This above poem is thematically related to Humphrey Ogu's "The Kingfisher and Us", where he say: "The address may have changed/ from dodan to aso/ the dress may changed from khaki to agbada/ babaringa or etibo/ but the fishing has not" (43). In "the tyranny of greed" (*marsh boy and other poems),* Ogbowei further tackles the issue of the prevalence of greed during the civilian rule. He ascribes tyranny, which is a feature of military government, to it. In"woodpeckers and saviours", (*town crier's song*) Ogbowei focuses on military coup d'etat, and describes the military men as woodpeckers.

> these khaki green saviours

these woodpeckers
excavating new trees
abandoning old holes (75).

In yet another poem, "what tale trinya," Ogbowei uses monologue to asks some pertinent political questions that border on elections and governance. Here the poet's questions are rhetorical. From the first stanza the image is that of helplessness. He likens the politician to a patient and wonders how a sick person can offer therapy or console a crying teacher. It is in the second stanza that one better appreciates the hopelessness of politicians who keep acquiring more exotic cars than they really need, while the citizens of the state starve to death.

what touching tale trinya
did the dodgy politician
tell the starving state
his humming hummer
gleaming in the sun
blinding their patriotism
could move them to ballot boxes
secure in a cave
crawling with king cobra (*songs of a dying river*, 30)

The poet who asks "why does my country ceaselessly wail" in a poem entitled "my country sings" (76) appears to have got the answers to woes of his country as shown the poem, "errors of the past" where he notes: "this land we've violated/…/ throws up reminders/from our fractious past" (65) in *the pregnant shops grows.*

CONCLUSION
It is pertinent to point out that Ogbowei's poetry is not just about social commitment or striving to stir the society to action against injustice. It is also about his style. For, as Trinya observes, "To Gilbert 'Ebinyo Ogbowei, images seem to come effortlessly, in their cadences and peculiar rhythmic alliterative attire" (xi).

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IZON OBJECT PRONOUNS: PREFIXES OR PROCLITICS?

By

Epunumokumo Favourben-Ghomorai

ABSTRACT

This paper descriptively analyzes Izon object pronouns with the aim of determining their status either as prefixes or proclitics. The paper is based on a variety of data on other languages with similar pronominal elements and behaviour. It adopts a qualitative investigation, employing interview, discussions and personal observations as instruments of data collection, and the data collected were descriptively analyzed. The analysis reveals that Izon object pronouns exhibit certain obvious behaviours of clitics. Hence, it is concluded that these pronouns are indeed proclitics and not prefixes, as against previous analysis. Based on the conclusion, it is recommended that further investigation be carried out on Izon object pronounsin other Izon dialects, to reinforce the observations of this study.

Introduction

Personal pronouns in many African languages have a distinction as *strong* and *weak*; *separable* and *inseparable; detached* and *attached* pronouns, etc. Like many African languages, Izon, spoken majorly in Bayelsa, Delta and Edo states, also has two sets of personal pronouns which occupy two different grammatical positions in the sentence. There is the set that is written as separate words or free morphemes, which can stand alone in a sentence and be meaningful, and they usually occupy the grammatical subject position in the sentence and they function as the subject of the sentence. They include: eménè, 'I'; emènè, 'you'; améné, 'she'; aménè, 'they'; ómènè, 'we'; and omènè, 'he'. These pronouns can be called subject pronouns based on the position they occupy in the sentence. On the other hand, we have the set of inseparable or attachable pronouns that are regarded as weak or bound morphemes which are always phonologically bound or prefixed to other linguistic elements or syntactic categories like verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc and they usually occupy the grammatical object position in a sentence and function as object or possessor of the word to which they are appended or prefixed. These set of pronouns are the contracted forms of the free pronouns. They include: e, 'me, you'; a, 'she, them; o, 'him, us'. Possessive pronouns are also found in this group. These phonologically bound pronouns can be called object pronouns based on the position they occupy in the sentence.

There are completed and on-going studies on some languages, as well as a general agreement, that subject (and object) markers are bound morphemes; that their status as affixes or clitics has not yet been established in some of the languages. Whereas bound morphemes encoding the grammatical properties of nouns and free pronouns are analyzed as affixes in some African languages, in others, they are analyzed as clitics. (Kari,2017:102, citing Dimmendaal, 2000: 180). In line with Kari, the status of these bound or cliticized object pronouns in Izon are yet to be ascertained, hence, the call for object pronoun analysis in Izon.

Object or subject pronouns have been given different names by various scholars; Jenewari (1977), clitic pronouns; Igwe and Green (1964), Okonkwo (1977) Dimmendaal (2000), called them pronorminal subject markers; Thomas and Williamson (1967), pronorminal prefixes; Creissels (2000,2005) subject markers, non-emphatic pronouns, weak pronouns, personal ending of verbs; Kari (2017) subject (object) markers, all cited in Kari 2017), and Anyanwu (2017) referred to them as pronominal subject clitics. These different names imply that object or subject pronouns or markers share some common grammatical features with the noun phrase either in the object position or subject position.

In support of this paper are the works of Kari (1995), clitics in Degema; Kari (2002), distinguishing between clitics and affixes in Degema; Kari (2005), Degema subject markers: are they prefixes or proclitics; Kari (2017), On the status of subject markers in African languages; Anyanwu (2012), Pronominal subject clitics in Igbo; Sarage and Kasiyarno (2015), Arabic personal pronouns as word, clitic and affix, etc.

Subject (object) markers, according to Kari (2017), are pronominal markers that correspond to noun phrases, which function as the subject (or object) of the sentence. As object pronouns, they usually occupy the object or accusative position in the sentence and frequently occupy a preverbal position. They are usually followed by main verbs and auxiliary verbs said Kari (2017). He added that these pronominals in many African languages agree with the main noun in person and in number and are also encoded as gender and humanness. In Izon, these grammatical features are understood as person, gender and number. This point will be illustrated with the following examples in Kabo variant of Izon.

1. (a)   *á-kúlóè-prè*
            her- greet me-give
        Greet her for me

   (b) *ò- fàmù*
   him- beat
   Beat him

2. (a) *á-sérido*
      You(plural) "good morning"
      Good morning to you (ona good morning)
   (b) *á-dó*
 you (plural) "well done" or "welcome"
"Well done all" or "welcome all."

In example 1a, *a* is encoded as the 3SG feminine gender pronoun while in 1b, *o* is understood as the 3SG masculine gender pronoun. In example 2a and b, the linguistic element *a*, is encoded as number to mean more than one person. Since these grammatical features are prefixed to a following syntactic element, should they be treated as affixes (prefixes) or clitics (proclitics)?

An affix is an element found in a word that disrupts the form of the word. Nwala (2014a) defined affixes as "grammatical or bound morphemes that cannot stand on their own as independent words, but are attached to lexical items such as nouns, verbs, etc. to mark agreement of tense, person and number". In the words of Akmajian, et al, (2008), "affixes are bound morphemes that are attached to a stem and modifies its meaning in some way or indicates, for instance, person, number, gender and tenses. Prefixes and suffixes are the two common kinds of affixes in world's languages. This implies that affixes cannot stand on their own and make meaning. In essence, the usefulness of affixes depends solely on lexical units because they make no meaning on their own. Affixes do not have independent existence because they are always attached to the base or root of a word (Ndimele, 1999). They are phonologically and morphologically bound to a stem. For instance, the Kabo variant of Izon has -*me,*'simple past tense marker',- *iin/-yin*, 'progressive tense marker', and -do, 'past participle marker', etc. These are affixes which are all suffixed to a stem. These can be illustrated as follows:

3a)   *àké-mé*
      take- PST
      Took

 b)   *bo- íin/bo-yín*
      Come - PROG T

c)   *mú- dó*
      go- PS PA T
      Gone

On the other hand, clitics are a kind of hybrid between affxes and free morphemes said Denham and Lobeck. They defined clitic as "a morpheme that is phonologically dependent on another word, but is grammatically independent, so in that way clitics are distinct from regular affixes. They involve at least some reduction, as in the not of do not in English becoming n't". (Denham and Lobeck, 2013). In the same vein, SIL Glossary of linguistic terms (2003), defines clitic as a morpheme that has syntactic characteristics of a word, but shows evidence of being phonologically bound to another word. In other words, clitics are bound morphemes with no meaningful existence when written separately from other words. Trask (1993) in Ndimele (1999) noted that, "a clinic is a grammatical unit which exhibits behaviour intermediate between that of a word and that of an affix". He added that," a clinic has the phonological form of a separate word, but cannot be stressed and is obliged to occupy a particular position in the sentence in which it is phonologically bound to an adjoining word, its host". In line with Trask, Richard (2019) stated thus, "it is a word or part of a word that is structurally dependent on a neighbouring word (its host) and cannot stand alone on its own". According to Wikipedia, a clitics is morpheme in morphology and syntax that has syntactic characteristics of s word, but depends phonologically on another word or phrase". All these definitions are pointing to the fact that clitics are partly words because they have grammatical independence or are syntactically

independent, and are partly affixes because they cannot stand alone since they have some form of reduction which made them to be phonologically dependent; always bound to an adjacent word. This explains why clitics are a kind of hybrid between affixes and free morphemes according to Denham and Lobeck (2013). Kari (1995) citing Borer (1992) and Spencer (1991) described clitics as "syntactic constituents or elements which can't stand alone but are phonologically attached to a host". This implies that such elements are not phonologically independent words. They depend on their host phonologically which make them similar to affixes.

Affixes and clitics share some similarities as well as dissimilarities. From the above definitions it is obvious that both affixes and clitics are characterised by being bound to a stem and host respectively, meaning they are two forms of bound morphemes. It is also seen that affixes are phonologically and morphologically bound to a stem in the sense that they form part of the morphology of the stems they are attached, which make them difficult to be deleted and still retain its meaning. This implies that, when an affix is deleted from a stem, the meaning of the stem will not remain the same, hence they cannot be deleted. Whereas clitics are only phonologically bound to its host. Though they are phonologically bound, their omission or deletion will not affect the meaning of the host to which they are appended because they do not form an intaegral part of the host, hence, they can be deleted. There are also a lot of other differences seen in the two bound morphemes. Kari (2017) in his paperentitled "On the status of subject markers in African languages" cited Spencer (1991) and Kari (2002), giving detailed definitions of the affix and clitic, that clearly distinguished affixes from clitics.

The definition and behaviour of clitics, to a great extent, describes Izon object pronouns which when omitted or deleted, do not affect the meaning of the host to which they are prefixed. In comparison to pronouns with similar behaviour in other languages such as Degema, Igbo, Kalabari, Swahili, etc, it will not be out of place to analyze Izon object pronouns as clitics and not affixes. Further analysis will show if they are morphological affixes or syntactic clitics.

Statement of the problem

The status of Izon language object pronouns which are prefixed to different syntactic categories in the language is yet to be ascertained or established. This was observed in Ekiogbo and Ayunku (2018) analysis of prefixation in Izon. They presented a data and claimed that they were cases often treated as cases of prefixation in the language. However, these scholars recognized the so-called prefixes in the examples as pronouns. Hence, they concluded that the examples in the data are pronouns and not prefixes, and since pronouns are free morphemes , they cannot be treated as prefixes. As a result, they are of the opinion that there is no prefixation in the language. However, the stand point of these pronouns was not discussed. Thus, this current study is set forth to investigate and analyze the true status of Izon object pronouns to ascertain if they are prefixes or proclitics.

Significance of the Study

The study will be significant as it will contribute greatly to the development of Izon language and enrich its literature. It will also be beneficial to future researchers as it will serve as a handy reference material for them.The work will equally add to existing literature as it will close the gap of the unknown status of Izon object pronouns.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The study is aimed at re-analyzing object pronouns in Izon language, sometimes treated as cases of prefixation, to ascertain their real status as true cases of prefixation or procliticization. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. ascertain the status of Izon object pronouns as regards affixes and clitics.
2. affirm that there is no prefixation in Izon language.

Research Questions

1. is there prefixataion in Izon language?
2. What is the status of Izon object pronouns as regards affixes and clictis?

Literature Review

This section will lend itself to three subheadings: conceptual review, theoretical framework and empirical review. Under conceptual review, the following will be discussed: morphology, the word, morpheme, affix, clitics, difference between affixes and clitics. Under empirical review, works of other scholars relating to this study will be discussed.

Conceptual Review
Morphology

Morphology is the study of word structures and forms in a language. Morphology, according to Yule (1996), is the study of "investigating forms in language rather than depending on identifying words". Morphology enables the language user to create new words from already existing words and also to change the grammatical function of words by changing their forms. Yul-Ifode in Umera-Okeke et al (2016) defined morphology as "the study of form or forms". This statement suggests that morphology studies how words change from one status to another. For instance, in Izon, the noun *'ikasi'* meaning a 'chair' can change its form or status from being singular to a plural form by the addition of '-*ama'*. Thus it becomes *'ikasi-ama'* meaning chairs. To understand the best position to insert or fix that affix (-*ama*) by a non-native speaker of Izon language requires understanding the rules governing the formation of words in the language which is a unique function of morphology. In this regard, Umera-Okeke et all (2016), defined the term morphology as the " body of rules governing the formation of words in a language". She added that these rules help us to know well-formed words and morphologically incorrect words.

Meaning of words

Words are linguistic units that have dictionary meaning. That is, they can stand in isolation and make meaning. They are meaningful representation of sounds that make communication possible between individuals. One major function of words in a language is to convey meaning. A Word can be monomorphemic (a single morpheme), bimorphemic(two morphemes) or polymorphemic (multiple morphemes). For instance, the word 'truth' contains a single morpheme, the word 'untruthful' contains two morphemes while the word 'untruthfulness' is a polymorphemic word. Thus, words are internally structured with morphemes. Umera-Okeke (2016) referred to morphemes as the "building blocks of words... just as words are the building blocks of phrases". In the same light, Ndimele (1999) stated that words are composed of smaller meaningful units which are known as morphemes. These morphemes are the basic units of morphological analysis.

The Morpheme

Morphemes are the smallest meaningful elements in a language which can either be an independent unit or a dependent unit. This is the thrust of morphology which is to identify and classify those units that can stand alone as words and those that cannot stand in isolation. Yul-Ifode (2001) defined morphemes as "the minimal meaningful units in a given language". In line with Yul-Ifode, Tomeri in Umera-Okeke (2016), defined a morpheme as the smallest unit of speech that has semantic or grammatical meaning. At the same time, Umera-Okeke (2016) referred to the term as building blocks of words that have meaning and grammatical function just as words are the building blocks of phrases. The opinions above indicate that morphemes either have a lexical meaning or grammatical meaning. Smallest meaningful unit implies that morphemes are indivisible. That is, they can no longer be subdivided or further broken down. According to Web lecture(1998) in Umera-Okeke(2009), morphemes have four defining characteristics:

- They cannot be subdivided.
- They add meaning to a word.
- They can appear in many different words.
- They can have many number of syllables.

There are two major classifications of morphemes: free morphemes and bound morpheme. Under free morphemes, we have independent bases which are lexical or functional. While under bound morphemes, we have the affix (prefix, suffix, interfix infix etc) and bound root (contracted root and non-contracted root). For the purpose of this study, we will only look at the two major types of morphemes which are free and bound morphemes.

