

Linguistic Stylistics Study of Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate linguistics stylistic features in Chimamanda Adichie *Purple Hibiscus*. The specific objectives of the study are to discuss the syntactic features used by the author in this novel and identify the various morphological features the author has used in the novel. Areas of linguistics to investigate on are syntactic and morphology. The study is anchored on Language Variation Theory. Syntactically, it was discovered that Adichie used epizeuxis, anaphora, asyndeton, parenthesis as the syntactic devices in *Purple Hibiscus*. For morphology, acronyms, abbreviation, compounding words, initialisms were used to put these elements together to pass a message that is relevant to the study. The researcher also explored the cultural and linguistic background and how they have helped the style of the writing.

Keyword: Language, Linguistics, Syntax, Morphology, Stylistics

Introduction

Stylistic analysis is a normal part of both linguistic and literary studies. Stylistic analysis in linguistics refers to the identification of patterns of usage in speech and writing. In linguistics, the purpose of a close analysis is to identify and classify the elements of language being used (Newton,

2012). In literary studies the purpose is usually a means to understanding, exegesis, and interpretation. In both cases, an extremely detailed and scrupulous attention is paid to the text. It is practiced as a part of understanding the possible meanings in a text. Stylistic analysis is generally concerned with the uniqueness of a text; that is, what it is that is peculiar to the uses of language in a literary text for delivering the message. This

naturally involves comparisons of the language of the text with that used in conventional types of discourse (Qian, 2006 & Wang, 2001). It is also generally assumed that the process of stylistic analysis will reveal the good qualities of the writing. In stylistic analysis, the numerical recurrence of certain stylistic features is used to make judgments about the nature and the quality of the writing. Stylistic analysis purports to be fairly scientific.

Linguistic stylistics focuses on linguistic theory. “It is about doing stylistic analysis in order to test or refine a linguistic model-in effect, to contribute to linguistic theory”, (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010 in UK Essays, 2015). Linguistic stylistics was introduced as a complementary approach to literary criticism where the linguistic study of texts was absent. It is different from literary criticism in that while literary criticism rests solely on the subjective interpretation of texts, linguistic stylistics concentrates on the ‘linguistic frameworks operative in the text’ (Ayeomoni, 2003:). This gives the critic a pattern to follow, what to look out for in a text, and his point of view can be verified statistically

Stylistics is the study of various styles used in literary and non-literary texts which

distinguish the uniqueness of a writer from another. Stylistics recognizes literary stylistic and non literary stylistics as academic discipline. It enables us to identify and name the distinguishing features of a literary text and non-literary text and to specify the generics and structural subdivisions of these two aspects of stylistics.

Stylistics allows the stylistician to analyze a work not from the perspective of the writer, but from his own creative ability to pick out intended meanings in a work. In every style, there is a message unrevealed. The main object for stylistic is language and in that language is embedded style. That style depends on language for manipulation. Stylistics is only restricted to only spoken and written language. The writer or speaker may not meet at equilibrium. It is the writer’s duty to write and it is the interpreted duty to interpret and other style in language is the use of language. Stylistics deals with literature in terms of literary stylistics. Many people have defined literature from varying perspective. According to Egudu Romanus (1979) “Literature is a mode of expression. It is not just a subject that expresses something but rather, it is the way manner or method in which something is said or written” (105). Many other descriptions exist which you may come across each trying to define literature

from its varying points but all are almost saying the same thing. Literary stylistics deals with the characteristics of literature as a genre and the style of individual authors. The stylisticians interest in literature is in the language use.

The creative artist uses language as an artistic medium. He does not use language simply for communication or even expression like other writers. This kind of language is used to show the stylistic features of a work of art that make it unique from the others. In order to communicate effectively, we need to be aware of how languages should be used in different ways and on the wide number of subjects. The aim of linguistically oriented stylistic study is clear. What a variety of language is to be studied in as much as possible so that we can point to the formal features which characterize them and understand the restriction in their use. A lot of similarities exist in the definition of language from another angle, there are highly technical wages of the word “language” reflecting the way the term has been applied reguratively to all forms of human behavior such as language of writing, media, politics, music, law and advertisement. The major challenge about defining language is that of trying to summarize its content in single sentences.

