A Stylistic Analysis of Adichie's *Half of A Yellow Sun*

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Abstract

Language analysis has continued to benefit from a functional approach to its study and stylistics as a linguistic discipline is an approach to the functional interpretation of text. The purpose of this paper is to analyze peculiar linguistic features in relation to their functional values in Adichie's **Half of a Yellow Sun**. The study employed such tools as graphology, morphology, and synta**ctic** and lexico-semantics to examine the stylistic features in the text.The major findings of this study were: there is the use of a non-structural linguistic element to indicate plot movement. Graphological elements such as spacing and asterisks were used to effect change in spatio-temporal context;language-character mapping is achieved via the use of such linguistic features as deviant word forms and expressions, compounding, etc. to reveal characters' social, economic and educational levels. Also, loan words reveal the physical setting of the text. The syntactic and the lexico-semantic features of the text foreground the themes entailed in the text. The subject matter of a writer informs his choice of words and expressions. The deployment of language for experiential, interpersonal and textual functions depends largely on a language user's effective competence in the language of communication and his sound control of the contextual variables of her/his physical and linguistic contexts.

Key words: Language, Linguistic element, Graphological

Introduction

Language is a human-specific means of communication. It is a religious truth that man was created through the power of the 'WORD' (The book of Genesis and the holy Qur'an, 2:30). Indeed, Lyons (1977: 32) observes that it is difficult to imagine any satisfactory definition of language which does not relate to the notion of communication. Language is a social and functional entity; a tool of social engineering in our day-to-day lives. As human beings, knowledge and information dissemination are language dependent, and linguists have recognized the striking distinctions between animals and human communication.

In literary composition (such as prose which provides the data for this study), language is perceived as a social reality. It is a text made of meanings coded in structure and unfolding in context of situation (Halliday and Hasan 1976 and Halliday 1985). The potency of language, hence, manifests in the meaning it is deployed to convey in interactional situations. The totality of linguistic ingredients and extra-linguistic paraphernalia used in interactions is aimed at concretizing human thoughts and experiences in actual contexts. The functionalist approach to language study investigates how meanings coded in the structural patterns of language are decipherable by recourse to the situations surrounding their use. The purpose for which or context in which a language is used precipitates the choice of words and syntactic structures of a speaker or writer.

Therefore, readers have insights into the discourse intention of the text producers (encoders) when attention is given to the situations surrounding the text. Functionalism, hence, brings about the notion that meanings are well explicated when language is examined in its social context. In order to effectively and objectively probe into the foregoing, stylistics appears a veritable tool in the investigation of meanings engendered by literary works. Literary artists have the characteristics of deploying language creatively whereby the language so used requires an analytical framework which possesses the potentialities of examining the language with the aim of arriving at an objective appreciation or interpretation of the literary work.

The Definition of Style

The definition of style constitutes the first concern in any stylistic study. The ambiguous nature of style has subjected it to strenuous examination from diverse fields of endeavour; such as: psychology, philosophy and linguistics (Adejare 1992: 1). The common ground among them all is that style is a behaviour, particularly, language behaviour in this case. Igboanusi (2006: 19) postulates that

> Language is part of human social behaviour which operates within a wide
> framework of human activity. [Therefore] Whenever we speak or write, we are
> affected by social and linguistic conventions and by the expectations of hearers
> or readers.

Since the essence of language is for meaning making, the meanings therefore engendered by utterances are context determined as observed by Alabi (2002: 22) that "The linguistic codes which are available to language users generally are patterned in specific manners which impose meaning restrictions on them". Processing the meaning of language in discourse involves tracing the interconnectivity between language or utterances and the situation surrounding the communication. Haynes (1992) remarks that context of situation plays a pivotal role in creating uniqueness of style in a text.

The study of a text, therefore, is useful in providing the term to cover the activities going on in the world outside the text which make the text what it is (Butt, et al. 2000), and the psychological motivation which prompted its producer's choice of words and expressions. Igboanusi's (2006: 92) submits that "An outstanding contribution of contemporary Igbo novelists to African literature

is their adaptive use of the English language which has been demonstrated to be an effective linguistic style".

Stylistics: Meaning and Application

Stylistics has been variously defined in literature from different perspectives. Hartman & Stork (1972: 223) describe stylistics as 'the application of linguistic knowledge to the study of style'. Stylistic analysis in linguistics refers to the identification of patterns of usage in speech or writing. It is the study of the forms and functions of language as deployed by its user for the communication of their intentions. Stylistics is an objective approach to the analysis of language which aims at trying to explain, as scientifically as possible, the relationship between the structure and form a language takes and its function and contextual appropriateness. Enkvist (1964: 27) calls attention to the multi-faceted nature of stylistics and how it mediates in the schism between linguistics and literary study while Hoffmanova (1997: 5) also submits that stylistics is a field of study that is not only highly interdisciplinary but also considerably eclectic.