Free morphemes, according to Ndimele (1996), are words which can occur in isolation without necessarily having to be attached to another grammatical unit. This invariably means that free morphemes can stand alone on their own and make meaning. For instance in English,

morphemes like teach, mother and true can stand alone as words and are called free morphemes. Amera-Okeke (2009) put forward that, a free morpheme is" a morpheme that can stand alone on its own as a single word". Free morphemes with independent dictionary meaning are lexical morphemes, while those free morphemes that only mark grammatical relationship are functional or grammatical morphemes. According to Akmajian et al, (2001) English lexical morphemes belong to the openword category while the functional morphemes belong to the closed word category.

On the other hand, bound morphemes are those that can function only as part of a word to change its form or derive a new word. Bound morphemes are always attached to other grammatical elements and they do not have independent dictionary meaning because they cannot stand alone. Ndimele (1999), in his book titled: 'Morphology and Syntax', identified two types of bound morphemes: affix and clitic. These two bound morphemes are similar in some ways but are also different in a lot of ways.

An affix
An affix is a bound morpheme that is either prefixed, infixed, circumfixed, interfixed or suffixed to another linguistic unit. In the words of Akmajian, et al, (2008), "affixes are bound morphemes that are attached to a stem and modifies its meaning in some way or indicates, for instance, person, number, gender and tenses. Prefixes and suffixes are the two common kinds of affixes in world's languages. In line with this, Nwala (2014a) defined affixes as "grammatical or bound morphemes that cannot stand on their own as independent words, but are attached to lexical items such as nouns, verbs, etc. to mark agreement of tense, person and number". In essence, the usefulness of affixes depends solely on lexical units because they make no meaning on their own. Affixes do not have independent existence because they are always attached to the base or root of a word (Ndimele, 1996). The process of fixing bound morphemes to free lexical morphemes to either mark agreement, tense and number(inflectional affixes) or to derive other words (derivational affixes) is known as AFFIXATION.

A clitc
On the other hand, clitics are a kind of hybrid between affxes and free morphemes said Denham and Lobeck. They defined clitic as "a morpheme that is phonologically dependent on another word, but is grammatically independent, so in that way clitics are distinct from regular affixes. They involve at least some reduction, as in the not of do not in English becoming n't". (Denham and Lobeck, 2013). The process of attaching clitics to hosts is known as CLITICIZATION.

Difference between affixes and clitics
There are a lot of observable similarities and dissimilarities between affixes and clitics in the above definitions. Nevertheless, Kari (2017) in his paper, titled "On the status of subject markers

in African languages" cited Spencer (1991) and Kari (2002), gave detailed definitions of affix and clitic that clearly distinguished affixes from clitics:

"An affix is any linguistic element that attaches itself to another linguistic unit called stem for the sole purpose of gaining both phonological andmorphological identity; it cannot be deleted but can be moved along with its stem to a different location in the sentence; its meaning may be compositionally determined with respect to the stem, and its prosody (tone or stress pattern) is lexically determined (Kari, 2017:102)."

"A clitic, on the other hand, is any linguistic element that attaches itself to another linguistic unit called host for the sole purpose of gaining phonological identity; it may be deleted but cannot be moved along with its host to a different location in the sentence; its meaning is constant irrespective of its form or the kind of host it attaches to, and its prosody (tone or stress pattern) depends largely on context (Kari, 2017: 102,103)"

From the two definitions above, it can be noted that affixes and clitics have some resemblance. They are all dependent on other linguistic units to make meaning. No wonder, some earlier researchers like Thomas (1964) in Kari (1995) analyzed them as inflectional affixes. Some of the differences observed and pointed out by Kari (2017) are:

1. Affixes have both phonological and morphological identity, whereas clitics have only phonological identity. This implies that affixes form an integral part of the morphology of the stem to which they are appended, which is why the affix has both phonological and morphological identity.
2. Affixes cannot be deleted due to the morphological role they play in the stem they are attached to. If deleted, the compositional meaning of the stem will be distorted. On the other hand, clitics can be deleted and the meaning of the host will still remain the same because they do not constitute part of the host.
3. Affixes are attached to single category of words, whereas clitics have the freedom of attachment to more than one grammatical category such as verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc. This made Ndimele (1999) referred to the clitic as exhibiting promiscuity of attachment due to its ability to be hosted by more than one part of speech unlike the affix.
4. There is also a semantic difference between the affix and clitic. The meaning of affixes may vary due to compositionality. That is, its meaaning varies depending on the context in which its stem occurs, but the meaning of clitics remains constant irrespective of the category of its host. Kari (2017) pointed out that, possession of one or more of these characteristics outlined in the definitions may be sufficient to distinguish between the affix and the clinic in any language.

Izon Object Pronouns
Izon has two sets of pronouns which occupy two different grammatical positions in the sentence. There is the set that is written as seperate words or free morphemes, which can stand alone in a

sentence and be meaningful and they usually occupy the grammatical subject position in the sentence and they function as the subject of the sentence. They include:

eménè,'I',
eméné,'you', (sg)
améné,'she'
aménè,'they',
ómènè,'we', and
omèné, 'he'.

These pronouns can be called subject pronouns based on the position they occupy in the sentence. On the other hand, we have the set of inseparable or attachable pronouns that are regarded as weak or bound morphemes which are always phonologically bound or prefixed to other linguistic elements or syntactic categories like verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc and they usually occupy the grammatical object position in a sentence and function as object or possessor of the word to which they are appended or prefixed. These set of pronouns are the reduced forms of the free pronouns. They include:

e,'me, you',
a, 'her, them, their
 o, 'him, us', our, his
Possessive pronouns are also found in this group. These phonologically bound pronouns can be called object pronouns based on the position they occupy in the sentence.

Theoretical framework
This study has adopted an eclectic approach, which implies that it is majorly based on a variety of data and other languages that have such pronominal elements with similar behaviour.

Empirical review
In this section, works done by different scholars in different languages relating to the current topic of discussion will be looked at. Like in Izon language, Igwe and Green (1964) in Kari (2017) made a distinction between separable pronouns and inseparable pronouns in Igbo. The separable pronouns include: m, mụ 'I', gị 'you', ya 'he, she, it' (singular) and anyị 'we', unù 'you' and ha 'they', (Kari, 2017). They noted that the separable pronouns can function both as subject or object of the sentence as seen in the examples below.
4) a. *Mụ nyèrè gị ākwụkwọ.*
     I   give.PST you book
     'I gave you a book'
  b.   *Gị hụ̀rụ̀ ya.*
        you see.PST him
         'You saw him'

c.   *Ya kpọ̀rọ̀ ha.*
     he call.PST them
     'He called them'

On the other hand, it was noted that the inseparable pronouns which include:

m 'I', i (ị) 'you', o (ọ) 'he, she, it' and e (a) 'one,

With each having two forms, only function as subject of the sentence and are always phonologically bound to a main verb. This is illustrated below:

5)   a. *Ùgò ò sìrì anụ?*
     Ugo 3S.Q cook.PST meat
     'Did Ugo cook meat'

b.   *I sīele anū̄.*
     2S cook.PERF meat
     'You have cooked some meat'
     Culled from Kari (2017)

As noted by Kari (2017, Igwe and Green did not distinguishes these pronouns as affixes or clitics, but recent studies have reanalyzed these pronouns as clitics in Igbo. In line with this, Anyanwu (2012), categorized pronominal elments in Igbo into two type. He called them independent and dependent, weak or short prominas. He equally noted that the independent ones can occur both at the subject and object position in as sentence, whereas the dependent or short ones were previously analyzed by Uwalaka (1995) as resumptive pronouns. These pronouns have been reanalyzed by Anyanwu (2012) as pronominal clitics based on the following syntactic evidence, that pronouns as second object, pronouns in relation to preposition, pronouns and enclitics, strict adjacency to main /auxiliary verb, reflexive constructions, modification facts, topicaalization, clefting, coordination, etc.He also noted that these depend pronouns in Igbo fall within the category of special clitics since they appear in some special position, at the subject position before verbal elements as proclitics. In the sections that follow, we shall argue In what follows are examples of dependent pronouns to illustrate their clitic status as pronominal subject clitics.

6a)   *í-rìrì ńrí.*
     2sg CL. eat-past food
     „You ate food"

b)   *í-tàrà ánu*
     2sg CL. chew-past meat
     „You ate some meat"

c)   *ó- rìrì ńrí*
     3sg CL eat-past food
     „S/he ate food."

d)   *ó-tàrà ánú*

3sg CL. chew-past meat

"S/he ate some meat"

e)   *é-rìrì ńrí*

some person (s) CL. eat-past food

"Some person(s) ate food"

Taken from Anyanwu (2017)

Hence, it is clearly seen that Igbo object pronouns as called in this study have been analyzed as clitics. Jenewari (1977) cited in Kari (2017) equally notes that Kalabari pronouns are subject to a type of morphophonemic variation that involves shortening the structure of the basic allomorph such that they are reduced to a single syllable. These pronouns include:arị → a 'I', ori´→ o 'he', árị´→ á 'she', ọ́mịnị → ọ́ 'you' (pl), ini´→ n 'they'. The data below illustrated this point.

7a)   . *arị : /arị + ḅóḅa/ → a ḅóḅa.*

I come.FUT 'I shall come'

b.   *ori´: /ori´+ ḅóḅa/ → o ḅóḅa.8*

he come.FUT 'He will come'

c.   *árị´: /árị´+ wárī/ → á wárī.*

her house 'her house'

d.   *ọ́mịnị : /ọ́mịnị + lẹgíị/ → ọ́ lẹgíị.*

you (pl.) sit.IMPER 'You (people) sit down'

e.   *ini´: /ini´+ ḅóḅa/ → n ḅóḅa.*

they come.FUT 'They will come'

Gleaned from Jenewari(1977) in Kari (2017)

According to him, the behaviour exhibited by these pronouns is more consistent with that of clitics than affixes based on the fact that the deletion of these pronouns do not distort the meaning of the verbs that are hosting them. This can be seen from the data below in examples 8a and b.

8a)   . *gogó wárī̄ námáárị.*

Gogo house build.GEN

'Gogo is building a house'

b. *ọ wárī̄ námáárị.*

he house build.GEN

'He is building a house'

Culled from Kari (2017)

The data above showed that Kalabari reduced forms of subject pronouns do not form an integral part of the morphology of the verbs.

In Echie, Ndimele (1992) referred to the 3rd person plural Ó, as a pronominal clitic in his analysis of direct object movement in a sentence. This is seen in the example below, taken from Ndimele(1992).

9a.)   *Ó- gà nrí édè*
       3sc will pre-eat cocoyam

  b.   *Ó- gà édè nrí*
       He will eat some cocoyam.

This implies that subject pronouns in Echie are analyzed as clitics rather than affixes.

The most popular language where pronouns have been analyzed as clitics rather than affixes is Degema, Nigeria. Different scholars especially Kari, E.E have invested effort in analyzing these pronominal elements in Degama. Kari (1995, 1997, 2002, 2005,2017, etc), observed that subject markers like me and O in Degema where analyzed by Thomas (1996) and Thomas and Williamson (1967) as morphological affixes are actually syntactic clitics by virtue of their ability to harmonize with main verbs and auxiliary verbs. This implies that these pronomonal elements can be attached to more than one grammatical category just like Izon. This is illustrated with the examples below:

10a)   *eni mẹtạ.*
       we 1P.NPST-go
       'We go'

b.   *ọyị ọkị sire.*
       he 3S.EPAUX run
               'He ran'

c.   *ọyị mosire.*
       he 3S.NPST.run
       'He is running, He will run'

Culled from Kat (2017)

He also noted that these pronominal elements in Degema undergo deletion without distorting the meaning of their hosts in serial Verb constructions as we will observe in the data below:

 11a)   *e-ní jɔ o=síré=⁺té.*
       elephant the 3PlX=run=PE
       'The elephant has run'

b.   *tatanɛ o=gúgú=té é-ní jɔ*
       Tatane 3SgX=chase away=PE elephant the
       'Tatane has chased the elephant away.

The behaviour of pronominal elements in the above studies in different languages is similar to Izon object pronouns in a number of ways, and all are analyzed as pronominal or syntactic clitics.

Methods

To achieve the stated objectives of this seminar paper, the study follows a qualitative approach of investigation. The population for the study were majorly Kabo dialect of Izon speakers in Kabowei Kingdom of Delta State. The researcher employed interview, discussion and personal observation as research instruments to gather data for analysis. Whereas the employment of personal observation for data collection was considered most useful due to the researcher's extensive exposure to Izon language as a native speaker, the personal interviews and discussions were most helpful in the tone marking of syllables in the language. The researcher purposively with the help of older native speakers select appropriate lexical items for analysis. The data collected were presented in tables and were descriptively analyzed to bring out the differences between affixes and clitics to enable the researcher draw conclusions on the status of Izon object pronouns.

Data Presentation and Analysis of Results

This section will endeavour to answer the research questions raised in this study

Research question 1: Is there prefixation in Izon?

To answer this research question, the following data is presented.

Analysis of Affixes in Izon

Affixes as said earlier are bound morphemes attached to other linguistic elements either at word initial, medial or final positions. Izon language morphology is seen to be more efficient or productive with the use of suffixation. This is presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. KabuInflectional Suffixes Examined

S/NO	Type of inflectional suffix	Examples	Meanings
1	Possessive marker -ye Proper noun + -ye Pronouns + niye, riye, and wiye depending on gender.	*Ebi-ye, Tare- ye* *Ení-yè, Aní-ye, Owí-yè*	Ebi's own, Tare's own My own, her own, his own
2	Plural markers		

	Noun + -ménè (definite)	*Kásì-ménè, obóri-ménè*	The Chairs, the goats
	Noun + -ámà (not definite)	*Awóu-áma, obíri-áma*	Children, dogs
	Noun + -òtú (+ human)	*Keme-ótu, ere-ótu,*	People, women
3	Simple past tense marker		
	Verb + -me	*Fí-mè, aké-mè,*	Ate, took
4	Progressive marker -iin/yin	*Bo-iin/yin, sei-iin/yin*	Coming, dancing
5	Past participle marker doo	*Ake-doo, fí-doo*	Taken, eaten
6	Negative markers		
	Verb + -gha(did not)	*Disé-gha, mú-gha*	Dislike, didn't go
	Verb + -Kúmò (do not)	*Punumo-Kúmò, fàmú-Kúmò*	Do not oppress, don't beat
7	Comparative/superlative marker –dèin	*Ebí- dèin, kési- dèin*	More beautiful/most beautiful, shorter/shortest
8	Derivational suffixes		
	Verb + -bo Sg. Noun	*Furu-bo, anda-bo, ekiye-bo*	Thief, wrestler, a friend
	Verb + -otú. Pl. Noun	*Furu-otú, sei-otú, ekiye-otú.*	Thieves, dancers, friends

The analysis above showed that all possible inflections and derivations are achieved through suffixation unlike other languages like English where negation markers are prefixes. Hence, prefixation is not possible to be attested in Izon word formation processes as also admitted by Ekiugbo and Ayunku (2018). Edmund (2010) is also of the opinion that prefixation, infixation, circumfixation and interfixation are not productive in Kolokuma dialect of Izon language..

