

## **Practs of Deliberate Conceptual Mappings in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku***

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**ABSTRACT:** *Ahmed Yerima's Abobaku is a drama that explains Yoruba cosmological belief in the concept of a scape-goat who dies to accompany Alaafin and other Yoruba Kings to the ancestral world. Despite its significance to Yoruba cosmology, Yerima's Abobaku has not been given a full-blown pragmatic study. This paper therefore attempts to fill this existing gap by examining the practs of metaphor in it. Modified model of Mey's (2001) pragme and Steen's (2008) deliberate metaphor theory were used as the theoretical base of this study. The findings revealed that there are deliberate conceptual mappings of a human as a beast, a sacrificial lamb, and a saviour ; human's life as a journey, a light, and a cracked cooking pot; death as a container/vehicle and a journey; life as a journey and a light; and love as a two-edged sword . Participants rode on the shared socio-cultural, cognitive and linguistic common grounds to pract lamenting, warning, informing, condemning, stating, reminding and boasting in the text.*

**KEY WORDS:** pract, common grounds, Abobaku, scapegoatism, meaning.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The use of metaphor in the cultural discourse cannot be overemphasised. It is a tool used in structuring human ideology, thinking, knowledge and experience (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Since metaphorical expressions abound in participants' conversations in Yerima's *Abobaku*, this study attempts to examine the practs of metaphors in the text. It is essential to state that metaphors are more than mere stylistic devices but are the pivot on which human's thought revolves (Lakoff, 1993). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that every expression in human interactions is metaphorical. According to them, metaphor is not an ornamental tool in language but it is used as a conceptual gadget for restructuring, structuring and creating reality. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that conceptual metaphor signifies the ontological correspondence or mapping of the source domain with the target domain. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also explicate the concept of conduit metaphor which implies the metaphor that explains the communication process. Reddy (1979) states that language functions like conduit in transferring human thought from one person

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to another. Also, in speech and writing, humans insert their thoughts or feelings in words. Language transfers thoughts from speaker or writer to the target audience; while people often extract the encoder's thoughts from his or her language(Reddy,1979,p.12).

According to Kovecses (2005), metaphor resides not in language but in human's thought. According to him, some metaphors are culture-induced while some are context-induced. Metaphors can be universal or vary from culture to culture. Besides, variation in metaphor can be found within the same culture and within the same language (Kovecses, 2005). Deliberate metaphor theory of Steen (2008) is an expansion of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Examples of CMT include '*Life is a journey*', '*sex is a battle*', '*An examination is a battle*', '*Election is a battle*', '*God is a father*', etc. Steen (2008) posits that though metaphors are conventional, some of them can be deliberate whether they are direct or indirect. The concept of deliberate metaphor theory was initiated by Cameron (2003), Charteris-Black & Musolff (2003) and Goddard (2004) before it was made a full-blown theory by Steen (2008). Deliberate metaphor signifies 'to consciously set up a cross domains mappings in our speech' (Steen, 2008). Let us examine the speech of a bereaved wife in 'EX 1' to those who have come to commiserate with her on the loss of her husband.

Ex 1: "*I want to thank everybody who has come here to witness **this battle of life**. You will not experience such in your life*".

The expression '*this battle*' in 'EX 1' is a deliberate metaphor because the speaker can use '*the burial of my husband*' instead of the expression '*this battle*'. In Ex1' above, *the burial of the speaker's husband is mapped as a deliberate metaphor of battle*. Deliberate metaphors are often used in socio-cultural discourse like the discourse of ritual suicide and scapegoatism in Yerima's *Abobaku* which this study attempts to examine. It can be observed that scholars have studied the use of conceptual metaphors in the political discourse. For instance, Taiwo (2010) examines the metaphor in Nigerian political discourse, while Aremu (2017) studies the conceptual metaphors in the inaugural speeches of Nigerian presidents. Musolf (2004) examines metaphors in political debates in Europe, Chiluwa (2007) discusses the metaphors of power and corruption in media discourse in Nigeria, while Odebunmi (2010) examines ideology and body part metaphors in Nigerian English. Odebunmi (2010) states that sex organ is mapped in Nigerian English as the rouser of a container, illegitimate companion, an actor, a weapon, a commodity, a treasured property, a pit or opening, a busy or popular site, a cynosure, a heavy load, a feeder or a relaxant and as being tasty. Medubi (2018) studies the blending of proverbs and metaphors in Soyinka's *The Swamp Dwellers*, while Okunrinmeta and Alabi (2013) examine the cultural conceptual metaphors of corruption in Nigerian literature. Apart from Medubi (2018) as well as Okunrinmeta and Alabi (2013), scanty study exists on the conceptual metaphor analysis of Nigerian dramatic literature. Hence, this study attempts to fill the existing lacuna in research in cognitive metaphor usage by studying the practs of deliberate metaphors in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*.