According to Short (1996: 1) "...stylistics can sometimes look like either linguistics or literary criticism, depending upon where you are standing when you are looking at it." This is why Abrams (1993: 284) submits that

> [Stylistic] is expanded so as to incorporate most of the concerns of both traditional literary criticism and traditional rhetoric. It insists on the need to be objective by focusing sharply on the text itself and by setting out to discover the 'rules' governing the process by which linguistic elements and patterns in a text accomplish their meanings and literary effects.

The major concern of stylistic criticism is thus to give due emphasis to the aesthetic aspects or the textual distinctiveness or the foregrounded linguistic habits of any literary work with relationships between language and content objectively explicated; because every analysis of style is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a writer's choice of language (Chatman 1971:15).

As would be seen later in this study, the intrinsic relationship between the speaker or writer, the choice he makes in the communicative process and how this is well linked to the situation or context is shown. The stylistic features explored include the graphological devices: bold print, italics, spacing and asterisks; morphological devices: deviant word forms and expressions, loan words and compounding; and, syntactic and lexico-semantic features: parallelism, anaphora, parenthesis, semantic extension, transfer, simile and metaphor.

A Stylistic Analysis of the Text

Graphology

Marked graphological features in the text include bold print, italicization, spacing, and asterisk. The utilization of these graphological devices has stylistic and semantic implications in the text – *Half of a Yellow Sun*, particularly when considered in the context of use.

Bold Print

Bold print - the font type that is darker and thicker than the regular fonts in a text - is a graphological feature foregrounded in the text. The author presents some lexical items of the first sentence of every new chapter in bold print to create an eye-catching effect. Some of the instances are cited below:

> **Master was a little crazy.** (p. 3)
> **Olanna nodded to the highlife music...** (p. 26)
> **Richard said little...** (p. 53)

Besides, bold print, as seen in the expressions in bold prints above, performs the stylistic function of forgrounding. Adichie, uses bold print for stylistic effect which focuses the readers'attention on the renewed and updated dimension on the historical Biafran war. The stylistic significance of bold print in*Half of a Yellow Sun*is that it is used to open every chapter with focus on characters' experience in the pre- and post-Biafran periods. All the chapters in the novel begin with the names of major characters. In effect, bold prints foreground how the lives of the characters transmogrify from abundance to lack, unity to disharmony, love to hatred and integration to disintegration, etc. For instance, Odenigbo, who used to be a professor of Mathematics before the war, becomes an addict 'kaikai' drinker.

The significance of Adichie's use of bold print is equally felt in understanding the storyline (i.e. the plot) of the novel. Although, she divides the novel into four with events jumping between early 1960s – the period of peace in the era of independence, and late 1960s – when the war was on; she captures through bold prints the ethnic impasse and internecine killings that characterized the Nigerian states. The war is the aftermath of political and ethnic struggles and distrust.

Italicization

Italics is another graphological feature in the text. Loan words and expressions are foregrounded in italics in the novel. There are loads of Igbo lexical items and expressions in italics which buttress Igboanusi's (2006) observation that "there is today, the distinctiveness of Igbo English writers which manifests itself in experimentation in language, in recreating distinct Igbo discourse in English, and in stylistic motivations".Few examples from the text will suffice for illustration here:

> *osiso-osiso (p. 3)*
> *I kpotagoya (p. 42)*
> *Keduafagi?(p. 5)*
> *alumelu! (p. 195)*
> *Ewuawusa*

The underlying message in, for instance, '*ewuawusa*' (p. 378) is both allusive and metaphoric given the context of the raging war between the Hausa-Fulanis and the Igbos. The speaker of '*ewuawusa*' compares her son directly with a goat '*ewu*' which qualifies 'awusa' (hausa);

hence the stereotypic impression held by each of the clans against each one. This is summarized by Susan (white lady) thus:

> … the Hausa in the north were a dignified lot, the Igbo
> were surly and money-loving, and the Yoruba were
> rather jolly, even if they were first-rate lickspittles. (p. 55)

The above is a typical Eurocentric description of the three major and socially influential ethnic groups in Nigeria. The mutual abhorrence held against each other (i.e. the Hausa and the Igbo) is further buttressed by '*mmee-mmee-mmee*, please don't kill me' (pp. 130-131). The stylistic significance of the above example is that it helps to convey a social stereotype of comparing the Hausas with goats in the wider context. This is further explained by the extract below:

> 'Our people say that the chorus sounds like *mmee-mmee-mmee*, the bleating of a
> goat.' …. *Mmee-mmee-mmee*, a goat begging not to be killed: *mmee-mmee-mmee*.
> (p. 130)

Words and expressions which carry social and psychological feelings are foregrounded in italics.

