A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SENTENCES INELECHI AMADI'S *THE CONCUBINE*

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Abstract
Stylistics is the study of styles. It can be approached from different angles. The goal of stylistics is to investigate a text with respect to the expressions used in the text to discover their functional significance for the interpretation of the text. Three principles must be met for any stylistic analysis to be effective. The stylistic method must be rigorous. This means that structured models of language and discourse that clarify how language patterns are processed must be shown by the analysis. The stylistic method should be organized in very clear terms and criteria that can be retrieved by others. Furthermore, there should be enough transparency in the method of analysis that will enable others to verify it. The analyst should be flexible in this analysis with respect to selecting the aspects to focus on. This study points out the language features of the sentences analyzed and their stylistic significance. It is conducted after a critical study of the novel, with emphasis on the extracted sentences which form the data. Relevant authorities in stylistics are consulted. The study is hinged on contextual theory of meaning and the systemic functional grammar is our model. Our findings are: there are inanimate and animate actors, nominal and verbal groups, SPC, SPCA, ASP etc. sentence patterns are used. The indicative and subjunctive moods are used but the indicative mood dominate. The transitivity pattern shows that man lives under the god's influence1. The use of all the above language features have stylistic implications.

Keywords: Word: stylistics, investigation, analysis, sentence pattern, transitivity

1.   Introduction

1.1   Background of the Study

This study is focused on the stylistic analysis of Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* published in 1966. Elechi Amadi was undoubtedly a man of many facets, being a novelist, a dramatist and a scientist. He served as a public administrator, an educator, and a soldier. Among his novels are *The Concubine* (1966), *The GreatPonds (*1969) and *The Slave* (1978). His plays include *Isiburu* (1973) and *The Dancer of Johannesburg* (1982). Elechi Amadi died on 29th June (2016).

The story is focused on Ihuoma, a lady with a superlative degree of beauty, highly endowed with many positive intrinsic and extrinsic qualities. This heroine is so good that some critics describe her as a character that is too sweet to be real. Irrespective of her good qualities, Ihuoma is not able to marry successfully because of her relationship with the spirit world. Consequently, two young and promising men; Emenike and Ekwueme suffer untimely deaths because of their relationships with her.

1.2   Statement of the Problem
        This study is carried out to discover the types of groups, various sentence patterns, mood system and the transitivity system of selected sentences in the novel. These are the gaps the study hopes to fill in scholarship.

1.3   Aims and Objective of the study
        This paper focuses on the syntactic analysis of selected sentences in the novel. It treats the group types, sentence types, mood, and the transitivity system of the novel. According to Chomsky, "Syntax is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular language (1957:1). "Syntax stipulates a set of rules users of a given language must follow (Agbedo, 2003; 97, O' Grady 537 and Anagbogu *et al,.* 2010:37).
        From the above fact, we can conclude that syntax is the branch of language study that deals with how, words are brought together to produce grammatical construction. Syntax goes beyond just the combination of words in sentences to write many other issues about word use which are not of our immediate relevance. Syntax constitutes one of the various levels of stylistic analysis. As Butler (1985) notes, on application of systemic linguistics, the stylistic features of a text or body of texts may involve any or all of the levels of phonology, graphology and form (grammar and lexis). The above view shows that systemic linguistics embraces grammatical analysis of any text at any level.

1.4   Literature Review
        Style' as Traugott and Pratt have observed, "results from a tendency of a speaker or writer to consistently choose certain structures over others available in the language" (1980:29). Geoffery Leech and Michael Short (1981:12) opine that "Style is the linguistic characteristic of a particular text." Stylistics, which Adagbonyin (2017:11) describes as "The meeting ground between linguistics and literacy criticism", is defined by Chapman (1973:11) as "the linguistic study of different styles". It uses Linguistic method in explaining a text. Some critics have written the literary technique, thematic exploration, and the stylistic features of *The Concubine* but the fact is that none of such efforts has been geared toward treating the linguistic stylistic details as we intend to do in this aspect of the novel.
        For instance, while explaining the style, Ezirim (1986:19) writes, that "speed in the style of telling the story is the first thing that strikes the reader of *The Concubine*. He also opines that Amadi displays simplicity which is shown by a remarkable economy in the use of words. Bamgbose *et al.* (2000) explain some features of style in the novel as: "the use of proverbs, imagery and vivid description". They however, fail to do detailed analysis. Ebele Eko (1991), pointed out the use of African rituals, myths, folk-songs, folk-tale techniques, proverbs, local metaphors and in ages are part of Amadi style in the novel. In all, our study exploits language from an entirely different angle.