### **Synopsis of the Play**

Yoruba cosmological belief revolves round the concept of the three wolds: ancestral, the living and the world of the spirits (Soyinka 1973, Idowu, 1982). This makes the Yoruba's to believe that when Yoruba king 'enters into the ceiling' an Abobaku must die along with him to be his horse-rider to the ancestral world. The dramaturgy titled *Abobaku* was staged by Ahmed Yerima to explicate the Yoruba belief in a scapegoat that must die along with an Alaafin or any other powerful king in Yorubaland. Scapegoat motif centres on a person who performs a christlike role like Emman in Soyinka's *The Wasted Breed* or Elesin in *Death and the King's Horseman*. In Yerima's *Abobaku*, Ajibade is the scapegoat who swears an oath with Oba Karunwi to perform the duty of the King's horseman. After the demise of the king of Adeoti village (Karunwi), Ajibade shirks in his responsibility to serve as the King's horseman. Though Ajibade ran to Gbalefele village, where he was chosen by Ifa to be their next king, the oath he had sworn with Oba Karounwi hunted him. Faramola's attempt to replace Ajibade (her husband) as the King's horseman by wearing the garment of the death was not only a wasted effort ,but it also worsened the doom which Ajibade's indecision and irresponsibility caused on the people of Adeoti Village. Ilari, Faramola and her unborn child as well as Ajibade died as 'wasted breeds' in the play. The tragedy in *Abobaku* was 'fuelled' by Ajibade's tragic flaws. The play explains the doom which Ajibade's egocentricism and shirking in his role as the Abobaku caused on the people of Adeoti. However, despite the significance of the thematic foci of the Yerima's *Abobaku* to African cosmogony, scanty pragmatic study of metaphors exists on it. This study therefore attempts to fill the existing lacuna in the pragmatics of metaphors in this play by examining the practs of the metaphors used in the play.

### **Biography of the Playwright**

Ahmed Parker Yerima was born in Lagos, Nigeria on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1957. He got his B.A. Theatre Arts from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and M.A. Theatre Arts from University College London and PhD from University of London. He was a Director-General of the Nigerian National Theatre . He is a professor of Theatre and performing Arts and the Dean of the College of Humanities, Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria. Being a child of was an Hausa police officer has made him to travel far into the different parts of Nigeria has made Yerima a polyglot who fluently speaks Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Edo and Ijaw languages.His critical works on theatre and drama in Nigeria include *Gender Politics: Women's Writings and Films in Northern Nigeria* (co-edited) with Seedat Aliyu); *Discourse on Tragedy* (Guara, 2009); *Critical Perspectives on Dance in Nigeria* (co –edited with Bakare Ojo-Rasaki and Arnold Udoka); *Modern Nigerian Theatre; The Geoffrey Axworthy Years, 1956-1967;Basic techniques in Playwriting: Theatre and Democracy in Nigeria* (co-edited with Ayo Akinwale); *Collected Plays 1 and Collected Play 2*. His dramatic works are: *Orisa Ibeji's*, *Heart of Stone*, *Tafida and other plays*; *Igabiti*; *No pennies for Mama*; *Mu'adhin's call*; *Ajagunmale*; *Little Drops*, *The Ife Quartet*; *Mojagbe*; *Abobaku*; *Tuti*; *Akuabata*; *The Wives*; *Aetu*; *Erelu Kutu*, *Idemili*, *Ameh Oboni the Great*; *The Liman and Ade Ire*; *The Angel and other plays*; *Otaelo*; *The Lottery Ticket*; *Yemoja* *Dry Leaves on Ukan Trees*; *The*

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*Sisters; Attairu; The Trial of Oba Ovonramwen; The Bishops & the Soul and Hard Ground* (winner of 2006 ANA and J.P. Clark's prizes for drama and 2006 Nigeria prize for drama and 2006 Nigeria prize for Literature).

### **Existing Linguistic Studies of Ahmed Yerima's Drama**

Different scholars have used different linguistic tools to examine the drama of Ahmed Yerima. Adeniji (2014) studies the pragmatic acts in selected culture-based plays of Ahmed Yerima while Arua (2007) examines how politeness principles has been the defining mechanism in Yerima's *Yemoja*. Odebunmi (2007) does a pragmatic reading of proverbs in Yerima's *Yemoja, Attairu and Dry Leaves on Ukan trees*. Also, Adeniji and Osunbade (2014a) study the pragmatic acts in character's utterances in *Mojagbe*. Adeniji (2014) states that characters utterances in Yerima's *Mojagbe* are used to pract informing, invoking, warning, assuring, lamenting, cautioning, insisting and accusing. Adeniji and Osunbade (2014b) examine the pragmatic functions of tradition-motivated discourse in Ahmed Yerima's *Ajagunmale*. Adeniji and Osunbade (2014b) assert that the tradition-motivated discourses in *Ajagunmale* are used to pract explaining, warning, advising, persuading, rebuking, praising, accusing and pleading. According to Adeniji and Osunbade (2014b), participants in Yerima's *Ajagunmale* rode on the shared situational knowledge (SSK), socio-cultural knowledge (SCK), inference (inf), reference (ref), and voicing (vce) to instantiate different practs in the text.