In addition, italicization of some lexical items provides a means of giving the italicized expressions 'a different mode of decoding meaning' (Alabi, 2009, p. 134). Solidarity and phatic function of language are indicated through italicization. For example:

> *ikpotagoya* (p. 4)
> *keduafagi?* (p. 5) (What is your name?)
> *nkem* (p. 24) (my own)
> *anyichabubiafra!* (p. 320) (We are all Biafrans!)
> *nno*(p. 326) (welcome)

These illustrate the strong ethnic bond between the ethnically bonded characters. Adichie shows with her good control of code-mixing that biafra is an igbo tradition, '*anyichabubiafra!*' (Meaning: we are all biafrans). Therefore, the emotional attachment to the 'win-the-war' effort is emphasized as a tenacious task on all Igbos.

More so, italicisation stylistically helps readers into the deep meaning of the text. For example; emphasis and attitudes towards persons and objects are shown through italics. Characters place accentual emphasis on words to establish their positions in arguments. For instance;

> …, ate meat *every day*. (p. 3)
> you will even eat meat *everyday*.(p.3)
> May be it *is* a European notion… (p. 20)
> …, *with* her unintellectual ways… (p. 51)
> but he *was* a writer,… (p. 55)

While arguing for the potentiality of pan-Africanism as a mediating force for protecting the

image and interest of Africa among the comity of nations, Mrs. Adebayo accepts Odenigbo's critical view on pan-Africanism as a western ideology devoid of true African spirit and philosophy by emphasizing '*is*' to denote the hypocritical position of the movement among African nations because pan-Africanism is fundamentally a European notion (p. 20). Also, the '*was*' is deliberately italicized to create an ironic effect and mock Richard's writing inability in:

> but he *was* a writer,... (p. 55)

Writing, as revealed in the context of the narration is the cloak under which Richard hides his desire to run away from or run towards something which seems elusive to himself (p. 61). Social and economic inequalities characterize the nation before the war and Ugwu, Odenigbo's house boy, could not imagine the reality of his auntie's declaration that

> you will even eat meat *everyday*.(*p*. 3)

However, during the war, the socio-economic ladder is equalized that there is no difference between the once rich and the ever poor because Odenibgo, the mathematics lecturer and a member of the middle class, now 'drank *kaikai*' (p. 377). The destabilizing effect of the war is, therefore, captured through the italicization of lexical items and expressions in relation to context.

More so, the educational levels of characters who are the quintessential examples of the Nigerian citizens are shown in italics. Deviant and perfect pronunciations of English words are italicized. Examples include:

> ugwu mouthed *street* … (p. 3)
> he said *thirteen* in English. (p. 5)
> Ugwu really preferred *sah,* (p. 13)
> *stupid ignoramus* slid out... (p. 14)
> …, in a free biafra, … (p. 282)

English, as exemplified above, reveal the classification of characters into social and economic groups. The adorable accent of Odenigbo exhibits that of the literate and educated and by extension the socially privileged while the English of Ugwu, Jomo and Harrison tallies with the semi-literate and the under-privileged. Language is therefore used in correlation with the social stratification projected in the text.

Spacing and Asterisks

Spacing is used to indicate change in spatio-temporal context while corresponding changes in scenes, time, thoughts and mental states are indicated by spacing and asterisks in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. An instance of the use of spacing and asterisks in (p. 47) marks a scenic change from the north to the south. This is instantiated in the extract below:

> Olanna wondered if Muhammed's lightness hid a more serious mockery. Her hand was still in his and she wondered, too, if he was having difficulty manoeuvring the car with one hand.
>
> *   *   *

> Olanna moved to Nsukka on a windy Saturday, and the next day Odenigbo left for
> a mathematics conference at the University of Ibadan. (p. 47)

The combination of both space and asterisks in the above instance indicates a change in narrative movement in both physical space and time i.e. spatio-temporal. As seen in the above sample, asterisks and space are deployed to signal a change in narrative settings.

On (p. 29) Adichie uses both space and asterisks to narrate her story with utmost sense of regard for the narrative plot. Space and asterisks are used to show the character's (Olanna's) drifting thoughts about her lover (Odenigbo) in Nsukka to her parents who are inviting her to dinner in an attempt to win a favour from Chief Okonji – the finance minister. The foregoing is exemplified in the extract below:

> …. He was too sure. She looked out at the clouds outside her window, smoky
> thickets drifting by, and thought how fragile they were.
>
> ＊　　　　＊　　　　＊
>
> Olanna had not wanted to have dinner with her parents, especially since they had
> invited Chief Okonji. (pp. 29-30)

Adichie combines both spacing and asterisk to signal narrative transition (p. 51). These two graphological elements (spacing and asterisks) are used to achieve coherence in the text. The narrative flow of events is coherently knitted as coherence is maintained between actions and forms using spacing and asterisks. This claim can be further illustrated in *Half of a Yellow Sun* with the extract below.

