

SYNTACTIC FEATURES IN OKPEWHO'S *THE LAST DUTY* AND NWAPA'S *NEVER AGAIN*

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the use of language in Okpewho's The Last Duty (TLD) and Nwapa's Never Again (NA). Both novels communicate the Nigerian civil war experiences of 1966 – 1970. The novels were viewed not just as literary genre but as discourse type with particular emphasis on linguistic stylistics. The analysis was based on the systemic functional grammar model, a theory of language. The study focused on the syntactic features of the language used in the primary texts. Investigations revealed copious structural sentence types such as, simple, compound and complex sentences well as functional sentence types like declarative, imperative and rhetorical questions in both texts. In addition, there was an incorporation of a conversational voice expressed through verbal exchanges among participants in the war, with the use of elliptical structures, contracted forms of words and utterance initiators which portrayed participants as live humans. Okpewho preferred hypotactic sentence style which in feminists' stylistics is interpreted as a male phenomenon of patriarchy and dominance while Nwapa's sentence style were rather parataxis; short and simple sentences intended to show equality and coordination. This observation agrees with the gender voice about what feminists' stylistics advocate. Both authors used rhetorical questions, elliptical structures, hesitation features and contracted forms. The languages of both authors were replete and spiced with insults and abuses, exemplifying the language of war. These features and devices employed helped the authors to communicate the message of the Nigerian civil war and achieve realism.*

KEYWORDS: Syntactic, Okpewho's, Nigerian Civil War

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

There is always a purpose for any piece of composition and style is a means of achieving that purpose. The purpose is usually enhanced by the resources of the language which encodes the impression of a writer. In other words, it is the resource of language that aids individual's performance (Crystal 1994) rightly observes that style is any situational distinctive use of language and of the choices made by individuals and social groups. This subtly accounts for every aesthetic use of language in all domains. It is important to note that words have meaning only in context, and context reveals the writer's ideas, intentions, perspective and disposition in each situation. The choice of appropriate words to convey or express an individual's desires, motive and attitude becomes an element of style when the choice of words bears a direct relevance to the subject of discussion, transmits the intended message and is understood by the target audience. That is why Osgood (1960), views style as an individual's deviation from norms for the situations in which he is encoding. These deviations become the statistical properties of those structural features that account for the degree of choice in his code.

In recent times, language and gender are topical issues in linguistics. Lakoff (1975) in *Language and woman's place* is widely recognized as the pioneer work in feminist research

on the relationship between language and gender. And scholars of language and gender have debated and developed Lakoff's initial observations which state that language is fundamental to gender inequality. Lakoff points out that there are areas in which inequalities can be found in the language used by men and women. The source shows that the language used by women and about women reflects the way that women are treated and, by extension, shows powerlessness.

There are some societal implications of the differences between men's and women's writing and speaking forms. Uduk (2012) observes that the speech of one sex may be judged a prestigious though the same evaluative criteria may be applied when considering the other. In other words, some features have been 'recognized as the outstanding markers of sexes in some or various communities' (Uduk 2012:1). Just as different people in different age groups speak and write differently using different forms of expressions that are peculiar to their group, linguistic research in different parts of the world have shown that the speech/writing of men and women differ. For this reason, this paper seeks to evaluate the reports written by a male and a female on the Nigerian civil war of 1966 – 1970.

Research Problem

As language is a social phenomenon, linguistic varieties are expected to arise from who the man is and his unique artistic creations. These different personalities are usually identified through a perfect adaptation of one's language to one's ideas. This paper seeks to evaluate the way language is used by both a male and a female writing to articulate the realities of the Nigerian civil war of 1966 – 1970. Furthermore, this paper intends to compare and contrast such usages in the structure, the two texts.

Significance of the Study

This study will be relevant to students of English as it will help them appreciate the differences and similarities discovered in language use by both sexes. It will be an additional research material in the field of applied linguistics as well as stylistics.