Language is a symbol; based on pure or arbitrary convention infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers. According to Lyon (2003) languages are: “The principle system of communications used by particular groups of human beings within the particular society (linguistic community) of which they are members” (94). The use of language is not restricted to only human being, but for the purpose of this, the researcher is concentrating on language used by human beings. Language as a human property is used to perform various functions in a society such as communication, instruction and socialization, which is why its study is indispensable. The role of the literary analyst is to bring out the style that is the literary elements used by the writers to interpret their works. Widowson (2014) explains the function of literary stylistic as the interpretation and evaluation of literary text as work of art, that the primary concern of the analysis is to explicate the individual message of the writers.

Stylistics is the study of various style used in literary and non-literary text that distinguishes the uniqueness of a writer from another. Style is a pattern of linguistic features that distinguish a piece of writing from another. It also distinguishes the

personality of an author from another. No wonder the French scholar Buffon (2010) said “style is the man”. Stylistics is very important in literature because each literary text represents an individual’s use of language which reflects his style and shows the linguistic repertoire of a writer. Stylistics looks at the choice of words, the sentence patterns and figurative usage of words by a writer. This makes it possible for us to study the stylistic choice made by Chimamanda Adichie’s in the text *Purple Hibiscus*, where she used the novel to explore the aspects of the challenging realities in the Nigerian society and reflections of important events in Nigeria’s history and culture.

Stylistic analysis which this research focuses on, is the end product of a mode of analysis of literary texts. The role of the literary analyst is to bring out the style that is the literary features used by a writer to interpret his works. One can conclude by agreeing with Leech and Short (2010) that:

Every analysis of style is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a writer’s choice of language. All writers and for that matter, all texts have their individual qualities. Therefore the

features which recommend themselves to the attention in one text will not be important to another text by the same or different authors (100).

This makes it possible for us to study the stylistic choice made by Adichie which illustrates or represents lexical variation or socio-cultural factors that inspire creativity. According to Nnolim (2009), the Nigerian novel is perceived as “the sum total of literary conventions and narrative habits that have been put together to assume what may now be referred to as indigenous ingredients that wear a particular Nigeria face in the corpus of the African novel” (290).

Therefore, Adichie illuminates the complexities of human experience in their texts, inspired by events in their native Nigeria. In her novel *Purple Hibiscus*, she was able to reveal a level of creativity with their display of stylistic variations peculiar just to their style of writing. This creates the background on which this research will be carried out. The Nigerian novel from their inception explores all the aspects of the challenging realities in the Nigerian society. Thus, it has always engaged itself with the reflections of important events in the Nigerian history and culture. In this regard, it

is not surprising therefore that event in the life of the society provide the writer with the materials in the process of artistic products (Nnolim, 2010).

The Nigeria novel has its root in what may be called the regional perspective. Most of the early novels have shown evidence of reflecting specific regional concerns, for examples, many of the novels from the eastern part of Nigeria such as Achebe *Things Fall Part* (1958) and *Arrow Of God* (1964) employ themes which have significant bearing upon real life and naturalistic inclinations of the Igbo society. To a great extent, the Nigerian novel is influenced by socio-cultural factors which inspire creativity.

Nnolim (2010) argues that the novel is that which represents copies from and make use of our folk literature, and creativity making use of our local proverbs, legends, customs, rituals, institutions and mythology in giving imaginative expression to our national culture. This argument is essence attempts to link the Nigerian novel with oral tradition thus formally establishing the image bond between writers and their societies. The Nigerian experience here become unique

because it enhances its social function and durability.