> They all laughed. There was something habitual about it, as if they had different
> variations of this conversation so many times that they knew just when to laugh.
> Olanna laughed too and felt for a moment that her laughter sounded different,
> more shrill, than theirs.
>
> ＊　　　　＊　　　　＊
>
> The following weeks, when she started teaching a course in introductory sociology,
> …. (p. 51)

Spacing performs the function of coherence in the text by signalling a change in the plot of the narration. For example; cause and effect conjunction is signalled by spacing as seen in the instance below:

> Finally, Edna fell asleep. Olanna gently placed a pillow beneath her head and sat
> thinking about a single act could reverberate over time and space and leave stains
> that could never be washed off. She thought about how ephemeral life was about
> not choosing misery. She would move back to Odenigbo's house. (p. 245)
>
> They had dinner in silence the first night. Odenigbo's chewing irritated her, … (p.
> 245)

They had dinner because her thought has transformed into an action because she had moved back to Odenigbo's house. Also, the 'graphicalization' of cause-effect through spacing helps to indicate the natural tendency of a perceived spatio-temporal contiguity of events with cause always preceding effect in temporal order; hence the cause of war always precedes war and its effect. Kainene goes to trade across enemy lines (afia attack) and never returns (p. 407).

Morphology
The major word forms and word formation processes in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are captured in the domain of morphology. The morphological processes marked in the text under study include deviant word forms and spellings, loan words and compounding, among others.

Deviant Word Forms and Expressions
In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, deviant word forms and expressions manifest at both the lexical and clausal levels to mark off the social status of characters. Broadly, there are marked differences between the educated and the non-educated or semi-literate. These educational differences are sometimes marked, in the text, through deviant spelling and syntactic structures. This gives credence to the assertion that syntax sometimes trespasses upon the domain of morphology because it [i.e. syntax] "deals with the combinatorial properties of words that go into the formation of sentences" (Ajadi, 2008). For example; Jomo, Ugwu and Harrison are exposed to the English language through their roles as domestic staff of the elites. Consequently, these characters' use of English is graphologically and morphologically represented in the text to reveal their educational and socio-economic status. Examples of such words are:

> sah   (sir)
> mah   (ma)
> bo-tah   (butter) (p. 121)
> manscrit (manuscript) (p. 121)

These three characters are depicted as people with relative competence in English as shown by the following:

> I serve now   (p. 23)
> I'm well, mah(p. 23)
> I have tire of stories of Onyeka (p. 120)
> I pack other paper for you? (p. 112)
> 'I never do it with oyinbo man before, but I want try everything now, oh' (p. 172)

These expressions are literal equivalent or translation of Igbo expressions – the L1 of the speakers – presented in deviant grammatical structures. This device shows the linguistic reality of the English language in Nigeria. This permits a relaxed interaction and helps soften the communication acts among characters. It also fosters the sense of belonging shared by Ugwu and Harrison, for example, while living with those who are educationally and socially superior. Sometimes, the adoption of English by these semi-literates results in outrageous ambiguity which

requires 'rephrases' for comprehension. For instance;

> Good afternoon, sah! This is the child. (p. 4)

The word 'child' is actually meant to refer to a 'houseboy'. Deviant spellings and syntactic constructions are equally deployed as means of mapping language with the personality of its users. An illustration of language personality mapping is seen in chapter 27, (pp. 302-303). There, Harrison, Richard's 'houseboy', recounts his escape ordeal in English dotted with deviant syntactic constructions:

> but everybody is knowing… (p. 302)
> even two day ago we are hearing … (p. 302)
> when I am hearing … (p. 303)

The characters are afraid and confused and therefore cannot fathom the reality and inevitability of the impending war and the high psychological effects the war will bear on the casualties. Adichie deliberately creates this stylistic effect through character mapping to tell her story with an interest; not on the war but on its lingering effects on the survivors.

Loan Words

Loan words or borrowings are potent morphological device employed in the text to help the readers into the physical context or setting of the text. The text fictionalizes the Nigerian experience in the thirty months civil strife. The Igbos who are considered the most ravaged by the war are foregrounded in the text more than other ethnic groups. As a historical fiction, Adichie imports Igbo lexical items and expressions in the text with a sprinkle of Hausa and Yoruba expressions. The following are elicited for illustration:

> *neeanya* (p. 10) (this is all water)
> *arigbe* (p. 14)   (herb of forgiveness)
> *agbadas*(p. 34)
> *nagode*(p. 46)   (thank you)
> turban (p. 49)
> *onyenzuzu* (p. 93)   (stupid man)
> *kpamkpam* (p. 293)
> *Gini?*(p. 295) (what?)