So called prefixes in Izon as culled from Ekiugbo and Ayunku (2018).

a.   *famọ* 'beat' *famọ* 'beat me'

b.   *baín 'run'baín* 'let's run'

c.   *bo* 'come' *o bo* „let's come'

d. *mu* 'go';*o mu* 'let's go'

e. *we ne*; 'walk'*'o we ne* „let's walk"

f. *fíní*'open; '*o fíní*'open it'

g. *ke re* 'hold';*o ke re* 'hold it'

h. *na na* 'marry';*a na na* 'marry her'

i. *da 'imitate' e da "imitate me"*

j. *bo u* drink;*o bo u*, "let's drink"

The data above showed that all the so-called prefixes are object pronouns and thus cannot be accounted for as affixes until their true status is established as affixes or clitics in the section of object pronouns analysis below.

Research question 2: What is the status of Izon object pronouns as regards affixes and clitics?

The following data is presented to answer this research question.

Analysis of Izon object pronouns as affixes or clitics

The different definitions of affix and clitic provided by the different scholars in this study will help to guide the researcher to judge whether Izon object pronouns, previously analyzed as prefixes, are affixes or clitics. Some of the differences of affix and clitic are presented below and illustrated with valid examples in Kabo dialect of Izon language for analysis.

1. Affixes are attached to single category of words, whereas clitics have the freedom of attachment to more than one grammatical category such as verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc. According to Anyanwu (2012), clitics enjoy a much larger freedom of attachment unlike affixes. This point will be illustrated with the examples in table 2 below:

Table 2. Showing Izon Object Pronouns

S/No	Affixes/Clitics	Function	Root Words	Gloss	Word Category	Derived Form	Gloss
1	a-	3SOBJ PRON (her)	*fàmù*	Beat	Verb	*à-fámú*	Beat her
2	a-	3S OBJ PRON (her)	*-mòmò mu*	With	Preposition	*à -mómó mu*	So with her
3	a-	3SPOSS PRON (her)	*yei*	Husband	Non	*à -yéi*	Her husband
4	o-	3S OBJ PRON (him)	*nana*	Marry	Verb	*ò-nànà*	Marry him
5	o-	3S OBJ PRON (him)	*-mòmò timi*	Stay	Preposition	*ó - mómó timi*	Stay with him
6	o-	3SPOSS PRON (His)	*ta*	Wife	Noun	*ó-tá*	His wife
S/No	Affixes/Clitics	Function	*Root Words*	Gloss	Word Category	Derived Form	Gloss
7	o-	1st PL OBJ PRON-us	*da*	Imitate	Verb	*ó -dá*	Imitate us
8	o-	1st PL OBJ PRON-us	*-momo tun*	With	Preposition	*o-mòmò tún*	Sing with us
9	o-	PL POSS PRON our	*awou*	Children	Noun	*o-áwou*	Our children
10	a-	3PL OBJ PRON -	*kulo*	Greet	Verb	*a-kùlò*	Greet them
11	a-	-them	*-momo sei*	With	Preposition	*a-mòmò séi*	Dance with them
12	e-	1st S OBJ PRON me	*dere*	Laugh	Verb	*e-dere*	Laugh me
13	e-	1st S OBJ PRON Me	*-momo timi*	With	Preposition	*e-mómótimi*	Stay with me
14	o-	3SG NEUT OBJ PRON – it	*kore*	Hold	Verb	*o-kòrè*	Hold it
15	o-	3SG NEUT OBJ PRON – it	*Mene*	Swallow	Verb	*o-mènè*	Swallow it

From the data presented above in table 2, Izon object pronouns are capable of being attached to more than one grammatical category. In number 1-3 in the table above, the 3SG femine gender (object) pronoun 'a'- her, demonstrated its freedom of attachment to the verb 'famu', to the preposition 'momo', and to the noun 'yei'. The same thing is applicable to the 3SG masculine object pronoun 'o'- him, in 4-6. In 7-9, we see where the 1st plural object pronoun 'o'-'us' is appended to a verb, a preposition and a noun. In number 10-12, the 3PL object pronoun 'a'-them is prefixed to the same set of syntactic categories. In like manner, the 1st SG object pronoun 'e'- me is seen to be attached to a verb and a preposition in 13 and 14. We also observed that the neuter pronoun 'o'- it, is prefixed to main verbs in 15 and 16. The freedom of these Izon object pronouns to be attached to more than one syntactic category as seen in the data above is a feature of clictics. With the evidence presented above, it is arguable and more valid to say that Izon object pronouns are clitics and not affixes. Their preverbal or attachment before their hosts indicate that these clitics are proclitics.

2. Affixes cannot be deleted because they form part of the stem to which they are attached. Hence, if deleted, the compositional meaning of the stem will be distorted. On the other hand, clitics can be deleted and the meaning of the host will still remain the same because they do not constitute part of the host. This will be illustrated in table 3 and 4 below:

Table 3a: Stems with Affixes

S/N	Stem with Affix	Gloss
16	*bo-iin/yin*	Coming
17	*fi-me*	Ate
18	*fi-do*	Dead
19	*aki-me*	Took
20	*Famu-do*	Has beaten
21	*kasi-ama*	Chairs
22	*keme-ama*	Persons/people

Table 3b: stems with deleted affixes and how they affect the meaning of the stems

S/NO	Stem with Delete Affixes	Gloss
23	*bo*	Come
24	*Fi*	Eat
25	*Fi*	Die
26	*aki*	Take
27	*famu*	Beat
28	*kasi*	Chair
29	*keme*	Person

From the data presented above, 'iin/yin' is a progressive tense marker in Kabo, 'me', a simple past tense marker, 'do', a perfective tense marker and 'ama', a plural marker. The suffixation of 'iin/yin', 'me', and 'do' to thee verbs bo- come, aki- take and famu- beat respectively in number 1,4and 6 changes their meanings to 'coming', 'took' and 'has beaten' respectively, but their deletion in table 2b distorted the meaning of the stems to which they are attached. This is an indication that an affix constitute an integral part in the morphology of its stem unlike the clitic as we will see below in table 3a and 3b.

Table 4a: Hosts with Clitics

S/NO	Attached Host	Gloss
30	*a-famu*	Beat them
31	*e-deri*	Laugh me
32	*o-ta*	His wife
33	*a-yei*	Her husband
34	*o-kere*	Hold it
35	*o-ware*	Our house

Table 4b: Hosts with deleted clitics and how they affect the meaning of the hosts

S/NO	Detached Host	Gloss
36	*Famu*	Beat
37	*dere*	Laugh
38	*Ta*	Wife
39	*Yei*	Husband
40	*Kere*	Hold
41	*Ware*	house

Table 4a and 4b show hosts with clitics and hosts with deleted clitics respectively. The clitic, even though it is phonologically bound to its host, its deletion does not distort the meaning of the hosting category. This is evidenced in table 2b above where all the hosts maintain their original meanings even after the clitics have been deleted.

Conclusion

Izon object pronouns by virtue of their freedom of being appended or prefixed to different syntactic categories such as verbs (*o-famu*= beat him), nouns (**o-ware**= our house), and prepositions (*e-momo timi*= stay with me), and the ability of these object pronouns to be omitted or deleted without distorting the meaning of the host are behavioural characteristics of clitics. Hence, it can be concluded in this study that, treating or analysing Izon object pronouns as clitics will be more appropriate or valid than treating them as affixes.

Prefixation as a process of affixation cannot be said to be possible in Izon language as all possible inflections and derivations are achieved through suffixation as seen in table 1 above.

Recommendations
Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:
1. It is recommended that further studies on Izon object pronouns other than Kabo dialect should be carried out to verify the claim in this study that Izon object pronouns are proclitics and not prefixes.

2. It is possible for these object pronouns to be analyzed both as cliticsand inflectional affixes since they inflect for number. Hence, it is recommended that a re-analysis be made on these pronouns with lucid examples to serve as evidence.

3. Further studies should be carried out on cliticization in Izon language to find out if there are other types of clitics in the language.

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COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES IN MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF TYPES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTION

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Abstract
People from different backgrounds have different values, beliefs, and perceptions, therefore, using communication can increase uncertainty and ambiguity in culturally diverse organizations. Cultural diversities have greatly contributed to ineffective communication in many organization and workplaces. It is important to state that employees in organization operating in a multicultural society like Nigeria encounter communication breakdown and barriers due to the conglomeration of culturally varied individuals with differences socio-cultural backgrounds. This scenario always results to ineffective communication in the workplace. In an organization where members share a similar culture and language, communication is normally used to share information, and get messages across either from management of the organization to employees and from an employee to another with ease and smooth process. In the event where this linguistic mutuality is absent, communication is seen as a majorchallenge and threat to such multicultural organizations as employees who with different linguistic history and speak different languages are unable to communicate effectively in the same workplace. This paper seeks to investigate the types of communication challenges encounter in multicultural organizations. In this paper, the researchers explore the various factors and types of communication challenges confronting multicultural organizations and as well proffer solution to these challenges. It also provides the ways, and how multicultural organizations manage their communication challenges.
Keywords: Communication, Multicultural Organization, Challenges Impacts and Solution

Introduction

With regard to mobility of workforce and the need of skill personnel in companies around the world, the present workforce is extremely multicultural in many countries. Both in higher and lower positions, there are people working together from all over the world, many of them with a different sociocultural background. Inevitably, this leads to many problems regarding their cooperation and their working climate. There are people who do not want to work with others

just because there are difficulties in their communication or because they come from foreign countries and have other habits, languages or religions.

The concept Communication involves the act of transferring information from one person to another. Organizational communication is the study of communication within organizations. The flow of communication within an organization is multifaceted: formal and informal, vertical and horizontal, verbal and non-verbal, and written and oral. According to Shafaat(2018), communication in multicultural organizations is like a neural network in the human body; and if there is a fall through, the organism becomes inefficient or even dysfunctional. Similarly, in a multicultural organization, it is only through effective communication that information is shared, trust is built, and constructive relation is developed and maintained.

Communication affects all aspects of human interaction, relation and endeavour to some extent. Without effective communication among people, work progress would become a herculean task in any organisation. In the modern fast-paced world, the workforce has become a diverse, multicultural group of employees worldwide. In this environment, it is fundamental to recognise the ever-growing diverse workforce with regard to language and culture. Butchibabu et al. (2016) state that teams that have a good way of communicating and are used to working together are more successful in the work than teams who do not communicate well. Communication between people of the same national background comes naturally but companies are employing people from all over the world today and are expanding beyond original borders. This means that leaders have to find ways to communicate with and manage people from different cultural backgrounds (Butchibabu et al., 2016). Diversity management refers to the way diversity is managed in an organization to bring out the benefits of diversity and to integrate employees into a functioning workforce. It creates a company culture where the diversity of employees is seen as valuable and it is encouraged to create value to the organization through diverse thinking (Cox et al., 1991).

In recent times, organizations have significantly inclined towards setting multinational businesses and are doing international assignments, cross nation business dealing and huge projects to make regular growth in business. With this there is an increase in the propensity of individuals to communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Borgulya 2007, Bakacsi and Takács 2002).

Multicultural organizationsare omnipresent in the current economic system; and we are persistently surrounded by diverse cultures; therefore, workforce diversity is becoming the common feature of the multicultural organization. The size and number of the organizations operating across the globe is also growing very fast. Consequently, the diversity is more in the consumer base, client groups, and partners (Sudhiir and Sudhiir, 2016). An organization wherein

the people of diverse culture work together in order to achieve certain common goals is known as a "multicultural organization."

According to Shafaat Hussain (2018), there are many instances of cultural variants in the different parts of the world. Knowing these differences can simplify the functions of both multinational employers and employees. Knowing the cultural diversity helps in team building, trust formation, conflict resolution, effective collaboration, and more importantly assess the performance of the team members (Binder, 2007; McDonough, 2001:111). Communication in Western cultures is generally direct and explicit. The meaning of the message is very clear (Shafaat, 2018). However, this isn't the case in other countries, like Nigeria, where respect, formality, and etiquettes play a major role in their communication. For some cultures, eye contact is considered as discourteous while for others refraining from the same is considered as disrespectful. Further, in Western cultures, and in Africa, giving a hug is considered very informal and fine but it may not be so in Asian countries. Furthermore, some cultures treat women as subordinate and for men belonging to such cultures it becomes near impossible to working shoulder to shoulder or having women as their superiors. Additionally, in some cultures the appropriate greeting is a handshake, in others a bow, in others an embrace. In Nigeria, younger person brings out his/her hand for a handshake with older people in the society is viewed as disrespectful.

In another environment, "silence" is indicated as respect among Chinese people while it is interpreted as shyness or lack of interest among Australians. Similarly, "touch" has different meanings in different cultures. In Thailand it is considered rude to touch to strangers; whereas in Ethiopia, walking hand in hand with friends and opposite sex indicates a romantic relationship (Sudhiir and Sudhiir, 2016:97). Thus, difference in communication approaches, understandings, attitudes, and styles, is inevitable phenomenon among the diverse workforce of multicultural organizations.

Organizational work Culture

Every corporation has a unique work culture. It embodies the values and leadership style of an organization but also the way employees are expected to act and treat other colleagues. The company identifies itself through the culture and is important in helping employees to have the right mindset and make decisions according to the company's interests (Schneider, GonzálezRomá, Ostroff & West, 2017; Tellis, Prabhu & Chandy, 2009). The culture is learned and understood over time and becomes clearer the longer an employee works for the company. Work culture as a guide to employees to do what is in the company's best interest and therefore results in positive outcomes (Guiso et al., 2015). According to Pilch and Turska (2015), a company can have a culture that supports harsh managers who push employees because it is believed to aid in reaching goals quicker.

Benefits of a culturally diverse workforce

One of the main benefits of diversity, if managed effectively, is enhanced creativity (Shen et al., 2009; Tang, 2019). A recent study by Tang (2019) discusses a model to help increase the team creativity in diverse organizations called the VICTORY model. This model emphasizes seven factors that enhance team creativity. Each letter stands for an enabler which are V: Vision, I: Ideation, C: Combine, T: Team, O: Openness, R: Risk-taking, and Y: Yes-I-can. This means that with having a vision of mutual valued goals, a process of generating, evaluating, and selecting opinions and ideas among individuals and the whole team, combining and connecting these ideas, having a "team" mindset with shared responsibilities and goals, as well as being open to the different opinions and perspectives, and lastly having a "Yes I Can" mindset, the creativity can be improved among intercultural team members.

Imperatively, organizations can greatly benefit from a culturally diverse workforce, but to do so, cross-cultural communication has to be functioning. Only being diverse is not enough and the organization has to manage communication to be able to utilize the benefits of cultural diversity (Trittin &Schoeneborn, 2017). Different forms of communication can be used within an organization and be more or less effective depending on how the employees work. It is also explained that communication between groups and people can lead to greater innovation. This is especially true in culturally diverse groups since everyone has a different background and contributions. According to Tang (2019), management needs to create an environment where communication flourishes so that innovation and creativity are possible.