It can be argued therefore, that the Nigerian novel offers in the process, an imaginative recreation of an identify art which cuts across ethnic and cultural boundaries sharing in the process some historical experience both in terms of internal social dynamics and extended pressures. Also corruption in terms of governmental affairs in our societies was the beach mark of what inspired Chimamanda Adichie in her writing. The features used to present these experiences of the style and linguistic by these writers is what the study attempts to explore. And this will expand the frontiers of knowledge by helping upcoming researchers to understand how Adichie's styles are unique to this works.

This study hinges on the Language variation theory. The language variation theory was propounded by William Labov in 1963. The variationist approach claims that language varies systematically in accordance with social characteristics of the speakers. The basic question which arises in this approach is that if language use varies from a situation to another, how it can describe, and more importantly explained it as a systematic apparatus. Labov's theory of linguistic

variation seem to be central to the issue since it starts with real phonological sample analysis and takes into consideration the sociolinguistic factors behind such variation.

The theory asserts stylistics as the study of style and the method used in written and spoken language, it is the manner of linguistic expression in prose and verse and it is the way the speaker or writer expressed whatever he wants to say. Also Leach and Shorts (1981) support the view of stylistics as simply an exercise in describing what use is made of language. Linguistics, however, gives an aid in literary study, and literature being essentially language is therefore open to formal linguistic investigation. Linguistic stylistics serves as a tool for helping us organize, formulate, and communicate our thoughts and this great detail is possible because of the delicacy of linguistic analysis.

Labov's endeavors to systematize the methodology of analyzing language variation and change later developed the field from an approach into a method known as "variation theory". In this theory, variation is an inherent part of language which can be observed and studied both synchronically and diachronically, in that it shows variation and change in its historical development and also denotes that language varies across different

dialects within linguistic communities and socio-geographical distribution. Such variations which can even be traced in everyday vernacular of a language are at the same time rule-governed as is true for all natural languages. In other words, it is established in sociolinguistic research that language variation is not a haphazard phenomenon, but happens rather systematically (Togliamonte, 2012).

Language variation theory particularly the textual met function, as the analytical template, this study focuses on how sound or phonic elements such as alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia are systematically organized or patterned in the texts under study, it also focus on Syntactic and morphological stylistics feature such as types of sentence, compound word, noun, adjective to foreground stylistic meaning and serve aesthetic ends. The study demonstrates the fact that writers deliberately deploy lexemes not only because of their senses or signifying potentials but also as result of the suggestive power of their sounds in relation to context of situation and textual function.

Linguistics Stylistic Study Of Chimamanda Adichie *Purple Hibiscus*

The stylistics features used in

Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* are to be analyzed in this chapter, which are use of language, graphology, figures of speech, adage and thematic representation to portray how Chimamanda Adichie who is a creative and imaginative writer was able to put these elements together to pass across his message.

Narrative Style in *Purple Hibiscus*

Purple Hibiscus is told in the first person narrative style. The language is simple and sometimes lyrical. As stated earlier, it is an account of sights and sounds from the mouth of a quiet witness like Mama, Auntie Ifeoma, Jaja and Ade Coker. In Adichie's employment of the 'shift in perspective technique', Kambili's focus is beamed beyond the seclusion of the Achike family house in Abba to the wider society. Some reviewers argue that the political sub-plot of *Purple Hibiscus* does not complement its main plot. This view is incorrect. It is chiefly through this sub-plot that the novel's setting emerges. Ade Coker reminds us of the late Dele Giwa, who was bombed to death in Lagos during the Babangida's military regime. By localizing this sub-plot and its drama to Abba, the setting becomes modern Nigeria as a whole. The political sub-plot also aggravates the drama in the main plot by fuelling Eugene's stress, this help to shake

things up towards the climax and hasten the drama and the suspense that brought about his tragedy.

Adichie's language was simple and comprehensible by an average reader in the least however she does endeavour to import some of her native language's lexicons but she was careful enough to make sure they don't hinder the simplicity in the text's language as the English translation of these lexicons were made to follow immediately after them. Also, it helps inform the reader of the cultural inclination of the text.