Borrowings provide a means of expressing ethnic solidarity. Essentially showing the sociolinguistic realities of the country, borrowings, in code-mixing and code switching forms, illustrate the multilingual nature of the nation. Some expressions are clues to the physical setting of the story because they reveal the multilingual nature of the text's setting. These include:

> *Afa m buJomo* (p. 15) (My name is Jomo)
> *keduafagi?* What is your name? (p. 15)
> his *arigbe*. his herb of forgiveness… (p. 17)

Nagode. Thank you, Hajia' (p. 46)
onyenzuzu! Stupid man! (p. 93)
ndo – sorry… (p. 157)

Compounding

Compounding is a morphological process stylistically foregrounded in the text. Compounding, according to Wales (2001: 74), is a productive morphological process where two hitherto independent words are fused to make a new one with distinctive meaning. It involves the process of conflating a rather long expression into a word or two words. The following examples are elicited from the text:

> brandy-diluted (p. 21)
> wall-to-wall burgundy (p. 33)
> cast-off kaftans (p. 34)
> wood-framed photo (p. 48)
> mimicking-the-oppressor's English (p. 51)
> money-loving (p. 55)

This morphological device is equally used by Adichie for stylistic significance in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. For example; corn-grounding station (p. 203), rain- holder (p. 200), knee-length tunic (p. 197), win- the–war effort (p. 185), etc. are conflation of:

> The station where corn is ground
> Someone that can hold rain
> A knee long tunic
> The effort of winning the war

The hyphenated compounds in the data perform derivative functions mostly. Used as nouns and adjectives to reinforce vivid exposition and description, compounding performs descriptive function in

> … the self-styled militiamen (p. 406)
> Olanna held the thin wisps in her hand, a sun-bleached yellow-brown that was nothing like Baby's natural jet-black. (p. 409)
> yellow-brown that was nothing like baby's natural jet-black. (p. 409)
> the deliciously foul-smelling fish, (p. 414)
> … walls half-standing. (p. 415)

Most importantly, compounding allows for compactness and brevity in the expression of thoughts and ideas. In the samples above 'sun-bleached yellow-brown' is a compact form of

> Olanna held the thin wisps that had been bleached by the sun to become yellow
> and brown and looked nothing like Baby's natural jet-black colour in her hand.

Adichie describes the symbolic adverse effects of the war through compounding. 'The delic:ously foul-smelling fish' (p. 414) contains contrasting qualities which gives no room for choice making in a war situation. Such compound in page 414 is used to capture the agony of survival in war which implies that the character in their survival struggle must learn to perceive foul odour as palatable. Alliterative compounds are also used for emphasis; for example, the following alliterative compounds appeal to the auditory sense of the readers.

> *slap-slap* (p. 3)
> *gom-gom-gom* (p. 187)
> *wah-wah-wah* (p. 202)
> *ta-wai, ta-wai, ta-wai* (p. 417)

Syntactic and Lexico-Semantic Features

The syntactic and lexico-semantic features identified in the data include; parallelism, anaphora, parenthesis. Also, included here are semantic extension, transfer, simile and metaphor. These syntactic and lexico-semantic features are elicited for close examination and analysis.

Parallelism

Parallelism gives a definite pattern to the whole of the parallel structures which have effects on the information pattern the writer or speaker wants the attention of his readers to be focused on. Parallelism is a "foregrounded regularity" (Leech 1969) which "involves holding some structural features constant while others, usually [but not necessarily only] lexical items are varied" (Short 1996: 14). Parallelism is deployed as an information focusing figure as evident in the following instances drawn from the text.

> **Master was a little crazy**; he had spent too many years
> reading books overseas, talked to himself in his office,
> did not always return greetings, and had too much hair. (p. 3)
> Would master send him home because he did not speak
> English well, kept chicken in his pocket overnight,
> did not know the strange places Master named. (p. 10)
> She helped him find a small flat, buy a small car, get
> a driving license, go to the Lagos and Ibadan museums. (p. 55)

As seen from the foregoing, information focus is achieved through parallelism to enhance the perceptual prominence of the text. In the examples above, readers are made to focus on the qualities of Master in (p. 3) and in (p. 10) on the conditions in which the speaker is likely to be sent home. Parallelism creates, in the text, the tendency of reinforcing meaning in relation with the text's spatio-temporal context. Adichie, eases the readers' effort at searching for meaning connections between parallel structures. For example, parallelism in the example below conveys an imagery of dilapidated infrastructures and suffering. The war has had gross effects on basic amenities, nature, and man. In other words, the images of dilapidation in infrastructure and human total being are foregrounded as consequences of the war. The extract below illustrates

the foregoing.