Methodology

The method adopted in this study includes the selection of prose texts that have a common field of discourse (civil war in Nigeria). Data relevant for analysis are drawn from the primary texts; Okpewho's *The Last Duty and Nwapa's Never Again*. Other secondary sources shall also be consulted. Lexico-semantics, graphological and syntactic features will be analysed through a systematic model.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In discussing language use in literary texts, Halliday's systematic theory, fashioned for the description of texts, is adopted. Halliday (1985) fashioned a theory called systemic grammar which is described as both a theory of language system and of the text. He explains that this theory functions in three distinct but closely related ways; in its interpretation of texts, of the system and of the elements of linguistic structures. The theory is designed to account for how language is used.

It is believed that every text unfolds in some context of use. It is the uses of language that have shaped the system. According to this model, all languages have unit, structure, classes and systems. Sentence and clause are instances of the category of unit, verb and noun are instances

of structure. Unit structure and class form a system of categories of the theory of the grammar. Since language evolved to solve or satisfy human needs, therefore the way it is organized is functional with respect to these needs and each element in a language is explained with reference to its function to the total linguistic system. Thus, Halliday's functional grammar which is adopted in this study, is one that construes all the units of a language as organic configurations of functions, each part is interpreted as functional with respect to the whole.

This work, with the application of the systemic model will analyse *The Last Duty* and *Never Again* to show the linguistic features such as syntactic, lexico-semantic and graphological features. Such features will take into account the examination of sentence types as used by the authors; investigate to establish certain usages like figures of speech, collocations and idioms.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

Styles are the product of social situation of a common relationship between language users. Banjo (1982:1) views style as an exhaustive study of the use of language in literary works while Crystal et al (1979:165) views style as 'the features of situational distinctive uses of language'. It is noted by scholars that style is the medium that enables a writer to produce a piece of text with a specific pragmatic goal such as informing, or persuading. In order to achieve this goal, s/he makes particular linguistic choices, decomposes rhetorical goals into lexical, syntactic and semantic choices. Adejare (1992:6) defines a text as a unit of language that has been used in a specific context by a text producer with the purpose of communicating a message through the use of the linguistic signs existing within a language's semiotic universe. This means that a writer uses a text to communicate a message. The grammar of the text allows the recognition of the overall structure of a text and how it works to achieve a certain communicative goal. It is also observed that context of situation has to be involved before any text can be accurately interpreted.

Udofot (2001:110-126) carried out a linguistic analysis of selected short stories in *Breaking the silence* by the women writer of Nigeria. Her analysis is dependent on dominant linguistic features in each story. Linguistic items of consideration include sound devices, where she gives attention to the identification of alliteration, onomatopoeia and their stylistic effects. She also identifies allusion and clearly accounts for this device. She also gives attention to the use of subjective cases or forms; use of repetitions and parallel structures as well as use of imagery, imperative sentences, direct and rhetorical questions. She considers coinages which together with other features accounts for the writer's verbal dexterity.

In another work, Udofot analyses Egharevba's language in *Voices of Thunde*. She pays attention to the use of rhetorics as a tool to violence (Udofot 2001: 238). She examines rhetoric usages to be the art of using language to persuade and influence others. Analysis of this work is categorized into verbal and non-verbal diction as well as images of violence to penetrate the text. Oha also considers stylistic Renaissance in an African short story: A study of Helon Habila's 'Love poems'. In the analysis, he considers graphological patterns, syntactic mode and lexico-semantic patterns, syntactic mode and lexico-semantic patterns. He operates his analysis on the systemic model.

Research suggests that men communicate in "report" style and this seems to involve switching topics frequently. Moreover, they attempt to dominate conversations. In contrast, women tend to use a "relate" style of communication with each other, engaging in self-discourse, and

showing concern and sympathy. Also they intend to interrupt each other less, and let everyone participate in the conversation (Argamon, Koppel, Fine & Shimoni 2003; Coates 1986; Pilkington, 1998; Swann 1998 all in Ukut 2012).