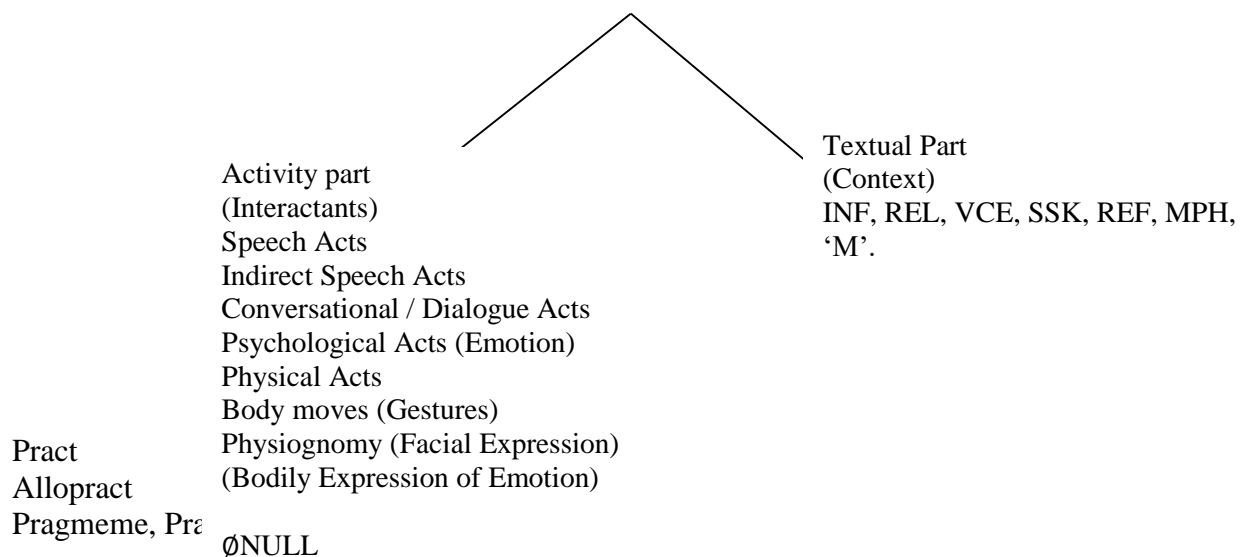
Besides the foregoing, Odebode and Odesanya (2015) carry out a socio-pragmatic analysis of Ahmed Yerima's *Ade Ire*. Odebunmi (2006) utilises the modified model of Mey's (2001) pragmeme to examine the pragmatic acts in proverbs in Yerima's *Yemoja, Attairu, and Dry Leaves on Ukan trees*. Odebunmi (2006) states that Yerima uses proverbs as communication tools within culturally defined contexts. According to Odebunmi (2006), participants in Yerima's *Yemoja, Attairu and Dry leaves on Ukan trees* use proverbs with poetic and non-poetic as well as fixed and non-fixed structures. Odebunmi (2006) continues that participants in the three plays rode on the shared situational knowledge (SSK), socio-cultural knowledge (SCK), metaphor (MPH), reference (REF) and relevance (REL) to pract counseling, accusing, pronouncing and assuring. However, it has been discovered that apart from those mentioned above, scanty study on the pragmatics of metaphors in Yerima's *Abobaku* exists in literature. Many of the existing pragmatic studies on Yerima's plays were centred on proverbs with little research on the pragmatics of metaphors. Besides, existing literature on linguistic studies of Yerima's drama also reveal that not much work exists on the pragmatics of metaphors in Yerima's *Abobaku*. This study therefore attempts to fill the existing gap in research in the pragmatics of Ahmed Yerima's drama by studying the practs of deliberate metaphors in *Abobaku*.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study revolves round the modified model of Mey's (2001) pragmeme. According to Mey (2001), pragmatic act was introduced as a result of weaknesses

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discovered in speech acts. For instance, Mey (2001) states that speech act lacks the theory of actions; and even of has, it is thought of atomistically as wholly emanating from individual. Mey (2001) continues that 'human activities is not a prerogative of individual setting goals; rather, the individual is situated in a social context'. Hence, pragmatic acts deals with situating our speech acts in context in which they could be properly understood. Mey (2001) asserts that pragmatic act does not explain language from 'inside out' but rather from 'outside in'; and in a context in which participants find their affordances. When someone uses her or his speech to co-opt or set people in motion he or her has engaged in pragmatic acts (Mey, 2001, p. 216). Pragmatic act is an instance of adapting oneself to context as well as adapting context to oneself. Pragmatic act engages the whole individual in communication and not just the speech portion of his or her contribution (Mey, 2001). An allpract or pract implies the different realisation or instantiation of a particular pragemme. Mey (2001) explains that the concept of pragemme through the model in the following 'Fig 1'.