> ..., past potholes on the road, past palm trees stripped of fronds, past a thin soldier pulling a thinner goat. (p. 346)

The structural patterns which are varied in a parallel structure give access to the meaning conveyed by the writer.

Anaphora

Anaphora, according to Wales (2001: 19) involves repetition of the same word [or phrase] at the beginnings of successive clauses, sentences or verses. In the extracts below, anaphora is used to underline the speaker's feeling for achievements, in particular, with a revolutionary spirit.

> 'to that brave black American led into the University of Mississipp!''to Ceylon and to the world's first woman first prime minister!''to Cuba for beating the Americans at their own game!' (p. 18)
>
> 'Of course, we are all alike, we all have white oppression in common,'...'Of course, of course, but my point is that the only authentic identity for theAfrican is the tribe,' (p. 20)

The repetition of 'Of course' at the beginning of each proposition in (p. 20) expresses extreme tribal sensibility which is created by a strong feeling of ethnic loyalty and awareness in Odenigbo. Anaphora, as seen from the example above, assists in emphasizing points in argument. An attestation to this claim is seen in the extract below:

> I am Nigerian because a white man .... I am black because the Whiteman .... But I was Igbo before the Whiteman came. (p. 20)

Odenigbo argues and emphasises that the 'geographical space' known as Nigeria is the white man's irrational creation into which he is forced to sacrifice his first Igbo identity.

Also, in the following examples, anaphora brings out the thoughts, feelings and regrets of the characters in the text. Anaphora is used by the novelist to make the inner most feelings and thoughts of her character readily accessible to the readers.

> It was mama who initiated their hug; it was mama who smiled warmly. (p. 223)
>
> to think that her sister was sitting across from her, that her sister had come to visit her, that her sister had... (p. 344)

In the above extracts, Adichie uses anaphora to draw the readers' attention to the message of the propositions.

Parenthesis

Parenthesis entails the art of marking off explanatory remarks in writing. Parenthesis is stylistically deployed by Adichie to give vivid and detailed description and extra information to

aid the comprehension and interpretation of the text. In the examples below, the novelist uses appositives as parenthesis thus:

> Chioke, the junior wife, would be tending the pot of watery soup balanced on the three stones over the fire. (p. 7)
> They – her breast – were the images saved for last on the many nights when he touched himself. (p. 9)
> This was why she came to kano: this lucid peace. (p. 39)
> …, but also because he would be in the southeast, in the land of Igbo-Ukwu art, the land of the magnificent rope pot. (p. 56.)
> not just because she was mocking Susan – he told her what Susan said about Chief Ozobia – but because she had said *we*. (p. 76)

The use of punctuation such as: comma, colon, dash, to mark off parenthetic elements makes the parentheses non-restrictive. Parentheses in non-restrictive structures thus appear dispensable. However, they are important in the examples above because they function as explanatory elements to the words or phrases that precede them.

Functionally, parenthesis is essential to instill clarity, emphasis, and to produce a permanent effect on the reader and to enhance textual coherence and comprehension between syntactic structures and meaning. For example;

> Chioke, the junior wife, would be tending the pot of watery soup balanced on the three stones over the fire. (p. 7)
> They – her breasts – were the images saved for last on the many nights when he touched himself. (p. 9)

While the 'junior wife' expresses a semantic experience peculiar to Africa where wives are categorized in hierarchical relation, 'they' a third person personal pronoun, (which traditionally is grammatically used in reference to a person i.e. a human being) is semantically extended to be in apposition to 'her breasts', parts of a person.

Lexico-Semantics is concerned with lexis and grammar in relation to their senses and references which can only be appropriately comprehended by recourse to context – immediate and wider – that inform their choices. Among the Lexico-semantic features that are foregrounded by Adichie in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are transfer, semantic extension, simile, metaphor, code mixing and switching.

Semantic Extension

Semantic extension is another Lexico-semantic device used in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*. This lexico-semantic feature is a stylistic element that is motivated by choice of codes which the novelist deployed for stylistic effect. Adichie uses some words whose connotative imports are basically context-dependent for appropriate appreciation of their meanings in tandem with the unfolding narration, for example:

You should have warn us that you were coming (p. 39)
It is only women that know too much Book like you who can say that (p. 41)
If people like me who don't know Book... we will expire. (p. 41)
How is the new car behaving? (p. 64)
The white men will poke and poke and poke the women in the dark ... (p. 80)
'You touchedAmala' (p. 224)

The underlined words in the extracts above are made to acquire extended meanings. For example; 'behaving' (p. 64) presupposes attributing animate quality to an inanimate object. Adichie recognizes the intrusion of L1 interference in the characters' attempt to use the second language - English. Semantic extension is used to communicate a worldview where everything – human or non-human – is perceived as behaving in one way or the other. Also, 'You touched Amala' (p. 224) and 'The white men will poke and poke and poke ...' (p. 80) have the denotative content of 'touch' and 'poke' extended to avoid the vulgarism and irritation associated with sex-related words which are socioculturally considered as taboos.