Lakoff (1975) further claims that women are denied access to the ‘powerful’ style that characterizes not only the male’s linguistic creativity, but also the male’s authority. In a more recent research Cameron (1992) in Ukut (2012) indicates that gender specific linguistic differences lead to gender-specific conversational strategies. Bearing in mind that a linguistic exchange is the result of the relationship between interlocutors, and that males and females have disparate social statuses, conversational patterns between males and females have been found to reflect the social inequalities which exist between them.

Much of research on language and gender seek to describe the linguistic means by which men dominate women in interaction. Lakoff (1975) argues that women use many linguistic forms which weaken or mitigate the force of their utterance. Expletives such as, “Oh! Dear” versus ‘damn’; trivialising adjectives (divine versus great); tag questions used to express speaker’s opinions (“the way prices are rising is horrendous, isn’t it?”); and rising intonation in interrogative (what’s for dinner” Roast beef?”); punctuate female texts (Kendall and Tannen, 2003, Lakoff, 1975, Ukut, 2012). Coates’ study reveals that while men look for difference, feminine talk is more like melding together, dwelling features of speech labelled as women’s speech such as hedges (e.g. ‘mmm’, “you know”), and questions which secure relationship and collaboration. However, the rhetorical tag questions style by women, were seen to maintain conversation and confirm the shared world. Tag questions together with hedges, are labelled as elements of powerless speech but Coates sees as agents of maintaining the collaborative floor. O’Barr and Atkin (1978) argue that speech differences between women and men can be accounted for in terms of dominance, power and status relations.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data from both texts are signified by the acronym *TLD* and *NA*. The *TLD* is Okpewho’s *The Last Duty* and *NA* is Nwapa’s *Never Again*. For clarity, the *TLD* and *NA* are written by Okpewho (male) and Nwapa (a female), respectively. Sentences from the *Last Duty (TLD)* are;

1. Give me that gun – p.17
 2. The war is still on and every moment is pregnant with danger. p3.
 3. The next days were dominated by painful uncertainty p.7.
 4. How long can I survive in this town if I stay isolated from the entire community except for a few soldiers who happen to stray into my stall? p.12.
 5. I can feel the unspoken questions p.237.
 6. I turned to Oghenovo, and I see that he is sobbing with a film of water covering each eye. p.136.
 7. Suddenly there was a dead silence as a soldier walked in, armed to the teeth p.15.
- Sentences from *Never Again (NA)* are as follows;
1. Ugwuta was threatened p.4.
 2. The rockets were falling indiscriminately p.56.
 3. There was visible sign of kwashiorkor in them p.69
 4. There were bullet wounds all over the walls p.72
 5. Soon the gallant Biafran forces will drive them out of Omoku p.48
 6. Get your children out of danger p.41.

7. Evacuation p.43.

Analysis1. //Give me that Gun//2. // The war is still on and every moment is pregnant with danger//3. // The next days were dominated by painful uncertainty//4. // Ugwuta was threatened//5. // The rockets were falling indiscriminately//6. // Evacuation//

The above analysis reveals that both authors employed all forms of sentence types, though for space and time some sentences especially the complicated types that may pose difficulty in the analysis are carefully kept off. But all of them were certainly crafted by authors to communicate the realities and experiences of the Nigerian civil wars. Also the meaning of the sentence types and the situational implications are quite varied. For instance, text 1, the author (male) chooses to start some sentences with lower-case letters to defy the grammatical rules which states that every sentence is to begin with a capital letter. See extract from *TLD*, 113-118, the big soldier is standing very close to the small soldier, he is much taller than the small soldier, and his red cap is slanted with his face as he looks down on the small soldier. The small soldier is standing straight and looking straight, not at the big soldier, his gun by his side, the big soldier is talking to him, and knocking his cane on his own leg, and the small soldier is not looking at him yet. I think he is afraid of the big soldier (p.13).