Pragemme



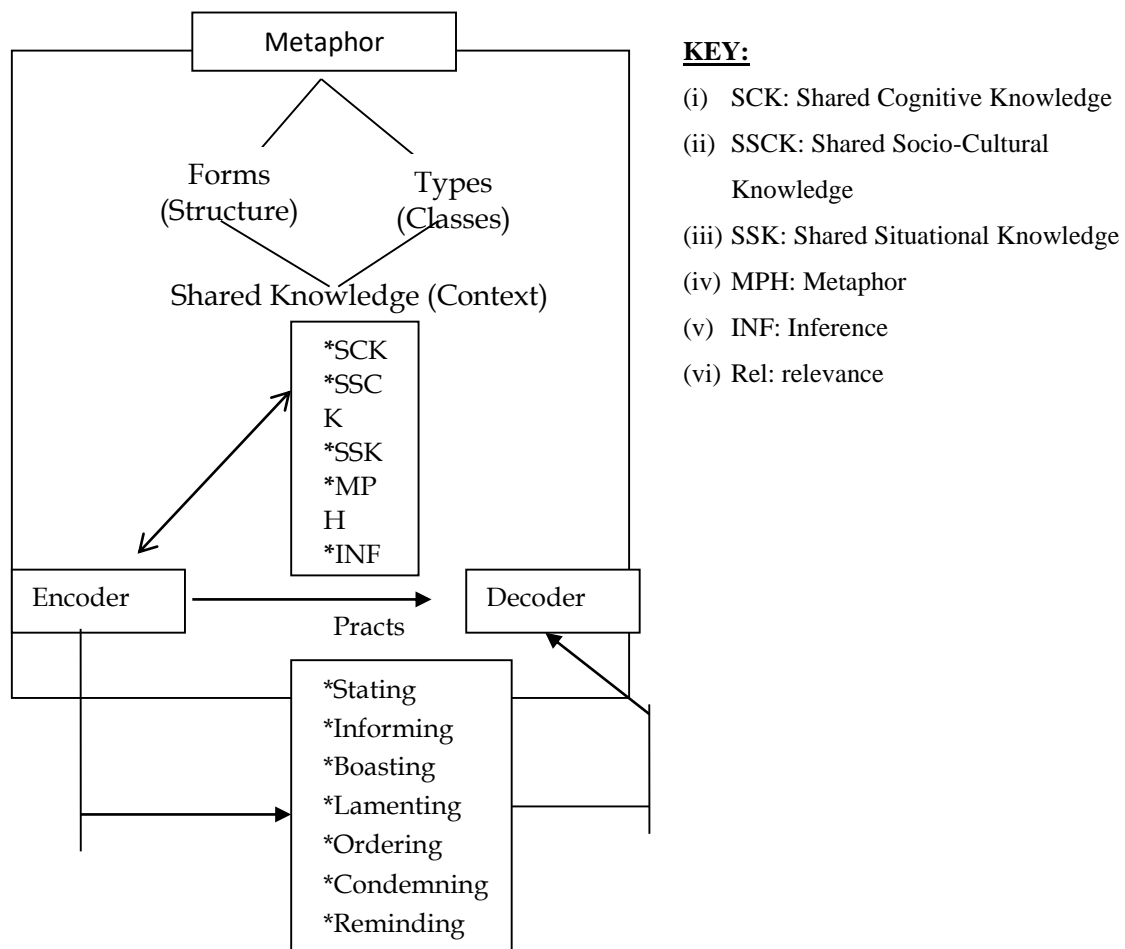
**Key:**

- (i) INF: Inferer
- (ii) REF: Reference
- (iii) REL: Relevance
- (iv) VCE: Voice
- (v) M: Metapragmatic joker
- (vi) MPH: Metaphor

**Fig 1:** Mey's (2001) Model of Pragemme)

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‘Fig 1’ shows that pragmeme has 2 parts: (i) activity and (ii) textual. Activity part is the interactants part. This reveals that participants in any pragmatic act engage in speech acts, indirect speech acts, dialogue acts, psychological acts, prosody (songs or poetic) act, physical acts, gestures and bodily expression of emotion. Besides, there are 7 types of context in a pragmeme- inference (INF), reference (REF), relevance (REL), metaphor (MPH), voice (VCE), shared situational knowledge (SSK) and metapragmatic joker (M). The following ‘Fig 2’ is our modified model of prame in metaphors used in Ahmed Yerima’s *Abobaku*.



**Fig 2: Modified model of Practs of Metaphors in Ahmed Yerima’s *Abobaku*.**

In ‘Fig 2’, it can be shown that metaphors in Ahmed Yerima’s *Abobaku* have forms and types. It is also revealed that participants in these texts often ride on the shared cognitive knowledge (SCK), socio-cultural knowledge (SSCK), situational knowledge (SSK), metaphor (MPH), inference



Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK (INF), reference (REL) and relevance (REL) to instantiate practs. Also, REL, INF, REF, MPH and SSK were borrowed from Mey's (2001) model of pragmeme as shown in 'Fig 1', while SCK (shared cognitive Knowledge) and SSCK (shared socio-cultural knowledge) were added in our modified model of Mey's (2001) pragmeme in 'Fig 2'.

## METHODOLOGY

The data for the study were gathered from the corpus of metaphorical expressions used in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. Conceptual mappings in the categories of Steen (2008) deliberate metaphors in the text were analysed through the theoretical underpinning of Mey's (2001) pragmeme. The modified model of Mey's (2001) pragmeme was utilised in analysing the practs of metaphors in the dramaturgy. Besides, simple percentage statistical tool was used in analysing the frequencies of conceptual mappings and the instantiation of pragmatic acts (i.e practs) in the text.

### Data Analysis

The following tables 1 and 2 were used to reveal the frequencies of conceptual mappings and the instantiation of pragmatic mappings and practs) in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*.

**Table 1:** Frequencies of deliberate conceptual mappings in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*

S/N	Deliberate Conceptual Mappings in Yerima's <i>Abobaku</i>	Frequencies	Percentage
01	Human as a Lamb	14	32.59
02	Human as a Saviour	11	25.58
03	Death as a Journey	06	13.95
04	Death is a container/ vehicle	03	06.97
05	Human's Life as a cracked cooking pot	03	06.97
06	Life as a Journey	02	04.65
07	Love as a two-edged Sword	02	04.65
08	Human as a Beast	01	02.33
09	Life is a light	01	02.33
	Total	43	100%

From 'Table 1', it could be observed that the deliberate conceptual mappings of 'human as a lamb' took the highest (14/32.59%) in the text of Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. This is followed by the deliberate conceptual mappings of 'human as a saviour', which has 11 (25.58%). The significance of this is that, the conceptual mapping of *human as lamb* abound in the text because the central thematic focus of the drama is the concept of *human as a scapegoat (or sacrificial lamb)*.

**Table 2:** Frequencies of practs of Metaphor in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*

S/N	Practs	Frequencies	Percentage
01	Lamenting	15	34.88
02	Ordering	08	18.60
03	Condemning	07	16.67
04	Reminding	05	11.63
05	Informing	04	09.30
06	Stating	02	04.65
07	Boasting	01	02.33
08	Begging	01	02.33
	Total	43	100%

From 'Table 2', it could be observed that the total frequencies of practs in Yerima's *Abobaku* are 43(100%). It could also be observed that pract of lamenting has the highest frequency 15 (34.88% in the data. This signifies that the play is a tragedy. It is not only a tragedy of an Abobaku who falls from grace to grass, but also that of the entire people of Adeoti village. The following discussion of findings will suffice in explaining not only the conceptual mappings in the text, but also discussing the instantiation of practs of metaphors in the drama.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that the language used in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* is characterised by the conceptual mappings of *human as a saviour*, *a beast* and *a lamb*; *human's life as a cracked cooking pot*; *love as a two-edged sword*; *death as a container / vehicle*, and *a journey*; *life as a journey* and *a light*. These are hereby discussed.