Semantic Transfer

Transfer is one of the Lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English (NE) (Adegbija 1989). Meaning, culture, context, etc. peculiar to Nigerian socio-cultural realities are transferred linguistically to express experiences foreign to English but present in the indigenous languages. In the following examples, the author is able to use the English language in such ways that English expresses the Nigerian socio-cultural reality.

..., for Anulika's wine-carrying, (p. 121)
'... Asked him to join them in touching their hands to their mouths' (p. 195)
... Did I say 'oh' to you? (p. 195)
'We'll do the wine-carrying later, ...' (p. 200)
Master found a rain-holder on the wedding day. (p. 200)
... and had come here to perform rituals with her fellow ogbanje. ... (p. 239)

The dynamic nature of the English language is illustrated when peculiar Igbo cultural experiences are given graphical expressions in English; for instance, 'wine-carrying' implies the tying of the nuptial knot between couples in the presence of both families while the act of 'bringing palm wine' means the cultural and formal meeting of the groom's and bride's families to negotiate the wedding contract. Likewise, 'age' is quantified in terms of big or small in analogy with related physical object. In other words, 'age' in Igbo is related and interpreted or conceived as an object(s) which can either be big or small. This is transferred in the following examples in which we can only relate 'big' with 'elder' through the socio-cultural contexts of the utterances.

Ibiba, I am telling my big sister that your soup... (p. 41)
Have you people seen this woman? Why can't I talk to my big sister in peace? (p. 42)

Transfer of meaning, culture and context buttresses the functional use of language where form and content are deployed with respect to the context of communication. Adegbija (1989: 171) claims that transfer is utilized where several meanings related to marriage and burial semantic fields cannot be conveyed in English or their expression would be inadequate to indicate their Nigerian socio-cultural realities. Such cultural realities as 'junior wife', 'big father', 'big sister', '… gone to husbands' houses', 'big man', etc. are alien to the native speaker English. The use of English in *Half of a Yellow Sun* is therefore typically Nigerian, particularly among characters who do not 'know too much Book' (p. 41) like Ugwu, Arize, Harrison, etc.

Simile and Metaphor

Simile and Metaphor, which are figures of comparisons, are foregrounded in *Half of Yellow Sun*. Adichie creatively uses simile to vividly describe the uprooting of Ugwu, a thirteen year old village boy, from his family. On Ugwu's journey away from his village, his first encounter with the city is laddened with the thought of how

> he would never be able to describe to his sister Anulika how the bungalows sat side by side like polite, well-dressed men, how the hedges separating themwere trimmed so flat on top that they looked like tableswrapped with leaves. (p. 3)

The theme of uprooting is projected through the use simile that compares objects or things peculiar to the city with those of the village for vivid description in an attempt to reunite with his source. The following extracts further exemplify this:

> The bushes were shaped like hills. (p. 2)
> His complexion was very dark, like old bark, (p. 2)
> andmarvelled at how bright the bulb that dangled from the ceiling was, how it did not cast long shadows on the wall like the palm oil lamps back home. (p. 7)
> those pointy breasts, he had wondered if they would feel mushy-soft or hard like the unripe fruit from the ube tree (p. 8)
> On this bed that was nothing like his hand-woven raffia mat. (p. 9)

Simile, in these examples, draws comparison between village and city lives. Ugwu is afraid of being sent back to the village and he is determined to hold on to city life. More so, simile provides a means of expressing the state of being which relates one thing to another through comparison. In the following extract, simile is used to express a unit of generalization through communication and thinking (Vygotsky 1978).

> It's like a political club in the in the evenings. (p. 36)
> 'So, perhaps, you look like a monkey as well'. (p. 42)
> '…to look, like a bush woman?' (p. 44)
> it would strike her how her life in Nsukka felt like being immersed in a mesh of soft feather. (p. 52)

Simile allows a language user to relate his thoughts, ideas and worldviews to elements in the real world.Olanna compares her lovely and serene life with a soft feather which has the same tender effect with the love she gets from her lover (Odenigbo). Simile, as used *Half of a Yellow Sun,* establishes connections among language, concept and context, for instance; 'so, perhaps, you look like a monkey as well' (p. 42), conceptualizes 'ugliness' as mutually shared in the language community about the animal 'monkey'.