This narrative style may confirm Lakoff's opinion of men's linguistic creativity and authority. In the two texts, however, this style is only found in the text written by a male. The idea of error in punctuation in the normal classroom sense is ruled out here because the English user here (Okpewho) is not a learner of English in the common sense of the word. Rather Okpewho uses the lower-case alphabets as a creative art device to showcase the confusion of ideas and situations during the Nigerian civil war and to further represent the reasoning capacity of a child who is, to a large extent, ignorant of happenings around him and can hardly assign interpretations to what he observes.

On pages 58 and 59, describes a situation where corpses were found everywhere in the village below is an extract. There were more and more corpses as we moved along. I shut my eyes. We moved on. We moved on for fear that if we did not move on. We might be corpses ourselves.

Actually, the sentences here are mostly simply ones and appear to be constructed under tension, as a period of war suggests but observing closely it thus show the thumbprint of Nwapa's style. See the following extract from *In Efurū and Never Again*. In *Efurū*, the linguistic experiment is indicative of Igbo language presented in English.

Mother of a feasting girl, mother of a feasting girl, she turned and saw that it was her sister. Ajanupu. How is she now? She is well, my sister Has it healed? Yes it has healed. She has good body. That's very good. The woman who did it has good hands too. (p.16).

In the above, the stressed linguistic cues that the quoted conversation is done is through the L₁, although it appears in L₂ orthographic shape. In *NA* the use of extreme short sentences is a common antecedent of Nwapa's style. In page 56,
We stood. Others joined us. Watched. Then a rocket, another and yet another. We took cover. We lay on our stomach. The body was peaceful.

From the four excerpts, it is observed that Nwapa uses short sentences to create a broken pace of lives of the characters, especially in the war situation. At most critical moments, the sentences are shortest to accentuate the tension in war situation. But ultimately too, in this particular text of consideration, the simple sentence type tends to dominate the discourse. In fact in some situations, she uses just one word for a sentence (In *Efuru* 16 and in *Never Again* 43).

People were passing. Children were crying. Women were crying... there were tears in his eyes... He burst into tears again. We couldn't help weeping too. And once more the chant of weeping rent the air (56-78).

FUNCTIONAL TYPES

Imperative sentences

Table 1: Commands

Example	Page	Effect
Shut up, you dumb fool!	19	Command combined with insult.
Give me that gun	17	order
Surrender your gun, I say!	17	order
I command you to surrender your gun at once	17	A command from a supervisor to a subordinate
Will you please sit down!	41	Command tempered
Leave her alone, Toje! I warn	213	A command from an inferior to a supervisor. This is an insult.
That's enough from you?	213	An indication of warning stern
Go home!	214	A command of instruction
Sit down for God sake!	214	Instruction
Now stop it madam	216	Order
Stop! Stop!	242	Order
Don't move!	242	Order
Push him out! Don't push him out	9	Commands from factions in a political gathering
Allow him to speak!	10	
Order! Order!	12	

Commands are characteristics of the military and in *The Last Duty*, the activity of the military is highly notable hence the dominance of imperative sentences. On the other hand, commands that are not given by the military are those given in the atmosphere of quarrels between a master and servant. Some of the commands too are combined with insults. Okpewho uses this device to portray tension, command, insult and unrest during the war. Imperative sentences flow as a result of the conversational variety that permits interaction between addresser and addressee. This difference seems to agree with the opinion of other researchers on language and gender that most men's talk is primarily a means to preserve independence and negotiate and maintain status in a hierarchical social order, a language of report. Males have been found to keep their

distance from relational and human issues by reducing them to theories and abstractions (Aries 1976; Steinem, 1991; Swacker, 1975; Tannen, 1990). But women are more likely to discuss interrelational topics and personalise conversations, a discursive style. Men are more aggressive and domineering. The table above seems to agree with the position of most researchers on language and gender differences because the domineering and aggressive tendencies reflect greatly on the tables above.