### Deliberate Conceptual Mappings of *Human as a Lamb*

The deliberate conceptual mappings of *human as a lamb* take the highest frequency (14/32.59%) in the data gathered from Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. This is because the play centres on the concept of scapegoat motif. Examples of the deliberate conceptual mappings of *human as a sacrificial lamb* are the following.

**Ex 1:** "In the presence of the three gods- ogun, osun and Esu-of Adeoti village. In the name of Alaafin Oyo.... We enthrone you the new Abobaku who will escort our new Oba to the land of the ancestors..." (p.8)

**Ex 2:** "The confused gods confuse me in turn. And too drenched in the fear of despair, remain a supreme lamb for sacrifice".

**Ex 3:** "...I almost regret being born a woman. If only I had known that being a woman will be so difficult, I would have begged Obatala, the god of creation, not to let me come this way.... I am one of those cursed by the weight of ill-fated destiny. I should have left these things alone... But I broke



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*all that, so I shall bear the consequences of daring to want to be what I was not born to be or do...(p.41)''*

In Ex 1, Abore is initiating Ajibade as the new Abobaku of Adeoti village who will serve as a sacrificial lamb to the king and the entire citizens of Adeoti. The statement uttered by Abore in Ex 1 signifies the deliberate conceptual *mapping of human as a lamb*. Also, in Ex 2, Ajibade has just been enthroned as the new king of Gbalefele after he ran away from performing his ritual suicide as the Abobaku of Oba Karunwi of Adeoti village. Ajibade's statement in Ex 2 shows that he is a confused man who does not understand what is happening to him again. He is despondent and doesn't know what death has prepared him for in the new land he has found himself. Ex 2 is a conceptual *mapping of human as a sacrificial lamb*. Ajibade is just powerless in the hand of fate. He is just a sacrificial lamb in the hand of fate.

Besides the foregoing, Ex 3 is also a deliberate conceptual *mapping of human as a sacrificial lamb* (in the hand of fate). In Ex 3, Faramola (Ajibade's wife) has become pregnant as a result of different rituals performed on her behalf by her mother at the shrine of Osun in order to change her destiny as a barren woman. Faramola's pregnancy has made her to be in danger. As the wife of Abobaku, she mustn't be pregnant. This has led to taboo. In Ex 3, Ajibade has rushed to Gbalefele village. Faramola (Abobaku's wife) is now soliloquizing in her room, thinking of her husband. Faramola is in the palace (inside her room) where Iyalode later meets her and wraps her with the shroud of death (black cloth) to replace her husband who is at large (and has been in Gbalefele). Faramola's statement in Ex 4 is the real summary of the story and a perfect example of the mapping of human as a lamb.

**Ex 4:** *"And, I am dressed for sacrifice ...my husband, a willing lamb, follows (p.44)''*.

Ex 4 is a deliberate mapping of human as a sacrificial lamb. In Ajibade (Abobaku), Ilari (Faramola's father), Faramola and her unborn son (in her womb) are all wasted breeds (unaccepted sacrificial lambs to the gods of Adeoti village) in the play.

### **Mappings of Human as a Saviour**

The findings reveal that the mapping of human as a saviour also characterise Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. The frequencies of these in the data are 11 (25.58%). Examples of these are the following Ex 5-Ex 6.

**Ex 5:** *"Wake up husband, Ogun sword dangles, your neck its target. Awake, husband, this is not the time to shut your eyes even by mistake of fate (p. 32) ... Husband, we shall meet soon. By the gods, I promise. Feel me all over, and let this memory suffice for now. Just go, my love ! Send for us... me when the dust settles. Hurry, Baba. I can feel death ...angry with club lurking already. Go!(p.33)''*

**Ex 6:** *"...When I was but eight years old sick to the point of death and Baba Ifadeyi said I needed a husband... to carry the sacrifice to the footpath of Esu... He swallowed the Akara and Eko and*

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*in a swift motion, he lifted my sacrifice...Father, I can never forget that favour... He saved my life, your daughter's life, I, we must pay him back tonight with my life (p.31)''.*

EX 5 and EX 6 are examples of the deliberate conceptual mappings of Human as a saviour in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. In Ex 5, Faramola is trying to save the life of her husband (Ajibade, Abobaku of Adeoti village). She leads her husband out (with the assistance of Ilari, her father) out of Adeoti village. This makes Ajibade to run to Gbalefele. In page 32 of the text, Faramola tells her husband to run fast to Gbalefele because death looms on the head of Ajibade. In Ex 6, Faramola speaks to her father (Ilari) to join her in assisting her husband to escape from Adeoti. He reminds (her father) how Ajibade has assisted her once by carrying ritual on her behalf. She tells Ilari to assist since Ajibade has risked his life for her in the past.

### **Mappings of Death as a Journey**

The findings also revealed that Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* is characterised with the deliberate conceptual mappings of *death as a journey*. The data shows that there are 6 (13.95%) frequencies of deliberate conceptual mappings of *death as a journey* in the text. Examples of these are the following Ex 7 and Ex. 8.