1.5   Theoretical Framework and Linguistic Model
        The contextual theory of meaning proposed by Wittgenstein (1953) and popularized by J.R Firth (1957). The thesis of this theory is that meaning of any linguistic expression is determined by the context in which it is used. Our choice of linguistic model is the systemic grammar as exhibited by Muir (1972) because the clause can be combined with SPC A structure to produce as many clauses as possible in English among other reasons.

2.   The Group Types In *The Concubine*

Tomori notes that "a group is one or more words that occupy a distinctive grammatical slot in a stretch of linguistics signals (1977:18)." We will focus our attention on the nominal and verbal groups in this paper because they dominate in the novel.

2.1   The Nominal Group

Butler (1985:19) observes that "we may take the 'nominal group' to be equivalent to noun phrase. Within the noun phrase, the head is pre or post modified by other words"… (Lamidi, 2000; 99). The primary elements of structure in the nominal group are: "Modifier), Head word) and Qualifier)" as Butler notes. Furthermore, he notes that "at primary delicacy, then Halliday's examples given below would have the same structure namely: M M M H Q (1985

2.12   All the ten houses on the river side (19).
　　　　M M M   H   Q

2.13   The finest old houses on the river side (19).
　　　　M M M   H   Q

Halliday and Hasan further note that the nominal group "consists of a head and a modifier, with modification constituting its logical structure: The modifier is optional and it includes elements, some of which precede the head and some of which follow it (39)." The elements that come before the head are pre-modifiers while the ones that come after it are post-modifiers.

The nominal group features prominently in *The Concubine* and they represent human beings, spirits, gods, and some basic concepts. They function mostly as, subject, objects, and complements. With the aid of the instances of the nominal group, Amadi is able to present an exact slice of the village life among his people. A major message of the novel is that the gods greatly influence the affairs of man. With the aid of the nominal group, Amadi demonstrates the fact that the gods are the performers of most of the actions that affect man negatively. Clear instances are the deaths of Emenike, Madume and Ekwueme.

Some examples of the nominal groups in the novel are underlined in the following sentences.
　　　　S　　　　　P　　　　　C　　　　　　S　　　　　　P

i.   'Beauty//seems to carry // sorrow with'… it, ugly people//do not suffer as
　　　　H　　　　　　　　　　　　H　　　　　M　　　　　H

　　　　much as the beautiful (35).
　　　　　S　　　　　P　　　　　C

ii.   Several Spirits//swore to kill// you … (58).
　　　　M　　　H
　　　　S　　　　P　　　C

iii.   This thing// is//obviously the act of a god (70).

iv.   He unleashes all the powers at his command and they are fatal. (196).
　　　　SP　　　　　C　　　　　　　　　　conjSPC

v.   Ihuoma's late husband apparently died of 'lock-chest' (195).
        M   M   H   H

With the aid of sentence one above, the novelist is able to make the readers get into the thoughts of his heroine, Ihuoma. They function as subjects, objects, and complements. For instance, in sentence 'ii' above, the nominal group is 'several spirits' it is animate and it function as the subject. 'You' in the sentence also plays nominal role. 'You' represents 'Madume. The spirits in question represents the gods. The gods are the actors while man represented by 'you' (Madume) is the object, subsumed by complement in our model of analysis.

The subject in the above sentence is animate while the object is equally animate. Similarly in sentence (iii) 'This thing'… is the subject while 'the act of a god' is the complement. 'This thing' refers to the 'act of a cobra spitting into Madume's eyes'. The two nominal groups in this example are in animate.

In sentence 'iv', 'He' refers to the sea king which is animate subject while …all the powers at his command is a nominal group which stands for the object, subsumed as a complement in our model. The sea king is portrayed to have a lot of powers and they are fatal. Sentences ii to iv commented on above portray the gods as very strong and influential beings and therefore take actions that affect man negatively represented by Emenike, Madume and Ekwueme. This is the stylistic significance the sentences and other sentences. Placing man as the receivers of the actions of the gods, hence it is said that man lives under the influence of the gods.