Declarative sentence

The sentences which run through the two texts are primarily declarative because the texts are accounts of the Nigerian civil war. In *TLD*, several narrators are involved in accounting for the civil war as it affected them. They narrate the story as eye-witnesses. Okpewho stylistically uses eight (8) persons from all strata of life to enumerate their experiences. The linguistic marker is the first person singular pronoun which dominates the text. The syntactic representation of the speaking voices reveals a significant widespread of the first person singular pronoun. Few examples are presented as table 2.

Table 2:Declarative sentence

Sentence Type	Text	Effect
I am a bigman, and there is no question about it even if I have to say so over and over gain. COMPOUND COMPLEX	<i>TLD 5</i>	A declarative sentence stating the status of the man in the society.
I put the finishing rouches to my own dress. SIMPLE	<i>TLD 11</i>	She accounts for how the mirror reveals a non-attractive image because of the rough experience of the war
I have therefore all along tried to maintain an atmosphere of calm, understanding and mutual respect for how should I know what the people are feeling COMPLEX	<i>TLD 4</i>	Account from the commander of the federal troop in Unikpe. A soldier stating his responsibility.
I went to show Onome my clothes, and Onome my father was a thief and did not buy me any clothes, because he was a prisoner and the soldiers had put him unto prison because, because, because he had stolen... COMPLEX	<i>TLD 15</i>	An innocent child ignorant of the real fact concerning his father who is actually in detention because of few people who wants him out of business line. Oghenovo is a child who cannot differentiate truth from lies. He is also affected by the war and suffers deprivation of fatherhood.
I was thoroughly tired of life. (Simple)	<i>NA 1</i>	An account of an eye witness stating her disgust during the war
I heard the deadly whine of shells	<i>NA 1</i>	Account of the bomb shells
I walked to the road. I saw a check point	<i>NA 7</i>	

The texts show that the use of first person pronouns is highly significant. There are also second and third person pronoun usages due to the direct addresser - addressee relationship and

interaction. The context of direct address enables the author to adopt a less formal style where necessary like the incorporation of conversational variety. This variety is marked off by contracted forms of words such as we've, couldn't, isn't, that's, I'm and so on. Other structures like interjections or emotive signals such as oh! Allah! Em!, eh! Haw! Ehm! Sometimes called utterance initiators or fillers are widespread in *TLD*.

NA is a straight forward narrative; that is why there are several uses of first person pronoun as indicated on the table. The story is reported in a formal style though punctuated by informality. This shows Nwapa's ability to incorporate conversational tone which makes the account achieve realism. She also uses the second person (you) to indicate direct address between an addresser and addressee.

Rhetorical Question

Both authors have employed rhetorical questions as stylistic devices to evoke emotions in the people for a reaction. They stir up the reasoning potentials of the people for activity.

Table 3: Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions	Page	Effect
Where can I run, what can I do? If it weren't for the goodness of the federal army commander here, who has warned that nobody should take the law into his hands, where would I be today? If I can no longer go to the market to buy foodstuffs for my child and myself then how can we survive? And one day someone asked me if I was buying up food to send to my people: my people? My people?	<i>TLD</i> 11	These are questions Aku asked herself. These expressions indicate desperate cry caused by hopelessness; the questions reveal her emotional state which plagued by feelings of uncertainty about the future. The questions also reveal her loneliness and isolation from the society which she is supposed to fully belong by marriage.
How long can I survive in this town if I stay isolated from the entire community except for a few soldiers who happen to stray to my stall?	<i>TLD</i> 12	These questions further announce her separation from the society and the consequent emotional trauma she is facing
For isn't it a hazard of the trade? And what man would stand up and swear to himself he didn't know what dangers he faced as he sought that costly thing? Besides, it was done in the night and where would I begin a search for a race I saw many months ago and could never be certain to recognize today even if she stood before me and called my name ?	<i>TLD</i> 23-24	This is a contemplation of a man who is seeking a way to solve a serious problem. The problem is that which goes with shame and frustration and he seems not to have a solution to it. He is confused and this emotional instability is giving him great concern.
I know I am not worth much or anything. I know I cannot help myself or anybody. I cannot think or do anything... what can a man do with only one arm?... It is impossible that the same fate that gave me one arm should have addled my brain?	<i>TLD</i> 60	This character reasons within him in order to show his emotional problem of having lived in the midst of people who have all their body organs and parts complete. It shows the frustration that goes with being a misfit in the society.