Syntactic Devices in "*Purple Hibiscus*"

At this syntactic level, syntactic devices such as parenthesis, asyndeton, anaphora, epizeuxis and polyptoton are deployed in the text.

Instances of Parenthesis are as follow;

- "Her brown face, flawless but for the recent jagged scar on her forehead was expressionless." (pg. 23)

This implies that 'mama is sad and didn't know what to say at first.

- "I felt looking at her, that I was helplessly watching precious flaxen sand slip away between my finger" (pg. 101)

This implies that Kambili, the speaker was startled and eventually taken by surprise (almost insulted) by the statement previously made by Achike.

- The sole man tone, more than the sacrilege of what she said, made me look up (pg. 152).

This shows Kambili's (speaker's) disbelief at Auntie Ifeoma's view of 'defiance'.

Asyndeton is the deliberate omission of the conjunction 'and' in between two or more clauses. We have rare usage of this device in the text. An example is;

- "I closed my eyes, sat still, waiting to hear him call Jaja to hear Jaja go into his room" (pg. 17).

In the above sentence, the additive conjunction 'and' is omitted in the above sentence. This is used to sustain the readers' thoughts.

Anaphora entails the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of a clause or sentence. This is mostly used for emphasis. For example;

- "When we were on vacation, we had a little more family time, a little more time to need newspaper..." (pg. 32).

In the above sentence, the noun phrase "a little more time" is emphasized.

- "Military men would always overthrow

one another, because they could, because they were all power drunk" (pg. 32).

Hence, the conjunctive "because" was repeated for more emphasis.

- "The blood was watery flowing from Mama flowing from my eyes..." (pg. 43)

Here, the repetition of the continuous verb 'flowing' implies the fact that both the speaker and mama felt the tow of the pain.

- "I know his arrest was because of the big cover story in the last standard a story about how the head of state and his wife had paid people to transport heroin abroad, a story that questioned the recent execution of three men..." (pg. 46)

Here, the nominal lexeme "story" was given more emphasis.

- "I needed him to touch the back of my neck and tell me that I was fulfilling God's purpose. I needed him to smile at me, in that lit up his face..." (pg. 47).

In the above extract, the clause 'I needed him' was repeated twice to show how much the Speaker (Kambili) wished her father could just commend her in an encouraging manner or way.

Instances of Epizeuxsis

Alabi (2007) says that epizeuxsis repeats a word or phrase without any break at all as shown in the following;

- a. "...But you father stayed with me

with us” (pg. 28)

b. “This country is giving down”, way down (pg. 34)

c. “Thank you Lord, thank you Papa, thank you mama”... (pg. 22)

d. “And, as usual, you will stay with longer than fifteen minutes. Fifteen minutes” (pg. 69).

e. “...Baskets hold water, were all devilish folklore. Devilish folklore...” (pg. 93)

Also, two instances of **Polyptoton** are found in the text whereby words/lexemes with a same root are used together in a sentence. For example;

- “..... Naked and semi-naked children...” (pg. 63)
- “.... She unfolded and refolded her wrapper around her waist...” (pg. 176)
- “...dreamingunrealistic dreams...” (pg. 156)

On the whole these devices are used to reinforce information; parentheses are used for additional information, Asyndeton provides a hurried a rhythm in the sentences. Anaphora in the text was used to shows the extent of what the characters were going through and to produce a strong emotional effect. Epizeuxses are employed for direct repetition to lay emphasis. This analysis of

lexical features covers four word classes, namely: nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. The assumption here is that the study of these word classes will help to uncover the semantic/lexical and grammatical choices that realize Adichie’s style and mind-style.