**Ex 7:** *"I went to the temple of the goddess, and here I am dancing with the spirits. I have returned with the blessings of life, here I am drunk with the magic of an ebora. See, woman...see! Put these down, women...see! Put these down, women...hurry...the gods down, women...hurry...the gods are happy. Put down my gifts (p. 21)''.*

**Ex 8:** *"This is the sword of Ogun....The next time we meet will be at the shrine of Ogun where you shall remove my head..In order to allow me the honour to meet my king...my partner...my god (p.9)''*

In Ex 7, Ajibade (the Abobaku) is busy performing his ritual dance as the scapegoat who will soon die along with Oba Karunwi of Adeoti village. He is heavily drunk and is busy enjoying a transient joy which will lead to his death. Ajibade in Ex 7 is heavily drunk as a partially dead man. Ex 7 is a conceptual mapping of *death as a journey*. Ajibade, in Ex 7, has started his journey from the world of the living to the world of the ancestors.

In Ex 8, Ajibade is doing his initiation ceremony as the new Abobaku of Oba Karunwi of Adeoti village. Ex. 8 therefore is a deliberate conceptual mapping of *death as a journey*. Ajibade states in Ex. 8, that 'the next time we will meet at the shrine of Ogun where you will remove my head'. Ajibade is swearing an oath of allegiance to Oba Karunwi. Ajibade is just an *Abiku that moulds from the yoke* (as stated by Soyinka in his poetry 'Abiku). Ajibade's death's journey starts from where he swears an oath to Ogun as Abobaku of Adeoti village. The expression 'where you shall remove my head' can be replaced by 'where I will die'. This signifies that Ex. 8 is a *deliberate conceptual mapping* (Steen, 2008) of *death as a journey*.

### **Conceptual Mapping of Death as a Container / Vehicle**

The deliberate conceptual mappings of *death as a container or vehicle* also characterises Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. There are 3 (6.97%) frequencies of this in the data. The following Ex 9 and Ex 10 will suffice in explicating the mappings of *death as a container or vehicle* in the text.

**Ex 9:** *"I beg you, Baba tell me, has the rooftop become a more comfortable place for Kabiyesi to lie? Or simply put, has his illness taken a turn for the worse? (p. 13)''.*

**Ex 10:** *"Now, he sits tight in the presence of death. I hear he finds it hard to breathe, as if pulled sideways by an angry Ogun. His once strong arms pulled out of control...P. 17''.*

In 'Ex 9', Faramola (Ajibade's wife) asks Ilari (her father) whether the king has died (whether the rooftop has become comfortable place for Kabiyesi to lie). Ex 9 is a *deliberate conceptual mapping of death as a container (or vehicle)*. In the Yoruba cosmological beliefs, the king doesn't die but 'climbs the ceiling or rooftop'. The 'rooftop', therefore, is a container or vehicle that carries the king to the ancestral world. Faramola asks the question in Ex 9 in order to know the fate of her husband (Ajibade, the Abobaku) who must die along with Oba Karunwi.

Faramola is worried because of the 'failing' health of Oba Karunwi and requests from Ilari who stays in the palace to know whether the rooftop (or ceiling) has acted as a container or vehicle to carry Oba Karunwi to the ancestral world. 'Ex. 10' is also a *deliberate conceptual mapping of death as a vehicle*. The expression *'I heard he finds it hard to breathe'* signifies *'I learnt that he is dying'*. Faramola is worried about the failing health of Oba Karunwi and feels that death as a container has started carrying Karunwi to ancestral world.

### **Mappings of Human's life as a cracked cooking pot**

The deliberate conceptual mappings of human's life as a cracked cooking pot characterise Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. The frequencies of these takes 6.97% from the data collected from the text. Examples are the following Ex II and Ex. 12.

**Ex 11:** *"...Hurry home, woman...their lives depend on the flip of your eyelids. Hurry. The cracked bottom of the cooking pot begins to widen. How will it hold the soup now? (p. 27).''*

**Ex. 12:** *'Abore: Great woman, the time has come. Drink this... Remember, you did not offend us. It is the head of the unborn child you offered that we need to save his father's honour. But to get him we must touch you.*

*Balogun: Then the journey has begun. Give her the final load to take to Oba Karunwi...*

*Ajibade: Stop! By the spirits of our fathers, please stop. I am here to carry my load to the stream of death (p. 67)'.*

In Ex 11, Ifadeyi (the Babalawo) tells Mama (Faramola's mother and Ilari's wife) to rush home because death looms on her family. Ifadeyi gives Mama sacred oil lamb which must not be quenched. Ifadeyi warns Mama to rush back home to save her family members whose lives are as cracked cooking pots that cannot hold the soup. EX11 is a deliberate conceptual mapping of *human's life as a cracked cooking pot*. Also, Ex. 12 is a conceptual mapping of *human's life as a cracked cooking pot*. In Ex 12, Faramola (Ajibade's wife) has voluntarily 'surrenders herself to replace Ajibade, her husband. Poisoned water has been given to Faramola before Ajibade entered to perform his role as Abobaku. The *cooking pot has cracked* already. Faramola has drunk poisoned water to die. It has become too late before Ajibade arrived to perform his duty. Ajibade's indecision and shirking in his duty has allowed the cooking pot to crack. Faramola and her unborn child has been wasted for sacrifice. Hence, Ex. 12 is a conceptual mapping of *human's life as a cracked cooking pot*. A cracked cooking pot (human's life) when destroyed cannot be recovered.

### **Mapping of Life as a Journey**

The language use in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* is also characterized by the conceptual mapping of life as a journey. This takes 04.65% of the data gathered from the text. Ex 13 below will suffice in explaining this.

Ex 13: "Two steps as one. Your leg, Oba Karunwi, Ajibade, his leg, Abobaku. One serving as the forerunner of the other. Drink milk of life. Your blood now flows as one (p.9)".