Challenges of multiculturalism in workplace

It is imperative to state that people from different cultures and backgrounds normally hold different values and belief (Stahl et al., 2009) and as a result challenges such as lower cohesion (D'Netto et al., 2014) loss of productivity (Martin 2014) lack of companionship, and lack of empathy can arise within culturally diverse organizations. Communication breakdown and less effective communication are also among major challenges associated with cultural diversity. The issue of language still remains sacrosanct when it comes to effective communication.

A study by Tange and Lauring (2009) cited in Caroline R, and Niousha K (2020) illustrates that even though a company can have a corporate language, there will still be a language diversity in the organization due to the variety of cultures. The findings of the study show that language diversity can result in thin communication and language clustering. Thin communication means that the employees might avoid informal conversations due to being uncomfortable with using the corporate language. For instance; if English is used as a corporate language in a Swedish company, employees might limit their communication to only professional conversations, as they might not be as comfortable with speaking English as much as they are with their native language. In this case, employees tend to talk more to colleagues that share the same language as

them, resulting in the establishment of language clusters. This will further result in disturbance in the dissemination of information (Tange & Lauring, 2009).

Communication

The general view of communication is that it is an interaction within a social context. Communication usually involves a sender (source) and a receiver. It involves the interlocutors exchanging signals. These signals could be verbal or graphic, it could be gestural or visual (photographic). In essence, communication involves using codes that are done with the eyes, body movement or sounds made with the voice. Whichever way it is done, there is always a process in which someone initiates a meaning intent that is passed to the interlocutor (receiver). Daniel (2016) asserts that it is when feedback, which involves the receiver responding to the signal by initiating another circle of meaning exchange, has been sent to the sender (source) that the communication process has gone full circle and become complete.

Globalizationhas brought a numerous opportunities and challenges to the organizations. Amount of growth of any occupation mainly hangs on good and effective communication (Livia, 2009). Communication can act as an important connection among various individuals from diverse culture and different social backgrounds, who works together to build a successful organization. Communication can be classified into two; verbal and nonverbal. Nonverbal communication has always considered as a significant part of communication process which include signs, nods, poses and outlook. Throughout communication process, nonverbal communication compliments verbal communication and make communication process more expressive, real and significant (M. Jayanthi, 2014).

Cultural diversity may affect quality of communication which will further influence the performance of individuals. Ineffective communication creates clashes and because of lack of understanding there will be a decline in the productivity of employees (Ferraro, 2001, & Nagourney, 2008). There are several distractions which hinder effective communication in an organization like culture, language, confusion, conflict work pressure, and noise which may lead to ineffective communication. A distraction does not only mean the unwanted sounds form surroundings it can be anything which is causing disturbance, distraction or interference while interacting.

Therefore, crafting an atmosphere for operational communication is a task as these hindrances can damage or impede the ability to transfer the desired message in a proper manner. It has been observed that in a global economy the performance and output of human resource largely depend upon the effective and efficient business communication which includes the ones aptitude to code, decode, and deduce messages (Ferraro, 2001, & Nagourney, 2008). Knowledge and understanding about Cross-cultural norms, the use of different organizational trainings, motivating individuals to communicate effectively rather than just interacting with each other,

and putting stress on nonverbal communication capability is indispensableactivities for operative organizational communication (Beaner, 2007).

Communication; with any one, i.e. employee to employer, employer with employees, employees-employees, with business partners, customers or we can simply say internal and external communication; is playing a significant role in the development of the world economy by narrowing the differences among nations and upgrading the business into international business. But on the other hand, communication is emerging as a major challenge in front of organizations because of the reason that in organization people from different regions with different languages and communication styles come together to work.

Communication in culturally diverse organizations
Communication affects efficiency and performance of a business in a diverse workplace. In a multicultural workplace, communication is factor to be considered by management of the organization to achieve its core value and vision. The vision and mission of every organization is represented through the disposition of its employees. This achievement is communicated to every section of the organization through the vehicle of language. Communication incidents are very common in peoples working within diverse groups and occur very often in the workstation as they require communicating with each other either authoritatively or informally. In order to live up to the task of disseminatinginformation impeccably and effectively among employees with diverse socio-cultural background, it is important to communicate effectively and consciously use language at all levels and the channels and methods adopted should be chosen wisely to improve workplace communication. Supporting this, Patricia, (2007) state that if communication properly handled and done in an appropriate way, communication in multicultural organization can be beneficial depending upon the model and structure of organizational communication in an organization.

Thani (2011) discusses the difference in communication styles as the main trigger of misunderstanding in the workplace in his study on the cultural impact on organisational communication. This especially happens between speakers from various cultural backgrounds. He views communication styles from two perspectives: direct/indirect and formal/informal. A traditional Oman saying, "advise me in private but don't embarrass me in public", shows the Oman preference for indirect communication. As stated earlier, certain cultures value people and warm relationships. These traits are categorised as feminine traits, hence such cultures fall under the feminine cultural dimension as classified in an earlier study by Hofstede (2011). The above Oman statement also reflects other feminine traits, such as sensitivity to insult, which induces face-saving behaviour and the unacceptability of public criticism. He further points out that the inability to adapt one's communication style to that of a fellow interactant from a different culture can result in conflict.

On cultural norms and their influence on communication, Thani's (2011) observation of Omani workers' attitude to work is relevant. The Omani worker is more relationship-oriented than task-oriented a quality of the feminine cultural dimension. For the Omani worker, work is not as important as family and friends. This is evident in Omani employees' tendency to find it challenging to meet deadlines and to be punctual going to work. The study also reports them as being late for meetings and constantly requesting a break. Indeed, an Omani employee says, "Work to me is not everything. My private life and family are far more important." The study opines that Omani workers can discuss home-related issues during working hours. This demonstrates the low power distance present in an Omani work environment as well as the Omani society. Furthermore, family ties are considered important; hence, as an example, funeral attendance by Omani workers can be accepted as an excuse for leaving work. The study states that Omani workers show a preference for group work and are concerned with family relationships and the importance of face-saving.

In a large multicultural organism filled with employees from diverse cultures and have different language orientation and usage, it is eminent that the manager will find it more tactful and difficult o proffer appropriate ways for good and effective communication system. According to Pekerti as cited in Caroline and Niousha (2020),

> for communication to function, both managers and workers have to understand each other's backgrounds and be aware of the different cultures. This makes it easier to coordinate since a better understanding of the colleague is at hand. The way people translate information differs to a great extent and is also dependent on cultural aspects.

The importance of communication in a diverse organization has been highlighted by multiple authors. Different cultures have different ways of doing things, which can become challenging when people with different backgrounds are put in the same group (Butchibabu, et al, 2016). In multicultural organization in Nigeria, there are many communication patterns adopted by the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa. For instance, in the Igbo culture, a youngerperson is expected to look up when one is being advised by an elder. While maintaining eye contact in the first case may be interpreted as defiance or lack of remorse, looking away in the second case may communicate a lack of interest in what is being said. Notwithstanding, is advisable in Igbo culture during communicating and advise that one should maintaineye contact intermittent when listening to an elder. This act is different from that of the western culture which expect a constant look on the face while receiving an advice from an elder.

Greetings in workplace is a sign of respect in every part of the globe. However, different cultures are known for a unique pattern of greetings that expresses honour and total

submission to the master or the elders. In a multicultural environment like Nigeria, the three major tribes see greetings as a sign of respect. Notwithstanding, while the Yoruba culture recognizes bowing, curtsying and prostrating, the Igbo culture recognizes a slight bow orsome bodily movement that helps to indicate respect for the person being greeted. In most Africa countries, especially in a multicultural nation like Nigeria, it is disrespectful to address an older person by name. When this situation arises between an African elder and a non African national, the response is giving with disapproving gestures. To this effect, age is accorded with much respect and honour in terms of communication in the workplace in many African countries which is different that of the Americans who address and greet their elders in by their names.

Multicultural Organizations

To quote Herbert(2002), multicultural does not refer to the relationship between cultures but deals with their varieties. We speak of a multicultural society if people coming from different parts of the world with different cultures live and work together in one country. Inevitably, the result of a multicultural society is a multitude of intercultural encounters. Multicultural teams comprise of individuals, coming from diverse places, values, principles, backgrounds, culture and language under one roof. Individual of such diverse groups from diverse cultural upbringings and understandings can act as a base of excellent growth of the business in international markets (Bennett, 1998). These groups or teams have a vast treasure of knowledge and material to construct innovative tactics to intricate organizational encounters and help the business to embellish high degree of productivity (DI Stefano and Maznevski, 2000). Various life experiences, expertise and understandings of diverse social environments and situations make these multicultural teams or groups innovative and enable them to think out-of-the-box (Symons and Stenzel, 2007). Although, these individuals are excited and enthusiastic to work together with cooperation, but as these individuals belongs to different societies may develop a state of misconception and can affront each other due to their dissimilar working methods and communication styles.

Types of Communication Challenges in a Multicultural Organization

Based on literature reviewed below are the types of communication challenges in a multicultural organization.

1. **Noise.** is another factor that is often associated with communication challenges. According Caroline and Niousha (2020), noise is not just auditory. It can refer to anything that is distracting or interferes with communication. For example, it could be caused by not understanding the meaning of a word or how the word is being used. Psychological issues such as stress or anger, frustration overload of information can also be considered noise, as they will interfere with our ability to communicate effectively. When we are stressed or distressed, we may find it difficult to form cohesive sentences and our listening ability is often greatly diminished. It is often much more challenging in

culturally diverse environments because of the additional linguistic barriers, difference in communication styles, expectations, approaches and understandings.

2. **Language Barrier:** Language barrier is one of the major communication challenges in a multicultural organization. It is worthy of note that English language has taken the position of language of wider communication in many parts of the world. Despite this status, there are many non-native speakers of the language that have problem of mother tongue interference. According to Jenifer and Raman (2015), in a multicultural organization, language barrier is the most common problem found in multicultural organization as staffs have more chances of meeting and dealing with the speakers of other languages. There is no denying the fact that English is the lingua franca of the modern economic world; and it has become the official standard language for business throughout the globe; however, because of this many non- English speakers can be overlooked and unrewarding because of their incompetence to communicate and comprehend English, and thus convey what they want to say. Even sometimes, there are chances the managers take a backseat as they are unable to convey their message crossways.

3. **Stereotyping**. This is the perception, view and assumption associated to a particular set of people, culture, and values. These views negatively reconfigured the mind of other people to a particular set of groups which could result to fear of the group or lack of knowledge about them – leading to miscommunication or no communication. It is assumed that all American are both impatient and arrogant at same time they are friendly and tolerant. Stereotyping discounts individuals and can limit options for them in the workplace. Many stereotypes are negative or even hostile and are a serious barrier to workplace communication.

4. **Non-Verbal Communication:** It is important to state that a methods and communication skills adopted by a group of people may appear ineffective or inappropriate to another group. Therefore, nonverbal communication being different in different cultures also becomes a matter of huge concern. This is because, in Africa, especially in Nigeria, it is probably not acceptable for a female or married woman to advance for a hug with his male counterpart in exchange of greetings. This may be acceptable in some western cultures. Since communication takes different forms such as physical gestures, tone, touch, expressions, it is therefore imperative that organizational staffs be trained on how to exchange the various form of non-verbal communication among each other in the workplace. Employees with diverse backgrounds have different interpretations of languages, signs and other forms of communication. This affects how they converse, make decisions and approach conflict.

Non-verbal communication which involves facial expression, body movement, posture and gestures, personal appearance, dressings, touch, colors, silence, etc. These methods of communication play important roles in any communication situation. It often plays a supplementary role to the verbal content delivered orally. People with different cultures have different styles of non-verbal communication. Knowledge of different nonverbal communications is essentially very important so as to avoid the misunderstanding and other barriers of communication. They differ in the rules for turn-taking, the use of silence, the posture, the eye contact, the proximity, the touch, the tone of voice, the node, the facial expression, the gesture, and so on (Sudhiir and Sudhiir, 2016:96).

5. **Ethnocentrism / Cultural Relativism:** According to Ethnocentrism is defined as a cultural superiority complex: rationalizing that one's own culture or group behavior is advanced against all the other groups. It is an attitude wherein one's own cultural experience unintentionally makes us to feel that our culture is distinctive. This feeling further increases the level of the anxiety, which in turn affects the productivity of the working culture (Jenifer & Raman 2015:332; Sudhiir&Sudhiir, 2016). The workforce of multicultural organization faces a lot of issues due to ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism interferes with interaction to other cultures and proves a barrier of communication. International workforces need cultural understanding of local conditions to multiply competence and productivity (Singh, 2018:48).

6. **Challenges of Accents and Fluency:** A more obvious challenge within an organizationally diverse workplace is the language barrier among employees, including accents and fluency. Although English is the standard language internationally for business, many non-English speakers can feel unnoticed and unappreciated in the workplace because they have difficulty conveying what they want to say in their non-native language. Employees who may be subject matter experts, may take a backseat to contributing to the team because of their inability to get a message across in their second language. This can sometimes cause frustration and interpersonal conflict. They may become less engaged and motivated as a team player, and become an impediment to the collaborative learning process as a whole.

7. **Diversity in Attitudes toward Hierarchy and Authority:** In any organization, teamwork is essential to success and profitability. However, in some cultures, employees are treated different based on their rank within the organization. Diversity training in the workplace should account for negotiation tactics among different cultures. For example, multicultural employees have different ways of presenting an idea to the manager or CEO. In some organizations, employees must present to higher-level team members and up the corporate ladder before reaching the executive level. Other organizations have relatively flat hierarchical structures where employees and leaders work as a unified team. A lack of cultural awareness can result in a disconnected workforce and leave some employees feeling left out and unrecognized.

Overcoming Communication Challenges in Multicultural Organization

It is important to state that culture has a significant influence on the people's pattern of communication based on gender, greeting, honorific, silence etc. Therefore, multicultural organizations are bedeviled with challenges as intercultural relationship among people opens doors for various forms of communication conflict as culturally different people attempt to work together in organisation. In this section, I will provide different ways these communication challenges can be solved.

According to Feely and Harzing (2003), a solution to this problem could be to implement a common language. This would put everyone on the same level and create an organizational language where everyone can partake. Although, it is important to note that not everyone can easily adapt to such a system and some might struggle to use a language other than one's native language (D'Netto et al., 2014; Feely &Harzing, 2003).

Supporting with the above view on choosing a common language as a safe channel for effective communication in a multicultural organization, Tange and Lauring (2009) aver in their findings that "the use of a common and homogenous way of communicating can hinder the full context to go through and result in thin communication. Furthermore, some context can get lost in translation, which makes communication less efficient".