2.2   The Verbal Group: This group functions as predicate in sentences. Muir (1972)points out that verbal group is "one of the most complex areas of English grammar (41)." This complexity occurs because many systemic choices take place in the verbal group and there is no one to one correspondence between a term in a system and an element of structure of this choice. We are interested in how Amadi has used the various tenses to project the message in the novel. Some examples of the verbal group in the novel are;
        S   P   P   C

Beauty //seems// to carry// sorrow with it (35). (simple present tense)

vi.   Several spirits swore to kill you … (55). (Simple past tense).
        S   P   C

vii.   This thing //is //obviously the act of a god … (7). (simple present tense)
viii.   It would be a terrible mistake to marry Ihuoma (105). (Simple future in the past tense)
        Amadi has used mostly the present tense and the past tense. The future tense comes in occasionally. His frequent use of the present tense is stylistically significant because it makes his readers feel that they are involved in the discussion of the characters. Besides, the present tense makes his presentation real, his aim is to present what occurs often in the present time. The past tense enables him to use the literary device called 'flash-back'.
        Several spirits swore to kill you. Transitive
ix.   … Your husband is ill (164). Intransitive
The use of "kill" above signifies that the gods often fashion man's fate in the novel.

3.   Sentence Types

A sentence as Crystal notes, is "the largest structural unit in terms of which the grammar of a language is organized (432)."A sentence is important because it is the basic unit of expression. With respect to the use of sentences, every language user has his or her linguistic universe. Through the utterances of such language, we can have an idea of his or her real nature. This is why style has been viewed as a signature.

The various types of sentences are in the novel but this study will be restricted to only the ones that project Amadi's message. According to Butler, "four basic elements of clause structure are recognized in systemic linguistics which Halliday labels S (subjects), P (predicator), Complement) and Adjunct) (17).Halliday uses the terms 'complement and adjunct' more widely than in some other accounts: the former covers the direct and indirect object of traditional grammar as well as complements of copula-type verbs, the latter covers a wide range of groups with 'adverbial' functions (19: 1961).Butler, further notes that 'the elements of structure of a given unit are 'ordered' in 'places', where there are alternative orderings a variety of structural types may result (18:1985)."As a result of the above facts, the four elements of the clause structure SPCA could be combined in different ways, and C and A might appear at more than one structural place giving structures such as; SPC ASP, SAPA, ASPCC and so on.

'Clause structure' has been used in a synonymous sense with 'sentence' since an independent clause is a simple sentence. Different types of sentences are used in the novel. The sentences analyzed according to their types. The sentence structures are our basis of classification.

3.1   Simple Sentence: A simple sentence is the one that consists of a subject and a predicate with or without a complement depending on a class of verb occurring as predicator with or without one or more adverbial and with or without a vocative.

Some instances of the simple sentence in the novel are as follows.
x.   The gods// were // behind it (58).
          S   P   A

xi   The marriage // will not work out // well (194).
          S   P   A

xii   They // are // against the marriage // (195).
          S   P   C

xiii   Ihuoma // belongs // to the **sea** // (195).
          S   P   C

 (xiv) With the Sea king, // it // is // impossible // (196).
          A   S P   C

Amadi uses the above declarative sentences to depict the circumstances surrounding Madume's toe injury, Ihuoma's spiritual background and the fate of the proposed marriage between Ihuoma and Ekwueme. This is why the sentences are stylistically important.

3.2   Compound Sentence: Crystal and Davy define a compound sentence as "A sentence that is made up of two or more simple sentences joined by a conjunction or conjunctions (98)."

xv   He **//** unleashes **//** all the powers **//** at his command **//** and
        S   P   C   A   conj.

        they **//** are **//** fata (196).
        S   P   C

xvi   Accept **//** my sacrifice **//** and spare **//** me (59).
        P   C   conj.P

xvii   It // was // all the design of the sea king // (195)
        S.   P.   C

The above compound sentences are used to portray the brutal nature of the Sea king and man's helplessness before him.