Ex. 13 is a conceptual mapping of life as a journey. In Ex. 13, Ajibade has become Oba Karunwi's Abobaku and that is how he (Ajibade) will spend the rest part of his life. Ajibade's choice as an Abobaku is a conceptual mapping of human's life as a journey.

### **Mappings of Love as a two-edged sword**

The mappings of *love as a two edged sword* also characterise Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. This is discussed in the following 'Ex. 14'.

**Ex 14:** "What an intoxicating two-edged sword this love has become; soothing and hurting at the same time. Ajibade, I carry your love like a shroud. Pity follows me like a true companion, until I have become a coin with two sides of the same....my fear looms. My soul oscillates between momentarily joy and a caged world of jeers...(P.12)".

The mappings of love as a two-edged sword take 4.68% of the entire cognitive metaphors in Yerima's *Abobaku*. In 'Ex 14', the encoder (Faramola, Ajibade's wife) is confused and disturbed by the web of love she has for her husband. Faramola is soliquising and thinking about the 'soothing' and 'hurting' love she has for Ajibade. She is busy thinking that the momentary joy in loving Ajibade will soon metamorphose into sorrow and death.

### **Mappings of *Human as a Beast***

The mappings of *human as a beast* characterises Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*. These take 4.68% of the cognitive metaphors in the text. The discussion of the following 'Ex 15' will suffice in explaining this.

**Ex .15: Faramola:** ... *'Father, find a place for her in your condensed heart of stone'*.

*Ilari: 'Heart' um. Mine bled out.. the day I took oath as Ilari. A dog must get lost when it refuses to listen to the call of its `owner. I owned her once as a father. But she desired to sit alone ... let her play with deadly poison...and label it fun... (p. 14).*

**Faramola:** *Ho Baba! What foul words ....*

**Ilari:** *I pray it burns your deafened ears, girl ... yes, as Ilari, I have no heart. I have no blood or an aota of emotion in my heart. It all died the day I was castrated for the safety of the king..... (p. 15)'*

The discourse of "Ex 15" above is a deliberate conceptual mapping of a *human as a beast*. In the text of "Ex 15", Faramola ( Ilari's daughter) is begging her father to 'forgive her. Ilari then answers that he has become a heartless person an Ilari. As a beast, Ilari says cannot think of loving a child again. *Ilari maps his daughter (Faramola) as a dog* who fails to listen to the call of its owner (Ilari) and he starts raining curses on his daughter (Faramola).

### **The Mapping of *Human's Life as a Light***

Besides the foregoing, Yerima's *Abobaku* is also characterised by the mapping of *human's life as a light*. The frequency of this in the text takes 4.68% of the entire conceptual mappings in the dramaturgy. The discussion of the following 'Ex 16' will be sufficient in explaining this.

**Ex 16:** *"Oh my God .... The three lanterns are dead?*

*This is a bad omen. Esu has blown off the lights, and has also blown out our lights. From now on, darkness looms and now, like cursed children, we will walk by the stones of fire and led by Esu to the throne of iku (P. 36)''.*

In 'Ex 16,' Mama (Faramola's mother and Ilari's wife) is lamenting because the sacred three oil lamps given to her by Ifadeyi (The Babalawo) to ward-off the evil of death that looms on her family members has been blown-off by Esu. This makes Mama to start lamenting. The text of 'Ex 16' is therefore a conceptual *mapping of Human's life as a light*. The blowing-off of the three sacred oil lamps by Esu signifies that death looms on the entire family of Mama. The blowing-off of the oil lamps also signifies the taking out of the precious light (i.e life) of Ilari, Faramola and her unborn child and Ajibade (Faramola's husband). It is essential to state that, the participants in the text of Yerima's *Abobaku* ride on the shared cognitive (SCK), socio-cultural (SSCK), situational (SSK), metaphor (MPH), inference (INF), reference (REF) and relevance (REL) to engage in different instantiation of pragmatic acts (or practs). This is explained below.

### **Practs of Conceptual Mappings in Yerima's *Abobaku***

Pract signifies the different realisations of pragmatic acts in a text or discourse (Mey, 2001, p. 116). In Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku*, participants rode on different common grounds to instantiate



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the practs of deliberate conceptual metaphors in the categories of lamenting, stating, ordering, condemning, reminding, boasting and informing. These are hereby discussed.

**(a) Practs of Lamenting in Mappings used in Yerima's *Abobaku***

Conceptual metaphors used in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* are characterised by practs of lamenting. These have highest frequencies (15/35.71%) in the text. Examples of these in the data are 'Ex 16', 'Ex 14', 'Ex 9', 'Ex 10', 'Ex 11', and 'Ex 3'. In Ex 3', Faramola (Ajibade's wife) is lamenting and regretting being born a woman. She is also lamenting concerning her action in attempting to change the ill-fated destiny given to her by Obatata to be barren. Also, in Ex 9, and Ex 10, Faramola is lamenting about the news that she has heard about the failing health of Oba Karunwi. She is lamenting that the death if Oba Karunuwi will soon lead to the death of her loving husband (Ajibade, the Abobaku).

**(b) Practs of Ordering in Mappings used in the text**

Conceptual metaphors used in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* is also characterised by practs of ordering. These take 19.05% of the entire practs of the cognitive metaphors in the text. Examples are 'Ex 5', 'Ex 11', and 'Ex 12'.