Okpewho uses these negative assertions to paint a picture of victims of war, to showcase their feelings and emotions, the trauma they undergo in society, again their problems have no solution or cure where they belong. Rather, members of society tend to cause them more pains and wounds. In the same way, *NA* also employs this device.

Rhetorical questions	Page	Effect
Where are we going to flee to again? Where are we running? Who are the Vandals? Who are they?	NA 8	Rhetorical question is used to rouse the emotions of the people to rise to the challenge of oppression. The repetitive use of 'who are they' is a strategy to build strength and hope in them to face their common enemy. This device is often used by politicians. In this case it is used to foster unity among the Biafrans and set them up to react against their opponents.
My fellow Ugwuta people, the Nigerians will not leave us alone. The vandals said we have committed a crime by leaving them. Can you imagine that, my fellow women here? Can you imagine it? If you were fighting and you are beaten and battered? You run home and lock your door, baring the man beating you. Then he turns round and says you have committed a crime. A crime my people. A crime my people. Is cowardice a crime?	NA 9	These questions are used to evoke the masses emotional reaction against the encroachment unto their territory and oppression.

Question tag is used by both authors. But it appears even the question tags found in *TLD* are from the voices of the helpless such as women, children and misfits, and they somehow show their helplessness in the face of opposition including their inability to face challenges.

OTHER SYNTACTIC FEATURES

Elliptical structures

Elliptical constructions are essential features of everyday usage. It is a device that threads a fine line between economy and coherence where too little information undermines understanding.

Table 4: Elliptical structure

Example	Page
Well... she... she	<i>TLD</i> 6
She... she was sitting on a bench	<i>TLD</i> 8
More of the arm soldiers ...	<i>TLD</i> 14
I am still Toje Onovwakpo...	<i>TLD</i> 27
Oh... well	<i>TLD</i> 110
I promise ... nothing	<i>TLD</i> 112
I could hardly... it	<i>TLD</i> 124
Do you mean... a fight	<i>TLD</i> 146
Oh... em... I	<i>TLD</i> 150
No... not really, I mean... I... she	<i>TLD</i> 204
He can't give a deaf ear to our prayers...	NA 6
I lost my husband in this war...	NA 8
God please don't give me such a child...	NA 10
Please...	NA 11
And... it worked	NA 24
In the end thy parted as friends...	NA 33
Oh...	NA 47
You have not done well at all...	NA 60

The use of this feature introduces informality as well as a situation where the flow of thoughts could be interrupted by others or changes of topic of discussion. Okpewho and Nwapa have fully used this structure to achieve realism in their texts.

Hesitational features

Hesitational features are markers of conversational variety. They are utterance initiators and reactional signal because they could be used to start a discussion and as a sign of reaction to an utterance. At other times, they are also referred to as fillers in the sense that they hold brief for an utterance that is not readily available and which the speaker is yet to recollect or organize in his brain. These features are found in the two texts but are more in *TLD* than in *NA*. Examples are shown below.