There are various ways that a multicultural organization can initiate in order overcome these communication challenges. These include, establishing a common linguistic code generally understood by employees and employers. Most importantly, language training, creation of cultural awareness programmes and seminars, establishing communication channel suitable, and accessible by all members of the organization. Speaking on language training among staffs in a multicultural organization, Shafaat(2018) aver that,

> once appointed [into an organization] language training support is the second requisition of the employee of a MCO. Many organizations try to hasten adjustment to a host nation by encouraging employees to learn local language, or lingua franca. They offer training prior to assignments. It often includes orientation to the geography, customs, culture and political environment in which the employees will be living.

She further state that employees need to recognize and admit the existence of differences between cultures, the differences in values, beliefs, perceptions, interpretations. Employees should be given a basic cross culture training which will make them aware of the cross culture in the work place. The cross-cultural knowledge training can help in resolving the communication challenges like stereotyping, ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, and cultural shock.

It is the duties of the managers in multicultural organization to create avenues and an environment that allows differences in culture and belief to be appreciated and recognize by every staffs of the organization. Notwithstanding, platforms should also be created for employees to communicate new ideas, grievances, input and feedback to the managers and other co-workers. A cultural climate must allow differences to be celebrated rather of merely tolerated. All employees must understand the competitive and moral advantage of diversity. They must respect and support cultural diversity through the recognition of distinctive cultural and religious holidays, open days, weeks, anniversaries, and festival celebrations (ShafaatHussain, 2018)

It is needful for organizations tocreate a culture of awareness that inspires employees to respect one another through diversity training. This mutual understanding among managers and employees encourages new ideas, different perspectives and collaboration, making all the difference within an organization. Multicultural organization should adopt a communication method that back up oral communication about the project. Such method as written communication can be revisited if an employee does not understand perfectly or forgets a point. While it may be necessary to strip down written text to the bare bones follow up emails can help drive a point home. As far as possible ensure that your body language and expression is visible, video chat is the best mean out when you are on the other side of the globe

To avoid these challenges, Maninder Gill Sudhiir and Rhea Gill Sudhiir (2016), state that the older employees should make an effort to develop their interpersonal skills so that communicating with these members from others cultures becomes more effectively. Give people the chance to communicate their views, share one's own, and as with any discussion, it is important to let the other person know you are listening and thinking over their views too.

Conclusion

From the above discussion this paper established that culture has a significant influence on the people's communication pattern. In a multicultural workplace, it is important to comprehend the tenets that affect communication styles and to address variances openly and check for clearness and comprehension in order to boost collaboration, achievement, and relationships.Keeping this in mind, there is need for organization to develop a realistic and implicit approach to communication between employees and management in order to avert conflict and low productivity in the workplace. In the absence of effective internal communication, no organization that communicate efficiently with internal and external channels and lead to the failure of the business. Therefore, to attain success, it is of utmost importance that an organization with a diverse workforce should focus on refining and preserving its internal communication to make it an effective factor. Effective communication process boosts coordination and improve performance due to more sharing information among employees.

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LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG EARLY LEARNERS: THE ROLE OF NURSERY RHYMES

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the role of nursery rhymes in the literacy development of early learners. The specific objectives were to: determine the frequency of the usage of nursery rhymes in early learners' education and examine how early learners can develop literacy through nursery rhymes. The study adopted the multimodality theory which served as the theoretical framework for the study. To actualize the objectives, the researcher adopted the descriptive-survey method. The sample size of the study consisted of 20 three to seven year-old children; 12 were female and 8 were male. They children were those who primarily spoke English at home. Also, the researcher used nursery rhyme completion statement to assess the participants background knowledge of nursery rhymes in addition to the 7 nursery rhymes selected for the study. The study revealed that constant singing of nursery rhymes by early learners would without much effort help them to master certain words and increase their vocabulary; which in turn would empower them to read and spell.

Keywords: literacy, literacy development, childhood, song, nursery rhyme.

Introduction

Literacy development is a major domain of early childhood development. It involves in the best simple terms the ability to read and write. Just like language, literacy develops through a vast number of means. According to Universal Class report, literacy develops through the interactions a child experiences with others. In early childhood, for example, literacy can develop through hearing stories read from books and showing children pictures with words. Early childhood covers the period from birth through age 8. These first years of life are marked by children moving from being totally dependent on adults for virtually everything to being quite self-reliant in a number of respects. Their literacy development also develops significantly during these eight years. According to Baron (1992), biological and socio-cultural factors combine, so that typically around the age of one, the babbling that had begun between four and eight months develops into recognizable words, and by the time they are eight most children have vocabularies of several thousand words, readily talk in complex and compound sentences. This type of development begins from birth, even though babies are not yet able to speak using language. The following study covers the key areas of knowledge one should haveas it concerns early childhood literacy development. In the current study, nursery rhymes as a literacy development tool is the focus.

In recent time,academics are beginning to appreciate the place of nursery rhymesin early learners' literacy development. This is observable not only in theincrease in the number of nursery rhymes at the crèche and nursery levels but also with the pressure mounted on teachers of these classes to use them more often. Brown(2000) avers that learning to read is a developmental process. In the view of Kenney (2005), this situation could lead kindergarten teachers to put aside more traditional interactive activities such as nursery rhymes. In fact, when they learn nursery rhymes, children face linguistic and musical challenges that trigger their cognitive development through pleasant social interactions mediated by adults and peers (Gauthier & Lejeune, 2008).

Most children follow a similar pattern and sequence of reading behaviors as they learn how to read: from appreciation for and awareness of print to phonological and phonemic awareness to phonics and word recognition. Foundation skills are reading skills that students typically develop in the primary grades. The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) Report (2008) identified six important predictors for reading and school success. These skills and abilities include: phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, rapid automatic naming of letters or numbers, writing and phonological memory (NELP, 2008). Children who do not acquire mastery of these skills fall behind their classmates and generally are not reading and comprehending at that grade level. The current study therefore is definitely not a ground breaking one rather, it aims at improving the literature on early childhood literacy development (only?). A number of studies have been carried out in the area of literacy development and nursery rhymes respectively, but to the best ofthe researcher's knowledge not much has looked at nursery rhymes and how they contribute to early learners' literacy development. Based on this background, the objectives of this study are simple. They are to: determine the frequency of the usage of nursery rhymes in early learners' education and examine how early learners can develop literacy through nursery rhymes.

Literature Review

Only within the last decade has the concept of "literacy" become a central focus in early education. Previously, experts rarely viewed literacy as an essential aspect of healthy growth and development in young children (Justice, 2010). This is in supporting the earlier claim by the National Assessment of Education Progress (2005) which stated that the current rate of reading problems among school children remains unacceptably high. The estimates of the report show that about 40% of fourth graders struggle with reading at even basic levels and there is a markedly disproportionate representation of children who are poor and who belong to ethnic or racial minorities among those who struggle with reading.

We place an emphasis on a developmental approach because we are sensitive to the long journey of acquiring the rich skills that will prepare learners "to enter adulthood with the skills they will need to participate fully in a democratic society." Gambrell et al., (2011) averred that:

The child (or emerging learner) is not faced with the prospect of developing such complex skills *from the get go*. There should be a progressive, temporal dimension to this learning where the child is supported by others to develop foundational skills which lead into competencies which lead to mastery which leads to further disciplinary practices (p. 18).

Literacy development mainly borders on reading and writing. Reading as a literacy skill is not serendipitously acquired neither does writing. They are developed through certain established processes. Brown in her study on *"Language and Literacy Development in the Early Years: Foundational Skills that Support Emergent Readers"* averred that learning to read is a developmental process. Hence, most children follow a similar pattern and sequence of reading behaviors as they learn how to read: from appreciation for and awareness of print to phonological and phonemic awareness to phonics and word recognition. Foundation skills are reading skills that students typically develop in the primary grades. Strickland and Riley-Ayers in their report on *"Early Literacy: Policy and Practice in the Preschool Years"* observed that early childhood professionals have long recognized the importance of language and literacy in preparing children to succeed in school. Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates and enhanced productivity in adult life.

NELP (2008) in their report recognized additional five early literacy skills that are moderately predictive of later literacy achievement: Concepts about print, print knowledge, reading readiness, oral language and visual processing. These five skills are usually more predictive of literacy achievement at the end of Kindergarten or beginning of 1st grade than of later reading development (NELP, 2008). Another study by The Common Core Reading Standards: Foundational Skills (K-5) outlined a set of skills that children must develop and master before they can become fluent readers and comprehend what they are reading. The foundational skills are focused on developing learners' understanding and working knowledge of print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency (NGA & CCSSO, 2010). These skills are taught in a developmental sequence to support reading development.

Studies reveal that there is a connection between nursery rhyme knowledge of early learners and the success they make much later in reading, writing and spelling. Bradley and Bryant (1985) as cited in Harper (2011) report that sensitivity to rhyme and alliteration prior to a child's entry to formal schooling plays a causal role in their reading success several years later.In their research the authors reported that receiving explicit instruction and training in the areas of alphabetic principles, rhyming, identification of words and alliteration strongly and positively affected children's reading ability.

Nursery rhymes such as "Humpty Dumpty," "Little Miss Muffet" or "Jack and Jill" are defined as short rhythmic poems. They are often a source of shared pleasure between educators and

children in preschool and nursery settings. Through this interaction, nursery rhymes are thought to play an essential role in the processes of transmission and learning (Gauthier & Lejeune, 2008). Dunst et al, (2011) reviewed 12 studies on the relationships between nursery rhymes and emergent literacy development. The studies indicated that nursery rhyme experience and knowledge were predictive of both phonological processing skills and print-related performances among young children. Harper (2011) observed that the knowledge of nursery rhymes seems to foster children's phonological awareness, which, in turn enhances their literacy skills in school.

Fernadez-Fein & Baker (1997) in their view opined that language play may help children develop their rhyme and alliteration skills. MacLean et al. (1987) proposed that young children may learn about rhyme and alliteration with the help of linguistic routines, because such games often include awareness of the component sounds in words. Treiman (1991) similarly speculated that an informal but useful kind of phonological awareness training may take place when children learn nursery rhymes at home or at preschool. These routines involve rhyme (shared rimes) and, to a lesser extent, alliteration (shared onsets).

Treiman proposed that nursery rhymes may pave the way for eventual awareness of phonemes by helping children become aware of onsets and rimes.MacLean et al, (1987) investigated, in a longitudinal study, whether there is a relation between children's knowledge of nursery rhymes and their phonological awareness, as measured by rhyme and alliteration-detection and alliteration production tasks. These researchers found a "strong highly specific relationship" (p. 255) between knowledge of nursery rhymes and the detection and production of rhyme and alliteration. Furthermore, knowledge of nursery rhymes and of rhyme and alliteration was related to early reading measured 15 months later.

Songs and rhymes for young children have been passed down for generations. They are fun, children love them, and they provide a warm, nurturing experience between parent and child. What we may not be aware of as we recite simple nursery rhymes or sing songs with children is their enormous educational value. On a different dimension, "experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they're four years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're eight" (Fox, 2001).

York (2011) submits that the casual nature of learning through singing can help promote a productive atmosphere in the class, lowering the affective filter and, in turn, increasing the potential for language acquisition.Moreover, there is one more advantage why teachers introduce songs in the classroom, in the view of Papa and Lantorno (1989) as cited in Pourkalhor and Tavakoli (2017), "singing is certainly one of the activities which generates the greatest enthusiasm and is a pleasant and stimulating approach to the culture of foreign people" (p. 114). Pourkalhor and Tavakoli (2017) in furtherance to Papa and Lantorno's submission observed that the L2 learners may feel more fluent singing along to song lyrics than they do speaking an L2, so

this builds confidence. Also, a range of colloquial language can easily be introduced through songs. Finally, most lyrics need to be interpreted, and regular practice of this may improve prediction and comprehension skills.

Multimodality Theory
Ledin & Machin (2018) observed thatsince two major publications in the 1990s (Kress et al, 1996; O'Toole, 1994) multimodality has been a growing field which has developed into a handful of overlapping and distinctive sub-fields (Jewitt et al., 2016). In recent years, theories relating to multimodality have challengedthe prevailing of languagein the education system. Communication has always been multimodal—humans make meaning through various modes, including images and gesture—but schooling has focused primarily on oral and written language. There is a need to attend to other modes in the digital age, in which image and movement, for example, have become prevalent across all kinds of screens (Kress, 2010). Flewitt (in press) as cited in **Kennedy *et al*(2012)** offers the following definition of multimodality:

> The term 'multimodality' describes approaches to representation that assume communication and meaning-making are about more than just language. Multimodality takes into account the many different modes in printed and on-screen texts (such as image, layout, colour and language) and also the different modes that people use as they engage in face-to-face interaction (such as gesture, gaze, artefacts and language), and considers how these modes work together to create meanings in a 'multimodal ensemble' (p.61).

Rather than drawing on modes in an arbitrary manner, young children use modes in strategic ways and are purposeful in their intent (Rowe, 2008). Lancaster (2001) closely examined the mark-making practices of a 2-year old child and identified how important the deliberate use of gaze by the child was in making meaning through this process.

A recent study examined the multimodal practices of children (3-4 years) in homes and in school and identified how they were competent in making meaning from a range of modes across a variety of media, such as computers, television and electronic toys (Flewitt, 2011). Research in early years classrooms suggests that children are engaged in multimodal production and analysis in unofficial activities (Björkvall & Engblom, 2010), and that teachers can draw on their skills and knowledge in order to embed multimodality in the official curriculum. Teachers and children need to develop an understanding of the affordances of each mode, that is, an understanding of what each mode can offer in the communication process, and therefore an awareness of which modes should be used for what purposes. There is also a need to develop assessment criteria so that teachers are able to identify stages of development in children's skills and knowledge in this area (**Kennedy *et al*, 2012**). Bearne (2009) as cited in **Kennedy *et al* (2012)** proposes a framework for analysing children's multimodal texts that pays attention to:

• *image:* content, size, colour, tone, line, placing/use of space

• *language:* syntax and lexis

• *sound/vocalisation:* content, emphasis, volume, vocal intonation, pause, pace

• *gaze:* direction of gaze of communicator or character in representation

• *movement:* gesture and posture.

These aspects can be analysed across children's multimodal productions, whether they are on paper, screen, or other form. The use of nursery rhymes to usher children into formal learning is achieved with intentional introduction of multimodal features such as images, sounds, movementsand demonstrations.

Methodology

For the study, a descriptive survey was adopted. The study participants consisted of 20 three to seven year-old children and their parents in Obio/Akpor LGA. Of the participants 12 were female and 8 were male. The study participants cut across backgrounds. They were originally contacted through their parents (mothers) whose number was 14. The discrepancy isdue to the fact that some of the parents had more than one child sampled for the study. The children were those who primarily spoke English at home. Also, the researcher used nursery rhyme completion statement to assess the participants' background knowledge of nursery rhymes. The instrument for the studywas composed of visual and auditory cues in video clips as well as images. The researcher's selected nursery rhymes included: **Yankee Doodle –** *By LittleBabybum*, **Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,I Can Sing a Rainbow –** *By Jello Candyman*, **Little Bo Peep –***by Badanamu*, **My Bonnie –***By LittleFox,* **You're My Sunshine and My Head, My Shoulder**. However, she also depended on the nursery rhymes that the participants know. Participants were shown a series of pictures and audio of the seven nursery rhymes listed above and asked if they knew who the pictures represented. Additionally, children were asked where they learned these nursery rhymes. Their responses were recorded along with the additional information concerning their nursery rhyme knowledge and their ability to respond to the completion statement task. To assess their letter or sound recognition ability, the child was shown from a set of letters of the English alphabet, - single letters and asked to mention what they were, and the researcher recorded whether he or she was able to name or sound the letter as the case may be. For spelling and reading task, the researcher showed 10 highly frequent but simple words from the nursery rhymes to the child and asked if he or she knew them. Another method of gathering data was the *forced-choice task* the method was to introduce a pet named *Peep*. The child was told that *Peep* likes words that sound like his name, as in: *weep, keep*. I am going to tell you some words and I want you to tell me which one *Peep* would like. Then the child was given example that rhymed with *Peep*.

Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Age of parents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
15 – 25 years	2	14.2
26 – 35 years	9	64.3
36 – 45 years	3	21.4
Total	**14**	**100**

The above table implies that parents within the ages of 26 to 35 years were found to have more children within 3 to 7 years of age.

Table 2: Educational qualification of parents

Response Category	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
FSLC	-	-
SSCE	1	7
OND	2	14
HND/Degree	10	72
Master and above	1	7
Total	**14**	**100**

The implication of table 2 above is that there were mothers with HND/Degree qualification than other educational qualifications. This also implies that many of the parents should have a good knowledge of nursery rhymes. Necessary to state here is the fact that those parents with HND/Degree qualifications had a better knowledge of the subject matter of the study, hence; more interested.

Table 3: Children's knowledge of nursery rhymes

Response Category	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
Yes	12	85.7
No	2	14.3
Total	**14**	**100**

Table 3 above implies that the children actually sing nursery rhymes even while at home.

Table 4: Children's frequency of singing nursery rhymes

Response Category	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)

Regularly	6	43
Rarely	3	21.3
Can't say	5	35.7
Total	**14**	**100**

The implication of the above table is that there were some parents who did not actually monitor their children's singing of nursery rhymes.

Table 5:   Children singing of nursery rhymes without guidance

Response Category	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
Yes	10	71
No	4	29
Total	**14**	**100**

The table above implies that the study children have learnt to sing nursery rhymes on their own without anyone having to sing with them.

Knowledge of Nursery Rhymes

Nursery Rhymes	Number of Respondents	Age	Performance Level (0-5)
Yankee Doodle Yankee Doodle went to town Riding on a pony…	15	3-4 4-5 5-7	2 3 3.5
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star How I wonder what you are Up above the world so high…	20	3-4 4-5 5-7	4 5 5
I Can Sing a Rainbow Red and Yellow and Pink and Green Purple and Orange and Blue I can sing a rainbow…	16	3-4 4-5 5-7	3 4 5
Little Bo Peep Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep	12	3-4 4-5	1.5 2

And doesn't know where to find them Leave her alone and she'll come home…		5-7	3
My Bonnie My Bonnie lies over the ocean… My Bonnie lies over the see… My Bonnie lies over the ocean…	12	3-4 4-5 5-7	2 3 4
You're My Sunshine You're My Sunshine… My only Sunshine Make me happy… when skies are grey You never know, dear… how much I love you …	14	3-4 4-5 5-7	1 2 2.5
My Head, My Shoulder My head my shoulder my knee my toe My head my shoulder my knee my toe…	20	3-4 4-5 5-7	4 5 5

The table above reveals disparities in the number of participants that had knowledge of the rhymes. The disparities evident from the table is an indication that the study participants did not have equal knowledge of nursery rhymes. Some knew more nursery rhymes than others. However, there was no child who didn't know about nursery rhymes after being explained to what they are. Also noticeable from the table is that their knowledge of nursery rhymes increased as they grew older. Those within 3-4 years of age knew nursery rhymes but not as much as those within 4-5 and 5-7 years of age respectively. Also relevant to this analysis is the variations in the performance level during recitation. After one practice trial the children were expected to sing or recite the rhymes. Their level of mastery of individual rhymes varied basically as a result of variation in age. Just as with the knowledge, their performance improved as they grew older. Where 5 points was considered the highest, those within 3-4 years of age were seen to have performed relatively lower. With few popular nursery rhymes their performance was high but with the uncommon ones (which were more in number) their performance was lower; by this it means that they sang them with some level of fluency and consistency even though they rarely completed the nursery rhymes. For example, in the nursery rhymes "You Are My Sunshine" and "My Head My Shoulder", children within 3-4 years were rated 1 point in their performance;

children within 4-5 years of age were rate 2 points whereas 5-7 years were rated 2.5. But in the second there was a tremendous improvement in the performance level. Those within 3-4 years were rated 4 points while those within 4-5 and 5-7 were rated 5 points. It is important to state clearly here that the variation in performance wasnot as a result of not completing the rhyme rather as some distortions in the pronunciation of certain words.

The study revealed that children within 3 to 4 years of age had good knowledge of nursery rhymes. This was evident in the number of nursery rhymes they could say. Even though some of them were unable to say them completely, they were able to say a number of them as they demonstrated with jumping. The children within 5 to 7 years of age had a better mastery of the rhymes even though they hardly completed the nursery rhymes as required by the researcher. All the children knew *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* as well as *My Head My Shoulder*

Early Learners Development of Literacy through Nursery Rhymes
In an attempt to ascertain how early learners can develop literacy through nursery rhymes the researcher adopted the letter recognition task. The table below reveals the result.
Table 7:

Age	Name of Letters	Number of Respondents	Recognition Level (0-5)
3-4	Mm	20	1
4-5			4
5-7			5
3-4	Dd	20	1.5
4-5			3
5-7			5
3-4	Ff	20	1
4-5			3
5-7			4
3-4	Ee	20	3
4-5			5
5-7			5
3-4	Gg	20	1
4-5			3
5-7			4
3-4	Tt	20	1
4-5			2
5-7			4
3-4	Ss	20	3
4-5			5
5-7			5

3-4	Aa	20	1
4-5			3
5-7			4

The table above reveals that the total of ten letters of the English Alphabet were used to determine the participants' letter recognition ability. The participants were asked to name the letters on the flashcards shown to them. One commendable thing here was that all the subjects attempted the trial. Unlike in the knowledge of nursery rhymes task where there were disparities in the number of participants, there was no disparity in the number of participants as evident in the above table because all the study participants participated. As shown in the table above, there was low recognition of letters by the participants within the ages of 3-4. Many of the study participantswithin 3-4 years of age were more conversant with the sound names than they were with the names of letters. For instance, they could easily associate /**e**/ with 'elephant' than they could associate **dee** with 'dog'. As evident also in the table above there were noticeable improvements in letter recognition following age discrepancies. That is to say that those within the ages of 4-5 were able to recognize the above letters of the English alphabet by saying their names far more than those within 3-4 years of age.

The 3-4 years of age recognition level of the letters "Ee" and "Gg" surpassed that of other letters in the letter recognition task. For the above two stated letters, the participants within 3-4 years of age were able to get 3 points out of 5. This may not be unconnected to the regular usage of the above stated letters. Following the result as presented in the table above, it would suffice to state that the early learners' knowledge of letters is directly proportional to their literacy development. The more letters they know and identify by their names the more likely they are able to spell words.

Table 8:Sound recognition task

Age	Name of Sounds	Number of Respondents	Recognition Level (0-5)
3-4	m	20	3.5
4-5			4
5-7			3
3-4	d	20	5
4-5			5
5-7			4
3-4	f	20	3
4-5			4
5-7			5
3-4	e	20	4
4-5			4
5-7			4

3-4	g	20	3
4-5			3
5-7			4
3-4	t	20	4
4-5			5
5-7			4
3-4	s	20	5
4-5			5
5-7			5
3-4	a	20	5
4-5			5
5-7			5

In the table above, the sounds were matched with objects using the match-sound-to-object nursery rhyme. The participants were asked to sing the sound-object nursery rhyme *(i.e. m- is for mango, d- is for dog f- is for fish…)*. This they did with high level of fluency and consistency. The table above reveals that the participants could match sounds with objects irrespective of the age variance. For instance, all the three age categories were able to match /s/ with words such as: snake, sand, sun, etc. and /a/ with words such as: apple, ant, antelope, alligator, etc. The above findings affirms the position of Mclean (1987) that children's knowledge of nursery rhymes could be related to their phonological skills and could be used to predict the development of these skills irrespective of other variables. Also, it agrees with report of National Early Literacy Panel (2008) which posited that knowing the names of the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds and visual representation in print, has been recognized as the strongest predictor – followed closely by phonemic awareness – of later achievement in decoding, comprehension and spelling. Such knowledge may support phonemic awareness. The more they learn the names of the alphabetic letters and their associated common phonemes the better they understand the sound structure of words.

Following the study also, the children were presented with flashcards having mono-syllabic words. Some of the words were got from the nursery rhymes selected for the study and others from the nursery rhymes they already knew and sang. They were asked first if they knew the individual letters of each of those words. They were asked to say the words after spelling. Following the task stated above, the result indicated that only those within the ages of 5-7 were able to spell (looking at the flashcards) and pronounce the words such as: **my, me, see, sing, go, come,** etc. The other technique adopted was the *force-choice rhyme task*. Here, the first thing the researcher did was to assess their rhyming ability using the *force-choice* rhyme task. The researcher named pets after some words in the selected nursery rhymes and others in the rhymes known to them. The result of the task revealed that those within 4-5 and 5-7 years of age were conversant with rhyming because they could identify that if the name of the pet dog is *"Bai"* and Bai likes words that end with "ai" simply because his name ends with "ai", they should say the

word that Bai would like given three words. More number of them within the above mentioned age brackets chose *"my"* having repeated the task for 5 times those who chose the correct answer twice or more were considered to have passed. This task was done for words such as: **mind, my, me, see, sing, go, come, little, heart, home, love** and **look**. From the result, those within 3-4 years of age seemed lost in the task as their responses were considered off point. Some even attempted asking questions that proved they didn't understand the task. Questions like: "will the dog bite me?"

Conclusion

The present study highlighted the place of nursery rhymes in literacy development and focused on early learners. Following the findings of the study, it is revealed that through nursery rhymes learners are exposed to listening instruction and listening is applied as tool to foster communication, resulting in teaching other literacy skills and sub-skills, such as reading and writing skills. The study has been able to establish that children from 3 years and above have a good knowledge of nursery rhyme even though they did not have much knowledge of the ones selected for the study. As children develop at different rates, using nursery rhymes will support children's communication and language development at whatever stage they are at for example, older children may be beginning to learn to rhyme, whereas younger children may still be at the stage of learning new words.

Introducing children to a variety of nursery rhymes can help them understand and learn about different sounds. In fact, following the study results, younger children (3-4 years of age) tend to enjoy as well as be more conversant with sounds than the older children (5-7 years of age). This is an important part of developing those early literacy skills. Listening to different sounds in the environment as well as in nursery rhymes provides children with the foundations in helping them to read and write. As nursery rhymes are fun and full of sounds, children will tune into these sounds. Older children will experiment in combining sounds and blend them together to form a word. This is because the more the early learners learn the names of the alphabetic letters and their associated common phonemes the better they understand the sound structure of words.

As previously mentioned nursery rhymes and songs have a huge impact on children's literacy and communication development. Children want to listen to songs full of rhyming, rhythm and repetition. By singing songs containing these core elements it is helping boost children's language, communications and literacy development. The benefits of nursery rhymes in language learning cannot be over emphasized, the following contributions can be produced: it is beneficial for teachers to be aware of using nursery rhymes in teaching literacy and language skills effectively and practically by involving the learners in the context of interaction.

The study suggests that with constant singing of nursery rhymes children would without much effort master certain words and increase their vocabulary; this in turn would empower them to read and spell. This is so because following the findings of the study, it is revealed that children

within 5-7 years of age are able to spell and pronounce words selected from the nursery rhymes overtime. This is the ground those within 3-4 and 4-5 age brackets are not able to break. Based on the conclusion, it would suffice to state that the classroom and non-classroom usage of nursery rhymes for early learners instruction should be intensified and a multimodal approach, where various modes of communication are adopted should be preferred over the older approaches.

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REVISITING CLASSICAL CATHARSIS IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN DRAMA

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Abstract

This paper examines revisiting classical catharsis in contemporary Nigerian drama. Catharsis is purification and refinements in tragic plays. The objectives are to explore the concept of catharsis,its usage in classical works and its application by contemporary Nigerian playwrights. The work adopts Therapoetics in the analysis of the following texts, Elechi Amadi's *Isiburu* and Esiaba Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die.* Finding among others reveal the use of catharsis in contemporary Nigerian drama through characters, plot and thematic devices. In the attempt to retain catharsis, characters undergo reversal of fortunes or death due to tragic flaws which create pity and fear. The researchers are of the view that such cathartic effect leads to purgation of emotion.

Keywords: Catharsis, Contemporary, Classical and Therapoetics

Introduction

Drama is a work of art which describes human life and activity through the presentation of actions by means of dialogue amongst groups of characters. Dramatic form of literature is traced to the ancient Greeks. The commencement of dramatic art took place one day in the sixth century BC. It happened when Thespis stepped out of a chorus of fifty men before a fifteen thousand audience who had gathered to honour Dionysius, the Greek god of wine and fertility. Though drama had earlier been traced to the Egyptian civilization, its development and preservation are credited to the classical Greek. The word, classical entails a creative work considered to have reached artistic superiority, established excellence, and belonging to an established literary canon. Classical drama thus implies the plays of the ancient Greeks and Romans. It includes plays written in the tradition of the Greeks and Romans or thematic expression. Emeka Nwabueze in *Studies in Dramatic Literature* writes that classicism refers to "the Roman culture or developed through the imitation of their art"(21). To this end, contemporary plays in the structure and themes of the classical period received critical attention with classical perimeters.

Classical Drama maintains certain specific characteristics distinguishable from other periods. Apart from parading individuals whose works remain a references point, classical drama is recognized for clarity of thought, artistic unity, sense of appropriateness and decorum. The structure and subject matter of classical drama possess dignity and universality. Classical

playwrights concerned themselves with general behaviour of man instead of personal issues. Such other factors as vatic intellectualism, strict attention to structure, logicality and dominance of reason are features of classical drama and or literature. Prominent names of the classical drama and or literature include Thespis, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristotle, Horace to name but a few.

Classical age developed two forms of drama; tragedy and comedy. Aristotle in *Poetics* considers tragedy "as an imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude, in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament"(10). He further emphasizes that "tragedy is the imitation of action; and action implies personal agents who necessarily posses certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought. Tragedy is an imitation not only of a complete action, but of events inspiring fear and pity"(Aristotle 18). (Literaryterm.com) adds that tragedy is one in which the hero is ultimately destroyed and there is no happy ending to be found. It is the fall that leads to fear and pity which in part is the trade mark of tragedy across the literary periods. Classical tragedy is characterized by certain factors; first the subject matter of classical tragedy is always serious and has magnitude. The protagonist or chief character does not always die at the end of the play rather he undergoes a reversal of fortune through suffering. Also "classical tragedy was designed to purge the soul through the emotion of pity and fear"(Nwabueze 2).