Nouns and Adjectives

This extract is drawn from the first part of *PH* entitled “Breaking Gods: Palm Sunday”. In this passage, Adichie draws mainly on concrete nouns: (*Things, Missal, church, line, people, Papa, Mama, Father Benedict, face, nose, clapping, Brother Eugene, congregation*, etc.). The absence of abstract nouns from this extract denotes that the extract is concerned with physical and concrete description. Another striking observation is that all the nouns tend to occur as the Head words of major noun phrases (*his ... line, most ... people, Father ... Benedict, The colours of his ... face, his British ... nose, hand ... clapping, Brother ... Eugene, the ... congregation*). As it appears in the foregoing, the use of these noun phrases denotes once more the writer’s preference for concrete depiction. All the nouns in general point to such concrete things as characters or character

names (*Papa, Mama, Father Benedict, etc.*) and their acts and traits (*His line, hand clapping, the colours of his face, his British nose, etc.*).

Adichie also employs adjectives for stylistic effects. She uses the adjectives almost frequently to make her description concrete, physical or visual for the reader. Hence, the reader will notice that the adjectives employed by the writer modify or qualify or refer to people, objects, etc., and most of them are attributive, predicative and non-gradable in nature. The writer employs one non-restrictive adjective and one gradable adjective in the extract. All these are illustrated in the subsequent examples:

- Attributive

... Papa flung his heavy missal across the room and broke the figurines on the étagère (1).

- Predicative

He still looked new (15).

- Non-restrictive

Mama placed the fresh palm fronds, which were wet with holy water, on the dining table and went upstairs to change (3).

- Gradable

His line moved the slowest because he pressed hard on each forehead to make a

perfect cross with his ash-covered thumb and slowly, meaningfully enunciated every word of “dust and unto dust you shall return.” (7).

Another salient observation in this extract is the writer’s use of compound adjectives: *gold-framed* in “... gold-framed family photo (4), *ash-covered* in “... ash-covered thumb ...” (7), *life-size* in “... with the blond life-size Virgin Mary mounted nearby ...” (10), *cut-open* in “... a cut-open soursop ... (16)

and *straight-line* in “... straight-line lips turned down at the corners to form an inverted U” (20). Though they are not numerous, these adjectives encode the writer’s style. Again, the writer uses a noun to modify or qualify another noun; she uses this pattern to express her style in the passage. Consider the very few cases of Noun + Noun pattern in the passage: Father Benedict, Brother Eugene, family photo, marble altar, offertory songs and Palm Sunday.

Verbs and Adverbs

It is very important to note that Adichie does not provide her concrete description without giving an account of the relations that exist between her fictional characters, the roles they play or the acts they perform,

etc. The first paragraph in this passage is rife with verbs like *started to fall apart, did not go, flung ... over, had just returned, placed, were, went, would knot, (would) hang ... on, would stay, would take, helped distribute, moved, pressed ... on, enunciated, shall return*. The second paragraph contains such verbs as *sat, was, did not kneel to receive, did, would hold, tightened, would stick, could go, sat, watched ... troop, had taught ... to do, had been, referred to, would not have, had not been, looked, had not tanned, was, was, had had, did not get, came, had changed, be recited, was not, was to be kept, be compromised, allowed, called, said, turned down ... to form, referred, used .. to illustrate, let ... shine, 're reflecting, said, Look, could have chosen to be, could have decided to sit ... to make sure, did not threaten, used ... to speak, meant, lost, spoke out, have stood up, have reflected*. The verbs in the third and last paragraph in the extract are *said, bless, would not sound like, listened*.

As it is obvious in the foregoing, Adichie draws on verbs extensively to encode her message. She draws on verbs denoting both states of being or condition (e.g. be) and actions or events (e.g. go), with action verbs dominating largely. The action verbs

in this extract are both active and passive in nature. This is to say, most of the sentences in the extract contain an agent, the agent in the sentences is of two types: animate and inanimate, but the animate type predominates largely (e.g. Papa, Jaja, we, etc.). Again, these verbs are both transitive and intransitive, with transitive verbs dominating chiefly. All the action verbs in this extract do encode physical or concrete acts, verbal acts, psychological and physiological states. The following sentences are extracted from the passage:

- **Physical Acts**

Things started to fall apart at home when my brother, Jaja, did not go to communion and Papa flung his heavy missal across the room and broke the figurines on the étagère (1).