Table 5: Hesitational features

Examples	Page	Effect
Ehm.. Today is the seventy-sixth day of the sitting of this tribunal of inquiry into the conduct of the Rebel occupation of the Black Gold state, and I declare the proceedings open!	<i>TLD</i> 39, 45, 195, 206	An indication that one has forgotten readily what to say or how to put his words across. On the hand, it may be that one is going to speak and desires the audience to pay attention.
Eh, no sir	54	Expression of uncertainty
Hm? – no	77	A sign of one thinking to be sure
Mm? why did you not run away like most others?	86	Thinking and reasoning to be sure of one's utterance
Oh-em	87	A sign of complain
Oh, so you now believe that Port Harcourt is in the hands of the vandals	<i>NA</i> 3	A sign of surprise
Oh, if only we could have one twentieth of the arms and ammunition they have	17	This is a cry of dismay. A sign that one is handicapped

2.5 Contracted forms of words

Though the language of prose is mainly narrative, it has the ability to incorporate different varieties of language such as the variety in which the novelist narrates and those used for characterization such as dialogue involving different characters. The former speaks of formal style while the later refers to informal style. Contracted forms of words are usually evident and allowed in a conversational variety. A few examples are highlighted in the table below.

Table 6: Contracted forms of words

Contracted forms	Examples	Pages
Wouldn't	But he wouldn't let me go	<i>TLD</i> , 71
Don't	Oh don't worry	<i>TLD</i> , 73
It's	It's a difficult situation	<i>TLD</i> , 95
I'll	I'll handle it all nicely	<i>TLD</i> , 104
I'm	I'm greeting the chief's wife	<i>TLD</i> , 104
Didn't	I didn't wait long at my friend's place	<i>TLD</i> , 123
Wasn't	It wasn't easy	<i>TLD</i> , 123
Don't	I don't want it to fall	<i>NA</i> 11
Let's	Let's not hear him	<i>NA</i> 12
That's	That's the question people asked you when you told them that a place had fallen	<i>NA</i> 26
I'll	I'll finish you	<i>NA</i> 74
I'd	I'd rather wait if I were you	<i>NA</i> 81

COMPARISON OF USE OF SYNTACTIC FEATURES IN *TLD* AND *NA*

Okpewho uses long and complicated sentence structures which sometimes make analysis difficult as these sentences hardly fit into existing sentence types. He also uses other sentence types like simple and compound which have also been analysed. He switches freely from one sentence type to another being strictly guided by which character is to report. In essence the characters reports are given one or a combination of the sentence types to achieve the effect Okpewho desires. For instance, the language of Oghenovo, the innocent child is not like the sentence structure that Ali, the Commander of the federal troop uses to narrate his experience.

Nwapa also uses other sentence types though the simple sentence structure has been identified as a predominant style. However, these sentence types are used as a variety to spice up the novels because every effective prose demands sentence variety to break monotony which could make reading boring. Even in the use of simple sentences, Okpewho and Nwapa vary the position of the prepositional phrases in sentences and use modifiers especially adjectives. Again, the peculiar feature of complex sentences is that they make important ideas to stand out, and the less important ideas are subordinated to the main clause. Complex sentences in the two texts are the most effective type of sentence structures used in combating the tendency to string sentences together by inserting 'but' or 'and'.

Moreover, both authors use compound sentences to coordinate statements that are of equal importance to tie the same subject as well as different subjects performing related actions. All these sentence types help in the account of the Nigerian civil war and further help in the flow and continuity of the story. In the two texts, analysis shows that the parts of sentences are arranged in such a manner to achieve suspense and reduce tempo in sentence movement. These also are done by employing periodic sentences in which the subordinate or modifying part begins the sentence. An example could be seen below:

When he arrived, the vehicle was there all right. His pace didn't change. He cocked his gun, and with one violent kick of the leg he flung the door open. After a quick look around he made for the bedroom. And there, just a wake from her slumber, the girl was lying in pain, shameless nudity on the bed, with the sergeant's camouflage shirt and belt slung over a nearby chair. She screamed, sat up quickly and tried to cover herself. But soldier's gun was at the ready and she knew it. She called his name and begged to explain. One look of contempt down her lewd figure told him what had happened. Told him he had to put an end to it all. Anger now knew no verbal language, except one muttered curse, 'Harlot!'. He screwed his month, clenched his teeth, pulled the trigger and tat-tat-tat-tat! The girl writhed for a few seconds, and slumped between the blood-socked sheet *TLD 17*.