However contemporary tragedy differs from the traditional concept of tragedy, in that contemporary tragedy reflects new world ideas and intentionally departs from strict adherence to classical rules. Unlike classical tragedy, which is concerned with man's relationship with supernatural or cosmic forces, contemporary tragic plays dwell on socio-economic factors. Tragic characters are pictured in terms of their frustrating circumstances as victims of social or mountain pressures of heredity and environment. Its thematic concern includes corruption, politics, poverty, women's right, ecology, leadership, joblessness, youth pressure, migration, religion, family challenges. Joseph Wood Krutch in "The Tragic Fallacy" quoted in Nwabueze asserts that "no contemporary drama could be characterized as tragedy because of the spirit of modern age which places more importance on science than on the man himself." On other hand, contemporary drama feels that common man is an adequate personage for portrayal as a tragic hero.

Hence, Arthur Miller Maintains that what is important in the tragic hero is not his social status but the height of his willingness to throw his social status into the contest, the battle to secure his rightful place in the world. Thus the error prevalent in asserting this rightful place and the huddles therein create a fall that leads to fear and pity that create catharsis which is the connection between classical drama and contemporary Nigerian drama.

Theoretical Framework

No work of literary composition is created in vacuum. They are tied to a particular time, space and theoretical framework. This work is based on Therapoetics. Therapoetics is a theory that emphasises the healing power of words in a creative work like music, poetry, drama amongst others.

Therapoetics is the brain child of Kontein Trinya. He proposed therapoetics in the 19th inaugural lecture series of Ignatus Ajuru University of Education, held on August 29, 2019. Therapoetics is conceived as the interdisciplinary and clinical application of poetry (drama and prose) to diagnose conditions as music has been (Trinya 31). Therapoetics in a psychoanalytic sense, shows interest in the fact that a creative process offers the literary artist healing or health or palliation that comes from the expressive release of toxic pent-up emotions through the relieving pleasure of a fantasized escape through the passage of art into a dreamed land of bliss or others. Its core concern is the healing of the soul through a creative confession of acts. Therapy in Therapoetics is conceived as curative, preventive and palliative addressing mental and behavioural wellness as well as physiological wellness that is ultimately achievable from the state of mental balance (Trinya 31).

Art may not cure like medical doctor, but it can heal the one who receives it. Art may not kill "malaria parasites in the bloodstream it might not perform the cancer surgery and administer dialysis, but it can put the soul in harmony with life as could facilitate the cure. This release from emotional pains underscores the catharsis that audience benefits from in tragic plays. The purgation of emotion is encapsulated in both classical and contemporary Nigerian drama despite generational space between the two literary periods.

Catharsis in Classical and Contemporary Nigerian Drama
Catharsis is the process of releasing strong or pent-up emotions through art. Aristole coined the term "catharsis" which came from the Greek, **Kathairein** meaning "to cleanse or purge", to describe the release of emotional tension that he believed spectators experience while watching tragedy. In another sense, catharsis is an experience which the audience or readers experience share in same emotions that characters experience on stage or on the page.

Catharsis helps to explain why we enjoy negative emotions in music. Individuals enjoy music that is sad sometimes because such music helps the listener to purge negative emotions from their system. These pent-up emotions manifest in tragedies of classical period and in contemporary Nigerian drama. The down fall of tragic hero creates cathartic feeling, fear and sympathy for the hero. Such pains and sorrow at the tragic ending lives us with purgation of our own emotions. This aspect of drama underscores Aristotle's idea of catharsis as specific to the experience that audience has watching drama or to the people reading dramatic literature. (Literaryterms.com).

A work in which a husband loses wife to COVID 19, may not be cathartic for most people but lost of a friend to COVID 19. Reading or watching such work can be extremely emotional experience. The fact is that the audience or readers feeling the same emotions of the characters themselves. They share in their pains, grief and anger as if it were their own. This in fact gives a work of art its cathartic effect in that this strong affinity, intense feelings connect the audience to the sympathy, pity, fear, desired of a tragic play.

A classical play with cathartic canon is Sophocles' (496-406BC) *Oedipus the King* with a contemporary adaptation in Ola Rotimi's *The Gods Are Not To Blam*e. The tragic hero, Odewale through the superior powers of the supernatural forces kills the father, the king of Kutuje and marries his own mother. The revelation of this truth during a serious plague that hits the community caused his down fall. The Queen kills herself and Odewale makes Aderopo pluck out his eyes and goes into exile with his four children. Nwabueze in *Critical Study of Modern African Drama* says that "Odewale is a just king, a good man who is overwhelmed by circumstances beyond his control"(156). Odewale's rise and sudden sorrowful fall underscores the relationship between classical and contemporary Nigerian Drama.

William Shakespeare in *Othello* creates ambitious, respectful and just plain malicious soldiers named Lago who brought down his captain, Othello, by making it look as though his wife is cheating on him. Othello goes mad with jealousy and eventually kills his own wife. After learning his wife was in fact faithful Othello then delivers a monoloque in Act 5 scene 2 before taking his own life "....I took by his throat the circumcised dog / And smote him, thus…"
Othello's suicide is cathartic for readers for a number of reasons. First is that Othello is the plays hero, a good nurtured and honest person, so readers naturally identified with him and wants the best for him. The most painful part was when he takes his own life. *Othello* is a cathartic work not only because readers feel Othello's pain but especially because readers vicariously experience Othelle's feeling of being released from that pain through suicide (Definition).

In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe employs the devices of classical tragedy to narrate the story of Okonkwo's down fall. After a worthwhile life to Umuofia, Okonkwo is driven to suicide, an omen to his society. However his death represents a kind of victory. Although he is unable to save Umuofia from the invading strength of British colonial masters, his suicide compels the colonial masters to bury him, hence creating a moment of justice and dramatic catharsis in this tale of loss.

To create drama with cathartic effects, contemporary Nigerian playwrights produce works wherein the protagonist experience death, sudden and unexpected downfall or reversal of fortune. These heroes lose their lives, fall from grace to grass or lose something important sometimes because of influence of supernatural forces beyond their control or due to ignorance and or pride of life. In *The Gods Are Not to Blame,* the young energetic king Odewale becomes

the victim of the plaque in Kutuje. His acts of parricide, regicide, and incest brought him down as he is led to the evil forest. *When the Arrow Rebounds: A Dramatized Recreation of Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God.* Ezeulu the symbol of authority of Umuaro people becomes a victim when he considered himself an iroko tree, and a forest. His arrogance and selfish use of power become his undoing. Ezeulu: "who tells the clan what it says? What does the clan know?(57). When Ezeulu realize his glory has gone, he cried out thus…

> Ezeulu: ulu why have you chosen to deal with me like this?/
> Why strike me down and cover me with mind?...
> idemili, are you laughing at me ?
> What have I done ?... Ulu, why do you desert me? (Nwabueze 72).

The statement above invokes a sense of pity and fear. For a man highly honoured as the chief priest of Umuaro, the arrowhead of Umuaro, the mediator between the people and the spirit to be abandoned in the pit of life such that he weeps profusely lives the audience with cathartic effect.

Catharsis in *Hangmen Also Die*

Hangmen Also Die (2011) by Esiaba Irobi dramatizes the doom that befalls the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Niger Delta by present definition consists of nine states that occupy the coastal region of Nigeria. The states are Abia, Bayelsa,Cross River, Delta, Edo, Ondo, Imo, Rivers, Akwa Ibom. These states especially Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Cross River suffer environment despoliation as a result of oil exploration and exploitation by oil companies. Oil spillage in these states renders their water and forest inefficient. Aquatic lives are fast extinguishing much as forest animals and farm lands are unproductive.

The play, *Hangmen Also Die* tells the story of seven young Niger Delta youths who are sentenced to die by hanging for killing Chief Isokipiri Erekosima. Chief Isokipiri Erekosima of kalahari in Izon States is the honourable Commissioner for Local Government, Rural Development and Chieftaincy Affairs. He connived with his councilors and Local Government Chairmen to confiscate the three million naira sent to the citizens whose livelihoods were devastated by oil spillage as compensation .Instead of giving the money to the citizens, Chief Erekosima took one million, the councilors took one million and shared it among themselves and the Local Government Chairmen shared one million naira among themselves. No single citizen no matter how wretched got a single kobo. Angered by this action, seven young men formed a suicide gang led by Tarila Iganima also known as R.I.P. The squad abducts Chief Erekosima on his coronation day as the Ametemso of Izon States. And he confesses that he spent the money on his coronation ceremony, children education abroad etc. All attempts made by the squad to get the balance from him proved abortive hence, he was murdered. Because the law has to take its own cause the youths were sentenced to death by hanging. Ironically, Yekinni, the hang man refuses to perform his duty and get the boys off the scene because he considers their action to be genuine and expected in a recalcitrant society.

Tony Duruaku says that Yekinni absolves them of all previous guilt since their latest cause, in his opinion is heroic. Besides, the young men are unmoved by their impending death. This unusual behaviour strengthens Yekinni's argument that the boys were giving the people trouble and their killing Erekosima was justified. Instead of hanging them, Yekinni chooses to lose his job (106). It is painful to know that seven members of the suicide squad, all are distinguished graduates from Nigerian universities and each with at least seven years of grim experience in the labour market. Thus self-esteem is at its lowest and a seething hatred for the dehumanizing system at the highest. Their appraisal is marked by a despondent self-deflation that is a consequence of their agonizing acceptance of the consciousness of wretchedness imposed on them by an alienating society (Diala 87). Portraying the environment of this play, Obuzor writes that

> there are no clean drinking water in delta villages. There are almost no paying jobs in delta villages. People eke out a living by fishing while all around them, oil wells owned by foreign companies pumps billions of dollars worth of oil. Rather than the State re-examine itself and properly identifying the causes of the people's anger and antagonism, it resorted and still resort to visiting hungry with oppression (56).

It is on this note therefore that the hanging of these young men becomes pathetic. The audience feels pity for the youths and fear what the future holds for a society that trains her children only to hang them for a fault that is not their making. The death of these seven youths lives a cathartic effect on the audience not just that they died, but they died fighting a just course

Catharsis in *Isiburu*

The play recounts the heroic achievements of Isiburu, the protagonist of the text. Isiburu is a wrestler whose aim is to maintain his heroic deeds by winning the championship at all costs and by all means. But Amadioha chooses him as his servant. He is to understudy Agbarakwe who is serving out his years as the chief priest of Amadioha. For Isiburu, the choice is not in contention but he must first become the champion. So Isiburu goes to acquire more charms needed for the great position, even at the cost of sacrificing his respected slave lady, Mgbeke. He wins the competition and becomes the champion. At home Uzo who contends Mgbeke with him cuts down Isiburu's "Pot of life" which was hanging inside his power room. On entering into his house with the excitement of victory, Isiburu dies suddenly. Isiburu's wives and Mgbeke weep over the sudden twist of fate. Wagwu, Ohia, Woka and Agbarakwe consult Amadioha for a solution. "Suddenly, lightning, and thunder strike, Isiburu sneezes and rises slowly, and many onlookers run off in fear"(36).

Before the down fall of a tragic hero, there is usually an unequal elevation. Ebele Eko describes Isiburu "as the Crab in his physique, his accomplishment and his ambition, is the symbol of that culture's highest aspiration and pride"(156). Isiburu considers himself as number one and praises himself thus;

> For six years I have beaten them _
> Ota Achara of Aluu
> Okpokelede of Igwuruta
> Azo Dimgba of Isiokpo
> Osimini of Ibaa
> I have beaten them all.
> This seventh year, this year of years
> Will see their backs once again on the ground
> And I Isiburu Ekperi, the Crab
> will be the champion of Ikwerre (4).

The sudden death of Isiburu after a victory earnestly creates pity and fear. The Catharsis manifest as he could not celebrate his hard earned championship. The flood of tears by the wives and Mgbeke connects the audience to the same feelings as though his fate equally befall them. Though he came back to life, the reversal of events did not assign him time and space for celebration rather; those who would have rejoiced with him scampered for their lives when he came back to life as he "slowly rises,"

Conclusion

The aim of this paper is revisiting classical catharsis on in contemporary Nigerian drama. Classical drama belongs to ancient Greek and Romans and all dramatic portrayals of the canons established by the classical authors such as Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Sophocles, Euripides. The canons by Aristotle and other scholars guided critical analysis of that period and beyond.

Classical drama dwelt more on tragedy than comedy prompting Aristotle to assert that tragedy is an imitation not only of a complete action but of events inspiring fear and pity. Such pity and fear live the audience with Catharsis. And so Shakespeare followed and produced plays with classical contents and forms.

However Contemporary Nigerian Drama dramatists though aware of those specific classical rules produced plays with deviations in the strict sense of classical tragedy. Yet such plays encapsulate pity and fear which create catharsis on the audience even as they discuss Contemporary Nigerian issues as found in *Hangmen Also Die* and *Isiburu*.

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Applied linguistics and (English) language teaching and learning

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Abstract

The main aim of this work is to examine the role of applied linguistics in English language teaching and learning. In general, language phenomenon is complex and so applied linguistic comes in according to Bell (1968) and Brumfit (1990) as the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue. This work adopts the interactionist is theory using the English language as the subject and the applied linguist as the teacher. The objectives of this work are to enumerate the goals and focus of applied linguistics as well as the roles of applied linguists in the teaching and learning of English language; highlight on some language based problems that can be addressed by applied linguistics; identify, resolve and proffer solutions to language based issues and the English language in particular. This work therefore recommends that applied linguists be consulted to render professional advice to language teachers; language teachers should first identify specific language based problems among second language learners and proffer solutions to ameliorate or address any possible language based issue so as to achieve effective teaching and successful language acquisition.

Keywords: Applied linguistics, linguistics, linguist, teachers, second language.

Introduction

Language teaching came into existence as a profession in the twentieth century and while applied linguistics focused on the fields of linguistic and psychology to support what was thought to be a more effective teaching methodology, language teaching in the twentieth century was characterised by frequent changes, innovations, development of language teaching ideologies. Applied linguistics according to Corder became a collection of applications of linguistic at various levels to the -language teaching operation and infact became an interdisciplinary field of research and practice dealing with practical problems of language and communication that can be identified, analysed or solved by applying available theories, methods or results.

People learn new languages for several reasons. Learning is a natural pleasure and people learn generally to acquire knowledge and the application of that knowledge does great things and brings about positive changes. Ossat (2010) defines learning as a permanent change in behaviour of the learner through the learner's performances. Language plays an important role in any learning situation because no learning activity can take place without the use of language. Whether spoken, written or in sign form, one way to obtain learning is that the language in use

must be understood by both the teacher and the learner/s. Applied linguistics which is the application of ideas and methods of linguistics to any of the practical problems in language learning is therefore necessary for language acquisition so the applied linguist professionally engages learners to determine the constraints or laws which govern the constructs employed in specific language descriptions, he identifies practical language based issues, proffers linguistic solutions and ensures a successful second language acquisition.