Metaphor is equally deployed to describe village related beliefs. For instance, in the examples below, metaphor portrays the socio-cultural beliefs that are stored in the schema of the language users when faced with the challenges of relaying new experiences.

> A cold barn…that kept food from going off. (p. 6)
> A black cat means evil. (p. 104)
> The taut globes that were his bellies … (p. 348)

Ugwu maps two different conceptual domains or fields. The source domain i.e. 'a cold barn' is drawn upon to create a metaphorical construction of the target domain (a refrigerator). The source domain serves as a vehicle for an appropriate conception of a refrigerator (the tenor) in the city. Adamu (1998: 39) observes that metaphors are integral parts of fictional narrative strategies since they have a major function of telling the story and conveying its meaning. Metaphors help to concretely represent factual and direct comparison to aid effective meaning exchange between the encoder and the decoder. Ugwu's admiration of Odenigbo's accent transforms into respect and appreciation in the example, 'Master's English is music.' (p. 22). Our understanding of the target domain is informed by our understanding of music and its effect of luring one to dancing. Other examples of metaphorical expressions in the data are:

> …and laughed when he teased her about being a distracting Aphrodite. (p. 26)
> …That friends called her art. (p. 26)
> 'So, will you be spreading your legs for that elephant in exchange for daddy's Contract?' (p. 35)
> 'They are not using me as sex bait.' (p. 36)
> 'I thought Odenigbo's girlfriend was a human being; he didn't say you were a water mermaid.' (p. 49)
> Did not that great thinker call Africa a land of childhood? (p. 50)

The social abnormality of 'sex for contract' is vividly described with the rotundity of the politician compared to an 'elephant' (p. 35). Adichie uses figures of comparison – metaphor - to heighten the vividness of description and intensify meaning exchanges for readers' easy comprehensibility. The metaphoric comparison of Olanna's beauty with a 'water mermaid' illustrates the writer's sense of descriptive accuracy. Metaphor, as illustrated in, for instance, Olanna's response:'They are not using me as sex bait' (p. 36), is used to decline or correct the wrong belief that Olanna is their parents' instrument for winning political and social favour because she is more beautiful than her twin sister who is a recluse.

An accurate appreciation of the full semantic import of metaphor does not depend solely on the senses of the individual words but largely on the interpretation of the words and syntax in context (Wales, 2001, p. 251). According to Saeed (2009, p. 359) metaphor causes a transference of properties from one concept to another. Metaphor is an intrinsic aspect of language and thought which allows us to experience the world the way we do. Lakoff and Turner (1989: 135) cited in Saeed (2009: 360) posit that "Metaphors allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another". The following extracts help to illustrate the metaphorical mapping of one concept into another.

> 'Of course, many other countries want to recognize us but they won't because of America. America is the stumbling block!' (p.295)
> The shabby theatrics of the war reports ... did not interest him. (p. 399)
> '...Thank heavens there actually hadn't been a symbolic burial, although there was some sort of memorial service before Umuahia fell.' (p. 399)

Metaphors exert huge influence over a wide range of the linguistic behaviours of language users. Metaphorical expressions involve the presentation of thoughts and beliefs in the most concise and lucid manner.

Findings

The major findings in this paper are as follows:graphological elements are used by the novelist to enhance the texture of the text. For instance, the use of italics to mark off words in the novelist's native language, and the use of space and asterisk to indicate plot movement were matters of choice made by the novelist;at the morphological level of analysis, deviant word forms and expressions were employed in the text to indicate characters' social and educational statuses. These morphological features also revealed the linguistic reality of the physical context of the text. The potency of the morphological devices to give readers clues to the physical settings of the story made it a significant stylistic tool; the perceptual prominence of the text is enhanced through syntactic and lexico-semantic features such as parallelism, anaphora, parenthesis, semantic extension, transfer, etc. These stylistic elements helped Adichie to paint vivid visual pictures of the war and its attending devastating effects in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. The overall importance of the syntactic and lexico-semantic features is that they help the novelist to achieve the chief purpose of the narration which is meaning exchange and negotiation. At this level of analysis, it was discovered that the functional use of language involves the deployment of linguistic forms and contents with keen recognition of the context of communication.

Conclusion

Linguistic forms and contents are functionally employed in a specific context of communication.One can, therefore, conclude that the study is a further attempt to project the functional approach to language analysis and uphold the fact that 'all facts are open to a process of creation and re-creation in text in the light of the changing cultural or historical contexts (Bloor & Bloor, 2007. p. 51). Stylistics, through the functional approach to language analysis,

has become a veritable tool for studying the relationships between language and the creation of the realistic world of experience.

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