This method creates suspense. Another type is the one that begins with the central theme of a sentence. What this particular type does is to create emphatic effect. Therefore the use of suspense and emphasis create stylistic effect with the use of all the sentences but this type abounds more imperative sentences but this type abounds more in *TLD* than *NA*. This of course could be explained by gender roles.

Command is a characteristic of military language and the texts account for the civil war which brings the activity of the military to the fore. The war period reveals a time of activity, tension, quarrels and passing of orders or instructions and carrying out instructions. In Okpewho's text, the army features prominently, interacting with the civilians, having tribunal where cases are

tried, parading round the community to keep watch and to fight infiltrators. Under such circumstance, and atmosphere, the use of imperatives becomes more pronounced in *TLD* than in *NA* where military activity is implicit.

Okpewho and Nwapa have achieved realism by the use of declarative, imperative, rhetorical and other syntactic features in the texts. For instance, the two authors have incorporated a conversational variety, an indication of a spoken voice. This act of creating conversation between fictional characters and the verbal exchanges between and among participants in the conversation portray such characters as live humans. Both authors' intentions have been to create realism. The declarative sentences would have been too formal, and to spice the formality is this stylistic effect that has caused the account to look real.

The Nigerian civil war account is rendered in simple present and simple past tenses. At times, it is reported in the present progressive and present perfect or progressive tenses, that is why dynamic verbs are dominant in *TLD* and *NA*. But the difference between the two authors lies largely in the use of simpler past in Nwapa's work than any other type while Okpewho uses more of present continuous tense as if the war is in progress. Utterance initiators are numerous in *TLD* than in *NA* as well as contracted forms of words. These differences exist apparently because of the number of narrators in *TLD* and the number of pages housing the account of the war creates a big gap between the two texts.

Both authors employed rhetorical questions but to achieve different effects. For instance, Nwapa uses rhetorical questions in her text to stir up reactions, build up confidence in the masses to rise to challenge their opponents. This is evident in the political meetings organised in Ugwuta community. Okpewho uses the same rhetorical questions to help the war victims to lament, express desperation, hopelessness and helplessness. These are evident in characters like Aku, Odibo and Toje.

CONCLUSION

Both authors employed different sentence types in their works. The use of functional sentence like declarative and imperative sentences helped to reveal the language of Okpewho and Nwapa as a language of war. The imperative usages which majorly characterize the military are widely incorporated in *TLD* with the conversational variety exchanges and activities of the military are fully made bare. Okpewho used about eight persons from all strata of life to enumerate their war experiences and he employed the use of first person singular pronoun. In the same vein Nwapa used first person pronoun in the account of the war. Both texts also employed second and third person pronouns because of the direct addresser-addressee relationship and interaction. The context of direct address enables the authors to adopt a less formal style which makes the account to achieve realism.

From gender standpoint, it is realized that Okpewho assigns complex sentence structure to characters for two reasons; one to demonstrate confusion which supposed to be a common experience during a time of war. The second reason for the use of complex structure may be to reflect subordination and suppression portrayed through the use of hypotaxis at the level of syntax while Nwapa uses simple, co-ordinate or parataxis as a way of eliminating the linguistic correlates of patriarchy and dominance. In other words, the women prefer parataxis as a sign of resentment of oppression and subordination but prefer equality and co-ordination.

Both authors used rhetorical questions, elliptical structures, hesitational features and contracted forms as syntactic devices in the packaging and delivery of the message of the Nigerian civil war and its influences on the people. All of these helped the authors to achieve realism.

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