Applied linguistics

Applied linguistics is a practical field and an autonomous subject in linguistics. It is however seen as the development of language teaching methods and the theory of translation. Applied linguistics is simply the application of ideas and method of linguistic to any of the practical problem which has something to do with language. Mostly, the term is applied to the analysis of second language teaching. In a wider sense it can also be applied to the use of linguistics in such fields such as: socio linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, computational linguistics and stylistics, anthropology. We can therefore say that applied linguistics is an interdisciplinary field of research and practice dealing with practical problems of language and communication that can be identified, analysed or solved by applying available theories, methods or results of linguistics or by developing new theoretical and methodological frameworks in linguistics to work on language problem (Cook and Weli).

Varshley defined Applied Lign9usitics as the collective term for the various applications of linguistics (phonetic) scholarship to related practical fields such as foreign language, teaching, lexicography, translation, error analysis, speech pathology, therapy, etc the above can better be referred to applied linguistics subjects.

Some scholars see applied linguistics as the application of scientific knowledge about the structure and functioning of a language in non-linguistic disciplines and in different areas of practical human activity as well as theoretical understanding of such activities. Applied linguistics is a complex combination of different sciences the object of study of applied linguistics is nothing else but the language to be learnt. The purpose of applied linguistics is to deal with the problem of language teaching and to describe the best way of enhancing human linguistic ability.

Origin of Applied Linguistics

The history of applied linguistics roots back to the United States from 1940 after the establishment of the English language institute at the University of Michigan. Among others, the term was so used to label a course applying a so-called "scientific approach" to teaching foreign languages. The first scholars who were associated with the applied linguistics when this field was established were Charles Fries and Robert Lado. Charles Fries initiated the study of contrastive linguistics in 1945 which has been commonly recognised as a branch of applied linguistics science.

The English language

The English language is the language spoken in England. It pertains to the language descended form Anglo-Saxon which developed in England. The English language is the language that has its origin in England but now spoken in all parts of the British Isles, the Common Wealth of Nations, North America and other parts of the world.

The British colonized most of the world and their second language or lingua franca became the English language. Since they conquered most of the world the language travelled throughout. Globalization also contributed to the English language becoming the world's Lingua Franca. In fact, one will almost be tempted to propose that the English language speakers far exceeds those of Chinese based on the basis of the number of people that attend English lessons. English is way ahead of all languages as a learned language by non-native speakers and it is the only one to be well represented in all five continents. In terms of geographical dispersion only French comes close to the English but it is still far behind. And English vocabulary named "Air Speak" has been progressively adopted by over 1801 airlines. Meltz and Toubal (2014). "Sea speak" an English based vocabulary has also been adopted by the international marine organization.

Meetings of organizations with large international memberships, international policy, the IMF and world bank require the English language – it is possible to get along without the French, but not the English. The supply of international news and international sports are also usually in the English language.

Why learn the English language

If English is not your mother-tongue, why should you want to learn it, or give it special status in your country? English language is the common language or mode of communication that enables people who do not understand one another to do so regardless of their cultural or ethnical background. It makes communication a lot easier and understanding one another faster.

Many reasons point to the status of English being referred to an international lingua franca and that necessitates the reason for its study and they include: Historical Reasons, Internal political Reasons, External economic reasons, Practical reasons, Intellectual reasons, Entertainment reasons, Personal advantage prestige and Religious reasons.

English Language Teaching

The history of English language teaching is linked to development in many fields such as applied linguistics, psychology of learning and education, etc. there have been two basic positions held in English language teaching:
   (a) Form-focused teaching which emphasizes the teaching of the rules of grammar, structures, vocabulary development and the sounds of a language
   (b) Meaning-focused teaching which emphasizes language use, communication or fluency and appropriacy of expression in different situations.

Language teaching came into existence as a profession in the twentieth century, each foundation was developed during the early part of the twentieth century. Language teaching in the twentieth

century was characterized by frequent changes innovations, and developments of language teaching ideologies. Applied linguistics was a collection of applications of linguistics at various levels in the language teaching operations. Applied linguistics is an interdisciplinary field of research with practical problems of language and communications that can be identified, analysed and solved by applying available theories methods or result of linguistics.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the intractionist theory which is hinged on the notion that humans… have the innate desire to interact with others in the society, Sarem (2014). Nwala (2015) opines that the key words in the interactionist theory are "interaction" and "environment" because interaction and environment have significant roles in the acquisition or learning language. The interactionist theory is assumed to have much bearing to this paper since language, (English) language teaching requires the knowledge or skills of applied linguistics as well as the awareness of their linguistic environment or situation.

Applied linguistics in Language Learning

Linguistics is science whereas language teaching is an art. A relevant mode of language learning is the behaviourist form. Most of the methods for teaching languages are based on the following assumptions emanating from these forms of behaviour.

- Language is learnt only through use and practice the more the learner is exposed to the use of language the better the chances of learning it.
- The production of language depends on the situation which makes its use necessary because language cannot be taught divorced from the situation, the teacher has to introduce each new pattern of language in a meaningful situation,
- Producing the correct linguistic response to a stimulus requires effort. If then the leaner is not called upon to make this effort there is no learning
- Prolonged practice may be less useful than spaced practice
- The spoken form of language comes earlier than the written form
- The spoken form of language also described as the receptive (passive) experience of language should come before the written form which is also described as the productive (active) form.
- Learning takes place faster if the correct response to a stimulus is immediately confirmed. The learner must know at once if the effort made is right or wrong.
- Learning is faster if the learner is placed in a situation where she can produce only the correct response. Each correct response builds up a faithful behaviour pattern which interferes with the process of conditioning.
- Every new item leant must be reintroduced by further practice before further learning begins.

Focus of Applied Linguistics

To deal with real life language problems such as: teaching and learning a foreign language or a second language. It also takes the following into cognisance: language policy, language inequality, language problem, speech therapy, language assessment and measurement

Tasks of Applied Linguistics

Applied linguistics is a consumer or user not a producer of theories. The object of linguistic research has two fold

- First is to determine precisely the constraints or laws which govern the form of the constructs employed in the linguistic descriptions which best characterize the varied instances of human linguistic ability.
- The second is to determine the particular instances of the descriptive.

To optimize the functions of language in traditional text (exegesis and hermeneutics). It studies and develops ways to optimize the functioning of language including the modelling of the process of cognition, language training, the establishment of regulatory linguistic descriptions etc.

According to Van Lier the applied linguist is saddled with the task of working with language in the real world and is most likely to have a realistic picture of what language is and is not. It may also be the applied linguists who will most likely advance human kind's understanding of language knowing that no one has a monopoly of definition, theory, research or truth.

Ubiquitous nature of Applied Linguistics

The almost indispensible nature of applied linguistic will be of great relevance to several fields of human endeavours such as: the speech therapist, the literary critic, the translator, the communication engineer, the language teacher, the syllabus framer, the educational planner, the text book writer, the dictionary writer, the language orthography writers/ producers, e.t.c.

The tasks of the Language teacher

Every teacher must have the skills in choosing a learning strategy for each type of learning activity so as to achieve the expected learning objectives. A comprehensive and integrated should be fashioned out so as to give input linguistic and cultural aspects to the learning process. When this is done, students can apply linguistic proficiency and speaking skill in a cultural context. Every teacher must therefore have the skills in choosing a learning strategy for each type of learning activity so as to achieve the expected achievement of learning objectives. To function efficiently, the teacher must be an acceptable model of the skills he seeks to impart to the learners. The teacher must be well trained in the latest methodology and must be vast in morphology, grammar, syntax, phonology, e.t.c.

Teachers should also help learners to master the sound system as well as the set of meaningful sounds of the language of study and to master the sound of a language, learners need to understand the stream of speech to hear the distinctive sound features and to approximate their

production. The teacher needs to be proficient in the language to be taught, this proficiency skill requires the teacher to have the ability to speak, write, read in the target language.

Teacher must transmit and communicate learning content in a language that the learners understand so you use language to teach a new language. Language in this context may be verbal, nonverbal, written or even Para lingual. Teachers therefore need some psychological experience to detect gestures, facial expressions and postures and respond appropriately to them using theirknack. Bargoon in Agahi, (2007) identified five forms of non-verbal communication to include: Kinesis, Para language, proxemics, chronemics, and optics. These are nonverbal forms of communication that may be employed during language learning.

Role of Language to Language Teaching and Learning
Since applied linguistics is the application of ideas and methods to language problem it will definitely require the medium of language (in whatever form) to achieve that. The content of language learning is usually delivered in a language that is mutually understood by both teachers and learners. Language remains sacrosanct as far as teaching language is concerned, language plays an important function in any learning situation because no learning situation can take place without the use of language whether paralingual, spoken, written or semantics. One way to obtain effective learning is that the language in use must be understood by both the sender and receiver of the message that is the language teacher and the learner.

There are a number of variables, both linguist and non-linguistic which can determine the success of the teaching and learning process. The teacher is faced with the problem of trying to find out the answers to these questions:
1.   How can we teach language better?
2.   How can we diagnose speech pathologies better?
3.   How can we improve the training of translators and interpreters?
4.   How can we write a valid language exam?
5.   How can we evaluate a school bilingual problem?
6.   What advice can we offer a ministry of education on a proposal to introduce a new medium of instruction.
7.   How can we determine the literacy level of a whole population
8.   How can we helpfully discuss the language of a text

Language based problems
One of the main jobs of applied linguist is that of identifying language based problems in specific linguistic situations. Below are some language based problems that applied linguistics address Kaplan ()
a.   Language learning problems – (emergence, awareness, rules, use, context, attitudes, expertise)
b.   Language teaching problems – (resources training, practice, instruction, understanding, use, context, motivations, inequalities, delivery, pronunciation).
c.   Literary problems - (Linguistics and learning issues)

d. Language contact problem – (language and culture)
e. Language inequality problem – (ethnicity, class, region, age, gender)
f. Language policy and planning (status, planning, corpus planning, Oology of language)
g. Language assessment problem – (dialects registers, discourse communities, gate keeping situations, limited access to services, resource persons.
h. Language and technology problem – (learning assessment, access, use)
i. Translation and interpretation problem (S.V.O, S.O.V, denotative, connotative, word for word translation)
j. Language pathology problem – (disabilities, dylexim, aphasius)
k. Mother tongue influence - (speech defect, defect in parts of speech)

When a child is learning to speak, he is involved with both the production (speaking) and the reception (listening) of spoken language. But when he comes to read and write, he is introduced to the receptive skill. This is because it difficult for him to produce written language unaided. What then are the factors to consider for an effective English Language Teaching and Learning.

Factors to consider for an effective English Language Teaching and Learning.
- Willingness of learners to acquire the long skill (competent)
- Learners awareness of the relevance of the language
- Ensure the target language has good target in the community.
- Ensure the syllabuses are suitable
- Ensure intensity of teaching to be relatively height
- Teachers of language should have professional competence
- Ensure he knowledge of these three foundations – history, structure and use
- Be conversant with the grammatical rules of the language
- Be conversant with the appropriate language use.
- The system or administration should be effective
- Training and retraining of teachers should be up to dateand regular
- Employ the right teaching method considering age and background of leaners
- Consider the society, be sensitive not to offend learners.

The role of Applied Linguistics
Teaching is an honourable one because applied linguistics has been responsible for stimulating innovation and activity in language teaching. Applied linguistic with focus on enquiry, critical self-examination and new ideas has enriched the profession at least as much as it has positively influenced other professions/field. Through language method of applied linguistic, learning activity which is an effort where learners can learn the language in an effective and efficient manner. Efforts can be made by identifying the strategy of learning content and establishing procedures for the measurement of learning outcomes. Some professional linguistic methods suggested to address or achieve effective language learning have been listed below:

English language teaching can be traced to development in many fields especially linguistics, applied linguist, psychology of learning and education Titone () affirms that two basic positions stand till date in English language teaching and learning and they may be adopted

Form based (focused) teaching with emphasis on the teaching of the rules of grammar, structure, the development of vocal and the sounds of language. Meaning based (focused) teaching which emphasis language use, communication, fluency and appropriacy of expression in different situation. The following are relevant classroom activities that may enhance language learning: diction practice, pronunciation, word drill, word game, registers, essay writing, spelling, blending, word formation, dictation, word and picture matching, oracy skills such as speaking listening, writing and reading should be effectively employed; tongue twisters , word game, translation, e.t.c should be a constant practice.

The first reason for the English becoming widespread is because of the British empire. English then became an elitist language of some sorts spoken by those who were educated in literature, philosophy and poetry much like French was back then when it was most widely spread. The way English is used as lingua franca is heavily dependent on the specific situation of use. Generally speaking, English lingua franca interactions concentrate on function rather than form. In order words communicative efficiency is more important than correctness.

Language acquisition
Hudson (1984) opines that children normally acquire a high proportion of language learning skill before they are of school age. Therefore a sound foundation in the primary school is important if a learner must be acquainted with the oracy skills especially pronunciation, sentence formation, concord, etc.

The crux of the problem of English language teaching lies in the primary school because it is at this stage that the foundation of learning the English language is laid. The learners can later build on what they have acquired. Putting in at least five early years would enable a language learner acquire different ways of constructing interesting, tactful, logical, persuasive, polite and grammatically correct messages. Before a learner learns a language, he/she should ask this question: why should I learn this language? Of what use is the language to me? The following may also be reasons why a particular language may be learnt as a second language they include: historical reasons, political reasons, economic reasons, intellectual reasons, entertainment reasons, religious, professional, personal advantage/prestige, reasons, e.t.c.

Language as a medium of language acquisition skill
Learning language is a complex skill. Language acquisition be it L1, L2 or L3 is achieved via the medium of language – Language is used to teach language. Thoughts, ideas and feelings are expressed in language and so instructions of the learning process are only able to be delivered via language and the leaners respond and give feedback via the medium of a language.

Conclusion

This work has been able to describe the concept of applied linguistics as well as who an applied linguistics is. It gave a brief overview of the origin, the work further explored the roles of applied linguistic to language teaching and learning. It drew our attention to the English language and why English should be learnt. It highlighted on different fields or disciplines where applied linguistic can be found. It also listed different careers that applied linguistics will be relevant to.

More so, the work specifically looked at applied linguistics in language learning while enumerating the task and focus of the language teacher and the task of applied linguistics in a language class. Furthermore, this work succinctly listed some factors to consider for an effective English language teaching and learning while listing some language, based problems. Finally, the work identifies possible language based issues and tried to proffer solutions to ameliorate and address them.

Recommendations

This work recommends that applied linguistic be consulted to render professional advise to language teachers before the process begins.

(1)   Applied linguists who intend to teach the English language as either a second language or foreign language should identify specific language based problems peculiar to the class and learners they want to teach.

(2)   The right approach or strategy for teaching learners should be employed considering the age, exposure and background of leaners

(3)   Applied linguists may collaborate with psychologists, doctors, and speech therapists to address pathological issues, they should also work with education planners and orthographers for advice and guidance

(4)   Training and retraining of language teachers to get updated and furnished with language teaching innovations and strategies should be encouraged.

(5)   Applied linguistics should proffer solutions and make suggestions to language planners at different levels.

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