- **Psychological Acts**

He could have chosen to be like other Big Men in this country, he could have decided to sit at home and do nothing after the coup, to make sure the government did not threaten his businesses (25).

- **Physiological Act**

Afterward, he sat back on his seat and watched the rest of the congregation troop to the altar, palms pressed together and extended, like a saucer held sideways, just

as Father Benedict had taught them todo (12).

- **Verbal Act**

“When we let our light shine before men, we’re reflecting Christ’s Triumphant Entry” he said that Palm Sunday (23).

Again, Adichie’s use of adverbs in this extract is highly remarkable. In fact, all the sentences in the extract contain one or more than one adverb, and these adverbs occur largely as phrases or groups. The identified adverbs are used to perform the semantic functions of manner, place, direction, time, degree, cause, etc.

Systemic scholars would argue that these adverbs are used to enhance the experiential density of the passage.

Sylisticians, on the other hand, would hold that these adverbial phrases are used to encode a given spatiotemporal point of view in the text. Consider how Adichie enhances her authorial ideology or reinforces her spatiotemporal point of view in what follows:

Things started to fall apart at home (Place) when my brother, Jaja, did not go to communion (Place) and Papa flung his heavy missal across the room (Place) and broke the figurines on the étagère (Place) (1).

Mama placed the fresh palm fronds, which were wet with holy water (Manner), on the dining table and went upstairs to change (3).

They would stay there until next Ash Wednesday (Time), when we would take the fronds to church (Place), to have them burned for ash (Cause) (5).

The grammatical features discussed in this study are the functional and structural types of sentence, sentence length and sentence complexity.

Epizeuxsis

Alabi (2007) says that epizeuxsis repeats a word or phrase without any break at all as shown in the following;

Causing much blowing of horns sorry sir, sorry sir he chanted (p. 122)

When he drove you to the airport, you hugged him tight for a long, longmoment and then you let go (p. 127)

Who probably did not cook with palm oil or know that palm oil whenfresh was a bright, bright red and when not fresh, congealed to a lumpy orange (p. 141)

Edward had just told the Senegalese but he had dreamed of

her nakednavel, naked navel. (p.111)

Nobody has fresh ideas. It is university politics, politics, politics, whilestudents buy grades with money and their bodies (p. 68)

Dozie’s word – ‘hate’ – floats around in your head now. Hate. Hate. Hate(p. 197)

Epizeuxsis is employed for direct repetition to lay emphasis.

Onomatopoeia

This is a literary device employed to reflect the sense in the sound of words that are used to imitate or suggest the sound in the real world. According to Balogun(1996), onomatopoeia is “... an instance when the sound of the word actually captures the sounds being described.” In Ufot’s (2013) view, the term derives from Greek, meaning ‘name making’ and “refers to the tendency of words to echo their meaning by their actual sounds” In *Purple Hibiscus*, words that contain similar sounds to the sound they describe have been deployed to foreground aspects of meaning. The significant thing about the use of this device in the text is the effective exploration of descriptive sounds to attract and effect meaning. Thus, Adichie creates a pattern of suggestive sounds in the novel whose

meaning matches the meaning of the text. For illustration, let us examine the excerpt below:

Papa turned onto the dirt road, and soon I heard the screech-screech of the low underbelly of the Mercedes scraping the bumpy, sun-backed dirt road (55).

The sound /kr/ in “screech” repeated again in “scraping” echoes the sound made by the underbelly part of the Mercedes in scraping the bumpy road. Supported by the meaning of the text, Yankson(1987) refers to this as echoic effect. The extract below further underscores this part of Adichie’s stylistic technique:

Aunty Ifeoma was scraping a burnt pot in the kitchen, And the kroo-kroo-kroo of the metal spoon in the pot seemed intrusive (165).