In 'Ex 5', Faramola is odering (or directing) her husband (Ajibade) to wake up and not to sleep in the palace since death looms on him. She orders Ajibade to flee from Adeoti village so as to escape being killed since information has reached Faramola that King Karunuwi has *climbed the ceiling*. Ajibade flees with the help of Ilari (Faramola's father) to Gbalefele village. In 'Ex 11', Ifadeyi (The Babalawo) orders Mama (Faramola's mother) to run home because death looms on her entire family members. Ifadeyi gives Mama the sacred oil lamp which must be glowing without being put out through-out that night . Mama then listens to the command of Ifadeyi by rushing home to save the life of Ilari(her husband) as well as the life of Faramola(and her unborn child) and Ajibade(the Abobaku). In 'Ex 12', Abore orders Faramola to drink the poisoned lotion so as to die and replace her husband(Ajibade) who has run to Gbalefele village.

**(c.) Practs of Condemning in Mappings used in the text**

Participants rode on the shared cognitive, socio-cultural and situational common grounds to pract condemning in metaphors used in the text of Yerima's *Abobaku*. Example from the table is the following 'Ex 17'.

**Ex 17: Ajibade:** ... *'Death is far away from me...us. If only we had a child ...even a whisper of the news of impending child..today. my happiness will know no boundaries...*

**Faramola:** *Fool!... I too must give up this bullock at Ogun shrine of death. His madness...begins to creep into my head. Out! Out! You accolades of death, you flies set to swarm on a living figure, a possessed victim, a stupid victim, a fool of the gods.. Out! I say.'*

In 'Ex. 17, Ajibade with the some girls and drummers, are dancing in Faramola's room. Ajibade (the Abobaku) has become so drink and this annoys Faramola who starts condemning and scolding Ajibade. Different damning epithets are used by Faramola to abuse or condemn



Ajibade. Ajibade is called '*a bullock*', '*a fool*' and *a possessed victim of the gods*! The girls that are dancing with Ajibade are described as '*flies*' and '*accolades of death*'. Participants in "EX 17" hinge on the cognitive, socio-cultural and situational common grounds to instantiate or pract condemning.

**(d.) Practs of Reminding in Mappings used in the text**

Participants in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* hinge on the shared cognitive, socio-cultural, situational and contextual common grounds like metaphor (MPH), reference, (REF) inference (INF) and relevance (REL) to pract reminding. The practs of reminding has 5 (11.63%) frequencies in the text. An example from the text is 'Ex. 6'. In 'Ex 6', Faramola attempts to remind her father (Ilari) how Ajibade (her husband and Oba Karunwi's Abobaku) has assisted her in the past in saving her life by helping in carrying sacred ritual so that she (Faramola) would not die prematurely. Faramola states in 'Ex 6' that since has he (Ajibade) has saved her life in the past, they (Faramola and her parents) must 'pay him back' by saving his life with 'Faramola's life. Hence, participants in 'Ex 6' rode on the shared common grounds to pract (or instantiate) reminding.

**(e.)Practs of Informing in Mappings used in Yerima's *Abobaku***

Participants in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* also rule on *the* shared common grounds to instantiate the practs of informing in the conceptual mapping used in the text. Examples are 'EX 5' where Faramola informs her husband (Ajibade) that '*Ogun sword dangles, on his (Ajibade's) head* and 'EX 13' where Abore rides on the shared socio-cultural and situational common grounds to instantiate or pract informing Oba Karunwi and Ajibade (the Abobaku) about the socio-cultural significance of the oath that the duo (Ajibade and Karunwi) had taken. The pract of informing in 'Ex 13' is to make both of them aware that the oath that they have taken is not a child's play.

**(f.) Practs of Stating in Mappings used in the text**

Participants in conceptual mappings employ in Yerima's *Abobaku* rode on the shared socio-cultural, situational and cognitive common grounds to pract stating. The 'practs of stating has 2 (04.65%) frequencies in the data collected from the text. 'Ex 1' is an example. In 'Ex 1, Abore rides on the shared cognitive, socio-cultural, and situational common grounds to pract stating. Abore(Oba Karunwi's Chief Priest) states it clearly to Ajibade (the new Abobaku) about the oath (ritual initiation) which he(Ajibade) is about to take.

**(g.) Pract of Boasting in Mappings used in the text**

Instantiation of practs in the mappings used in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* has only one frequency (02.33%) in the text. This is in 'Ex 17' where participants hinge on the shared socio-cultural, situational, relevance (REL) and cognitive common grounds to instantiate or pract boasting. Ajibade (the Abobaku) boasts in 'Ex 17' that '*Death is far away from me*' and '*if only we had a child... my happiness will know no boundaries*'. The boast pract of Ajibade (the Abobaku) in EX.

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17 annoys Faramola his wife. Abobaku in EX. 17 annoys Faramola his wife. This makes Faramola to call Ajibade (her husband) a fool.

#### (h.) **Pract of Begging in Mappings used in the Text**

Participants in conceptual mappings used in Yerima's *Abobaku* rode on the shared common grounds to pract begging. Pract of begging has only one frequency (i.e. 02.33%) in the text. In 'Ex 9', participants rode on the shared situational, socio-cultural and cognitive common grounds to pract begging. In 'Ex 9', Faramola attempts to beg Ilari (her father) to reveal the health condition of Karunwi to her. She believes that if the health of Oba Karunwi keeps on being worsened, the life of her husband (Ajibade, the Abobaku) is in danger.

### **CONCLUSION**

The findings revealed that Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* is characterised by the deliberate conceptual mappings of *human as a sacrificial lamb, a saviour and a beast; death as a journey and a container; human's life as a light; and love as a two-edged sword*. Participants in these conceptual mappings rode on the shared common grounds in the drama to pract lamenting, ordering, condemning, reminding, informing, stating and boasting. Understanding the participants' common grounds in the play will assist in the meaning interpretation of the text.

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