3.3   Complex Sentence: Osimen (2019:28) notes that "a complex sentence could be defined as a sentence that contains one or more main clauses and one or more dependent clauses. The sense expressed by the subordinate or dependent clause is usually not complete until it is joined to the main clause with the aid of subordinating conjunctions like 'if', 'when', 'as' etc. Instances of acomplexsentences in the novel are as follow.

xviii   They // don's want // you // to have // anything //to do //with Ihuoma (58).
        S   P   C   P   S   P   A

xiv   As soon as// Emenike // married // Ihuoma,// his life // was // forfeited (195).
        A   S   P   C   S   P   C

xx   That // was // when //Ekwueme // died.
        S   P   A   S   P

Amadi usesthe above sentences to inform his audience, subordinate some information to the more important ones and throws more light on the deaths of Madume and Emenike. This techniques of using sentences and arranging ideas according to their importance in sentence validates the fact that the events of the novel are influenced by the gods.

4.   Mood
This is the form of a verb which shows the manner in which an action is expressed. Three moods exist in English language. They are the indicative mood, the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood. According to Waldorn and Zeiger, the indicative mood is the mood of fact, or rather of statement presented as fact, the imperative mood is the mood of command and request while the subjunctive mood is the mood of doubt, condition, wish, imagination and the like. (1980:29).

Butler notes that in the 'mood' options of English provided by Halliday,

> *An independent clause (a sentence) is either (indicative) having an expressed subject or (imperative), having no expressed subject. Clauses which are (indicative) go on to select either (interrogative) or (declarative).*
>
> *Interrogative clauses are either (yes / No) (polar interrogatives) or ('Wh') (introduced by Wh-words such as 'who' 'what' 'where'), declarative clauses select either (assertion) or exclamation. Clauses with the feature (imperative) can be either (jussive) or (optative) … (1985:44).*

A careful examination of *The Concubine* reveals that Amadi has mostly used the indicative mood, some sentences in the imperative mood and a few others in the subjunctive mood. Amadi's major usage of the indicative mood agrees with Waldhorn's and Zeiger's observation on the indicative mood. The indicative mood is much the most important in English; perhaps ninety-eight percent of the verbs employed in speaking and writing are in the indicative mood (1980:29).

Instances of sentences in the indicative mood in the novel are as follows:
xxi   Emenike and others // tried to drag // me // across // in a dream // (50).
      S   P   C   A   A

xxii   Ekwe, his only son // mad (174).
          S   C

xiii   A mad son// was // as good as a dead one,// probably // worse // (174)
          S   P   C   A   C

xxiv   Do // you // think // Ekwe // is // mad// (174)?"
      P   S   P   S   P   C

xxv   …as a wife, //she // is // completely //ruled out // (196).
          A   S   P   A   P

    with the Sea-king, // it // is // impossible / // (196).
          A   S P   C

Examples of sentences in the imperative mood in the novel are stated below.
    Accept // my sacrifice // and spare // me (59).
    P   C   conj. P   C

xxvi)   Oh! Amadioha // please help // our son (175).
          S   P   C

xxvii   'Come' (102)!
    P

xxviii   … don't forsake // him // now (175).
                    P   C   A

xxix   'Speak // to him // if you want to (192)."
              P   C   A

The followings are examples of sentences in the subjunctive mood in the text.
      Beauty // seems to carry // sorrow // with it (35).
      S   P   C   C

xxx   Well,// she // could be // someone's concubine (196).
       A   S   P   C

xxxi   May // the day // break (49).
       P   S   P

xxxii I // wish // we // were // at the arena (155).
       S   P   S   P   A

      The stylistic importance of the mood employed by Amadi lies in the following areas. The simple and short nature of the sentences enhances understanding, the sentences in the indicative mood are used to express significant facts, for instance, Ihuoma's spiritual background. The interrogative structures among the sentences in the indicative mood serve as appeal to the emotion of the audience and suggests the persona's out burst of natural feeling. Our view above is supported by the observation of Quirk and Greenbaum, that the usual function of a question in a discourse is "to request the listener to respond verbally with the information that the question seeks (1973:306)." Amadi uses the imperative sentences to express strong appeal, command, and instructions. The mood used enables the readers to get into the thoughts of the characters through elaborate use of direct speech. At times, the readers have a feeling of being spoken to directly by the characters.