The (kr) sound in “kroo” and in “scraping” echoes the sound made by the metal or iron spoon used in scraping burns from the pot and, therefore, reinforces the meaning of the text:

Then the clink-clink of forks and spoons scraping against plates would echo over the house (22).

The /kl/ sound in “clink” reflects the sound made by forks and spoons in scraping against the plate of food. Other instances of

sound suggestive of their senses in the text include:

- ... slap-slap sounds on the marble floor (7)
- ... The thump-thump-thump of the pestle (11)
- ... Buzzing bees that bumped against ... (5)
- ... Chattering at the backyard ... (91)
- ... Making clucking sounds ... (102)
- ... Muttering that the ... (102)
- ... Shattering ... (207)
- ... Whispered ... (248)

Hence Yankson (1987) observes that onomatopoeia as a sound or phonological aspect of stylistic analysis,... is perhaps the most subjective area of literary appreciation. It is generally agreed that certain words like ‘slushy’, ‘splash’ and ‘buzz’ echo the sounds the words refer to Any sound features which a poet may employ to echo, suggest or enact meaning can work only in conjunction with the meaning of the ... text.

Leech (1969:97) also asserts that,... this power of natural sounds or other qualities

(evoked by onomatopoeic references) is relatively weak – too weak to operate unsupported by meaning – and because of its range, is only latent.

The significant fact that ensues from the foregoing pattern is that Adichie has used words in the text to capture the sounds in real world. Therefore, it is clearly not an accidental or cosmetic form, but a deliberate design to effect or affect meaning. Simply put, sound segments do not exist in isolation but are deliberately foregrounded as a part of the semantic system of the text.

Morphological Analysis of “Purple Hibiscus”

In the text, the writer has made use of some morphological formation to create certain effects. These will be discussed next.

Abbreviation

Crystal (2008) says “the sense of abbreviation has been refined in linguistics as part of the study of word formation distinguishing several ways in which it can be shortened.

Initialism or Alphabetism: It reflects separation, pronunciation of initial letters of constituent words.

Examples are

- TV - Television (p.1)
- BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation (p. 72)
- CNN - Cable News Network (p.72)
- NTA - Nigerian Television Authority (p. 72)
- NGO - Non-governmental organization (p. 157)
- FM - Frequency Modulation (p. 157)
- DVD - Digital vital Disc (p. 81)
- MBA - Master of Business Administrative (p. 146)

Acronyms are pronounced as single words, it is the process of word formation in which words are formed from the initial letters of phrases.

- AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (p. 119)
- NITEL-Nigerian

- Telecommunication Limited (p. 70)
- JAMB - Joint Admission Matriculation Board (p. 170)
- SAT - Scholastic Aptitude Test (p. 150)
- Acronyms were used for shorter forms of words for brevity.

Compounding

Adedimeji and Alabi (2003) define compounding as the combination of two or more words. The combined forms can be with a hyphen or without it. Some examples from the text are:

Sucked-until-limp (p.22). It means sucked until the mouth becomes something limp like an orange.

Mouth-all-open (p. 47). It means laughter with mouth widely opened

Trigger-happy-policemen (p. 18). It is

likened to some policemen who are always

Tummy -tuck (p. 145), Matter - of - fact (p. 143), Spear - welding (p. 143)

happy to pull the trigger (shoot).

Word-compounding is another morphological device employed in the text by the writer to give a perfect description of certain concepts by joining two or more words together with a hyphen to create a new word/lexeme with a new meaning. Examples are;

- “Later, she knot palm front into sagging crop shape and hang on the wall beside our **gold-frame** family photo”. (pg. 11) – i.e. framed with Gold.

- “I tied around my chest, over my **pink-and-white flowered** nightgown.” (pg. 174) - i.e. a nightgown made of pink-and-white colour flower design.

- “Aunty said, laughing in that **proud-coach-watching-the-team** way.” (pg.140) – i.e. this depict that the person being refer to in this context (Aunty Ifeoma) laughs in the kind of manner in which a football coach who has been made proud : watching his football team play.

- “She lowly ran the cloth over her figurine one of its **match-stick-size legs** raised high in the air, before spoke.” (pg. 43) – i.e. legs like the size of that of matches sticks.

- “We drove past the sturdy tree around

Detergent – wet floor (p. 16). A floor that has been wet with detergent.

Pimple-like (P11). That which looks like a pimple

Half-smiled (p. 143). To give a half-smile.

Yellow-orange-rice (p. 16). It means a kind of cooked rice that is orange in colour.

Half-burned cars (p. 15). Cars that have been burnt

half -way,Also in the text are some more examples.

Dark - skinned (p. 143), Half - caste (p. 32), Self - contained (p. 32),

the faculty of engineering, past the vast **mango-filled field** around the female hostel.” (pg. 139) – i.e. full of mango trees.

- “I could see the big duplex that nestled behind a canopy of trees with **greenish–yellow leaves...**” (pg. 139) – i.e. yellow leaves with dotted green colour pigments.

This technique was deployed in abundance in this text to aid perfect description of objects, concepts and ideas. It also contributes to the simplified nature of language of the text thus making it, easy to read and understand even by an average reader. Other Instance of word compounding is.

- “...she then pointed to the vice chancellors lodge, to the high walls surround it, and said its youth to have **well-tended hedges** of cherry...” (pg. 139)

- “...and the **palm–size flower** brightened the foliage in the yellow polka dots.” (pg. 137)

- “...only for a snack when we sometimes bought the steam cooked **cow-pea-and-palm-oil cakes** on the drive Abba” (pg. 135)

- “...three **long-stemmed roses** so piercingly red, I wondered...” (pg. 122)

- “...to spill over onto a thin strip of road already full **double-parked...**” (pg.

119)

- “...It laid there, a huge **leather-bound missal** that contained the reading for all three cycles of the church year.” (pg. 15)

Initialisms

At the morphological level, Initialisms are employed in the texts thus abbreviated names or perhaps “lexemes” are used to represent and refer to certain items and concepts. For example, “Television” is represented and referred to as “TV”, “Master of ceremony” is represented by “MC”. Under this light, “Curriculum Vitae” is represented as “CV” and “Vice–Chancellor” as “VC”. These initialized/abbreviated words are used by the writer to familiarize the reader with the objects and concepts being referred to. For instance, abbreviated forms “TV”, “MC”, “CV”, “VC” and “CNN” are commonly used in the informal setting. Thus, this saves the text from being “too formal” and therefore helps to give the audience or reader a sense of familiarity with the text.

Conclusion

This work confirms that stylistic-linguistics is a useful tool in the interpretation of literary texts and by extension a requirement in the composition of original texts. It has focused on a number of linguistic aspects which appear more

significant and salient in the understanding of the texts. This study satisfies the first major aim of the study which is to show how and why the texts mean what they do especially, the meaningful choices from language which inform style. It is important to conclude that these stylistic devices employed by the writers, served the purposes for which they were employed. They helped in portraying the author's feeling and the disastrous effect of the government to the Nigerian society.

From the novel, we can conclude that the spirit, which propelled the literature of post-independence in Africa, is indeed the spirit of disillusionment, anger, oppression and hopelessness. African novels after independence are protest literature. The writers are firm in the forefront of the society towards progressivism. The linguistics stylistic features found in *Purple Hibiscus* have been exposed with examples from the text. The writer is protesting against the corrupt and immoral leadership of the African politicians. Just like what is obtainable in Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, which explore the social problems of disillusionment, unemployment, brutality, insecurity, harassment, betrayal of trust, injustice, violence, revenge and wickedness.

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