5.   **Transitivity:** As Halliday (1976:38)puts it,' Transitivity is concerned with the type of process expressed in the clause; with the participants in this process, animate and inanimate, and with the various attributes and circumstances of the process and the participants'. Transitivity has something to do with the relations between the process of verbs and other participants. A functional relationship exists between types of processes. For instance, action and the types of participants involved in the processes. Such processes involve for instance, the subject or the actor which performs the action and the object or goal towards which the action is directed. The ideational function of language has therefore provided a structure that contains functional elements such as Actor, process, and Goal.
      While analyzing the transitivity system the novel, this study will examine the transitive clauses and the intransitive clauses to identify the participants in the actions. Finally, their stylistic significance will be explained.

5.1   Analysis of Transitive Clauses

S/Nos.	Participants (Actors)	Processes (Actors)	Participants Goals
a	Beauty	Seems to carry	Sorrow with it
b	Several spirits	Swore to kill	You (Madume)
c	Emenike and others	Tried to drag	Me (Ekueme) across a stream
d	Do (gods) You (gods)	Accept Spare	My sacrifice Me (Madume)
e	It	Would be to marry	A terrible mistake Ihuoma
f	What you propose (marriage)	Can bring	Nothing but shame to me. (Ihuoma) and regrets to you (Ekwueme)
g	… he himself (sea king) Sea king	Assumed Dealt	The form of a serpent. His rival (Madume)
h	He (the sea king)	Unleashes	All the powers at his commend
i	… A man who (Ekwueme)	Regrets	Nil
j	The marriage	Will not work	Nil
k	Madume's real trouble	Began	Nil
l	Emenike	Died	Nil
m	Ihuoma's late	Died	Nil
n	She	Was to die	Nil
o	Ekwueme	Died	Nil
p	… the day	Break	Nil

Figure 1

The columns above show the actors processes and goals above.

The above analysis shows that abstract concepts, spirits, gods, human characters in the novel and the sea king are the actors. There are animate and inanimate actors. The usage of the above actors, processes and goals has some stylistic significance in the novel. The transitivity options analyzed above contribute to the reader's feeling of sympathy for man following his helplessness before the gods. A good number of the transitive clauses the gods are actors performing cruel actions against men. The clauses where the gods are actors contain transitive verbs of like 'kill' (58), 'dealt' (195), 'liquidated' (195) and 'unleashes' (196).

Contrary to the above observation, the transitive clauses with man as actor have transitive verbs that are not harmful actions. Examples of such verbs are 'marry' (105) 'met' (155),

'harvesting' (195) etc. Most of these clauses do not have the gods as goals. The pattern of transitivity Amadi displays makes the readers feel that the gods are the attackers of the helpless man whenever there is a conflict involving them.

5.2 Examples of Independent Clauses with Intransitive Verbs in the Novel

The analyses of the above sentences show that animate and inanimate actors have been used. The transitivity pattern noticed here shows that man does not take any actions (particularly offensive ones) against the gods. Instead, the gods act against him which further validates the opinion that he (human character in the novel) merely lives under the superintendence of the gods. The contextual implications of the intransitive clauses lie in the fact that they depict vividly the circumstances that occasioned Emenike's death, Ihuoma's relationship with the spirit world and why the proposed marriage between her and Ekwueme will not be successful.

Expectedly, the intransitive clauses in question have no goals (objects) because they do not require any to be able to express their meanings. Pink and Thomas' 1970:34observation that "an intransitive verb is one denoting an action that is not performed upon an object," supports the above view of ours.

The application of the intransitive clauses is significant because they express the actions that cannot be expressed with transitive verbs. Besides, it makes Amadi's work interesting as variety in terms of clause structure is enhanced.

6 Conclusion

To conclude this paper, we reiterate that Amadi uses the groups appropriately. The nominal group and the verbal groups dominate in the novel, various sentence patterns such as: S P C, S P C A, A S P etc. are displayed. Expectedly, the indicative mood dominates in the novel, the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood are also utilized. Lastly, the transitivity system in the novel indicates the application of transitive and intransitive clauses animate and inanimate actors and goals. The transitivity system affirms the fact that man lives in a society greatly influenced by the gods. The gods always have the upper hand in the case of any conflict (s). All the above features combine in making Amadi deliver his message to the audience creditably.

7. Recommendation

We recommend that other researchers should work on stylistic analyses of more sentences from the novel so as to discover more ways of manipulating words to achieve set goals which will be useful to future literary artists and critics of this novel.

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